

INSPECTION REPORT

KINGSBURY HIGH SCHOOL

Kingsbury, London

LEA area: Brent

Unique reference number: 101559

Headteacher: Mr P J Snell

Reporting inspector: Brian Oppenheim
2686

Dates of inspection: 25 – 27 January 2000

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	11 – 18 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chairman of governors:	Mr. R. Stone M.B.E.
Date of previous inspection:	1 May 1995

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Kingsbury High School is a very large secondary Foundation School for 1920 girls and boys aged between 11 and 18. The school draws most of its pupils from a relatively small geographical area with a wide ethnic diversity. Of the 300 or so pupils who start at the school each year about 10 per cent are selected on the basis of ability. There are 375 students in the sixth form which is also large for schools in England. A large proportion of pupils, nearly 71 per cent, have English as an additional language, 43 of whom receive support with their language learning. Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and the school is truly multi-cultural. The school has a unit for pupils with sensory impairment and as a result the proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need is higher than average. The proportion of pupils with special learning needs is lower than average but this still means that over 200 pupils need extra help with their learning. When pupils start at the school their attainment is broadly average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Kingsbury High School is a very effective school which achieves high standards in all that it does. The good quality teaching and learning, the high standards achieved by pupils and the sensitive leadership produce a vibrant and happy school that provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Most pupils achieve high standards particularly at the end of Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form.
- Teaching is very good with eight out of 10 lessons observed being good or very good: teachers are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about what they teach.
- The high quality of the learning gives the school a vibrant ethos where pupils are keen to succeed, are highly motivated and very well behaved, and make positive relationships with others.
- The school gives pupils rich and stimulating experiences that encourage thoughtful and sensitive responses to their learning and promotes personal development very well.
- Inspirational leadership and effective management create a culture of achievement, success and improvement at all levels.

What could be improved

- Teaching in a small number of lessons: too little variety in the activities pupils are asked to do, or in the methods teachers use, leads to a relatively slow pace of learning that runs out of steam before the end.
- In a small number of lessons the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are not reinforced as well as they are in most lessons and this sometimes hampers the learning of lower attaining pupils.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has been very successful in improving the quality of education and raising standards since the last inspection in May 1995. GCSE results have remained above average and attainment at 'A' level has improved at a faster rate than nationally. The school has tackled the eight areas identified for action in the last inspection rigorously. Teaching has improved significantly, so that work is more suited to pupils' abilities although

in a small number of lessons the variety of activities and pace of learning could be improved. Good progress has been made in developing the school's monitoring and evaluation arrangements, including those for pupils' progress; as a result the performance of girls at GCSE has overtaken that of boys. The governing body has strengthened its procedures and has effective committees responsible for the curriculum, finance and staffing. The school has been particularly successful in improving its provision for pupils' spiritual development: there is a wide range of high quality experiences, right across the school, through which pupils develop a good awareness of spiritual issues. The school now meets statutory requirements where appropriate although it needs to continue to strengthen its arrangements for the daily act of collective worship.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 16 and 18 year olds based on average point scores in GCSE and A-level/AS-level examinations.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
GCSE examinations	A	B	C	B
A-levels/AS-levels	D	D	B	

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

Results in the national tests for 14 year olds have risen at about the same rate as all schools in England and in 1999 were close to the national average. Girls have done slightly better than boys in English and mathematics and achieved above the national average. Boys' results were comparable to the average as were those for science for both girls and boys. Compared with similar schools performance in all three subjects was above average.

GCSE results have increased steadily since 1994 and despite a dip in 1999 show a rising trend. The rate of increase is slightly lower than the national trend but over the past six years, GCSE results have been above the national average. The slight fall in 1999 meant that results were average when compared with the national picture but above the average when compared with similar schools. The proportion of pupils gaining at least five A* - C grades at GCSE has also remained above the national average, with consistently strong results in mathematics, art and design and double award science over the past three years. The proportion gaining at least five of more GCSE grades at all levels, and those who achieve at least one GCSE grade, has also been above the national average. Girls have overtaken boys and achieved better results in each year since 1996. GCE A level results in the sixth form have risen significantly since 1996 and overall performance is now above average. GNVQ results are below average overall but high in intermediate level courses.

The evidence from the inspection confirms that achievement is higher than expected across all subjects. There are particular strengths in mathematics, where pupils make good progress in their learning and in art and design where work is of a very high standard. There are also strengths in many other subjects including drama and dance, where pupils are encouraged successfully to develop their creativity and imagination. Standards in

information technology are also high and pupils are able to use a range of software programs to support their work in other subjects.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very keen to do well and work hard for their teachers. They respond enthusiastically to the many opportunities and challenges the school provides.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave well in both lessons and when they are moving around the school.
Personal development and relationships	This is a particular strength of the school. Pupils have very positive relationships with each other and with teachers: they work extremely well together in lessons.
Attendance	Attendance is above the national average and unauthorised absence well below average.

The school promotes positive attitudes to education very successfully. The excellent relationships and the respect teachers have for everyone in the school lead to pupils' very good attitudes to the school and behaviour.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 11-14 years	aged 14-16 years	aged over 16 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Very good	Very good

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

Teachers are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the subjects they teach. They provide demanding work for pupils and students, plan lessons well and make learning exciting. All teachers treat pupils with great care and respect, and value them as individuals. Teachers' high expectations, their very good relationships with pupils and a firm grasp of their subject means that pupils and students learn quickly. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are mostly well integrated in the great majority of lessons but are not always consistently developed right across the school. The support for pupils with special educational needs, particularly those with sensory impairment, is good and this leads to good progress in their learning. Some pupils with less specific learning needs do not always get as good support and their learning is only satisfactory. Teaching was satisfactory in all lessons seen, very good or excellent in 27 per cent and good in a further 53 per cent.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Excellent. The school provides a very rich, broad and exciting curriculum that stimulates pupils' enthusiasm for learning and stretches their intellectual, creative and physical skills.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The support for pupils with special educational needs, particularly those with sensory impairment, is good. The school takes great care to ensure that pupils' needs are identified well and that they are provided with good opportunities to learn.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Pupils with English as an additional language are supported well and quickly learn to use English in their school work.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good and is a strength of the school. Moral and social developments make very strong contributions to pupils' personal development and their very good behaviour. Provision for developing pupils' spiritual awareness and cultural understanding is excellent partly because of the very rich curriculum.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very effective. All staff know their pupils well as individuals and use this knowledge to give help and support.

The school's provision is very effective in promoting pupils' learning, their respect for others and belief in themselves, and a sense of their place in society. The curriculum is a particular strength of the school. The rich, broad and exciting experience it gives to pupils makes a very strong contribution to pupils' achievements.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, senior management team and middle managers give a very strong lead to the school by setting high expectations and a culture of achievement, success and improvement. Effective management has led to good improvements in standards and provision.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its responsibilities effectively and supports the school well in its achievement of high standards and continuing improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is very thorough in its evaluation of its performance at all levels: it knows where it is and has a clear picture of its strengths and weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning is very good and the school makes very effective use of its resources, including its buildings where a rolling programme of improvements over the past few years has been very successful.

The inspirational leadership and effective management make a very powerful contribution to the school's positive climate for learning, high standards, rich curriculum and excellent relationships. The support given to newly qualified teachers is very good and ensures that they settle quickly into the school and are thus able to contribute fully to its work. The principles of best value are applied consistently in all that the school does.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and are expected to work hard. • Pupils are well behaved. • The help pupils get with their work. • Pupils learn to respect each other and manage themselves well. • The anti-bullying policy is excellent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents felt there was too little homework and others too much, especially where families do not have computers. • They would like more information about how their child is getting on. • The school working more closely with parents.

Parents who responded in writing to the inspectors and those who attended the pre-inspection meeting were generally very satisfied with the school. The inspection team supports these positive views, many of which are significant strengths.

Parents had mixed views about the amount of homework set and some were worried that pupils without computers and internet links at home were at a disadvantage. The inspection team read many pupils' school journals, talked to pupils about their homework and looked at homework that had been set. Generally homework was of a good quality, linked well to work in class and the journal gave pupils, parents and teachers good information. Homework was usually very carefully set or written on the board for pupils to copy. There are many opportunities during the day and after school where pupils can get access to computers and the internet, consequentially, no pupil should be disadvantaged.

The school gives parents excellent information about a very wide range of issues to do with their children's progress and extremely good opportunities to work closely with them. The evening meeting for Year 9 parents explaining about target setting is a good example.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Most pupils achieve high standards particularly at the end of Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form.

1. When pupils start at Kingsbury High School in Year 7 their attainment is broadly average. The standards achieved by pupils in the national tests for 14 year olds are close to the average for all schools in England. During Years 10 and 11, and in the sixth form, pupils make good progress in their learning so that by the ages of 16 and 18 they achieve standards that are high and above national averages overall. This is because of the very positive way they respond to all that the school has to offer, the very good teaching that expects everyone to do their best and the richness of the curriculum. The positive climate for learning and pupils' very good attitudes to school have a strong impact on achievement: pupils make good progress in their learning to develop a good range of social, academic, physical and creative skills. This is represented very clearly in the work and the lessons seen during the inspection.
2. Results in the national tests for 14 year olds have risen at about the same rate as all schools in England over the past three years: in 1999 they were close to the national average. Girls achieved above the national average in English and mathematics, slightly higher than did boys. For them, results were comparable to the national average as were those for science for both girls and boys. When compared with similar schools, performance in all three subjects was above average for both boys and girls.
3. GCSE results have increased steadily since 1994 and, despite a dip in 1999, show a rising trend. The rate of increase is slightly lower than the national trend but over the past six years, overall GCSE results have been above the national average. In 1999 just over 54 per cent of pupils gained at least five A* - C GCSE grades compared with 46.3 per cent nationally. These results were slightly lower than the previous year when nearly 57 per cent of pupils gained these higher grades. Similarly, 95.9 per cent of pupils gained at least five passes at GCSE compared with 90.7 per cent nationally. The reason that overall results were average, even when the proportion of pupils gaining at least five GCSE grades at the higher levels was above average, is because the school has been very successful in the number of pupils who achieve at least one GCSE grade. In 1999, for example, only two pupils out of a total of 271 failed to achieve at least one pass. GCSE results have been consistently strong in mathematics, art and design and double award science over the past three years. Results have also been robust in statistics. The proportion gaining at least five or more GCSE grades at all levels, and those who achieve at least one GCSE grade, has also been above the national average. Girls have overtaken boys and achieved better results in each year since 1996.
4. In the sixth form GCE A level results have risen significantly since 1996 and overall performance is now above average. The strongest performance is in art, biology, geography and sociology where the proportion of students gaining the top A and B grades is higher than the national picture. The evidence gained from the inspection confirms these high standards and the very strong contribution made by the teaching. In particular, teachers' very good subject knowledge, and the excellent relationships they have with their students, has a very strong impact on the progress students make in their learning. GNVQ results are below average overall but high in intermediate level courses.

Teaching is very good with eight out of 10 lessons observed being good or very good: teachers are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about what they teach.

5. The quality of teaching is high throughout the school and strongest in the sixth form. In all lessons, teachers have a good grasp of their subject and use their enthusiasm very effectively to introduce new ideas and promote learning. They clearly enjoy teaching and gain great pleasure and satisfaction from making the work they set both fun and demanding. This is partly due to the well-planned and prepared lessons and partly because of the very positive relationships teachers establish with pupils. The good planning and preparation ensures that pupils know exactly what is expected of them and what they are to do. In the most effective lessons this enthusiasm rubs off on the pupils and they quickly become excited about their learning. In a Year 9 dance lesson the warm relationships and the teacher's sense of humour made learning come alive: all pupils wanted to learn and although they worked very hard they also had great fun. In a Year 7 mathematics lesson the quick introduction, the very demanding tasks and the brisk pace inspired pupils to do well. They enjoyed the challenge of solving the problems and were motivated and enthusiastic.

6. In the sixth form, teachers' secure knowledge and understanding is a very effective characteristic of the teaching and has a very strong impact on students' learning and the standards they achieve. In a Year 13 business education lesson clear explanations of economic theory and how this translates into practical examples made the work understandable and real for students. Similarly, in a Year 13 English lesson the teacher's secure knowledge and understanding was very effective in helping students explore the key arguments in a debate about the main themes of the novel "Woman in White".

7. The very good relationships that teachers have with pupils and students are a particularly strong feature of all the teaching. Pupils respond very well to the warm and friendly manner of teachers. In all lessons, pupils are treated with respect and their ideas and contributions valued as in a Year 10 religious education lesson where the very good relationships helped to ensure that pupils contributed well to a discussion about stereotypical behaviour. In a Year 9 history lesson, the contributions of the lower attaining pupils were treated with great respect and praise was used to encourage and motivate very effectively. In a Year 11 mathematics lesson the teacher created a very relaxed but nonetheless hardworking atmosphere which allowed pupils to make very good progress. A particularly positive result of the good relationships, of the care and respect shown to pupils and of teachers' good subject knowledge is the way they all come together in lessons and create a very positive climate for learning. Most significantly this ensures not only that pupils hold their teachers in high esteem and respect their expertise but that they want to work hard, behave well and live up to their teachers' high expectations of them. A good example of this was in a Year 7 English lesson where pupils were planning a story. Here, the teacher's sympathetic manner and the respect shown to pupils all helped to get the most out of pupils.

8. Another reason for the good teaching is the way teachers use searching questions to extend and deepen pupils' learning. In a Year 11 English lesson good probing questions helped to remind pupils of previous work on the characters in "Silas Marner" and draw out their understanding of the story. A good question and answer session was used well in a Year 10 science lesson to recap on the basic facts about energy and set the scene for the lesson. Lessons are also well organised and structured so that the variety of different activities keeps pupils interested and moves their learning forward at a brisk pace. The sequence of activities is such that pupils are able to build on their previous understanding in a structured way and apply what they have learnt to new situations or problems. In a

Year 9 lesson on electronics, information technology was used well to help develop pupils' understanding. The range of tasks and the way the time was broken down into individual and whole-class activities kept pupils motivated and challenged their thinking.

9. Teachers manage pupils in a very assured way and rarely have any difficulty establishing good behaviour in their classrooms. As a result teachers are able to be quite flexible with their teaching and take risks. In a Year 8 English lesson sensitive management of pupils, high expectations and consistent expectations enabled the teacher to use a wide range of strategies to help pupils understand metaphors. This included pupils working in groups to mime metaphors to the whole class. This was particularly effective in keeping pupils' attention and helping them to understand the concepts.

The high quality of learning gives the school a vibrant ethos where pupils are keen to succeed, are highly motivated and very well behaved, and make positive relationships with others.

10. Pupils' attitudes to learning are a real strength. They are the result of the very good teaching and as a result pupils come to school ready to study and interested in gaining new knowledge and skills. They are keen to learn and as soon as break or lunch finishes the playground empties immediately and pupils go quickly into their classrooms. A common feature of most lessons is the interest pupils take in what the teachers say and in the subject they are learning. They show a curiosity and a desire to know more and they believe their efforts will result in progress. In a Year 9 mathematics lesson on trigonometry pupils were very keen to do well, stayed focused on their work throughout and were very enthusiastic. This helped them to make very good progress in their learning so that by the end of the lesson they were able to use trigonometry to solve problems with confidence. The rate at which pupils work is very brisk and they nearly always complete their tasks by the end of lessons. This happens both in lessons and during after school clubs and activities. Pupils using the open learning centre during lunchtime took great pride in their ability to use information technology to complete homework to a high standard and gain access to the Internet.

11. Pupils are prepared to work hard and want to increase their knowledge and understanding. In a Year 13 mathematics lesson looking at regression lines, students' self motivation, attentiveness and ability to concentrate enabled them to gain new knowledge and apply this to solving problems. Pupils also get great fun from their learning, as the work in many subjects is so well presented by teachers who have a very secure grasp of their subject and use humour effectively. A Year 9 German lesson was made fun for pupils by the relationships they had with their teacher, by the good range of different activities and the nimble way the teacher moved them from one activity to another.

12. In all lessons pupils concentrate very well. When they meet difficulties they persevere and are determined to do all they can to find a solution. Significantly, too, pupils readily help each other to overcome problems showing not just a resolve to get things right but also a concern for others. In a Year 13 information technology lesson one pupil, who wanted to replace the dollar sign with a pound sign, was quickly helped by others who shared their solutions with him. Teachers are very good at encouraging this desire to find out and to learn.

13. Pupils are willing to join in discussions, share their ideas and demonstrate their creativity in dance or drama with others. They do this because they have trust in their teachers to ensure these opportunities are managed sensitively and because they know their peers will respond with positive and constructive remarks. Relationships between

teachers and pupils and among pupils themselves are very good. They show a mutual respect and a liking for one another. Pupils are willing to try difficult tasks because they know they can take risks and make mistakes without being ridiculed. They expect and receive good support from their teachers who value pupils' positive response. Pupils' good involvement in lessons develops their understanding and knowledge extremely effectively. Teachers and pupils contribute to achieving an atmosphere where learning of high quality can take place.

14. Behaviour is consistently good in lessons and around the school. This results directly from the very good relationships, the enthusiasm that both teachers and pupils have for learning and the high quality of the teaching. Combined, these make the school vibrant and exciting, a place where learning is encouraged and where there is a commitment to the highest standards for all. In a Year 7 physical education lesson, high expectations, excellent subject knowledge, well-structured activities and good management all ensured that pupils' enthusiasm was used to extend and challenge them physically.

The school gives pupils rich and stimulating experiences that encourage thoughtful and sensitive responses to their learning and promotes personal development very well.

15. Pupils are given a very broad curriculum which covers more than the National Curriculum. Throughout Key Stage 3 all pupils take dance and drama. All pupils have access to a very wide range of out of class activities and are encouraged to use creative, physical as well as intellectual effort in their learning; this they do with enthusiasm and commitment.

16. The excellent opportunities for dance develop pupils' self confidence and poise and drama encourages their speaking and listening skills which they use in other subjects. Both subjects enable pupils to develop presentational skills which help them when they have to show what they know and understand. In a Year 9 geography lesson groups of pupils presented their work about the impact of an earthquake using diagrams, posters and overhead transparencies as visual aids. They spoke confidently and clearly, and could demonstrate their good understanding of their topics using a variety of individual approaches. English lessons often call upon pupils to read aloud or to present the findings of group discussions and they do so with assurance and vitality. Pupils are willing to share and show their feelings knowing these will be respected.

17. Throughout their lessons pupils are expected to consider important spiritual and moral questions thoughtfully. In a Year 11 English lesson discussing the book *Frankenstein* the teacher included thought-provoking questions about God, Satan and creation. In a Year 11 religious education lesson, a discussion about capital punishment led pupils to consider carefully both sides of the debate and how these relate to different religious beliefs and values. Very perceptive and mature ideas were developed in a Year 13 sociology lesson and pupils made good links between the message given in soft drinks advertisements and the underlying hidden message which they felt was much less wholesome. The mutually supportive and respectful atmosphere in classes allows pupils to speak their intimate and personal ideas safely.

18. The high quality of teaching contributes strongly to the richness of the curriculum. Teachers' enthusiasm and knowledge of their subjects, and their ability to teach it to others, ensures the content of lessons is stimulating and challenging. The variety of musical traditions pupils is introduced to in music and dance is wide and broadens and enhances their knowledge. In a Year 9 dance lesson, both boys and girls responded sensitively to

their task creating their own dance motif. They worked in pairs, showing respect and awareness of one another as they performed moves which required trust in each other. The range of books used in English introduces pupils to a wide variety of authors and styles. The chosen books also enable pupils to discuss cultures that are strange to them, either because the story took place a long time ago or because it is set in an unfamiliar country. Year 11 pupils discussing 'Silas Marner' quickly identified details about the life of people in the story despite being set in rural England a couple of hundred years ago.

19. The quality of assemblies also contributes significantly to the thoughtful and sensitive way pupils respond to all that the school has to offer and to their personal development. An assembly for Year 11 was expertly presented in a way that both held pupils' attention and gave a clear moral and social message about behaviour. Similarly, a Year 10 assembly provided a very positive atmosphere with a strong sense of community in which all are valued. This was illustrated in both assemblies by the way the signing for hearing impaired pupils enabled all to be included.

Inspirational leadership and effective management create a culture of achievement, success and improvement at all levels.

20. One of the main reasons for the success of Kingsbury High School is the high quality leadership provided by the headteacher and senior and middle managers. The headteacher brings a passion and commitment to educational endeavour that is translated into a very clear vision for the school. All in the school, teachers, pupils, senior managers and governors share this vision, so that everyone understands how they contribute to the work of the school. Pupils in Year 9 who act as prefects carry out their tasks very responsibly and with the same level of respect and care shown to them by teachers. In the upper school building prefects patrol the corridors at break with a quiet but assured manner. Their interactions with other pupils showed sensitivity and a clear sense of responsibility.

21. The high quality of the leadership is very effective in promoting and valuing individuals. This is apparent right across the school and in the way teachers not only have time for pupils but also know them very well. As a result everyone is clear about what the school stands for and where it is going. It is this sense of direction, the belief in its values and in individuals, coupled with the excellent relationships and high expectations, that create a strong culture of success and achievement. The fact that all but two pupils achieved at least one GCSE grade in 1999 is a good example of the school's commitment to the achievement of all. Similarly, the decision by governors to fund individual music tuition, so that parents do not have to pay for their children to learn an instrument, exemplifies the school's vision and attests to its commitment to helping everyone achieve their best.

22. The seamless way the school is managed, both day to day and on a strategic level, has a very positive impact on improvement. Performance data is analysed carefully and the findings are used to set priorities and targets. In making significant improvements to the achievement of girls, for example, the school has identified that boys' results, although rising, are not as good as they should be. Significant improvements have been made to the quality of the buildings and this is very significant in creating a purposeful and pleasant learning environment. In all its work, the school seeks high quality by getting the best from everyone.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Teaching in a small number of lessons: too little variety in the activities pupils are asked to do, or in the methods teachers use, leads to a relatively slow pace of learning that runs out of steam before the end.

23. Although teaching is very good, there is a small number of lessons where the organisation does not enable pupils to learn quickly enough. In some cases lessons start well with a teacher-led introduction followed by instructions but few opportunities for pupils to engage actively in their learning. Pupils follow instructions well but rarely have opportunities to extend their learning or develop new avenues of thinking. By the end of these lessons pupils had completed their work and the last ten minutes or so were wasted. In other lessons, a very brief introduction gave pupils little direction or understanding of what was expected. In these lessons, teachers did not intervene quickly enough to challenge pupils' thinking or check progress, usually because they were responding to requests for help from other pupils. In a few other lessons, teachers missed the opportunity to sum up what was learnt.

24. In some lessons teachers plan the content of the lesson carefully but do not provide enough work for pupils, particularly the high attainers. Sometimes, in their efforts to set clear expectations for pupils, teachers spend too much of the lesson talking pupils through a task rather than letting them work by themselves. Where this happens, the pace of the lesson is quite slow and pupils do not learn quickly enough. The school has done much to improve the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection and is in a very strong position to improve these lessons which are never less than sound.

In a small number of lessons the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are not reinforced as well as they are in most lessons and this sometimes hampers the learning of lower attaining pupils.

25. In many lessons, literacy is developed very well and this aids pupils' learning significantly. Literacy is a major focus of the school's work and much has been done to raise teachers' awareness and expertise. In a few lessons, however, there was insufficient use of the strategies the school has developed to support the teaching of literacy. In some lessons, for example, the key words and vocabulary pupils need for the subject were not displayed. In these cases this meant that pupils made limited progress in developing the specific vocabulary for that subject. In other lessons, these key words were displayed but not used to help pupils' learning.

26. There is also some inconsistency in the way pupils' books are marked. In most cases the quality of marking is good but some of the opportunities to correct basic literacy skills and knowledge are not always taken. Spelling is not always corrected and the same mistakes are repeated in the next piece of work. Pupils mostly have a wide and appropriate vocabulary but there are occasions in science and English where the lower achieving pupils have difficulty in understanding the more complex words. Many of these pupils are well supported, particularly where there are additional support teachers or assistants in lessons. However, in a few lessons, where this support is not available or where teachers use a restricted range of strategies, some lower attaining pupils do not make as much progress in their learning as they might.

27. As with literacy, most lessons develop pupils' numeracy skills effectively. In a few cases, however, where pupils use calculation to help them understand an idea, or draw graphs and charts to present information, these skills are not developed as effectively as they might be. Teachers in these lessons tend to miss opportunities to develop numeracy skills and skate over the difficulties pupils have with their number work. In a Year 10 lesson

looking at population, a few pupils would have benefited from help in revising their calculation skills.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

28. The school should now:

- (1) Improve teaching in the small number of lessons where the pace of learning is relatively slow by ensuring that all lessons:
 - include a range of different activities that provide sufficient work for all pupils;
 - use appropriate strategies that both challenge pupils' thinking and give opportunities to extend learning;
- (2) Achieve greater consistency in the way the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are reinforced in all subjects by:
 - ensuring that all lessons use the agreed strategies to support the literacy including key words and vocabulary;
 - using opportunities presented by the work to support and develop pupils' numeracy skills.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	64
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	11

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5	22	53	20	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils on the school's roll	1,549	375
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	271	

Special educational needs

	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	67	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	271	5

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1,061

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	63

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	7.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	1.1

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	1999	165	137	302

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	111	116	97
	Girls	110	91	79
	Total	221	207	176
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	73	69	58
	National	63	62	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	27	37	22
	National	28	38	23

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	98	120	107
	Girls	98	97	87
	Total	196	217	194
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	65	72	64
	National	64	64	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	23	38	23
	National	31	37	28

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4

Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	139	132	271

GCSE results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A*-G	1 or more grades A*-G
Numbers of pupils achieving the standard specified	Boys	61	132	138
	Girls	86	128	129
	Total	147	260	267
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	54	96	99
	National	46.3	90.7	95.7

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	39
	National	37.8

Figures in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Vocational qualifications		Number	% success rate
Number studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all those they studied	School	n/a	n/a
	National	n/a	n/a

Attainment at the end of the sixth form

Number of students aged 16, 17 and 18 on roll in January of the latest reporting year who were entered for GCE A-level or AS-level examinations	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	66	80	146

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	17.1	17.1	17.1	6	6.2	6.2
National	17.7	18.1	17.9	2.7	2.8	2.8

Figures in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Vocational qualifications		Number	% success rate
Number in their final year of studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all those they studied	School	n/a	n/a
	National	n/a	82.5

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	99
Black – African heritage	71
Black – other	37
Indian	754
Pakistani	110
Bangladeshi	6
Chinese	17
White	234
Any other minority ethnic group	172

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	24	2
Black – African heritage	13	0
Black – other	3	0
Indian	19	2
Pakistani	3	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	1	0
White	15	0
Other minority ethnic groups	15	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y13

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	129
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15.3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y7 – Y13

Total number of education support staff	31
Total aggregate hours worked per week	863.5

Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y13

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	77.3%
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Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y11

Key Stage 2	
Key Stage 3	20.6
Key Stage 4	20.7

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
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	£
Total income	6,819,208
Total expenditure	6,857,204
Expenditure per pupil	3,603
Balance brought forward from previous year	465,562
Balance carried forward to next year	427,566

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	1924
Number of questionnaires returned	250

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	41	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	37	55	5	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	49	2	1	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	53	11	4	4
The teaching is good.	36	51	6	1	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	31	50	14	3	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	38	51	6	2	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	39	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	24	50	15	4	7
The school is well led and managed.	42	44	6	0	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	38	51	4	1	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	43	41	7	3	6