

INSPECTION REPORT

**GILLINGHAM SCHOOL
Dorset**

LEA area: Dorset

Unique Reference Number: 113882

Headteacher: Mr. M. Lenarduzzi

Reporting inspector: Jan Allcorn
1068

Dates of inspection: 20th to 24th September, 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 708092

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
Type of control:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	11 to 18 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Hardings Lane Gillingham Dorset SP8 4QP
Telephone number:	01747 822222
Fax number:	01747 825263
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of Chair of Governors:	Mr. B. C. Nicholson
Date of previous inspection:	November 1994

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Jan Allcorn Registered Inspector	Mathematics	Attainment and progress Teaching
Jenny Mynett Lay inspector (Core)	Non National Curriculum at Key Stage 4	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Partnership with parents and the community Staffing, accommodation and learning resources (support) Efficiency of the school
M. Durkin Team inspector	Equal opportunities English	
A. Quinn Team inspector	Science Mathematics (support)	
C. Shaw Team inspector	Information technology Art	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
I. James Team inspector	Design and technology 6 th Form	
J. Carnaghan Team inspector	Geography	Curriculum and assessment (support)
S. Matthews Team inspector	History	Curriculum and assessment
G. Laws Team inspector	Modern Foreign Languages	Leadership and management
R. Chick Team inspector	Physical education	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources (support)
S. Jones Team inspector	Music	Support, guidance and pupils' welfare
D. Kay Team inspector	Special educational needs Religious education	Pupils' moral, spiritual, cultural and social development

The inspection contractor was:

Salter Baker & Associates
Drayton House
Oving
Chichester
West Sussex PO20 6EW

Tel: 01243 780805

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The Office for Standards in Education
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33 Kingsway
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MAIN FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Performance at GCSE is above that nationally, and at ‘A’ Level well above that nationally
- Standards are particularly good in religious education at Key Stage 4 and the sixth form, in physical education throughout the school, in mathematics at Key Stage 3 and design and technology at Key Stage 4.
- Students with special educational needs make particularly good progress at Key Stage 4
- Teaching throughout the school is good
- The provision of a happy, purposeful and attractive working environment in which students are well cared for and supported
- Good management and organisation and financial planning, with strong leadership
- The very good behaviour of students and the high quality of relationships between students themselves and staff and students
- Very good careers guidance, extra-curricular activities and visits, and links with the community

WHERE THE SCHOOL HAS WEAKNESSES

- Insufficient opportunities at Key Stage 4 for students to develop the required information technology skills
- The achievement of boys at 16 years of age, although overall at least in line with national averages over the last two years, continues to be significantly below that of girls.
- Insufficient provision for students’ spiritual development both in assemblies and across the subjects of the curriculum, apart from religious education
- Insufficient analysis of students’ attainment on entry to the school

Gillingham school has a great many strengths and they far outweigh its weaknesses. However the weaknesses will form the basis of the governors’ action plan, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of students at the school.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION

The school has continued to develop since its previous very positive report in 1994, being increasingly popular with parents and their children. In September 1996 it received Ofsted’s National Award ‘Good and Improving School’. Above average results at GCSE have been maintained and performance at ‘A’ Level has improved to be well above that nationally. There has also been an improvement in procedures and provision for students with special educational needs.

At the time of the last inspection a key issue was to improve the achievement of boys in comparison with that of girls, particularly at GCSE. The school has explored a range of appropriate strategies. However, although boys did well in GCSE in 1995 and their results are now in line with those of boys nationally at Key Stage 3 and ‘A’ Level, and above at GCSE, the girls results have improved at a faster rate than the boys. The gap has particularly widened at the higher level GCSE grades.

Pre-vocational courses are now appropriately organised, but timetabling of GCSE retake courses in the sixth form for mathematics and English is still unsatisfactory and contributes to a low success rate in improving grades.

Other key issues from the last inspection have nearly all been appropriately addressed. The use of the homework diaries has been reviewed and improved. All students now have a locker, although they are still not always used by students. Access for disabled students has also been improved. Communication with parents is now good. The school continues to be unable to offer a daily act of collective worship for all students.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good and the school has very good capacity to continue to improve further.

STANDARDS IN SUBJECTS

The following table shows standards achieved by 14, 16 and 18 year olds in national tests, GCSE and A/AS-level examinations in 1998:

Performance In:	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Key	
Key Stage 3	C	D	<i>Well above average</i>	A
GCSE examinations	B	C	<i>Above average</i>	B
A/AS – levels	A	N/A	<i>Average</i>	C
			<i>Below average</i>	D
			<i>Well below average</i>	E

At Key Stage 3 girls performed better than boys at English, but there were no significant differences in mathematics and science. Performance in mathematics was well above that nationally, but in English few students attained the highest levels. There was an improvement in 1999. Results for GCSE and 'A' level for 1999 continue to reflect the above good standards.

The comparison with similar schools is based on the percentage of free school meals, which being low for Gillingham School puts the school in the second most socially and economically advantageous category. The school considers that this is too high and not a true reflection of the local area and its students' backgrounds.

Students enter the school with average attainment, make better than average progress at Key Stage 3, good progress at Key Stage 4 and much better than expected progress in the sixth form. Results in public examinations at Key Stage 3 and GCSE are supported by inspection evidence. The attainment of students currently at Key Stage 3 and 4 is above average and students in the sixth form are overall attaining at expected levels or better for their courses. Public examination results for summer 2000 are expected to be at least equivalent to those for 1998 and 1999.

QUALITY OF TEACHING

	Overall quality	Most effective in:	Least effective in:
Years 7-9	Good	Physical education and modern foreign languages	Music
Years 10-11	Good	Design and technology, history and religious education	
Sixth form	Good	Religious education	
English	Good	Key Stage 4	
Mathematics	Satisfactory	Key Stage 3	

Over 95% of lessons observed were satisfactory or better. Sixty-three percent were good or better and 17% very good or excellent. Four excellent lessons were observed. Teaching was consistently good in design and technology, history, physical education and modern foreign languages. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed in the sixth form.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Very good in lessons and around the school. It well supports the overall good progress students make in lessons.
Attendance	Good, above that nationally.
Ethos*	Very good. Relationships between staff and students and students themselves are very good. The school provides a happy and stimulating learning environment. Staff work hard and positively encourage students to do their best.
Leadership and management	Good. The headteacher, with his senior management team, provides strong leadership. They are well supported by heads of department and year heads. Governors keep a good oversight of the work of the school and are very supportive.
Curriculum	Well organised and appropriate. Good provision for students of all ability levels. Assessment of students' progress is good, and particularly good at Key Stage 4.
Students with special educational needs	Provision for students with special educational needs is good and they make good progress. Progress is very good at Key Stage 4, reflected in most students gaining at least 5 or more GCSE passes and nearly all students at least one.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Overall good. Moral development is very good: students know right from wrong. Social and cultural development are good, with many opportunities to contribute to the local community through charity work and musical and dramatic performances. However opportunities for students to develop knowledge and understanding of the multi-ethnic society in which they live are insufficiently developed. Spiritual development is unsatisfactory with opportunities missed both in assemblies and across the curriculum for students to develop a sense of wonder and curiosity and to reflect.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Well qualified staff, good resources for learning and a stimulating and attractive learning environment. There is, however, a shortage of outside play space and specialist accommodation will be insufficient if projected increased student numbers enter the school.
Value for money	Very good. Students leave school with above average results at 16 and well above average results at 18 years of age. Pupils make good progress throughout all stages of their schooling. There is very good financial planning and use of resources.

* *Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

THE PARENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What most parents like about the School	What some parents are not happy about
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The good behaviour of the students • The very good procedures for supporting new students to the school, particularly in Year 7 • Their children enjoy school • The wide range of visits and trips 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough time to talk to teachers at consultation evenings • Not enough homework for 11-14 year olds. • Setting of homework can be variable, giving students too much to do at one time. • Few opportunities to be involved in the day-to-day work of the school

Parents are very positive about the work of the school, the standards their children achieve and the support their children receive. The management and organisation of the school is much appreciated. Inspectors agree with parents' comments on what they like about the school.

From the evidence available so early in the school year homework is regularly set and makes a positive contribution to students' attainment and progress. Students, spoken to by inspectors, consider the quantity and quality of homework appropriate. Inspectors were unable to substantiate parents' views concerning consultation evenings.

Opportunities are few for parents to take part in the day-to-day activities of the school, although the parents' association is very active and supports the school through social activities and fund raising. The vast majority of parents are pleased with the way the school responds to queries and concerns, but a very few parents feel that they have not received a satisfactory response. Inspectors found no evidence to support these concerns and consider that they were isolated incidents.

Seventy-four parents attend the meeting for parents and there were 164 responses to the parent questionnaire.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to maintain and to improve further its current high standards and good educational provision the governors and staff of the school should:

Continue to implement and develop strategies to improve the attainment of boys, such that it is equivalent to that of girls by

- evaluating and dissemination information about strategies that have been successful
- monitoring carefully the number of boys in lower ability sets and withdrawal groups
- ensuring that there is an educational climate in which hard work and success in the subjects of the curriculum by boys is clearly valued, particularly by boys themselves

(Paragraphs 6,7,8,9, 11,15, 21, 51, 77, 93, 94, 100, 102, 111, 114, 146, 154, 175)

Ensure all students have the opportunity to acquire by the end of Key Stage 4 the expected levels of information technology capability by

- clearly identifying the skills, knowledge and understanding to be acquired in a scheme of work
- putting in place strategies to ensure appropriate opportunities are available for all students to acquire the identified skills either through the subjects of the curriculum or specific information technology lessons
- assessing students' attainment and progress both in specialist information technology lessons and subjects of the curriculum

(Paragraphs 13,14,18, 35, 36, 76, 122, 124-134,149, 153, 162)

Put in place strategies to ensure appropriate opportunities for students' spiritual development are planned for and taken advantage of in

- assemblies
- subjects of the curriculum

(Paragraphs 37, 46, 122,162, 173, 195)

Put systems in place to clearly identify the attainment of boys and girls on entry to the school and to monitor their progress over Key Stage 3.

(Paragraphs 19, 41,122)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan

Statutory requirements not being met concerning

- the requirement for a daily act of collective worship for all students
- implementation of the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education

(Paragraphs 46, 76, 217, 218)

Insufficient opportunities for students to develop more fully their understanding of the multi-ethnic society in which they live, through all subjects of the curriculum.

(Paragraphs 49, 66)

Insufficient challenge for the highest attainers in English, history and information technology at Key Stage 3 and in design and technology.

(Paragraphs 15, 31, 51, 98, 126, 152, 171, 191)

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. Gillingham School has 1278 boys and girls on roll aged 11-19 years. It is a voluntary aided comprehensive school in the comparatively small rural town of Gillingham, Dorset. However, since the last inspection of the school in 1994, the population of the town has considerably increased. It is currently the second fastest growing town in the South West of England. The traditional rural population is being increased by more professional families, because of the reported high quality of life in the area, more home working, good road and rail communications to London and other major towns, and the good reputation of the school itself. Although jobs in the farming industry are declining, other industry is beginning to move into the area.
2. The school is very popular and admissions in Year 7 far exceed the standard admission number. Because the school is near the Wiltshire border it takes a significant number of pupils in at age 13 years from this county's middle schools, in particular the school in Mere 5 miles away. A small number of students also enter the school in the sixth form. In addition the school operates a parental preference system for students outside the catchment area. Students come from a mixture of privately owned, rented accommodation and council housing. Currently the number of students (1 in 20) claiming free school meals is considerably below the national average, putting the school in the second most advantageous category for the comparison of national exam results. The school considers this too high and that it is not a true reflection of the local area and its students' backgrounds. Very few students come from ethnic minority groups and none has English as an additional language. A new primary school has recently been built in the town, but is already too small. Projected future student numbers for Gillingham School indicate that present specialist accommodation will be insufficient in the future.
3. The attainment of students on entry to the school is average, but provisional information for 1999 Year 7 students indicates an improving picture. The number of students on the school's special educational needs register (181), is in line with that nationally, although the majority are at the lowest levels of need. Fourteen students have a statement of special educational need, which is below the national average. Four years ago at the time of the last inspection pupil attainment on entry to the school was average overall.
4. The school's aims and values statement refers to recognising and celebrating the diversity of children's abilities, personalities and backgrounds within a supportive and stimulating learning environment. Students' horizons are to be broadened, each stretching his/her abilities academically, practically and in sport and the arts, such that each can make a positive contribution to the community in adult life. This is in co-operation with parents and the community. Additionally the school's behaviour management policy states that the school's most important function is to offer effective learning and success to all students.
5. Governor and school priorities refer to continuing to raise student achievement, and to improving and extending the school buildings to meet projected future need. These are reflected in the school development plan. The proposed changes to the 16-19 curriculum, the extension of the National Literacy Strategy to Key Stage 3, and target setting also have a high priority.

Key Indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 3¹

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1998	100	102	202

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 5 or above	Boys	50	71	64
	Girls	71	68	64
	Total	121	139	128
Percentage at NC Level 5 or above	School	61(81)	71(72)	65(71)
	National	65(57)	60(60)	56(60)
Percentage at NC Level 6 or above	School	26(44)	46(47)	25(29)
	National	35(23)	36(37)	27(29)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 5 or above	Boys	56	74	63
	Girls	79	80	69
	Total	135	154	132
Percentage at NC Level 5 or above	School	68(68)	78(80)	67(76)
	National	62(60)	64(64)	62(61)
Percentage at NC Level 6 or above	School	34(28)	42(52)	28(34)
	National	31(28)	37(37)	31(29)

¹

Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

Attainment at Key Stage 4²

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1998	101	99	200

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 specified	Boys	46	96	100
	Girls	61	97	98
	Total	107	193	198
Percentage achieving standard specified	School	54(54)	97(98)	99(98)
	National	44.6(45)	89.8	95.2(95)

Currently no Key Stage 4 students are studying for approved vocational qualifications.

Attainment in the Sixth Form³

Number of students aged 16, 17 and 18 who were entered for

Year	Male	Female	Total
1998	60	55	115

GCE A/AS examinations in the latest reporting year:

Average A/AS points score per candidate	For candidates entered for 2 or more A-levels or equivalent			For candidates entered for fewer than 2 A-levels or equivalent		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
School	19.1	21.7	20.7(18.3)	2.6	3.6	2.8
National			17.6(17.3)			2.8

Number in final year of approved vocational qualifications and percentage of *such students* who achieved these qualifications:

1998	Number	% Success Rate
School	15	93
National		72.5

² Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

³ Figures in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions)			%
missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year :	Authorised	School	6.0
	Absence	National comparative data	7.9
	Unauthorised	School	0.1
	Absence	National comparative data	1.1

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age)		Number
during the previous year :	Fixed period	23
	Permanent	1

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :		%
	Very good or better	17
	Satisfactory or better	95
	Less than satisfactory	5

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

6. Performance in end of Key Stage 3 tests for Year 9 students in summer 1998 was overall in line with the national average. It was well above average in mathematics and in line with that nationally in English and science. When compared with similar schools nationally over the period 1996-98 performance was overall above average, but there was a drop in 1998 when it was below. In particular, overall performance in English was well below that for similar schools, because too few students gained the higher Level 6 or more. End of Key Stage 3 teacher assessments for history, geography, information technology and design and technology are considerably above national figures, whilst those for modern foreign languages are in line. Results for girls are better than for boys, significantly so in information technology and design and technology. Provisional results for summer 1999 show an improvement in National Curriculum test results in English and science with mathematics maintaining its already high standard.
7. Performance at GCSE in summer 1998 was above that nationally and in line with that for similar types of school. The proportion of students obtaining 5 or more A*-C grades was above the national average and for 5 or more A*-G grades well above. Nearly all students gained at least one GCSE pass which is also well above the national figure. Results for A*-C grades in mathematics and English literature were above the national average and for English language and science in line. However in summer 1999 performance in science at the higher A*-C grade was below average, and students did less well in science than they did in other subjects. Results in English and mathematics continued to improve, although the performance of girls was considerably better than that of boys at the highest A*-C grades in these subjects.
8. For other GCSE subjects in 1998 performance was considerably above the national average in German and geography, with better than average results in physical education and design and technology. For history and French, results were in line with national averages, but below for art and business studies. Pass rates for these two subjects were good but few students attained the highest A*-C grades, although there was an improvement in both subjects in 1999, with business studies results being in line with the national figure. The best GCSE results were in German, physics, chemistry and biology, which are taken by the most able students. Compared with their performance in other subjects students did particularly well in geography and German. Boys did considerably worse than girls in French and design and technology.
9. Performance at 'A' Level in summer 1998 was well above the national average, with similar results obtained in summer 1999. The school's comparison of results, with predicted results based on GCSE grades, indicates most students did as well as or better than expected. In summer 1998 the highest grades were obtained in English, mathematics, religious education, geography, German, physical education and chemistry. Performance in art and design, biology, design and technology, general studies, history and theatre studies, were broadly in line with national averages, but below in computing and French. For those subjects with a small number of students results were good in economics and physics, and satisfactory in music and home economics. There is no significant difference in the performance of girls and boys. Results are outstanding in religious education and physical education over the last two years, reflecting the high quality of teaching in these subjects. In summer 1999 there was a significant improvement in results at history, a high proportion of students attaining the top grades.
10. Sixth form students also undertake vocational courses: Intermediate GNVQ in leisure and tourism and health and social care and the Diploma of Vocational Education (DVE). In 1998 the proportion of students attaining a pass at GNVQ was well above the national average, improving on those for 1997. For the DVE course the proportion of students receiving an accreditation has fluctuated from being good in 1997 to being poor in 1998. The school states that results reflect the ability and application of the group of students taking the courses. Information available indicates most students benefit from these vocational courses by going onto further study. A range of GCSE courses is taken by sixth form students, mainly

students undertaking vocational courses. Results are generally appropriate for new subjects, such as Spanish, but students retaking English and mathematics, to improve their grades, are not very successful overall. A significant factor is timetable arrangements not allowing for the same group of students in each lesson, making teaching difficult.

11. Overall girls do better than boys at Key Stage 3. At GCSE girls did better than boys in most subjects in 1998, except in physical education, business studies, geography, music and art where there was little difference. Boys in the school perform better than boys nationally, but even so the gap between the boys' achievements at 5 or more A*-C grades and that of girls increased in 1999. The school has worked hard to improve the attainment of boys in relation to that of girls since the last inspection in 1994, particularly at GCSE, developing strategies to analyse results, to improve teaching styles and to identify underachievement. In 1995 the boys performed better than girls at GCSE. However this has not been sustained. The lower performance of boys compared with that of girls is a national picture.
12. Attainment for students currently in Year 9 and Year 11 is overall above average and national examination results for summer 2000 are expected to be equivalent to or better than those in 1998 and 1999. The good attitudes of students to their work and the support provided by staff ensure that students are very well prepared for examinations and coursework completed to a high standard. At the end of Key Stage 3 in mathematics and science attainment is above average and in English average. For design and technology, history, geography, German, art and physical education it is above nationally expected levels and for French, information technology, music and religious education in line.
13. For the oldest Key Stage 4 students, attainment is above average in English and mathematics and average in science. Information technology skills are below those expected, because of insufficient opportunities across the curriculum for all students to develop further those skills acquired at Key Stage 3. Attainment is well above average in design and technology and above average in German, geography, physical education and religious education. For other subjects it is line with expected levels. Attainment of students in the sixth form is overall in line with that expected for the 'A' Level and vocational courses being taken. It is well above that expected for 'A' Level religious education and above average in sports studies, and geography.
14. The progress students make in lessons is generally good. It is best at Key Stage 4, because teachers have particularly high expectations of students' performance. From average attainment on entry to the school progress over time at Key Stage 3 is good in the core subjects of mathematics and science, and satisfactory in English. In English the highest attaining students are not always given hard enough work, that challenges and extends their thinking. Progress is good in design and technology, history, geography, German, physical education and religious education and satisfactory in all other subjects. At Key Stage 4 the progress students make ranges from very good in design and technology and religious education to unsatisfactory in information technology. It is good in English and mathematics and satisfactory in science. For history, geography, German and physical education it is good, and for French, art and music sound. Progress in the sixth form is good overall, being particularly good in English, geography, history and physical education and outstanding in religious education. Students make particularly good progress when teachers' questioning encourages them to reflect and contribute their own hypotheses about outcomes and the possible causes of events. In religious education the emphasis on the development of skills such as sorting and analysing information has particularly positive benefits for the students learning.
15. Students with special educational needs make good progress overall, particularly in modern foreign languages at Key Stage 3 and personal, social and religious education at Key Stage 4. Progress is very good overall at Key Stage 4, with the Youth Award scheme providing an appropriate alternative to too many demanding courses. This very good progress is reflected in the school's well above average pass rate at GCSE. Sixth form students with special educational needs are well supported by the DVE course. However there is a much higher proportion of boys in each year group on the school's register of special educational needs than in the school population and it is almost three times greater in Year 11. Analysis of reading scores for students' entering the school over the period 1994-96 do not indicate any significant

differences in the number of boys and girls at a level well below that expected for their age. Teaching in most subjects provides appropriately for the highest attainers, but they are not always sufficiently challenged in design and technology and in English, history and information technology at Key Stage 3.

16. Good progress is associated with high expectations of the work students are able to do and good pace and challenge in lessons. It is most effective when students are fully engaged in the learning process, through whole class question and answer sessions and paired and group work, with the ablest students being provided with tasks that stretch their abilities. Where this happens students respond particularly well, asking perceptive questions of the teacher to develop their knowledge and understanding.
17. Students' literacy skills are very good and make a positive contribution to students' overall above average attainment throughout the school. Reading standards are good, with students reading a wide range of fiction and non-fiction with fluency and enjoyment. Students write coherently, fluently and accurately, with good presentation. At Key Stage 4 there are examples of extended writing that is both reflective and mature. In history and modern foreign languages opportunities for creative writing are good. A few students are reticent orally and do not express themselves fully in writing. Research skills are good, spelling satisfactory and handwriting generally of a good standard.
18. Students' numeracy and mathematical skills well support work across the curriculum, particularly in science and geography. However older students have insufficiently developed mental calculation strategies, shown by a lack of confidence when asked to tackle questions such as 16×7 in their head. Information technology skills are used in mathematics and English at Key Stage 3. They are part of planned courses for business studies students in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form and for Key Stage 4 students taking the Youth Award scheme. However there is insufficient monitoring of the programme at Key Stage 3, and a lack of planned experiences at Key Stage 4 to encourage students to use information technology more widely across the curriculum.
19. The school has set realistic whole school targets for examination performance at GCSE. It is considering making these more demanding for the proportion of students achieving 5 or more A*-C grades, because of the good GCSE results for the last two years. Targets are also in place for the core subjects at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 and are being developed in other subjects. The school has good procedures in place to analyse examination performance and to identify those subjects where students are performing below the level expected. These have been based on information from previous years' results, students' current attainment and the good use of national benchmark information. Overall students' attainment is well monitored and underachievers identified and given specific support from senior staff. However, as yet, procedures to assess the attainment of students on entry, in order to monitor student progress at Key Stage 3, are not in place. This is now to be addressed, with Key Stage 2 results from primary schools becoming more readily available.
20. The school has maintained its above average GCSE results since the last inspection, improving those at Key Stage 3 and 'A' Level. Good target setting procedures are being put in place. The school must continue to explore strategies to ensure boys achieve as well as girls, particularly at GCSE.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

21. Students show positive attitudes to learning. They are highly motivated, demonstrate a very good work ethos, and enjoy their time at school. Responding enthusiastically in lessons, students quickly and confidently apply themselves to the tasks set. Students generally participate well in class discussions and are prepared to undertake and persevere with challenging tasks. Overall there was no significant difference observed in the response of boys and girls in lessons. However a few comments, made to inspectors by parents and students, expressed a view that boys can be seen to very good at sport, but not at their studies. The phrase 'don't be a boffin' was used. Conversely, a few parents are pleased at the way their boys have been encouraged to do their best.

22. Students take increasing responsibility for their own learning as they progress through the school, particularly with GCSE coursework and projects undertaken by sixth form students involved in 'A' Levels and vocational studies. Opportunities are provided for students to choose their own resources in art and design technology. Students have good access to computers in the information technology rooms at lunch and break times enabling them to pursue their own project work. Students have been involved in the organisation of the arrangements for their work experience in Year 10 and in the sixth form. The work experience is one element of Project Trident which also includes a personal challenge and community service opportunities. This approach has been very successful in promoting their independence and sense of responsibility.
23. Behaviour in and around the school is very good, and this makes a substantial contribution to student's learning and their attainment and progress. They are courteous and friendly, talk confidently about what they are doing and show a pride in their work. Students speak well of their school. They show respect for the property of others and the environment. For example, students leave their bags around the school confident in the knowledge that they will be safe. Parents also speak highly of the school, commenting particularly on the good attitudes and the way high standards of behaviour are promoted. They feel that the ethos of the school creates a feeling of pride. Students are well aware of the code of conduct and rainbow logbooks within the behaviour management systems, and this has a positive impact on standards. The school operates a 'no put down zone' to stop name-calling. There is little inappropriate behaviour or evidence of bullying or racist comments in the school. Any incidents that do occur are taken seriously and dealt with promptly and effectively. The number of fixed period exclusions in the school has fallen due to the effective systems in place and the time undertaken by staff to work with and retain students.
24. Relationships within the school are very good both between students, and between staff and students. In most classes the good rapport between teachers and students is based on mutual respect. The maturity demonstrated by students in the sixth form is a direct result of this trust and respect. Students work well together in both pair and group situations. There were many examples of effective collaborative work observed during the inspection. Collaborative work was especially notable during science investigations, in art lessons, and during drama improvisations, with the levels of mutual support promoting high levels of attainment.
25. The personal, social and religious education programme promotes mature discussion and debate with students willing to listen, reflect and comment on a wide range of issues immediately relevant to their lives. The religious education programme introduces students to different cultural traditions, but this area is not fully developed across the curriculum to enable students to explore the wider cultural diversity of society.
26. Although students are willing, there are limited opportunities for individuals to show initiative and undertake positions of responsibility in the school. Fund raising initiatives are occasionally organised by individuals during the course of the year, and others organise sporting activities, look after the greenhouse or present their own plays. The house system, based upon tutor groups, has sports team captains and individuals acting as tutor group representatives although the school does not currently run a school council. The tutor groups undertake periodic litter collection duties. Sixth form students are given increased opportunity and were observed providing assistance in information technology lessons in Year 8. The head girl and boy, their deputies and other sixth formers undertake roles of responsibilities on formal occasions, such as helping to organise the evening for prospective parents and taking them round the school. With a strong focus on sporting activities, many students captain teams or represent the school in both county and national competitions. Students doing 'A' Level sports studies undertake the Sports Leadership Award, which allows them to work with groups of younger students.

Attendance

27. The levels of attendance in the school are good. At 93.9% attendance is better than the national average, and there are very few unauthorised absences. Students are generally prompt into school and lessons mostly start on time. There is some lateness to classes, especially following assemblies, because of the

distances to classrooms and no changeover time allocated between lessons. However overall latecomers to lessons are few and they are generally suitably challenged.

28. Registration is taken efficiently at the start and close of the day. This provides both an effective start to the day and a ‘capping off’ at the end, with opportunities to remind students about homework before they depart in an orderly manner to the bus lines. The school and governors are reporting attendance figures appropriately in accordance with statutory requirements.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

29. The quality of teaching is good at all key stages. It is best at Key Stage 4. Very few unsatisfactory lessons were observed, with none in the sixth form. Well over half the lessons seen were good or better, with 1 in 6 being very good or excellent. Teaching is satisfactory or better in all subjects, but is particularly effective in physical education at all key stages, in religious education at Key Stage 4 and the sixth form and in design and technology at Key Stage 4. The overall good quality of teaching, when combined with the positive attitudes of students to their work significantly contributes to the above average standards achieved.
30. Good subject knowledge and planning are evident in all lessons that are satisfactory or better. Management and the control of students are good, with very good relationships between teachers and students and students themselves. In the most effective lessons teachers generate a sense of excitement and curiosity. The interest of the students is fully engaged from the first moment and is maintained through brisk and challenging questioning, with high expectations of student response. For example, in a Year 9 French lesson the superb use of mime and mini-acting introduced new vocabulary to students about aspects of personality. In a Year 13 religious education lesson, on the problem of evil, the excellent planning, use of video and structuring of the lesson encouraged students to predict the response of speakers in a videoed debate. Skilful questioning ensured the students reflected fully on the issues. In the best lessons learning outcomes for students are clear, explained and constantly evaluated as the lesson progresses and then summarised at the end, as for example in ‘A’ Level Theatre Studies, when discussing responses to an examination question. The very good use of question and answer in history lessons leads to very good progress, particularly from lower attaining students, in understanding complex issues. During the inspection good examples of this were observed in lessons on the causes of the French Revolution in Year 8 and the Sharpsville incident in South Africa in Year 11.
31. The very few unsatisfactory lessons observed were not sufficiently well planned to make the best use of the time available. A characteristic was a lack of content and insufficient emphasis on the knowledge and skills of the subject being taught. In a small number of lessons the teacher had too few strategies to manage students’ behaviour and to ensure all students participated fully in the learning process. There are also some shortcomings in otherwise satisfactory lessons. Not all students are encouraged to answer questions in oral sessions, with the teacher taking answers too quickly from the first students to put up their hands. In some mathematics and science lessons this led to a substantial number of the class being passive listeners, rather than active thinkers. The highest attainers do not always have work that is hard enough in design and technology and in English, information technology and history at Key Stage 3. Teaching for students with special educational needs is good, particularly in the specialist reading recovery sessions for younger students. Support staff provide good support within lessons, but in mathematics they are not always confident about the subject matter.
32. Marking of students’ work is regularly done. However the quality of feedback varies from informative comments to help students make progress to very few comments or general comments such as ‘good’ or ‘please complete’. Overall the marking of pupils’ work, discussion in lessons and the monitoring of student progress in lessons provide sufficient feedback to teachers to plan future work and to identify areas requiring further support. Teachers know their students well.

33. From the evidence available so early in the school year, homework is regularly set and makes a positive contribution to students' attainment and progress. Some parents state that the quantity and quality of homework set at Key Stage 3 is variable, often being insufficient, whilst that at Key Stage 4 is not spread out well over time leading to nights when much has to be completed. This view was not supported by students in conversation with inspectors, who stated that overall the amount of homework set was sufficiently demanding but not too much. Coursework deadlines for the year are clearly given to Key Stage 4 students and form tutors encourage students to write them in their homework diaries and to manage carefully their time.
34. The good quality of teaching observed at the time of the last inspection has been maintained. There has been an improvement in the teaching of history and art, where some weaknesses were previously identified. The use of homework diaries has been improved. Weaknesses in the teaching of music have not yet been fully addressed.

The curriculum and assessment

35. The curriculum provided by the schools is good overall, with provision being sound at Key Stage 3 and good elsewhere. It has breadth and balance although the provision of information technology at Key Stage 4 is not sufficient to ensure all students acquire the appropriate skills. The requirements of the new Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education, introduced in September, are not yet fully met at Key Stage 3.
36. The curriculum contains the full range of subjects at Key Stage 3 including two modern foreign languages. At Key Stage 4 all students take a substantial core of subjects, with the Emphasis Option allowing students to choose additional subjects that match individual interests. Since the last inspection a GCSE short course in Sports Studies has been introduced, which currently obtains very good results. The Youth Award Scheme and a new course in Spanish have been introduced for students of lower attainment and for those with special educational needs. These ensure an appropriate but not too demanding programme for these students leading to success in all the subjects they study. Students can also take a Certificate of Achievement rather than GCSE in certain subjects if appropriate. In the Sixth Form there is a choice of twenty plus 'A' Level courses, giving students a good choice of subject combinations with an efficient use of staffing. Religious education is included in the General Studies course, taken by nearly all sixth formers, and includes much of the 'A' Level syllabus, making it an extremely worthwhile experience. Less academic students can combine vocational courses, such as GNVQ and DVE, with either 'A' Level subjects or GCSE subjects. Students are able to retake GCSE English and mathematics, but timetabling for these two courses does not support students undertaking a coherent programme and affects adversely student success. Participation in physical education is encouraged and the CCPR Sports Leadership Award can be taken by sixth formers. The school is committed to high standards in literacy, with a whole school literacy policy in place. There is, as yet, no whole school policy for numeracy. Information technology is not fully developed in all subjects at present.
37. Provision for students' personal development is good, being very well provided for in the personal, social and religious education programme (PSRE) for 11-16 year olds, which the students value and enjoy and the General Studies course in the sixth form. Social, moral and health issues are discussed and the policies and programmes are in place to ensure an appropriate provision of sex and drugs education. Some students believe that discussion about the issue of drug abuse is dealt with too late. Year group and tutor group assemblies make some contribution to student understanding of a variety of important issues, but spiritual or religious content is limited.
38. The coverage of subjects is well balanced and the organisation of the curriculum reflects the ethos of the school, which aims to ensure that all students have equal access, the best possible opportunities and reach the highest possible standards. Appropriate setting arrangements in subjects from Year 8 provide opportunities for students to be taught with others of similar potential attainment. This policy ensures that students of all abilities make good progress. However planning does not always provide sufficient challenge for the most students in all classes, for example history, information technology and English at

Key Stage 3. Students with special educational needs are well supported, usually in the classroom but also through the intensive reading programme. The school is concerned that the results of boys are inconsistent and that some do not achieve as well as they should. It continues to trial strategies to address this issue. Careful planning and preparation allows students who arrive in the middle of Key Stage 3 to settle in very quickly. Year 10 students all participate in work experience and careers guidance is well delivered from Year 9. Students are also advised about further education and university choices. The provision of careers advice is very good. The school participates in the Investors in Careers programme.

39. Curriculum planning is good throughout the school. Policies and schemes of work are available in all subjects, although there are weaknesses in those for music and science. The approach to teaching in many subjects provides opportunities for students to become independent learners by fostering a skills and research based approach to learning that enables them to succeed in examinations. Consistent approaches to long and medium term planning ensure all aspects of a subject are covered and students build upon previous knowledge and skills learnt. The governors of the school are actively involved in planning and review and keep themselves well informed of developments through subject presentations to the curriculum committee. Governors have put in place the required curriculum statement.
40. The programme of extra curricular activities provided by the school is very good. It includes sport, music, drama and debating, with many students joining in after school and lunchtime activities on a regular basis. Individuals learn to play a variety of musical instruments and many are involved in creative arts activities for example the production of Macbeth at Wardour Castle. Students go on a variety of visits in the local area such as to Sherbourne Castle to prepare for history course work. They also go to theatrical productions in London and Stratford and to art galleries as far away as New York. Music, drama and role play groups, such as the Cragrats, who help students with career choices, visit the school and their work is much appreciated by staff and students.
41. Assessment in the school is well developed and it meets current statutory requirements. The policy document is regularly updated to incorporate the lessons learnt from the introduction of target setting and other initiatives. The school has developed a strong consistency in its assessment pattern and is starting to track individual student's progress. It is beginning to use well the data provided by the various assessment procedures to address students' individual needs through target setting. School assessment information is analysed by senior managers and heads of subject areas and used to feed back into curriculum planning and the development of teaching strategies. Staff regularly share good practice with one another in whole school training sessions. While students are regularly and thoroughly assessed as they progress through the school, the systematic assessment of what students can do on entry to the school is weak. This makes it difficult for the school to assess the rate at which students make progress across Key Stage 3.
42. The quality of assessment of an individual student's development is effective overall. In English, mathematics and science it enables teachers to set informed targets for students to the benefit of their progress. The targets set are carefully differentiated to meet student needs more precisely. These subjects keep portfolios of students' work to exemplify National Curriculum levels of attainment; marked work is regularly moderated and this provides an effective means of ensuring consistency. Foundation subjects are also developing assessment and portfolios of work in their own curriculum areas. Students' reports include precise records of attainment in each subject and have started to reflect and report targets in all subjects. The results of assessment are starting to feed back into the curriculum; for example the Key Stage 3 geography scheme of work has been rewritten to include issues raised by assessment, such as the delivery of literacy.
43. There are sound procedures for assessing the needs of students with special educational needs. Individual education plans are in place, with generally good targets, and students' needs are regularly reviewed and re-assessed. They are used well to identify needs and to target specific help in English, design and technology, history, geography, modern foreign languages, physical education and personal, social and religious education. However, they are less well used in mathematics and science in order to set specific targets for improvement.

44. The issues raised in the last inspection have all been effectively addressed. While departments have a degree of autonomy in the methods that they use to assess students, there is now good consistency in the frequency and quality of assessments undertaken. A clear programme for each year group within each subject area is set out in the staff handbook. The range of assessment data generated within the school is now analysed and used effectively.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

45. Provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. The 'School Community Values' and student code reflect the importance placed by the school on co-operation, sensitivity to others, self-discipline and high quality cultural and social events. Personal, social and religious education (PSRE) makes a major contribution to the development of students' spiritual, moral and social development. The well-planned and regularly reviewed tutorial programme focuses well on self-awareness and on issues such as prejudice and the environment. Parents greatly appreciate the enthusiasm of staff to provide good activities and trips and their encouragement for all students to participate.
46. Since the last inspection, the school has increased the spiritual content of assemblies by including talks from local clergy in years 7 and 8. However, the school is still not meeting the statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship for all students. Sixth form students form have one assembly weekly and in other years they have two. During the inspection there was no evidence of spiritual provision in tutor times. A good assembly in Year 7 developed the link between healthy eating and problems in East Timor and gave students time for reflection. Two other assemblies also provided a spiritual focus. However, many opportunities are missed both in assemblies and across the curriculum, to encourage students to develop a sense of curiosity and wonder and to give valuable time to reflect. In PSRE there are very good opportunities to reflect on experiences and beliefs and develop empathy skills. There is good empathy in the Key Stage 4 history study of native Americans. However overall the lack of a planned programme, with subject areas clearly identifying opportunities, to promote students' spiritual development leads to unsatisfactory provision in this area.
47. Provision for students' moral development is very good. The school's aims for moral education are effectively promoted. There is shared understanding by staff, students and parents of the school's expectations of behaviour and in lessons the code of behaviour is promoted well. There are good opportunities to study issues of bullying and race in a sensitive manner in English, and in history when studying slavery and apartheid. Environmental issues are covered in art, science and design technology. In PSRE moral issues are very thoroughly addressed such as human rights in Year 9, suffering and euthanasia in Key Stage 4 and medical ethics in the sixth form.
48. Opportunities for promoting students' social development are good. Students' relationships with each other and staff are very good. Students are given opportunities to take on responsibilities and assist in decision making such as in helping with parents' evenings and the annual school production, and as form captains and prefects. Sixth formers assist in lessons in Year 7 and Year 8 and have a wide range of opportunities to develop confidence and social skills. There are very good opportunities to exercise responsibility in a range of physical education activities and, overall, there is a good range of extra-curricular activities, including residential trips. Competition to promote excellence is fostered through sport, music, debating and the national 'Mathematics Challenge'. In lessons, such as PSRE, science and music, group work is effective in teaching students to work productively together. There is good preparation for life in the wider community through history and PSRE. Good community links, for example through the 'High Ropes' course, promote teamwork and work experience with Project Trident establishes ongoing, positive community involvement.

49. Cultural provision overall is good. There is a very wide range of trips and activities which develop students' awareness of their own and European culture. Very good provision in French and German includes exchanges and Internet projects. There is a good range of creative arts clubs and curriculum visits including field trips and expeditions. The annual production and regular music concerts are very popular and arrangements are made for a large number of professional companies and artists in residence to work with students in providing valuable cultural opportunities. Since the last inspection, however, there is little evidence of increased emphasis across the curriculum in promoting students' appreciation of non-European cultures, although an audit of subject areas' contributions was undertaken a few years ago. In art, design and technology, history and PSRE there are opportunities to consider other cultures, but these are sometimes rather limited. Overall, curriculum opportunities to increase students' awareness of the multi-cultural society within the United Kingdom are insufficiently planned, particularly as the local area provides few opportunities.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

50. The school continues to have a strong commitment to students' support, welfare and guidance and the quality of the provision is strength of the school. Tutors and Heads of Year get to know the students well as they move through the years together and use this knowledge to encourage them to make the best possible progress.
51. Procedures for monitoring academic progress and personal development are good. Monitoring of students in Key Stages 3 and 4 takes place regularly through the year by way of progress checks, reporting to parents and the annual parent/teacher consultation evening, which students may also attend. Subjects have or are developing clear systems for supporting academic progress which include target setting but further work needs to be done to focus more specifically on supporting different groups of students; the most able, the under-achieving and boys. Year 10 and 11 students have coursework planners to help them organise their work and there is a coursework policy and timetable, with procedures for students who fail to meet deadlines. New homework diaries have been introduced since the last inspection, which are signed by parents and checked by tutors. Students are making better use of them for recording homework, particularly when teachers ensure the tasks set are clearly written down by the students.
52. The assessment of sixth form students' progress in individual subjects is well monitored by individual departments. Procedures for monitoring the whole of a students' package, to obtain an overall picture of his/her progress, are more informal and less consistent. However sixth form tutors are aware of those students doing particularly well or badly and the 'drop-out' rate is low.
53. The programme of personal, social and religious education and the comprehensive tutorial programme in Years 7-11 make good contributions to students' personal development. They provide guidance on health education, sex education, study skills, bullying, work experience, careers and national records of achievement. Work experience is provided for all Year 10 students, though placements are sometimes difficult to find. In the sixth form a good tutorial programme, plus the incorporation of religious education into the 'A' Level General Studies programme, well support students' personal development.
54. Students with special educational needs in all years are very well supported in a sensitive and caring environment, where they are not marginalised. There are very good links with external agencies and especially good psychological support. The LANSS teacher from Dorset also provides effective learning support directly for four students and indirectly through helping teachers with specific strategies to address individual needs.
55. Careers education and guidance is very good and is delivered through the tutorial programme from Year 9, mainly by the tutor. Students are able to make use of the careers library and various computer programmes to find information about careers and prepare a printout about themselves for use in career interviews with an adviser from Dorset Careers Service. The school joined the Investors in Careers programme eighteen months ago and hopes to complete this academic year. Parents are positive about the

guidance students receive in the careers programme.

56. Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour are very good and students and parents are given clear guidance on what is expected. Since the last inspection improved behaviour and classroom management systems have been introduced: the ‘Gillingham guide to behaviour management and behaviour policy’, ‘Time out’, ‘Rainbow System’ and the ‘No put down zone’. The school anti-bullying policy is comprehensive. Bullying is rare but is dealt with quickly when it does occur. Students know from assemblies, the induction programme and tutorial programme that bullying is not tolerated. A student, who had been bullied at his last school, said that being at Gillingham is the happiest he has been.
57. The school promotes the development of positive attitudes through rewards, positive praise and by sending letters of commendation home. An award system is in place that is well respected by students. In Years 7 and 8 students are awarded credits, while in Years 9, 10 and 11 students are awarded bronze, silver or gold certificates for positive achievements, such as good work, helpfulness, showing a positive change, and a commitment to an activity. The ultimate goal is the gold tie.
58. There are very clear procedures for class teachers and form tutors regarding attendance, marking registers and absence notes. Heads of year and Education Welfare Officers carefully monitor absences. It is up to individual teacher’s judgement to follow up absences from lessons, but there is no indication that this is ineffective as teachers know students well. Students are given certificates for attendance of 98% or above.
59. Induction days are held in the summer term for students joining the school in September, from either primary or middle schools, to meet staff and experience a typical school day. Year 7 parents have been very positive in their comments about the support given to their children and the students enjoyed the day and looked forward to coming to school. Careful consideration is given to placing new students into already established tutor groups in Year 9.
60. One of the deputy head teachers is the designated teacher for Child Protection. There are very clear procedures in place and staff are reminded of their responsibilities, particularly through tutor meetings. Students who are unwell at school receive a good level of care from teachers and administration staff. Illness and accidents are dealt with competently by staff who have received training in First Aid. Procedures to ensure students’ health and safety in school and on visits outside are good. Health and safety checks and risk assessments are regularly undertaken. Staff are aware that there is still an issue over bags, despite more students being given lockers, but the fact that bags can be left lying around, shows a positive ethos.

Partnership with parents and the community

61. The partnership with parents and the community is good. The school recognises the importance of effective liaison between home and school, and the active role parents can play in supporting their children’s education. Parents have very positive views about the school. They mostly feel staff are very approachable and that they are kept well informed. Detailed information about the school and its’ activities is provided in the attractive school prospectus and accompanying material and the governors’ annual report to parents. Information packs are also provided on entry to the school and transfer to Key Stage 4 and the sixth form. Regular contact is maintained through newsletters and reminders, and parents are circulated with curriculum and setting information, details relating to option choices and career guidance. Occasional workshops are held to keep parents updated and suitably informed, the last one looked at the home school agreement which is currently being circulated.
62. Consultation evenings are held each year to provide opportunities for parents to meet teachers to review their child’s progress and achievements. Parents reported some dissatisfaction over the organisation of the meetings and the small amount of time available for consultation. Appointments can also be made for parents to meet with the Headteacher, members of the senior management team, year heads or tutors to discuss any matters of importance or concern. The regular informative reports detail students’ progress

and attainment as well as setting out targets for improvement. Students' Records of Achievement are compiled as they progress through the school. Parents of students with special education needs are kept fully briefed about their child's progress, and are involved in the review process.

63. Parents are encouraged to become involved in their child's education by supporting school initiatives and policies. They are invited to sign the home school agreement, to support the homework policy and sign the homework diaries regularly. These diaries provide a regular means of communication between parents and form tutors. However a few parents feel that there are few opportunities for them to become actively involved in the daytime activities of the school. One parent has given a careers talk to older students. The active Gillingham School Association makes a valuable contribution to the life of the school. It holds a number of successful social and fund-raising events that support school activities and generate money to help purchase various resources and equipment for the school. A small group runs the school uniform shop
64. The school is a strong focus of activities in the town, and has established very good links with businesses and the local community. Strong links have been forged over a number of years with companies who offer placement opportunities for the work experience programme, which is run in conjunction with the local authority. A number of local business also sponsor activities such as advertising in magazines, helping to fund sporting activities or promoting self esteem courses.
65. There are a large number of visitors, including theatre companies and musicians, to the school during the year and wide ranging opportunities for students to undertake trips and visits to support their studies. A large percentage of students have been involved in overseas trips or foreign exchange visits, which offer a valuable enrichment opportunity, broadening the horizons of students who predominantly come from a small village or rural environment. Very successful outdoor pursuits and activity courses, opportunities for sports coaching, art activities and skill development programmes are also run during the year for different classes.
66. The school places a high profile on sporting activities and students successfully compete in different sporting competitions with other schools, as well as representing the school in national and international competitions. Most of Year 10 students last year undertook community service activities as part of the Trident project, including visiting senior citizen and nurseries. Students are also involved in organising fund raising events for charities. These activities help them become aware of those less fortunate than themselves. Multi-cultural links are, however, currently underdeveloped and the school provides little opportunity for students to explore the diversity of cultures represented in today's society.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

67. The overall quality of leadership and management in the school is good. The Headteacher provides clear and effective leadership. He and his staff have a high commitment to the ideals established over the past fifteen years. They promote an environment which encourages high standards of behaviour and successful learning, with full staff involvement in the formulation and administration of school policies. There is a commitment to the continuous improvement of educational standards.
68. The Headteacher receives strong support from his deputies. They have specific roles and operate effectively as a team. There is a strong sense of trust and openness. Ideas and responsibilities are shared in a constructive manner. The senior managers have initiated a comprehensive range of policies to support the school's very praiseworthy aims.
69. The quality of middle management, in providing effective curriculum and pastoral leadership, is mainly good and often very good. There is a strong sense of teamwork and a shared vision in departments. This provides a supportive framework for monitoring and review procedures. The effectiveness of this

teamwork is reflected in the quality of teaching throughout the school.

70. The governors are knowledgeable and supportive of the school. They share the aim of raising levels of attainment and make a significant contribution to the evaluation of the work of the school. Governors' committees contribute to review procedures and scrutinise examination results critically. Shadowing of students has been a worthwhile feature of governor involvement in the school. Meetings are thoroughly documented and background papers enable governors to make decisions on the basis of detailed knowledge of issues. Staff with management responsibilities regularly update appropriate committees about provision in their area.
71. Monitoring procedures are well established. Formal reviews of departments are conducted twice a year, and informal consultation is an ongoing feature. Heads of department are generally effective in monitoring standards of teaching, but this is an area of weakness in music. All deputies are linked to specific departments and these relationships ensure that senior management is always well informed. However, sometimes the monitoring of classroom practice by the senior management team lacks sufficient focus to inform future whole school development needs. The extensive meeting structure is complemented by the use of working parties to initiate and appraise developments. For example, the curriculum and in-service training group, open to all staff, was observed to have an excellent and informative discussion on proposed changes to the 16-19 curriculum.
72. Although there is a maze of communication networks within the school, they work well. All major policies are in place and staff feel that their views and contributions are valued. The systems have produced an agreed school development plan that has appropriate priorities and departmental plans that dovetail with the school's overall objectives. Departments work within clearly identified guidelines that are not restrictive, but effectively ensure, through consultation, a whole school approach to important issues.
73. Students strongly support the aims of the school, particularly with regard to behaviour. Resources and staff are well deployed, and the school regularly examines its own performance. The evaluation of decision-making structures is less rigorous. Nevertheless, a strong framework is in place to support the school's aim of continuous improvement.
74. Provision for students with special educational needs is managed effectively. Regular meetings of the special educational needs' link team ensure departments are up-to-date and enable the management of special educational needs students to have an increasingly high profile. Communication and liaison between special needs staff and other staff has positive benefits for students' progress. Documentation is thorough and has improved significantly since the last inspection.
75. Gillingham has a powerful ethos. Students come to the school to learn and treat each other with respect. The school's aims include a clear commitment to equality of opportunity and high standards. Teachers and students are committed to these aims which permeate the organisation and management of the school. There is open entry to the sixth form and the courses students take are based on their appropriateness for the student rather than ensuring the best league table results for the school. This approach is also followed at GCSE.
76. The school has responded positively to the previous inspection. Action planning identified all the issues that were raised and most have been tackled effectively. Communication with parents is good and the school has provided lockers - albeit small ones - for students to store their belongings. Homework diaries are now an established and useful feature of school life. Curricular provision has been enhanced and access for disabled students improved. Statutory requirements are not fully met in both Key Stage 3 and the sixth form for religious education and in Key Stage 4 for information technology. A daily act of worship for all students is still not observed.

77. There is still an issue concerning boys' attainment. The school has addressed this underachievement resolutely, and has instituted a number of strategies. During the week of the inspection, details of a further initiative were being discussed. The school has structures in place to ensure that high standards are maintained and to support the determination of staff and students to improve further.
78. In 1996, following the previous inspection and particularly good GCSE results, the school received Ofsted's 'Good and Improving School' award. The school has continued to make good improvement and has very good capacity to improve further.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

79. Gillingham School is well served with a sufficient number of enthusiastic, committed, well-qualified and experienced teaching staff. They make a significant contribution to the above average standards the students attain. There have been improvements in staff expertise since the last inspection and all departments have access to a high level of subject knowledge and expertise. Non-specialists are well supported. Nearly half the staff have been in the school for ten years or more and this contributes to the stability and continuity. The special educational needs department is well served with teaching and non-teaching staff and this contributes to the good progress made by these students. The amount of clerical staff time is low for a school of this size but this has no adverse effect on the very good financial control and school administration. There is an average number of qualified auxiliary staff and non-teaching assistants in the school. However there is a shortage of technician time in art, design and technology and science and staff and students would benefit from more support. The appointment of a full-time librarian since the last inspection has been very effective in developing the use of the library as a learning resource by teachers and students.
80. The induction, appraisal, training and professional development of all staff are very good. The school takes every opportunity to provide staff development sessions, which benefits the staff and students alike. Good support is provided for new teachers and newly qualified teachers. All teachers are offered experience in taking responsibility within the school. This may involve a specific task or in helping or shadowing experienced teachers. Financial rewards are always made where possible or appropriate. Heads or departments observe members of department at work and teachers are able to observe heads or departments and each other. Where possible team teaching is used to give younger staff experience in teaching particular aspects of their subject, for example 'A' 'Level. Formal and informal meetings also aid staff development. This has been especially important in the last two years because of an influx of new staff.
81. In addition to supporting individual teachers, a formal system of monitoring takes place. This is mainly undertaken by the senior management and heads of department to identify and develop good practice and to discover and help with problems. Observation criteria are being refined through use. Formal structures for development are instigated at individual, departmental and senior level and reviewed regularly. The current systems are well placed to absorb proposed government initiatives for the professional development of staff.
82. Since the last inspection the school has grown considerably and the staffing has only just kept pace. The pupil teacher ratio is now average where at the time of the last inspection it was better, being below average. The majority of the senior positions are still held by men due to the very stable staffing. Expertise in art and history has improved, although some weaknesses still exist in music.
83. The accommodation supports effective teaching of the curriculum, the attractively designed blocks, with their network of walkways, making an important contribution to the ethos of the school. There is very little evidence of vandalism, graffiti or litter. Design and technology, art and science are housed in new, very good specialist accommodation. The remaining subject areas benefit from good purpose built accommodation. The exceptions are music and information technology, where the rooms are small and cramped, and physical education, which has limited indoor facilities. Many classrooms and work areas are

enhanced by the good use of displays and work, much of which is produced by students. Art presentations are particularly good. The sixth form has new easily accessible accommodation, which well supports its expanding numbers. A small percentage of lessons are taught in non-specialist rooms. This happens in music, design and technology and art. However, the specialist accommodation will be insufficient if projected future student numbers enter the school.

84. Access for disabled students has improved since the last inspection. However, not all areas of school are accessible by lifts and the narrow corridors in some areas would make movement around the school difficult. All students now have a locker and certain classrooms are designated as social and/or wet weather areas. These would not accommodate a large influx of students. Students, however, prefer to deposit their bags under the walkways which could be deemed a Health & Safety risk, and stay outside in inclement weather, where there is a shortage of outside play areas. The maintenance, cleaning and repairs to the building are well financed and very well managed by the site manager and bursar in conjunction with the caretaking and cleaning staff.
85. The Governing Body plays a strategic role in the maintenance of the buildings and the planning for future accommodation needs. The financial details, schedules and procedures for the repairs and maintenance of the building are well established and documented.
86. Resources are generally good and accessible to staff and students. They are efficiently used and deployed and this enables students to achieve high standards. The library is well stocked with a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books. The classification of books is helpful to students and the library area is well used both by classes and for individual study. The computing facilities are due to be networked with some additional upgrading shortly. The information technology rooms are well used by students during their break times. Most teachers have access to computers and technical assistance. The allocation of textbooks is generally good although there is some sharing. There is a shortage of books in 'A' Level history, because of the recent large increase in student numbers, and in science at Key Stages 3 and 4. The school makes good use of trips and visits to enrich curriculum areas.

The efficiency of the school

87. Financial planning is very good. The school is well led by the senior management team and governing body who have a clear view of how the school operates. There are good management systems in place, which allow for careful action and financial planning. The annual budget is based on priorities and costed developments identified within the school development plan, this has clear long term aims.
88. The governing body is very supportive of the school and its objectives, and works closely with staff to help them achieve these. The governors are actively involved in the planning process and the ongoing scrutiny of the budget, keeping a watchful eye on available reserves. They have cautiously drawn up contingency plans in the event of a deficit budget arising. Money from the governor's trust fund and the deputies delegated budgets helps to sponsor some school activities and events, and covers unexpected changes or increased numbers in subject areas. The school is faced with reduced funding from the local authority and increasing student numbers. There is continued uncertainty about future funding and the allocation and use of funds has to be and is very carefully controlled. Governors however do not yet have a clear procedure for assessing whether initiatives give value for money.
89. Teaching and support staff are well qualified and effectively deployed. Heads of departments carefully monitor and control their own budgets. All departments bid for expenditure annually and are asked to detail previous spending and evaluate the educational merit of their requests. The use of support staff in the classroom to assist those with special educational needs works well and makes a positive contribution to the progress made. The Headteacher seeks to maintain a balance between expenditure on salaries for teachers and their support staff and other expenditure. The employment of high quality and well motivated teachers and the avoidance of redundancies is a key element in the school's strategy for continual improvement.

90. The accommodation and resources are efficiently used by all departments. The library is a valuable resource and is used effectively by most departments. Specialist teaching rooms are used to their maximum for the current numbers in the school. Class sizes are over-large in some areas such as 'A' Level history. The known projected increase in student numbers presents the school with cause for concern without further expansion of the accommodation.
91. The bursar maintains very efficient financial control. He informs the governing body and the heads of department regularly about the position of the budget, so that spending can be carefully monitored. The comprehensive systems in place enable very efficient organisation of the school's administrative procedures and financial control. The day-to-day administration is excellently managed by the bursar and his assistant. The latest audit report concluded that financial administration continues to be operated to a high standard, and that previous recommendations have been implemented satisfactorily. The secretarial and office staff provide very efficient and unobtrusive support.
92. The socio-economic circumstances of students is better than that nationally, with their attainment on entry to the school average overall. During their time at school students make good progress and their attainment in relation to national standards at 16 years is above average and at 18 years well above average. Attitudes, personal development and attendance are good, whilst behaviour is very good. The quality of education provided, particularly teaching, is good. The educational cost per student is below that of comparable schools. Taking all these factors into consideration the school provides very good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

93. The proportion of students who attained the expected level or higher in the 1998 Key Stage 3 tests was close to the national average, but well below the national average for students from similar backgrounds. Performance was not as good as expected, with too few students attaining the highest grades. In 1997 performance was above the national average. Over the three years, 1996-8, students' performance was above the national average for boys and well above for girls. Provisional figures suggest better results for 1999 than in 1998. In work seen during the inspection attainment for students by the end of Key Stage 3 is in line with expected levels nationally in all aspects of English. Students speak with clarity and confidence and written work is generally well structured and reflective. Written presentation of work is very good and includes a wide range of creative and factual work. The majority of students reads independently and is proficient at retrieving information.
94. Standards are above average at the end of Key Stage 4. Performance at GCSE in 1998 was in line with the national average in English Language and above in English Literature. Boys' results were below average in English Language and girls' results were above average in English Literature, reflecting national trends. Girls achieved better results than boys overall. Provisional figures for 1999 indicate an improvement in attainment for both boys and girls, with overall attainment above that nationally. Girls did significantly better at the higher grades than boys. These overall above average GCSE results are reflected in the attainment of current Year 11 students, which is above average overall.
95. Results at 'A' Level in summer 1998 were better than those nationally. The pass rate had been good in previous years, but in 1998 a high proportion of students attained the top A/B grades. Results for 1999 indicate this improved performance has been maintained. Attainment for present Year 13 students is above that expected for the course. In work seen during the inspection, a mature, sophisticated writing style was evident as were articulate, enthusiastic speaking and listening skills.
96. Overall, progress is satisfactory in Key Stage 3 and good in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form. Speaking and listening skills are good and improve as student's progress through the school. Most students are fluent and articulate, such as the Year 8 class discussing the vocabulary of racism in the play 'Buddy'. A wide range of vocabulary and expression is used and students are aware of speaking and writing for different audiences. Standards of reading are in line with or better than national expectations. Most students read fluently and with understanding. Information retrieval skills are of a high order and students of English make good use of the library. The quality of written presentation is very good and students write with accuracy and control in a wide variety of formats. A sophisticated style begins to emerge at Key Stage 4 as seen in the coursework of two students writing about their home town with thought, maturity and a highly developed sense of humour. Students with special educational needs are well supported through specialist reading lessons and appropriate classroom support. They make good progress throughout the school.
97. Students have positive attitudes to their work in English. Students' pleasure and motivation when receiving praise and constructive criticism boost their attainment and subject enjoyment. They work hard and generally take care over their work.
98. The teaching is good overall. It is satisfactory at Key Stage 3 and good at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. Lessons are well planned with a range of teaching and learning opportunities. Very good lessons are tightly focused and evaluated with a varied and appropriate pace and work matched to individual students' learning needs. They can be inspirational. Most lessons are well ordered and controlled. Relationships between teachers and students are very good and students clearly enjoy their lessons. An atmosphere of sensitivity and tolerance has been created. The use of drama across all key stages enhances the curriculum

and informs progress and attainment in English and other subjects. Complex characterisations were performed by Year 13 students with panache and insight. A small number of lessons lacked appropriate pace and structure and students were distracted from their tasks. Strategies for management and control and appropriate lesson planning were lacking in these instances. The highest attaining students are not always given sufficiently demanding work at Key Stage 3.

99. The curriculum is exciting and covers all attainment targets. A variety of appropriate learning approaches is offered including opportunities for drama work and the development of information technology and library skills. The department is very well managed, with clear priorities. Teaching is informed by constructive assessment across all key stages. Assessment procedures are rigorous and almost universally applied. English department policies reflect the aims and ethos of the school, providing a very good atmosphere for student learning. The contribution of drama across the key stages is positive and educational.
100. Since the last inspection the overall good standards observed have been maintained and improved. Attainment in the sixth form has particularly improved. Priorities for the department are to continue to develop strategies to improve the attainment of boys and to monitor carefully the achievement of the highest attainers at Key Stage 3 to ensure they reach the highest possible standards.

Drama

101. At Key Stage 3, drama in English develops and promotes well students' speaking and listening skills. It enhances their confidence and informs the teaching and learning of reading and writing. At Key Stage 4, drama provides added breadth and depth to the curriculum. Specialists teach it and the student response is very good. The teaching of 'A' Level Theatre Studies is good. Lessons are well planned and paced and there are very good student/teacher relationships. In work seen during the inspection there were examples of highly sophisticated role-play, hot seating, script interpretation and team building exercises. Drama makes a valuable contribution to extra curricular activities.

Mathematics

102. Standards in mathematics are good. Performance in Key Stage 3 tests for 14 year olds over the period 1996-98 is above average. Results for summer 1998 are well above the national average, although in line with those for similar types of school nationally. Provisional results for summer 1999 maintain this high standard. GCSE performance for 16 year olds in 1997 and 1998 is above average, with the percentage of students achieving the highest A*-C grades above average and nearly all students achieving a pass. Provisional results for 1999 are also above average. However in the last two years the performance of girls at the higher grades has been significantly better than that of boys, even though boys are performing at the national average. Whilst for summer 1998 this was expected, as girls had done better than boys in the Key Stage 3 test two years previously in 1996, it was not for summer 1999. Results at Key Stage 3 in summer 1997 for this year group had not been significantly different for girls and boys.
103. Over the last three years 'A' Level pass rates have been above the national average, but until 1998 and 1999 performance at the highest A/B grades has been below that nationally. In 1998 results at these highest levels were outstanding and in 1999 in line with those nationally. Based on predicted 'A' Level grades, students have performed better than expected over the last two years. A few students take the demanding further mathematics course at AS Level, with overall good results.
104. Results for students taking GCSE again in the sixth form are disappointing. Too few students improve their previous grade or obtain the desired grade C or better. A significant factor adversely affecting these results is the timetable for the students taking the course. Because of students' other commitments teachers never have the same group of students for a single lesson over the two week timetable cycle. This makes the introduction and recap of skills for a topic very difficult.

105. The attainment of current 14 year olds is above average overall. They are well on course to achieve above average results in Key Stage 3 tests in summer 2000. The most able Year 9 students are beginning to have a very good understanding of Pythagoras' theorem and its application and use algebraic notation confidently. Number skills are sound, but students are not always confident at undertaking calculations of the form 17×6 in their head. However Year 7 students are particularly confident in the quick recall of times tables up to 10. Current Year 11 students are also attaining at a level above that expected for their age overall. They are on course for attaining above average results at GCSE in summer 2000, with students in the top sets the highest grades. All students are expected to attain a pass, although a significant number of the lowest attaining students still have weak numeracy skills. Coursework and module scores for Year 13 'A' Level students indicate attainment is at a level expected for the course. A small number of very high attaining students are doing particularly well.
106. Progress over time for students is good. The limited information available from the school indicates the attainment of students on entering Year 7 is average. They make good progress throughout Key Stage 3 to attain above average results in national tests at fourteen years and continue to make better than expected progress to attain above average GCSE results and better than expected results at 'A' level. During the inspection the progress of students in lessons was at least satisfactory, being good in over half the lessons at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. The best progress is made when teaching is very brisk and purposeful and makes full use of the 40-minute lesson time, for example in a Year 8 lesson using spreadsheets to explore the concept of a limit. Students recapped previous work from last year, learnt how to use the copy function and produced sufficient results to be able to explore the number patterns obtained for homework: a demanding piece of work. Steady progress was observed in 'A' Level lessons, Year 12 students just starting their course and Year 13 students beginning a coursework task.
107. Students' attitudes to work and their behaviour are very good. These significantly contribute to the overall above average standards obtained. They remain on task and produce an appropriate level of work even on the few occasions when the lesson is not particularly lively or slower in pace. They work well together, sharing ideas sensibly and respecting the suggestions of others. It was, however, noticeable in a significant number of lessons that some students are reluctant to respond to the teacher's questions and that boys tended to respond more than girls. Where teachers waited longer for a response, expected a high percentage of hands up and targeted students, a good response was achieved and so ensured all students were involved in the learning process.
108. Setting, the sympathetic and encouraging approach of teachers and a good level of support teachers and classroom assistants ensures lower attaining students and those with special educational needs make good progress. This is clear from the well above average pass rate at GCSE with very few students not attaining a GCSE pass grade. The choice of GCSE examination, with ongoing module tests, supports success.
109. The quality of teaching is sound overall, and was good or very good, in just over half the lessons observed at each key stage. Some particularly effective lessons were observed at Key Stage 3. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and expectations of work and behaviour are high. Lessons clearly follow the scheme of work for the department and are at an appropriate level of difficulty for all abilities. The most effective lessons have very clear aims, which are shared with the students, and reviewed at the end of the lesson. A good example was a Year 11 lesson revising averages in preparation for a future GCSE coursework task. The focus of the lesson was clearly and appropriately on understanding how one or two figures might result in an average that gives a false picture, rather than the process of finding an average, which students already understood. In effective lessons the delivery is particularly lively, moves at a fast pace, uses questions which probe students' understanding and ensures that all students put their hands up to answer teacher questions. The use of an overhead projector to explore and illustrate where equal angles occur when parallel lines are present was particularly effective in promoting student understanding with a weaker Year 8 group. Homework is regularly set and overall contributes to students' attainment and progress.
110. A weakness in some otherwise satisfactory lessons is the lack of revisiting the aims of the lesson at the end, clearly going over what students should have learnt and ensuring understanding. The few unsatisfactory

lessons observed did not have sufficiently demanding mathematical content for students' to acquire new learning or consolidate previous learning. Liaison with support teachers and staff is variable, overall being satisfactory, but needing to ensure all support staff are confident in the mathematical content of the lesson being undertaken. There are no strategies in place to identify students with particularly poor numeracy skills and to address weaknesses through support and individual education plans.

111. The faculty is very well managed. The head of department provides clear leadership and good support for members of the department. The curriculum is well planned and appropriate and soundly resourced. However opportunities to develop students' knowledge and understanding of social and cultural perspectives associated with mathematics are not well followed through. For example, in work on Pythagoras opportunities were missed to discuss the high value the Greeks placed on mathematical knowledge and understanding and its place in their society. Assessment of students' progress is good and target setting for the future is well in place. Results are well analysed to identify areas for improvement, for example, the comparison of GCSE coursework marks for boys and girls clearly highlighted an area where boys under-performed. Whilst monitoring of teaching and learning through classroom observation ensures classroom practice is at the expected level, it needs to be more focused on identifying areas for improvement across the subject as a whole. Accommodation is good, although the two new rooms allocated to the department this year have badly placed boards that make it difficult for some students to see notes and worked examples.
112. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Examination results at Key Stage 3, GCSE and 'A' Level have improved. Target setting for year groups and for individual students is in place. The use of information technology is good at Key Stage 3 and in the sixth form, although it is unclear how students' skills are developed further at Key Stage 4.

Science

113. Since the last inspection, performance in public examinations at Key Stage 3 and 4 has been maintained at levels broadly in line with national averages. Although results in 'A'-Level science subjects have fluctuated in that time the trend has been upwards.
114. The percentage of students reaching the nationally expected levels and above, in the Key Stage 3 National Curriculum tests in 1998 is lower than that attained in 1997 but in 1999 it returns to the higher levels of 1997. In 1998 performance was in line with that nationally, but below that for similar types of school. There is no significant difference in performance between boys and girls. At GCSE in 1998, the proportion of students achieving A*-C grades was in line with the national average and for A*-G grades above, with all students entered achieving a pass. The percentage passing with A*-C grades in 1999 has fallen to just below the national average. There has been no significant differences between the performances of boys and girls over recent years but the results in 1999 show a large disparity, with boys now well below the national average. Of the twelve candidates who took the separate sciences at GCSE in 1998 all but one gained A*-C grades in each subject.
115. Biology, chemistry and physics are offered at 'A' Level. In 1998, with a small number of entrants, the examination results showed attainment levels to be above national averages in chemistry and broadly in line with national averages in biology and physics.
116. The knowledge and understanding shown by the majority of students in Key Stage 3 in the life, material and physical sciences indicates attainment levels above national expectations by the end of the key stage. At Key Stage 4 students' performance indicates attainment in line with expectations by the end of the key stage. No clear cut strengths are evident between these aspects of the curriculum but numerous examples of high attainment were seen in each of them. A Year 8 class successfully demonstrated and compared the magnetic fields of an electro-magnet and a bar magnet and, in Year 9, a sophisticated use of kinetic theory to describe and explain states of matter. Instances of similarly high attainment seen at Key Stage 4 include the application of high level concepts, such as activation energy, to describe and predict the course of

chemical reactions and detailed and accurate work on photosynthesis and transpiration. Attainment at 'A' Level is broadly in line with expectations, particularly in this early stage of Year 12. Above average work was seen in the competent way in which a Year 13 class deduced the mechanisms of substitution reactions in the benzene ring from first principles.

117. Students' written and class work show thorough coverage of the curriculum at each key stage, appropriately matched to different attainment levels. In the work of higher attaining sets, and in the sixth form, it is evident that students have opportunities to use study and research skills effectively in producing individual pieces of work. Some lower attainers need more guidance in note taking. Planning, observational and analytical skills in experimental and investigative science have improved since the last inspection to high attainment levels, more noticeably at Key Stage 4, but the skill of evaluation is a relative weakness. Lower attainers find difficulty in designing investigations to obtain evidence and so restrict their potential development in analytical skills. There is a need to allow individual students more scope for initiative through more open-ended and less directed investigations. No experimental work at 'A' level, appropriate for assessment, was observed during the inspection.
118. Progress in Key Stage 3 is good. Progress in Key Stage 4 is satisfactory. Attainment at the end of the Key Stage 4 is just in line with that predicted for current Year 11 students from their results at the end of Key Stage 3. Progress in lessons reflects the distinction between these two Key Stages. The generally better progress at Key Stage 3 is supported by a greater apparent enthusiasm for the subject, exemplified by the way a Year 7 class worked with great industry and keenness to master the use of classification keys. The response of lower attaining sets at Key Stage 4 is less positive. Progress in lessons in 'A' Level subjects is satisfactory overall but includes some good aspects. In a Year 12 lesson the teaching took students from an uncertain recall of GCSE work on atomic structure to an understanding of the mass spectrometer. Students with special educational needs make good progress at Key Stage 3, and satisfactory progress at Key Stage 4.
119. The large majority of students show good attitudes to learning. They are attentive, receptive and willing to complete the work demanded of them. Whilst an interest in the work is usually apparent, a convincing enthusiasm is not commonly observed. In some classes students are too passive and subdued, particularly in the sixth form, and not engaging actively with the teacher. There is a reluctance to answer or pose questions that might help to extend knowledge and understanding. Students behave well and relationships are good within lessons. There is good co-operation during group practical work.
120. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, as it was at the last inspection. It was good in nearly half the lessons seen. Teaching is best at Key Stage 3, being good overall. A particular strength observed at this key stage is a lively approach, through discussion and questioning in the opening phase, to focus the class's attention on the objectives of the lesson. Practical activities and demonstrations are well managed and support the learning process. Lessons are usually suitably challenging and a variety of appropriate teaching strategies is used but the value and purpose of using class time for copying or working from texts needs to be considered. Throughout the school the management of students is very good and teachers create an effective atmosphere for learning. More needs to be done to draw some students out.
121. The broad planning of the curriculum is good. In the best lessons time is well managed and teachers ensure activities are drawn to appropriate conclusions. However, some lesson plans lack detail, particularly with respect to timing and to identifying the main learning outcomes and their assessment. In some classes this results in teachers not being able to effectively summarise key points during or at the end of the lesson. Homework provision is well integrated and relevant to lesson content. Marking is generally thorough and helpful to students but it is not always clear whether the marks are assessing attainment or effort. There are comprehensive and detailed records of the assessment of students that are used to track progress and to review and plan the curriculum. The close correlation between teachers' assessment scores and the National Curriculum test results confirm the accuracy of the longer-term assessment procedures. However, the setting of targets is not yet sufficiently precise or triggered early enough. The requirement from the last inspection that more suitable and differentiated end of Key Stage 3 tests be developed has been met.

122. The curriculum is planned effectively to provide continuity and progression in and between Key Stages 3 and 4, but not from Key Stage 2. The schemes of work do not link closely enough to lesson planning, including the highlighting of opportunities to integrate aspects such as the spiritual dimension of science, which is lacking. The use of information technology has improved markedly since the last inspection but requires further extension and integration into the schemes of work as a support to learning.
123. Departmental organisation and management are good. Policies are in place and priorities defined and incorporated into a realistic development plan. Under effective leadership the teachers and technicians are working well as a team, with a commitment to improving standards. The recommendation in the last report to increase the provision of technical staff has not been met, despite a much increased school roll. Staff, resources and accommodation are properly and efficiently managed to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and the GCSE and 'A' Level syllabuses.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

Art

124. At GCSE over the period 1996-1998 the percentage of students gaining grades A*-C was well below the national average. The overall pass rate (grades A*-G) is consistently 100%. This year, summer 1999, A*-C grades significantly improved on previous years, although still below the national average. Over the same period, at 'A' Level, the percentage of students gaining grades in the range A-B is variable, but below the national average. Results for Photography at 'A' Level are similar.
125. Attainment for students currently at the end of Key Stage 3 is above average. It is in line with the end of key stage National Curriculum requirements in drawing and painting and above expectations in 3-dimensional work and in knowledge and understanding of art and artists. Students have the ability to adapt themes and ideas to their own work. Higher attaining students are able to control a variety of media and express complex ideas using drawing, painting, sculpture and ceramics. The majority of students do well in ceramics and sculpture with above average technical skills, imaginative response and individual approach.
126. Progress at Key Stage 3 is good. Students respond well to the high expectations and stimulating environment of the art department. They learn to build on skills and knowledge gained previously. Students with special educational needs also make good progress, with the teachers approaching their development sensitively and with appropriate material.
127. Despite previously disappointing GCSE results, attainment for present Year 11 students is in line with national expectations. Students produce a wide range of imaginative work in paint, collage, sculpture and ceramics. Sketchbooks are lively and sometimes exciting, following a range of ideas. Higher attaining students make detailed observational drawing and work from imagination. Where appropriate, students make sound use of photography, which they can translate into other media. Lower attaining students often lack confidence in their own work. Their examination work fails to express what they have learned on the course.
128. Progress at Key Stage 4 is satisfactory, with the higher attainers making good use of their initiative and strong self-motivation. The art department expects students to work independently and to research the work of other artists and craftsmen in depth. However, lower attaining students are sometimes left behind by this approach, especially if it is applied too early in the course. In addition, students need more direction in drawing from life in a wider range of materials, to build up a more flexible visual vocabulary.
129. Attainment for current Year 13 'A' Level students is below that expected for the course. School policy encourages students to engage in an appropriate programme of study, even though their chances of passing

a particular exam may be limited. This has led to variations in standards in art over the last few years. Students make satisfactory progress, with past 'A' Level results being at a level expected for students based on their performance at GCSE. The imaginative work of the higher attaining students is rich and expressive. All students develop the ability to develop ideas on a theme. They have a good grasp of working practices and an ability to plan and organise their own work, becoming fluent in a range of graphic techniques and styles. Less able students have a tendency to go straight to the imaginative development instead of spending more time drawing. Their ability to handle colour is sometimes limited. As at GCSE, lower attaining students often lack confidence and need to be brought into the 'grown up' mode of working more slowly.

130. Students enjoy art lessons at all levels. They learn to co-operate and collaborate effectively. Different age groups mix well in the same room. Sixth form students often act as assistants to the younger students. It is quite usual for an 'A' Level student to show a GCSE student how to develop a photographic print. Absolutely no bad behaviour was observed during the inspection. The art department fosters mature attitudes and relationships. The occasional childishness was dealt with effectively and with barely a raised voice.
131. The teaching is overall satisfactory. Most of the teaching at Key Stage 3 is good. At Key Stage 4 the teaching is satisfactory with a small proportion of good or very good teaching. In the sixth form teaching is satisfactory with a small proportion of good lessons. Teachers have good control of their classes and they are well organised. A positive attitude is encouraged through clear expectations and explanations. Teachers have a very good understanding of the subject and communicate this effectively to students. They make good use of technical and non-technical vocabulary. In the best lessons, teachers give appropriate work to students of different attainment, provide stimulating resources and target questions well. In these lessons also the teacher uses the ongoing assessment of students' work to influence positively the course of the lesson or future lessons. In the few less successful lessons, teachers give insufficient time to discuss, praise and evaluate work. In depth analysis of students' performance by the head of art has shown that in the past students have not always performed as well in art as they do in other subjects. This has enabled the head of art to make changes, which have already had a positive impact on standards.
132. The curriculum for art at all levels is broad and balanced and only the lack of space inhibits the more widespread use of specialist techniques such as printing, photography, ceramics, textiles and digital art. Where these resources are used they are of high quality. The department provides interesting stimuli through the use of books, artefacts and examples of work from different times and cultures. The introduction of GNVQ art and design at sixth form level has begun well and is a good example of teamwork within the school. From Year 7 onwards all the student's work is marked and the students gain a good understanding of their progress by being involved in the process of assessment. Reports to parents are informative and involve setting individual targets for improvement. Teachers set homework regularly, mostly to complement work in class or to practice drawing techniques. Some thought could be given to showing the lower attaining or less confident students how to do homework more suited to their needs and opportunities.
133. The head of art is a very good leader who provides very good support and guidance for the department, who work very well together. Adjustments are continually being made to the schemes of work in the light of careful monitoring of teaching and learning. The head of department's brief also covers the management of creative arts throughout the school and this has a big impact on the life of the department. The department is involved in musical and dramatic productions, video and animation and the work of visiting artists and theatre companies. Along with exciting trips abroad and at home to museums and galleries, these activities contribute very well to the social and cultural life of the school. Since the last inspection, standards of attainment have been maintained at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form and improved in Key Stage 3. Teaching has been much improved by the appointment of specialist teachers. Accommodation is now very tight and will not allow for the expected increase in student numbers. Teachers and students would also benefit from technical assistance, for instance in ceramics, photography and room preparation. Students now experience the full National Curriculum programmes of study for art.

Design and technology

134. National Curriculum assessment of attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 in 1998 is above the national average. Results at GCSE grades A*-C in all strands of the subject are well above the national average having steadily risen since the last inspection, but are only at national averages for the very highest A*/A grades. Girls do significantly better at the higher grades than boys. 'A' Level results are broadly in line with the national average for grades A-E for a small number of students. However, the numbers achieving the higher A/B grades are very few.
135. Attainment is above that expected nationally for students currently at the end of Key Stage 3 and well above for students at the end of Key Stage 4. Strengths lie in the good balance across the full range of activities as demonstrated by wall displays of the designing process showing a 'concept' approach that underpins the whole department's philosophy. This is seen in the technical knowledge about electronics demonstrated by a Year 8 class working on moisture detectors for washing lines. Year 9 students used spider and star diagrams, flow charts and sensory analysis for their investigations into food. A Year 11 class showed how their learning had progressed by working upon specification points for their textile work, which included seventies clothing, toddlers clothes and a costume for The Tempest.
136. The attainment of the oldest 'A' Level students is at a level expected for the course. Year 13 students show a high level of mechanical and scientific knowledge and understanding, an area the last inspection report noted for improvement. This was shown by the work of a student for a bicycle pedal which utilised fluidic dampening.
137. Weaknesses lie in the lack of breadth in approaches to information technology, and a tendency for some students to rely upon a narrow but well produced range of graphic techniques, which do not fully exploit assessment objectives for examination work. This was seen in design drawing in food technology: for example a Year 11 student used the same graphic design technique for each of three concept designs, 'orange kiwi & strawberry mousse', 'tropical tasting cheesecake' and 'citrus meringues'. Year 13 students stylise and limit their graphic techniques for example in individual designs for relief aid shelters, drum stands and keep fit equipment.
138. In Key Stage 3, students make good progress as they gain in their understanding of the design and technology process. This was demonstrated by Year 7 students working on their concept designs for 'active animals'. In Key Stage 4 students make very good progress. Year 11 students working on their textile designs showed a very good understanding of specification points whilst a food technology student using an ice cream maker showed a very good understanding of technological principles. Important design strands develop progressively from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4. Most 'A' Level students make satisfactory progress. Students with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets and are well supported.
139. Students are very well behaved and motivated. They respond enthusiastically to the challenging demands projects provide, and work hard throughout lessons. There is a pleasant working atmosphere within the department. Students enjoy their work and attend clubs after school or continue with their work during lunchtime, especially to complete their food technology. Relationships between each other and with their teachers are very good. Students are well organised in bringing homework and folios to school, and accept responsibility for their work areas, clearing up well at the end of lessons.
140. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 3 is good, in Key Stage 4 very good, and at 'A' Level satisfactory. However teaching generally needs to develop more strategies to challenge the higher attaining students as mentioned in the last inspection report. Teachers' own knowledge of materials and components is very good, as is their understanding of the design and making process that is commonly applied throughout the department. The best lessons have very clear exposition to students about technical processes along with good questioning techniques, ongoing assessment and feedback. These strengths were evident in Year 11

lessons on the gate logic in systems and control and on sensory analysis of food. The overall approach to teaching is a strength, moving from more prescribed approaches in Key Stage 3 to more open ended ones in Key Stage 4. Further development of this strategy is not evident in the sixth form to raise standards further. The occasional less successful lesson has approaches, which do not extend the more able students, and aims that are not clearly and simply shared with students and re-capped upon at the end of the session.

141. The leadership and management of the department are very good. There is a clear direction and underpinning approach and rationale that is common and well supported across all material areas, each very fairly treated and well appreciated. All documentation is up to date and to a high professional standard. Most aspects of curriculum planning and assessment are in place. More detail is needed for the 'A' Level design and technology scheme of work to ensure all aspects of each assessment objective are covered and for the full ability range. Planning for more information technology opportunities is needed in the scheme of work.

Geography

142. Attainment at Key Stage 4 is above national expectations. Performance at GCSE in 1998 was above the national average, the proportion of students achieving A*-C grades being significantly above that nationally and all students entered passing. There have been variations in the proportion of students achieving at these levels over the period 1996 -99 but, overall, attainment in national examinations has seen steady improvement. Provisional results for 1999 are also above average. Girls attainment is better than that of boys but both attain above national averages. Inspection of lessons and students' work confirms that student attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 is above expectations; students have good skills using atlases and demonstrate good knowledge of place. By Year 11 most can analyse a range of map types to help explain geographical patterns, such as the distribution of different types of farming within the United Kingdom. Work in books is well presented and most students clearly express their views in writing.
143. Attainment in the sixth form is above national expectations. Performance at 'A' Level in 1998 was better than that nationally, having improved steadily since 1996. Provisional 1999 figures show a slight decline. Boys and girls performance is broadly similar. In lessons attainment is also above expectations, students show developing aptitudes in analysing and evaluating data and begin to offer good explanations for the more complex interactions between physical processes and human activity.
144. Attainment at Key Stage 3 is above what would be expected of students of this age. This judgement confirms the school's view of students' National Curriculum levels, expressed in teacher assessment. Students learn some elements of how physical and human geography inter-relate as early as Year 7, and by Year 9 many know how to explain the geographical phenomena that result from the movement of the earth's tectonic plates. They have a range of basic geographical skills and good knowledge of place. Most students can suggest how various human activities affect the environment and can evaluate ways in which to manage the environment. In common with all other students of geography, Key Stage 3 students have good skills in handling atlases.
145. Throughout the school progress in geography is good, including that of students with special educational needs. Progress at Key Stage 3 is good. When students enter the school their attainment is in line with what would be expected. Helped by careful lesson planning, work consolidates, then builds on previous learning. Teachers keep checking what has been learnt. A Year 8 group working on climate made good progress due to the teacher's care in consolidating what had been achieved in the previous lesson before rapidly explaining the practical activity which followed. Students worked at the optimum rate on this challenging activity, seeking and getting help when it was needed.
146. In Key Stage 4 students make good progress. Again the teachers' close attention to recapping earlier learning before building on it is a strong factor. Teachers maintain a strong focus on the needs of the examination syllabus, regularly setting examination style questions for students. They give very clear explanations so that the positive response of students is channelled in the right direction. The progress that sixth form students make is also good. The atmosphere in classrooms is one of partnership with the teacher, who is continually helping drive progress. Careful planning and consolidation also means that progress can build on earlier learning.
147. Students enjoy geography and their response is positive. They like answering questions and show involvement: they are attentive and contribute well to discussions. Their response to challenge is strong

and behaviour is always good, they are courteous students who relate well to one another and their teachers. Most have good skills as independent learners but also work well in groups. They move from task to task within lessons with minimal fuss and are good listeners. They have the maturity to react with sensitivity to serious issues such as those raised by variable population densities across the world.

148. The quality of geography teaching displays a strong consistency throughout the school. It is good at each of the three key stages. At Key Stage 3 work is usually effectively matched to students' different learning needs in the mixed ability groups so that they are given challenging but achievable goals. Lessons are 40 minutes long but the purposeful style and rapid pace, which typifies most lessons, propels progress effectively. Lessons are usually divided into short sections. Teachers are clear on their aims (which are made explicit to students) and maintain a strong focus on meeting them. A typical Year 7 lesson on geographical features used what students knew from watching 'soaps' on television to draw clear geographical conclusions on the nature of places. What could have been a trivial discussion was transformed by the teacher's enthusiasm and drive which invigorated the students to produce some interesting accounts of their own, identifying places through geographical 'clues'.
149. Teaching at Key Stage 4 is good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and lessons are well planned and invariably have a good pace. Teaching of geography in the sixth form is also good. It is characterised by good subject knowledge and good relationships with students. Teachers have high, but not unreasonable, expectations of students, so that Year 12 students in their first few weeks of 'A' Level work are carefully encouraged to develop their essay writing techniques. They are well inducted into ways of responding to questions to meet the demands of the course. On other occasions students are encouraged to engage in their own research.
150. In almost every lesson students are very well managed and teachers have strong expectations of students' behaviour and academic performance; the students invariably meet these aims. The curriculum is well planned and continually reviewed. However, geography makes little contribution to students' spiritual development. Assessment in geography is thorough. Students have regular and varied assessments, which are carefully moderated, to allow accurate reporting of National Curriculum levels at Key Stage 3 and to assist all ages of students to make progress. This is focussed by the clear targets that are set for, and shared with, all students. The head of department is also head of the humanities faculty but, in practice, this poses no problems for the subject. Line management for the head of department is largely informal but effective. Staffing is satisfactory; staff are experienced and well deployed. Resources are generally good. However, there are too few computers for students' use; unsurprisingly there is too little use of information technology within the teaching of geography.
151. Since the last inspection student attainment at Key Stage 3 has remained steady, but GCSE performance has improved considerably. 'A' Level performance has also shown improvement.

History

152. National Curriculum assessments of attainment in history at age fourteen for 1998 were considerably above those nationally. At GCSE the majority of students are meeting course requirements and results are the same as those of schools with a similar intake of students. In 1998 overall performance was in line with that nationally with half the students entered achieving A*-C grades, and one in six awarded A* or A grades. Provisional results for 1999 are also in line with national averages, with all students entered achieving a pass. The trend since 1997 is for an increase in the numbers of students taking the subject and a steady rise in attainment at the end of Key Stage 4. However the number of boys reaching the very highest grades is low.
153. A' Level results are broadly in line with national levels. In 1998 there was a considerable increase in the number of candidates taking the subject from three students in 1997, which does not represent a valid statistical sample, to seventeen. In 1998 'A' Level results were overall in line with the course requirements, with the majority of students achieving a pass, as in 1999. However in 1998 the proportion

of students obtaining the highest A/B grades was below that nationally, but in 1999 there was a considerable improvement in the higher grades with eight students achieving an A grade.

154. During the inspection the attainment of students at the end of Key Stage 3 was judged to be above average. Departmental testing shows that many students reach the highest level of attainment and a high level of skills and knowledge. Students in Year 7 show that they have a good understanding of change over time and are able to use and evaluate a range of sources, when studying the Norman Conquest and aspects of life in the Middle Ages. They are able to find out about the events of 1066 by reading contemporary commentaries and studying the battle strategies of William and Harold. Older students acquire a good knowledge of the key events and developments in history such as the French Revolution by studying the lives of people involved such as Marie Antoinette. They all understand why she was so unpopular. By the end of the key stage they are able to understand the causes and results of the major developments of this century including the impact of world war.
155. Attainment for GCSE students in Year 11 is in line with that expected for their age. Most show that they have both a detailed knowledge of the period that they are studying and the high level of skills in essay and document work that will help them to succeed. Students answer and ask questions with confidence and in doing so they all show a secure level of knowledge and understanding. Most students are very articulate and they are able to base their ideas and judgements on a careful study of extracts and source material for example apartheid in South Africa. The most able students are able to cope well with the recognition of conscious and unconscious bias in the evidence they study.
156. Attainment is at level expected in the sixth form and Year 13 students show that they are working in a way which will enable them to meet and possibly improve on their target 'A' Level grades. Students in 'A' level classes show confidence in their own judgement of controversial interpretations of the past - for example when debating the settlement at the end of The First World War and its impact on Germany. By the second year of the course they have a secure understanding of the major developments in British political history and of international relations in the European context. They are able to interpret difficult and challenging sources in preparation for classroom discussion and they consult a wide range of books in the planning and writing of essays. The quality of some work at 'A' Level is very high and all work seen was at least of a satisfactory standard.
157. Progress is good in all year groups and for those students with special educational needs. Younger students were observed making very good progress in the use of extracts and in the development of skills in research and the evaluation of evidence. By the end of Year 9 the majority have a secure grasp of all aspects of the study of history. Those who choose to take the subject at GCSE make good progress in the acquisition of the knowledge content of the course and in developing skills in answering questions and completing course work. Sixth form students also make very good progress in some areas of the 'A' Level course, for example document based work and their contributions in class show that they quickly adapt to the new way of working.
158. The majority of students enjoy their work in history. An increasing number of students are choosing to study the subject at GCSE and 'A' level. Younger students take great pride in their work, which is generally very well presented and illustrated. They particularly enjoyed a role-play which introduced them to the causes of the French Revolution. All students have the opportunity to go on visits to historic sites, museums and student conferences; these are much enjoyed. In examination classes students respond to the intellectual challenge of the subject and show an ability to evaluate evidence about issues, for example an 'A' Level class studying international relations in the nineteenth century.
159. The quality of teaching observed was always sound and often good or very good, especially in examination classes. Teachers are using a variety of approaches to teaching and learning and they are setting tasks, which make a valuable contribution to literacy and sometimes to the development of skills in numeracy. However in some classes the pattern of lessons is very predictable, with the pace giving little time for students to reflect on what they have learned. Drama and role-play are used to increase the level of

understanding of students. No evidence was observed of the use of artefacts from the past or of computers in the classroom. All teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the subject and use video and overhead projectors to support students' learning very effectively. The department has developed an approach, which enables students to enjoy their work and to succeed at their own level by ensuring that students of varying ability are given appropriate resources and tasks. The quality and variety of resources and classroom activities is good but it does not always challenge the most able. However students with learning difficulties are well supported by teaching assistants.

160. The lessons observed were all appropriately planned and resourced; with clear objectives which focused on what younger students and examination students should know by the end of the lesson. Good progress is ensured by the deliberate policy of revisiting topics so that students benefit from prior learning. Work is marked frequently and assessment is used very effectively. In examination classes the very careful monitoring of work makes a considerable contribution to progress.
161. The rooms and resources used for teaching history are satisfactory. A range of well-chosen text and other books is available for examination courses. Good use is made of the library by 'A' Level students but there is insufficient use of library resources in Key Stage 3. The style of teaching ensures that the subject contributes well to students' social, moral and cultural understanding, but not so well to their spiritual development, with opportunities missed within the teaching situation. There is insufficient development of skills in the use of information technology, although some students do make good use of the computer themselves for research.
162. Since the last inspection examination results have improved and the numbers of students choosing to take the subject at GCSE and in the sixth form have increased. The good quality of teaching ensures that behaviour and response are now good. The management of the subject is the responsibility of an enthusiastic teacher, who has developed a strong team ethos ensuring that resources and assessment procedures are effectively used to ensure progression and continuity. The good quality of monitoring and evaluation has raised standards within the history department to the present high level shown in the examination results in 1999.

Information technology

163. Teacher assessments for students' attainment in information technology at the end of Key Stage 3 indicate that both boys and girls are attaining higher levels than those expected nationally. There are no assessments for students at the end of Key Stage 4. Students do not sit a GCSE examination in information technology. GCSE examination groups in business studies, which has an information technology component, achieve results which are in line with the national average. In 'A' Level Computer Studies students achieved very low grades in comparison with students nationally for the years 1996-98. This year, 1999, results improved with a greater proportion of students attaining the highest A/B grades.
164. For students currently in Year 9 attainment in information technology is in line with national expectations, except in the areas of monitoring and control where it is below. The majority of students can load, edit and save files in various formats and have a sound understanding of the school's filing system. This enables them to work independently on a word processor, spreadsheet, paint program and CD-ROMs. Students are able to collect data, enter and store this in a database and extract useful information. The higher attaining students combine well-formatted text and photographs they have taken or extracted from a database. The majority of students are able to insert a picture they have drawn into a word-processed document. Few students can write a control program to the expected level and no examples of data logging were seen during the inspection. In electronics lessons, students learn to design a printed circuit on the computer.
165. Progress at Key Stage 3 is satisfactory overall. Students enter the school with very different previous experiences in using information technology. The induction programme ensures that the majority of students gain the necessary skills to cope with the work that takes place during specific information technology lessons and in other subject lessons. Lower attaining students and those with special

educational needs make good progress, but the teaching programme does not ensure that the higher attaining students are sufficiently challenged and their progress is not as good as it might be.

166. Not enough examples of students' work in information technology were seen during the inspection to make a secure judgement on attainment at the end of Key Stage 4. The limited evidence, gained through talking to students and teachers and observing students in the few lessons where information technology was being used, shows that it is likely that few students are meeting national expectations. Progress in this key stage is unsatisfactory as the school does not provide a planned programme. However, on the new Certificate of Achievement course, designed specifically for the lower attainers, students in Year 10 are making good progress.
167. Attainment of current Year 13 students doing 'A' Level computer studies is in line with that expected for the course. However standards of attainment vary considerably from year to year due to the school's 'A' Level admissions policy. This encourages students to engage in an appropriate programme of study, even though their chances of passing a particular exam may be limited. Students make satisfactory progress. Higher attaining students make use of their considerable background knowledge of computer architecture as well as mathematical and language skills. The lower attaining students receive well targeted help in the more academic aspects of the course.
168. Students enjoy working with information technology and are keen to use it at every opportunity. The younger students are very well behaved and soon learn the routines. They co-operate with the teacher and each other in the smooth running of lessons whenever computers are used. Students can be trusted to work with the minimum of supervision. The computer rooms and other areas around the school are busy outside class time. Students develop independence in their learning. Many students now have computers at home and this plays an important part in the development of information technology as a useful tool for learning.
169. Teaching at Key Stage 3 is satisfactory. The specialist teachers have a good understanding of their subject. The non-specialist teachers receive good support and their management of the lessons and control of students is good. Teachers make good use of information technology to enhance learning in mathematics and English. Teachers work well to the planned programme of study but teaching methods are rather limited. They rely too much on whole class instruction and do not provide separate tasks for students of different attainment. Few worksheets, visual aids or teacher demonstrations are used. Careful attention is paid to students who find the work difficult but this sometimes results in the higher attaining students having nothing to extend them. Teachers make regular assessments of the students' progress. This helps to inform the day-to-day planning of the lessons.
170. Insufficient teaching was seen at Key Stage 4 to enable a secure overall judgement. In all the lessons seen, where information technology was being used, teachers displayed a satisfactory knowledge and understanding. Teachers use information technology competently in the planning and preparation of lessons and word processing is widespread.
171. The information technology curriculum at Key Stage 3 is satisfactory. The majority of learning takes place in specialist lessons in the information technology rooms. However in other subjects of the curriculum, with the exception of English and mathematics, many teachers, although using information technology, are missing opportunities to use it effectively to enhance learning. Assessment of pupils' attainment and progress only takes place on work done in specialist lessons. Other subjects do not contribute. This is unsatisfactory.
172. The curriculum at Key Stage 4 is unsatisfactory, because there is no programme of study, no monitoring or tracking of the development of information technology skills across the curriculum and no assessment of the standards students are attaining. As at Key Stage 3 many opportunities to use information technology across the curriculum are missed. Courses, such as GCSE Business Studies, the Key Stage 4 Certificate of Achievement for lower attainers, GNVQ business studies and 'A' Level business studies, involving information technology, are appropriate and meet the needs of students. Assessment in these courses is

good.

173. Since the last inspection, the curriculum leader for information technology has improved the school's provision, although that at Key Stage 4 is still unsatisfactory. The level of staff expertise has been maintained despite the rapid changes. Developments in the provision of new resources and accommodation have been expertly managed. Along with the senior managers of the school, he has made sound plans for the further development of the subject, taking into account the present shortcomings. The school has fewer computers than the average school of this size and the computer rooms are too small for individual work with most classes. The plans for networking the school and increasing the number of machines should help alleviate this problem. Overall the capacity for improvement in information technology is sound.

Business studies and Economics

174. The delivery of these two non-statutory subjects is managed by the information technology department. The GCSE examination groups in business studies achieve results that are in line with the national average, although in 1998 very few students gained the higher grades. Progress and teaching are good and the lessons lively and well managed. GNVQ business studies is well run, with good team work and co-operation. Teaching in economics is good. The students make good progress and attain average results. Since 1996 results have been better than expected at 'A' Level for the students taking the course.

Modern foreign languages

175. Examination results at GCSE in French have fluctuated over the past four years, although the entry level remains constant at about four in five students. In 1996 and 1998 the proportion of students obtaining grades A*-C was below the national average, but in 1997 results exceeded this benchmark. The strong performance of boys in that year group accounts for the improvement, otherwise girls consistently outperform boys, and this trend is continued in the provisional figures for 1999. Nevertheless, overall standards match national averages.
176. The most proficient linguists, usually about a quarter of the year group, are also entered for German. Results are excellent, consistently exceeding national averages by a significant margin. Both boys and girls achieve high standards with 9 students out of every 10 being awarded an A*-C grade. In 1998 over half obtained either an A* or A grade. Provisional figures for 1999 show a slight drop, but standards remain high.
177. The lowest attaining students are entered for Spanish and all have been awarded a grade (usually F or G) over the past three years. Results in the one year Spanish course in the 6th Form show consistent improvement from 1996 to 1998 when the eight students entered obtained grades B or C. In 1999 the course was offered to students with limited linguistic ability and results reflect that focus.
178. 'A' level results are appropriate for the students taking the course, with a reasonable spread of grades in both French and German. Provisional results for 1999 are similar to those in previous years, but with particularly good grades in German.
179. Attainment in French by the end of Key Stage 3 is in line with national expectations. Students are generally proficient in all four skill areas, and particularly in listening where students are adept at identifying key phrases. Whatever their potential, students use descriptive language well. They can express opinions and sustain meaningful conversation. They often write at length and higher attainers are ambitious when they combine a series of different situations. Pronunciation is generally good and all students respond successfully to a range of standard questions. The past tense is used confidently.
180. These students satisfactory progress is underpinned by a sound consolidation of skills learned earlier in the course. Students regularly refer back to structures that enhance their current topic. They use dictionaries confidently. A particular feature of this solid grounding is that students rarely use words in isolation.

They always seek to weave new vocabulary into sentences that have a point. This is also true of students with special educational needs, some of whom in Year 8 are progressing particularly well. Some boys begin to struggle when attention to detail is necessary.

181. Attainment in German exceeds national expectations by the end of Key Stage 3. This reflects particularly good progress, since students only start their course in Year 9. Students are already beginning to use the language imaginatively and there is a clear awareness of some difficult concepts such as cases and word order.
182. By the end of Key Stage 4, standards match national averages in French. All students can adapt models successfully and produce accurate alternatives. The production of sustained dialogues is a strong feature. Higher attainers also write appropriately in different styles. Details such as adjectival agreement and verb constructions are well understood. Satisfactory progress is consistently maintained as students continue to build on prior knowledge. Listening exercises are completed systematically, and higher attainers are able to manipulate language effectively. Many students with special educational needs can identify linguistic patterns and are making solid progress.
183. By the end of Key Stage 4 standards in German are high and progress is good. Students are able to speak at length and conduct mature conversations. Their writing has depth as they build on the strong consolidation of basic concepts that permeates the course.
184. Attainment in the sixth form is at expected levels and students' progress in both languages is satisfactory. Students express opinions fluently. For example, German 'A' Level students are able to debate stereotyping, employing an impressive range of vocabulary and constructions. All students benefit from the continuous active use of French and German in their lessons. Most are able to write full-length essays in the language being studied, using reasoned argument and offering a considered interpretation of factual information.
185. The attitudes and behaviour of students is almost always impeccable. The norm is for students to contribute willingly and co-operatively in all lessons. They often show initiative and have impressive levels of concentration. In many classrooms there is a genuine learning partnership between students and their teachers. A small number of boys in lower attaining groups sometimes lapse into attention-seeking behaviour.
186. The teaching of modern foreign languages is particularly strong. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. Three quarters of lessons are good or better. Teachers are organised and plan lessons carefully and enthusiasm for the subject rubs off on their students. They use pupil responses skilfully to develop skills further and questioning techniques are often incisive. French or German is used consistently throughout the lesson, and students are always fully involved in using the language. An inspirational lesson in Year 9 was introduced with imaginative use of mime and gesture and sequenced consolidation reinforced the aims of the lesson. All teachers ensure that there is pace and variety in their delivery. In a very good lesson in Year 8, the teacher made sure that the work challenged all students - many of whom have special educational needs - and the outcome was the impressive use of extended language by all members of the class. This insistence on high expectations by all teachers ensures that all lessons are purposeful and structured.
187. The department is ably led and the teachers form a cohesive team. There are good schemes of work and arrangements for assessment are well established. Insufficient use is made of the opportunities presented by modern technology, otherwise resources are adequate. The exchange and programme of visits abroad is an excellent feature of provision.
188. Since the last inspection standards have remained at least satisfactory and are frequently better, although the performance of girls is significantly better at GCSE than that of boys. Students take a pride in the presentation of their work and listening skills have improved. Curriculum planning is now more effective,

although there is still a need to ensure that the range of ability in all sets is catered for consistently. This is a strong, dedicated department with a good balance of experience and expertise. There is a clear commitment to further improvement.

Music

189. The examination results for GCSE over the last three years have been satisfactory. 'A' Level results have also been satisfactory. Comparisons with national figures are not reliable because of the small entry numbers.
190. Attainment at Key Stage 3 is overall in line with that expected, and current Year 9 students are on course to meet national expectations in performing and composing, and in listening and appraising by the end of the key stage. Their song-writing shows good phrasing and structure, good word-setting and they can develop their ideas using sequences; one group also included some simple 2-part harmony. The girls tend to sing more confidently and with better intonation than the boys. Students' responses to listening to excerpts of music in class and for homework are satisfactory. However, there is little evidence of students using musical vocabulary and their skills in appraising are still undeveloped as in the last inspection. Attainment by students with special educational needs is comparable with the rest of the year group. The attainment at Key Stage 4 is also satisfactory with the work of current Year 11 students in line with GCSE coursework requirements. They show a developing aural ability and good knowledge and understanding of compound time signatures and chords. Attainment in the sixth form is in line with course-related expectations. Year 13 students' have secure knowledge and understanding of harmony.
191. At Key Stage 3 all students, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress on the whole. Students in a Year 7 class were consolidating knowledge and understanding of note lengths and pulse and developing an understanding of style. In a Year 9 lesson students made some progress in their knowledge and understanding of chords. The progress of the more able is good in lessons where the work matches their ability. Students make unsatisfactory progress in some lessons. This is because teacher expectations are either too low or too high and the planning does not allow students to make musical progress. At Key Stage 4 progress is satisfactory. At the time of the inspection, GCSE lessons for Year 10 had not started. In a Year 11 lesson, focused on developing listening skills, students acquired a greater knowledge and understanding of the characteristics of Spanish music. Progress in the sixth form is satisfactory. Year 13 students are developing a greater understanding of effects and mixing through the use of an effects unit, mixing desk and multi-track tape recorder. Year 12 students are appropriately consolidating and acquiring knowledge of keys and key signatures.
192. Generally students have good attitudes and are well behaved. They are mostly attentive and able to sustain concentration to complete tasks. Student response to answering questions is varied, sometimes enthusiastic, rather passive at other times. Equipment is carefully used and students work collaboratively together in paired and group work. GCSE and 'A' Level students are well motivated but the take-up rates for GCSE are very small.
193. Teaching is satisfactory overall but there was some unsatisfactory teaching observed in Key Stage 3. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and use their own musical skills to aid students' learning. Their management of the students is good. In lessons where teaching is satisfactory, lessons are well prepared, a variety of activities is included, questioning is challenging and students are encouraged to apply previous knowledge. In unsatisfactory lessons, tasks and materials do not take into account the different abilities of students, students are not engaged in musical activity that enables them to make progress and teacher expectations are too high. Homework is regularly set to reinforce and extend learning. A lot of time has gone into developing homework listening tapes with worksheets for students in Year 7 and 8, which is a positive development to be built on further.
194. The department does not have a clear development plan, which identifies appropriate priorities for attention and the subject handbook does not include all policies and procedures to guide the delivery of the subject.

The head of department recognises the need for more monitoring of teaching and the sharing of good practice. Planning of the music curriculum is ineffective in providing continuity and progression, with only a list of areas to be covered. Schemes of work are either incomplete or lacking detail in Key Stage 3 and non-existent in Key Stages 4 and 5. A scheme with detailed lesson plans has been developed for Year 7 and shows what the students should have experienced by the end of the year. The scheme for Year 8 is in the process of being developed. There is no separate planning for students with special educational needs or evidence of IEPs being used. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. At Key Stage 3 there are clear procedures for assessment and the department meets the statutory requirement to report end of Key Stage 3 teacher assessment results to parents at the end of Year 9. Assessment is used to review curriculum content to a limited extent such as the introduction of a music technology unit in Year 8 as a strategy for improving boys' achievements.

195. Provision for students' social and cultural development is very good through the many extra-curricular activities, trips, workshops and the music competition. The curriculum gives students insight into the music of many countries, including non-western countries, thereby broadening their knowledge and appreciation of the music and life in those areas. However, there is insufficient consideration for the contribution music can make to students' spiritual and moral development.
196. Extra-curricular provision is very good and has a positive effect on developing students' performing skills. The school provides lessons on a wide range of instruments taught by eight visiting instrumental teachers who make a very valuable contribution to the work of the department. Approximately 120 students receive instrumental lessons, about one tenth of the school population. Students can develop their performing skills further by participating in the activities on offer at lunchtime, such as guitar trio, jazz band, string group, clarinet ensemble, Gillingham singers, brass group and orchestra. Students have performed in school concerts, productions combining art, drama and music and there are plans to take the orchestra, jazz band and Gillingham singers to Holland. GCSE music for Years 10 and 11 is provided for one hour per week after school.
197. Accommodation is tight for group performing and composing activities at Key Stage 3 and for extending instrumental teaching and extra-curricular activities. The main teaching room is well resourced but the mobile classroom is inadequately resourced for teaching music and therefore holds back the progress of students who are timetabled in there.
198. Since the last inspection, some of the issues raised have been resolved. However weaknesses in curriculum planning and for the professional development of staff remain, as well as ineffective development planning, monitoring of teaching and learning and planning for students of different abilities

Physical education

199. The attainment of the majority of students at all key stages is above the national average. This is evident in their level of skill acquisition, noticeably in invasion games and swimming and in their knowledge and understanding of health related fitness issues.
200. Examination courses are a very strong element of the curriculum. The results for the GCSE short course and 'A' Level physical education and sport studies are well above national averages. In 1998, the majority of students following the GCSE short course at Key Stage 4 attained A*-C grades. All other students achieved a pass. At 'A' Level in 1998, all the students achieved an A*-C grade. Results in both examination courses have improved steadily since 1995. Results for 1999 continue these high standards. In 1998 many of the Year 13 students entered for the CCPR Sports Leadership Award gained a distinction. This allows them to work with younger children.
201. Overall the attainment of students at Key Stage 3 and 4 is good and very good in the sixth form. Progress is apparent in lessons and through the key stages, exemplified by the successful defining of skills and understanding of body movement. Students with special educational needs make considerably better than

expected progress due to the department's very well documented and successfully implemented special needs policy, and the recognition of an individual student's education plan. Overall the progress of students throughout the school is good.

202. The attitude and behaviour of students is very good. They maintain very high levels of interest and enthusiasm. Their respect for each other and property is very good and the relationships between themselves and with staff are most commendable. They are willing to take responsibility and co-operate with each other very well indeed. The level of participation is very high, the standard of dress is very good and no time is lost in lessons.
203. The quality of teaching is very high. The teachers are very secure in their knowledge of each component of the syllabus and their expectations of the students are very high. Their management of the students, which is very good, is linked with sound teaching methods and good organisational strategies at all key stages and promotes high educational standards. Praise and encouragement are well used and lessons are well paced and resourced. The performance and evaluating elements within the lessons are very good, but the planning element less so. The match of tasks to different ability levels is apparent in most of the teachers' planning but is less evident in the teaching.
204. The curriculum meets statutory requirements at all key stages. There are good opportunities to participate in all aspects of the curriculum for both boys and girls, with very good provision for students with special educational needs. There is clear planning to ensure new learning builds on previous learning. The extra-curricular programme is a great strength of the department. The programme is extensive, open to all and greatly appreciated by students and parents. Some students go on to gain high representative honours within the county, which in turn extends the more able students in class. The department runs trips both at home and abroad, and through its curricular and extra-curricular programmes is building good links with the community.
205. Assessment is thorough. Ability and effort are assessed at the end of each unit and academic year, reported to parents, and grades used to inform future planning. A method of evidencing an individual student's progress needs to be established.
206. The department promotes the students' moral, social and cultural development implicitly through its teaching programme, promotion of good relationships and adherence to the rules of games, but has yet to formulate this good work into a policy.
207. Physical education is a very well organised, managed and documented department, with clear educational direction. The development of staff is a strength of the department. Staff relationships are positive and constructive and all staff participate in the decision making process. The work of the department is enhanced by the expertise of other members of staff and outside specialists. They contribute to both timetabled and extra-curricular sports activities. The ethos for learning is very good. Health & Safety procedures are in place and appropriately applied, as are the well-documented risk assessment procedures.
208. The accommodation overall is very good externally but lacking internally, due to the dual use of the hall and sports centre. Practical resources are plentiful and the book, information technology, and video stock for examination courses is being consolidated. More instructional posters are needed to enhance the learning environment. Capitation is well managed and meets the needs of the department's development plan. Staff and resources are well used. Overall it is a strong department.
209. Since the last inspection standards have continued to improve, with issues concerning the scheme of work and assessment procedures at Key Stage 3 being addressed.

Religious education

210. 'A' Level grades were well above the national average in 1998, with a much higher proportion of students

than nationally achieving the top A and B grades. This outstanding success continued in 1999 with over 60% of students gaining A and B grades. Most students attain higher grades than predicted and their grades in Christian Theology are usually higher than in their other 'A' Level subjects. Students who follow a general religious education course in the sixth form are reaching higher standards than expected in relation to the Agreed Syllabus. At the end of Key Stage 4 students gain the Dorset DARE accreditation for religious education. They achieve better than expected results and Gillingham is the highest achieving Dorset LEA school involved in the DARE project.

211. By the end of Key Stage 3 attainment is in line with the expectations of the Agreed Syllabus. Students have a sound grasp of the variety of beliefs and practices, a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of Christianity and a basic understanding of Islam. Their appreciation of the issues relating to human rights is at least satisfactory and often good. Students' skills are generally good and often very good in communication, research and analysis, empathy and reflection.
212. By the end of Key Stage 4 standards of attainment are above those expected by the Agreed Syllabus. Students have a good knowledge, understanding and application of moral issues relating to topics such as abortion, relationships, war and crime. By the end of the sixth form course attainment is well above the average in the knowledge and understanding of Christian ethics, including excellent use of vocabulary and the skills to apply knowledge to the quality of life. At both Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form, students' skills in analysis, enquiry, research, reasoned argument and debate and evaluation are very well developed and these skills are very sophisticated in Year 13.
213. Students' progress, including that of students with special education needs, is generally good at Key Stage 3, particularly in oracy and includes key skills such as summarising information. Progress is very good at both Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form, including that for the less academic students. In Year 13 excellent progress is made. Despite the shortage of time to teach religious education at both Key Stages 3 and 4 students' progress is remarkable, particularly from Year 9 onwards. Specialist teaching is highly skilled and there are high expectations of teaching, learning and enjoyment by both teachers and students. In this very good ethos for learning, students progress well in both knowledge and understanding of the relevant religious and moral ideas and in skills for learning, oracy and literacy. Also, the increasingly effective use of students' self-assessment and target setting is improving self-evaluation and increasing progress currently at Key Stage 4.
214. Students enjoy and value religious education and have increasingly positive attitudes to the subject from Year 7 onwards. Motivation for learning is high. It is particularly good in Year 9 and Key Stage 4, where the conscientious work produced by students in high quality home assignments compensates for a shortage of teaching time and leads to high standards. In Year 13 students revere their teachers. Relationships are usually very good and often excellent, as students express their views in a mature, confident and sensitive manner both in group work and whole class activities. At Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form, boys are usually very responsive and articulate. At all Key Stages students are very supportive of classmates with particular personal needs.
215. Teaching is good, with much that is very good. At Key Stage 3 the quality of teaching is good overall, though variable. The large staff team includes non-specialists and quality ranges from one unsatisfactory lesson to very good teaching in Year 8. At Key Stage 4 teaching is consistently very good and in the sixth form it is very good and consistently excellent in Year 13. Some non-specialist teaching in Key Stage 3 is inadequately planned and organised to focus on learning objectives, so students' learning is minimal and progress is unsatisfactory. However, teachers generally have very good subject expertise and high expectations. They provide good challenge, pace, interest and variety for students of all levels of attainment to extend their knowledge and skills. However, there is a limited focus on the effects of religious beliefs and practices on moral issues at Key Stage 3. At Key Stages 4 and 5 the good focus on teaching skills at Key Stage 3 is extended and there is much inspirational teaching. In Year 13 erudite and very skilled teaching provides an excellent basis for independent learning in higher education.

216. Teaching materials, often home-produced, are of high quality and are used well to address students' varying learning needs. Homework is usually appropriate and particularly from Year 9 through Key Stage 4 it is used well to support and extend students' learning. However, at Key Stage 3, there is some inconsistency in marking and some staff frequently give insufficient help to lower attainers to assess their needs and set targets for improvement.
217. Leadership of religious education is very good indeed with some outstanding features. Documentation, procedures, planning and administration are very good. Some excellent teaching materials and booklets, imaginatively produced to address a range of learning needs, empower teachers, particularly non-specialists. Most members of the large teaching team are very hardworking and committed to excellence in all aspects of their work. Procedures for monitoring and evaluation are in place, but some monitoring of teaching is currently informal. The requirements of the new Dorset Agreed Syllabus are not fully met at Key Stage 3 and the introduction of another world faith next year will need to be supported with appropriate teaching materials and also training for non-specialists. Currently storage facilities are not appropriate.
218. Increasing numbers in the sixth form reflect the high status and popularity of religious education, but its success also increases the possible need for further specialist teaching. The department's contribution to students' spiritual, moral and social development is very good and expanding opportunities to visit places of worship will enrich their cultural development. There is insufficient time to meet the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus at both Key Stages 3 and 4. The school is not fully meeting requirements in the sixth form, as religious education is not taken by all students, especially in Year 12. Also, in the school prospectus parents are not informed of their rights to withdraw their children from religious education, although the information is given in a supplementary booklet.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

219. The team consisted of 12 inspectors, including a lay inspector, who spent a total of 52 inspector days in the school

- spent 207 hours observing 243 lessons and reviewing children's work;
- attended a sample of registration sessions;
- attended assemblies and a range of extra-curricular activities;
- had lunch with the pupils on several days;
- observed pupils' arrival at and departure from school;
- observed all teachers, at least once and most several times;
- had discussions with the headteacher, teaching and non-teaching staff, the Chair of Governors and other governors;
- reviewed all the available written work of a representative sample of six pupils from each year group and talked to these pupils about their work and heard their views on the school;
- held informal discussions with many other pupils;
- analysed a large amount of documentation provided by the school both before and during the inspection including:

- the school prospectus;
- school policies;
- the Governors' Annual Report to parents;
- minutes of governors' meetings;
- financial statements;
- the School Development Plan;
- subject policies and planning;
- pupils' reports and records, including special educational needs records

- held a meeting attended by 74 parents and considered 164 responses from parents to a questionnaire asking about their views of the school

DATA AND INDICATORS

Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
Y7 – Y13	1278	14	181	51

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (Y7 – Y13)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	71.05
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.99

Education support staff (Y7 – Y13)

Total number of education support staff	16
Total aggregate hours worked each week	371

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes:	80.4
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Average class size	KS3	26
	KS4	23

Financial data

Financial year:	1998/99
	£
Total Income	2,500,631
Total Expenditure	2,504,377
Expenditure per pupil	2,185
Balance brought forward from previous year	3,579
Balance carried forward to next year	-167

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:	1278
Number of questionnaires returned:	164

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	13.2	63.5	15.0	6.6	1.8
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	38.9	54.5	2.4	3.6	0.6
The school handles complaints from parents well	19.9	47.0	27.7	4.8	0.6
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	20.4	61.1	13.2	5.4	0.0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	32.9	52.1	9.0	4.8	1.2
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	46.1	44.9	5.4	3.0	0.6
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	37.7	53.9	4.2	4.2	0.0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	26.9	51.5	10.2	10.2	1.2
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	34.1	50.3	12.6	3.0	0.0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	33.5	53.3	9.6	2.4	1.2
My child(ren) like(s) school	34.7	52.7	12.0	0.6	0.0

Other issues raised by parents

Consultation evenings very crowded and not enough time to talk to teachers.