

INSPECTION REPORT

CRANBOURNE SCHOOL
BASINGSTOKE

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique Reference Number: 116432

Headteacher: Mrs Ann Morrison

Reporting inspector: Mrs Jean Head
1604

Dates of inspection: 11-15 October 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 708125

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:	County
Age range of pupils:	11 to 16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Mike French
Date of previous inspection:	1-5 May 1995

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Lynn Jenkins	Religious education	
Edward Little	Science	Staffing
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Jennifer Murray	Physical education	The Curriculum Special educational needs
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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- At ages 14 and 16, attainment is above average; pupils make good progress in learning.
- Teaching is of good quality; teachers manage pupils very well and achieve high standards of discipline.
- Pastoral care provides all pupils with very good personal and academic support.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Leadership is strong and very effective.
- Relationships within the school are very good; care and concern for individuals are underpinned with a drive to achieve the best possible academic standards.

Where the school has weaknesses

- Information technology is not used sufficiently to support learning in subjects, particularly at Key Stage 4.
- Spiritual provision is unsatisfactory overall.
- Monitoring of teaching, assessment and the curriculum is inconsistent across departments.
- Pupils have limited access to a broad range of careers information.

The school has very many more strengths than weaknesses. The governors' action plan will set out how the weaknesses identified during the inspection are to be tackled. The plan will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection in securing improvements. It has addressed most of the key issues in the 1995 report successfully. Pupils are now challenged appropriately in almost all subjects; however, not enough is expected of pupils in some art and physical education lessons at Key Stage 3. Very good progress has been made in improving provision for non-statemented pupils with learning difficulties. Some headway has been made in developing the learning resource centre to support learning across the curriculum, but there is still a shortage of books within it. Sufficient time is now allocated for religious education at Key Stage 4. The school is well aware that statutory requirements for a daily act of collective worship remain unmet. In addition, good behaviour and good quality teaching have been maintained. GCSE results have risen, although, from 1995 to 1998, the rate of overall improvement was slower than that nationally. Recently, the school has made significant improvements in the planned provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; as yet, plans are not implemented fully. The school has also redefined its aims and future direction; new management structures have been put in place to help realise these aims. Given its strong foundations and the very effective leadership, the school is now in a very good position to secure further improvements.

Standards in subjects

The following table shows standards achieved by 14 and 16 year olds in national tests and GCSE examinations in 1999:

Performance in:	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Key	
Key Stage 3	A	C	<i>well above average</i>	<i>A</i>
GCSE examinations	B	C	<i>above average</i>	<i>B</i>
			<i>average</i>	<i>C</i>
			<i>below average</i>	<i>D</i>
			<i>well below average</i>	<i>E</i>

1998: In the Year 9 National Curriculum tests, pupils' attainment overall was above the national average for all schools and in line with that for schools with similar intake. Attainment was above that found in all schools nationally in each core subject; however, when compared with similar schools, performance was in line with national averages in English and mathematics but below average in science. GCSE results varied when compared with national norms. Pupils' average GCSE points score was in line with the national average for all schools but below that for schools with similar intake. However, the percentage of pupils gaining five or more A* to C grades was above the national average for all schools and in line with that for similar schools. Statistical information published by Ofsted indicates that in 1998, the strongest subjects at GCSE were music, computer studies, design and technology, modern foreign languages and mathematics. The weakest subjects were physical education, business studies, science, geography and art.

1999: Recently published comparative data shows that standards have improved. Whilst Year 9 National Curriculum test results in English remain above those found in all schools nationally, results for mathematics and science are now well above national averages, as is overall performance at age 14. Test results are now in line with those found in schools with similar intake in all three core subjects. GCSE results have also improved. The school's average GCSE points score has increased significantly and is now above the national average for all schools and in line with that for similar schools.

This overall picture of above average attainment is confirmed by inspection evidence.

Quality of teaching

	Overall quality	Most effective in:	Least effective in:
Years 7-9	Good	Drama, music	Art, physical education
Years 10-11	Good	Drama, music	
English	Satisfactory		
Mathematics	Good		

Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Of the lessons observed, 2 per cent were excellent, 16 per cent were very good, 45 per cent were good, 32 per cent were satisfactory and 5 per cent were unsatisfactory. Very good teaching was observed in nearly all subjects.

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

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Good; pupils are polite and friendly and behave consistently well in lessons.
Attendance	Good. Pupils arrive punctually and lessons start on time.
Ethos*	Very good. Pupils have good attitudes to work and want to learn. Teachers manage pupils very well; relationships are very good. The school seeks to achieve the best possible standards.
Leadership and management	Good. The headteacher provides very strong and effective leadership. She is supported very well by senior and middle managers, by well-informed governors and by a committed staff.
Curriculum	Good. The curriculum is well designed and flexible enough to meet all pupils' interests, aspirations and learning needs.
Pupils with special educational needs	Provision is very good and allows pupils with special educational needs to make good progress.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Good overall. Provision for social development is very good; that for moral development is good. Cultural provision is satisfactory; at present, spiritual provision is unsatisfactory.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good overall. There are sufficient well-qualified staff. In general, accommodation is good, although parts of the buildings are in a poor state of repair. Resources to support learning are mostly satisfactory, but there are deficiencies in information technology and a shortage of books in the learning resource centre.
Value for money	Good. The school uses below average funding efficiently and effectively to support learning and attains above average results.

* *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"> • Parents find the school is easy to approach with questions or problems. • They feel the school allows their children to achieve good standards. • They feel welcome and are encouraged to participate in school life. • They like the mutual respect and good relations that exist between teachers and pupils. • Their children like the school and are happy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents are not satisfied with the homework set for pupils. • Some feel they are not sufficiently well informed of their children's progress.

Parents are very supportive of the school. Their level of involvement is good; they help with school trips and wield painting brushes to redecorate and brighten dilapidated areas. The positive views, expressed at the parents' meeting and through the questionnaire, were supported by evidence collected during the inspection. The inspection team could find no evidence to substantiate the concerns of some parents over homework. Although, very

occasionally, teachers do not adhere to the homework timetable, almost always, homework is set regularly and is used appropriately to reinforce and extend learning.

The concern regarding the quality of reporting about pupils' progress was justified to some extent in that past reports have not always given parents sufficient information about attainment and what their children understand and can do. However, the style of reports has been changed, as of this year, to give parents more information of this kind. Now, the information provided for parents about their children's progress is good. In addition to annual reports, monitoring cards will give parents a snapshot of progress. These are sent out at different times to the full report; the first is due shortly, for Year 8.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

- Develop information technology across the curriculum to improve both pupils' information technology skills and learning in subjects by:
 - improving the resources for information technology;
 - incorporating its use into all subject planning;
 - co-ordinating and monitoring what is actually taught;
 - assessing pupils' attainment against National Curriculum criteria;
 - providing training for staff who are not confident in its use;
 - fulfilling statutory requirements for the teaching of information technology.(See paragraphs 11, 33, 42, 68, 73, 77, 100, 127, 135, 136, 138, 139, 140)

- Ensure all new plans and policies are implemented consistently and monitored effectively, so that they result in actual improvements in pupils' attainment and in curricular provision. In particular, ensure that:
 - the recent audit of opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is written into schemes of work and is reflected in classroom practice across all subjects;
 - the school's assessment and new marking policies are implemented effectively by all departments, so that pupils know how they are progressing and how to improve the standard of their work;
 - the purpose of, the criteria for, and the follow up to monitoring are understood clearly by all staff.(See paragraphs 26, 43, 45, 47, 67, 89, 91, 92, 99, 113, 118, 120, 127, 147, 159, 164)

- Improve provision for careers education by:
 - enhancing the careers library and interview room to make them more attractive and accessible to pupils;
 - developing planning for careers so that it underpins teaching in both careers lessons and tutor time;
 - broadening the range of experiences available to pupils to learn about career opportunities.(See paragraphs 35, 76)

In addition to the key issues above, a few other minor weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. These are highlighted in paragraphs 13, 22, 29, 34, 47, 68, 69, 75, 76, 80, 159.

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. Cranbourne School is a comprehensive school for boys and girls aged 11 to 16. With 1170 pupils on roll, it is larger than many other comprehensive schools nationally. There are roughly the same number of boys and girls. The school is situated in Basingstoke and was built in the late 1960s. Just over half the pupils come from the immediate vicinity, an area with estates, older housing and some light industry, and from the commuter village of Oakley. The rest are attracted from all parts of Basingstoke and beyond. Pupils are from over 20 different primary schools and from mixed socio-economic backgrounds. Just over five per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below average for comprehensive schools.

2. Overall, pupils' attainment on entry is broadly in line with that found in schools nationally. However, there are more high attainers in the current Year 7 than in most schools. The school has identified around 28 per cent of its pupils as having special educational needs; of these, 10 pupils have statements of special educational needs. Needs include moderate learning difficulties, dyslexia, emotional and behavioural difficulties, together with speech, hearing and physical impairments. About two per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language, which is a bit higher than in most schools. Typically, about 80 per cent of 16 year olds move into further education at nearby colleges. In 1998, 10 per cent left to go into employment.

3. The school's core purpose is summarised in its mission statement: "Cranbourne exists to bring the best out of each pupil". The school aims at excellence and seeks to enable its pupils to develop into confident, responsible and caring young adults; emphasis is placed on the development of the whole child and on the needs of each individual. To ensure its aims are met, the school has recently redefined its strategic intentions. These are: to become an excellent comprehensive school; to develop high quality teaching and learning with the best possible academic standards; to maintain high expectations for behaviour and to establish a culture of success; to provide a variety of experiences and opportunities; and to maintain and develop links with the community. Strategies for realising these intentions are set out in the school's 1999 - 2001 development plan. Aspects identified for improvement, at both whole school and departmental level, include the curriculum, the school's ethos, staff development and the promotion of the school. There is a separate plan for budget improvements.

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
1999	127	118	245

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 5 or Above	Boys	81(74)	98(80)	86(77)
	Girls	100(92)	86(66)	82(67)
	Total	181(166)	184(146)	168(144)
Percentage at NC Level 5 or above	School	74(79)	75(69)	69(68)
	National	63(65)	62(60)	55(56)
Percentage at NC Level 6 or above	School	34(37)	41(46)	31(30)
	National	28(35)	38(36)	23(27)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 5 or Above	Boys	94(59)	100(35)	99(22)
	Girls	95(75)	92(34)	91(22)
	Total	189(134)	192(69)	190(44)
Percentage at NC Level 5 or above	School	79(64)	79(75)	78(71)
	National	64(62)	64 (64)	60(62)
Percentage at NC Level 6 or above	School	46(30)	42(52)	39(36)
	National	31 (31)	37 (37)	28(31)

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
1999	121	133	254

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	55(61)	112(101)	117(108)
	Girls	79(54)	127(88)	131(93)
	Total	134(115)	239(189)	248(201)
Percentage achieving standard specified	School	53(55)	94.1(90)	97.6(95.7)
	National	53.2(44.6)	90.5(89.8)	95(95.2)

Number studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and percentage of *such pupils* who achieved all those they studied:

	Number	% Success rate
School	0	0
National		

Attendance

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

		%
Authorised Absence	School	6.8
	National comparative data	7.9
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.7
	National comparative data	1.1

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	75
Permanent	7

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	18
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

4. By the end of compulsory schooling, pupils' attainment is above average. Although in 1998, the average GCSE points score attained by pupils at the school was close to the national average, inspection evidence indicates that attainment at age 16 is above that found in schools nationally. This is confirmed by very recently published national data for 1999.

5. In the 1998 GCSE examinations, the proportion of pupils gaining five or more A* to C grades was above the national average for all schools and in line with that for schools with similar intake. Predictions based on nationally standardised data indicate that this percentage was just above what might be expected, given pupils' attainment on entry to the school. The percentage of pupils gaining five or more A* to G grades was not as strong, nor was the average GCSE points score attained by pupils at the school. The latter was in line with the national average for all schools, but below that for similar schools. Statistical information published by Ofsted indicates that in 1998, the strongest subjects at GCSE were music, computer studies, design and technology, modern foreign languages and mathematics. The weakest subjects were physical education, business studies, science, geography and art.

6. GCSE results have improved since the last inspection. In 1998, 55 per cent of pupils left the school with five or more GCSE A* to C grades, compared with 41 per cent in 1995. The school's average points score also improved from 1995 to 1998, but at a slower rate than the national average. During this period, girls attained better results than boys, but by a much narrower margin than that found nationally. For example, if results from 1995 to 1998 are averaged, girls' attainment was close to the national average for girls, whereas boys' results were above that for boys. This followed a drive by the school to tackle the issue of boys' underachievement. Very recently published comparative data for 1999 shows that, overall, the school's GCSE results have improved significantly. The proportion of pupils gaining five or more A* to C grades remains above the national average for all schools and in line with that for similar schools. However, the school's average points score rose from 38.8 to 42.8 points per pupil and is now also above the comparable average for all schools nationally and in line with that for similar schools. Again, girls attained better results than boys, the margin now being more typical of that usually found nationally.

7. Attainment overall is also above average at age 14. In the 1998 National Curriculum tests, the average level attained by pupils in each core subject was above the national average for all schools. Average levels were in line with national averages for schools with similar intake in English and mathematics, but below the comparable average in science. However, if results from the last three years are averaged, performance has been in line with that found in all schools nationally in English, but above the same in mathematics and science. Girls have attained slightly better than boys, very much in line with national trends. Overall, there has been a consistent trend of improvement since the last inspection, at a faster rate than that found nationally. Recently published national comparisons indicate that standards have improved further. Whilst the school's performance in English in the 1999 National Curriculum tests remains above the national average for all schools, results are now well above the comparable averages in mathematics and science, as is overall performance across all three core subjects. When compared with results for similar schools, performance in all three core subjects is now in line with that found nationally.

8. This overall picture of above average attainment around the end of both key stages is confirmed by inspection evidence. Attainment in lessons is above expectations; the proportion of pupils attaining the standard expected for their age and the proportion attaining high standards for their age are both above that found in schools nationally. Attainment is at its strongest in relation to national norms towards the end of Key Stage 4, where it is well above average in music and above average in English, mathematics, design and technology, drama, history, modern foreign languages and religious education. Attainment is in line with that expected nationally in all remaining subjects except for information technology where, overall, it is below average. The picture is not quite as solid at the end of Key Stage 3. Attainment is above that expected nationally in English, mathematics, science, history and music. It is in line with expectations in art, design and technology, geography, information technology, modern foreign languages and religious education. It is well above expectations in drama, but below the same in physical education.

9. Overall, pupils' literacy skills are better than expected for their age. Most subjects provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills; the ability to listen carefully is a strong feature of all year groups. Standards of written work are above average in most subjects; work is presented clearly and legibly. In history and geography, for example, pupils produce well-structured, extended writing at both key stages. Pupils cope well with the required reading in most subjects. For example, they use a range of literary sources in history with confidence and make good use of keywords displayed in geography classrooms. Some Key Stage 3 pupils, notably lower attainers, struggle to understand wordy problems in mathematics; most are more successful at Key Stage 4. To raise standards further, a policy for literacy across the curriculum is being developed.

10. Standards of numeracy are above average overall and allow pupils to cope successfully with the numerical demands of other subjects. Whilst lacking fluency in mental calculation, pupils use a range of methods when calculating to gain the correct answer, for example, when carrying out calculations in science and when constructing pie charts in geography. They can apply methods of calculation taught in mathematics to work in other subjects, for example, when calculating prices and totalling shopping lists in history and modern foreign languages. Pupils demonstrate a strength when collecting and interpreting data, particularly when this is associated with GCSE coursework, for example, in English, when illustrating in graphical form Lady Macbeth's state of mind during different scenes of the play and in science, when carrying out investigations and analysing results. The school recognises that its numeracy policy needs reviewing in light of the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy within primary schools.

11. Overall, pupils' information technology skills are below the standard expected for their age. Skills are broadly as expected by the end of Key Stage 3, in that most pupils are able to use word processing, desktop publishing, data bases and spreadsheets effectively to support their work. However, limited experience in using information technology to measure and control different situations means that skills in these areas are underdeveloped. Key Stage 4 pupils have few opportunities to develop skills in these aspects of information technology. Pupils taking GCSE, CLAIT or GNVQ key skills achieve at least satisfactory standards in communicating and handling information and in modelling. For pupils not taking these subjects, progress is unsatisfactory, as there are too few opportunities across the curriculum for them to improve their competencies. Many pupils at both key stages are able to use CD ROMs and the Internet for researching information.

12. Overall, pupils make good progress during their time at the school. Key Stage 2 test data and other nationally standardised test results indicate that, until 1998, attainment on entry was broadly average. Predictions based on this information indicate that GCSE results are at least as might be expected given pupils' attainment on entry. Inspection evidence confirms that, overall, pupils of all abilities make good progress in their learning, both in

lessons and over time. Progress is satisfactory overall at Key Stage 3; pupils develop their understanding of both familiar and new subjects appropriately and, sometimes, well. Progress is good overall at Key Stage 4, where the rate of learning is enhanced by pupils' motivation to do well and by well-focused support from staff. Targeted support work, the key skills course at Key Stage 3 and the curriculum at Key Stage 4 enable pupils with learning difficulties to made good progress throughout the school.

13. Overall, pupils consolidate and extend their learning appropriately in most subjects. Pupils make very good gains in learning across both key stages in music and drama, good progress in design and technology, geography, history, and religious education, and satisfactory progress in science and art. In English, mathematics and modern foreign languages, progress is satisfactory at Key Stage 3 and good at Key Stage 4. In information technology, progress is satisfactory at Key Stage 3 but unsatisfactory at Key Stage 4, due to limited opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to improve their skills. In physical education the reverse is true; progress is too slow at Key Stage 3 but is satisfactory at Key Stage 4.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

14. Pupils have good attitudes to their studies. They are interested in their lessons, willing to learn and ready to answer teachers' questions. They will also ask questions to gain further understanding; this readiness to seek information was seen, for example, in several mathematics and science lessons. Pupils are attentive and listen well. They have good powers of concentration: there are very few lapses towards the end of lessons. They work with energy and enthusiasm, particularly in response to lively teaching, for example, as in GCSE music lessons and in a GCSE design and technology (food) project seen during the inspection. As pupils move through the school, they are increasingly able to work independently. For example, they take up opportunities for personal research and study in history at Key Stage 4; many use computers in the information technology rooms at breaks and after school.

15. Behaviour is good. Pupils behave consistently well in lessons: they are sensible and responsible. Pupils are polite and friendly with members of staff and visitors. Older pupils can be trusted to work out of the classroom on their own. They handle equipment and resources, such as computers, with care. Behaviour is also good around the school, though standards are not consistently as high as in lessons. The one-way system is not always followed; there is some litter; and lavatories can be untidy. There is little bullying or harassment. The number of exclusions and, in particular, fixed term exclusions is above average for a school of this size. The rate has risen in recent years, partly in response to the school's policy of trying to keep pupils in school while maintaining standards of behaviour.

16. The quality of relationships in the school is very good. Pupils collaborate well together and work constructively in pairs and groups. In English lessons, they help to check each other's work and in Year 11 history, pupils conduct joint research on pre-war Germany. There is very good social interaction. Boys and girls work willingly together. Pupils listen to each other's views and performances; they respect differing opinions. Relationships between pupils and members of staff are also very good. Pupils have confidence in their teachers and like the way they make time to explain homework problems. Members of staff and parents alike commented with pleasure on the way former pupils keep in touch. Pupils with special educational needs respond well to the additional help given to them. They form good relationships with class teachers and support staff and have positive attitudes to their lessons. During withdrawal work and the key skills course, they gain confidence in their ability to learn and their self esteem is developed well.

17. Pupils respond well to the provision the school makes for their personal development. They are ready to accept responsibility and do so willingly. The many prefects take their duties very seriously. The school council members represent their year groups diligently; currently, they are reviewing the one-way system. Pupils help in the library from Year 8 onwards. The new literacy initiative, in which Year 10 pupils help Year 7 prepare texts they are going to study, involves some 70 pupils from both year groups. Pupils support a range of charities, local and national. Many take part in extra-curricular activities. There are many sporting teams. Dramatic and musical productions involve a sizeable proportion of the school either as performers or back-stage. Almost all Year 7 go to Cornwall for an adventure week. Other exchanges and visits are similarly well-subscribed. Pupils enjoy and appreciate what the school provides.

18. The good standards noted in the last inspection report have been maintained.

Attendance

19. Overall attendance and punctuality remain good and contribute positively to pupils' attainment. Levels of attendance are broadly in line with national figures; the rate of unauthorised absence during the last academic year was below the national average. Figures for the third week of the term in which the inspection took place are similarly low. Most pupils are punctual and lessons start promptly; pupils move quickly from one teaching room to another.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

20. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Of the lessons observed, 2 per cent were excellent, 16 per cent were very good, 45 per cent were good, 32 per cent were satisfactory and 5 per cent were unsatisfactory. Overall, teaching is equally strong at each key stage. The good teaching is attributable to a variety of factors. Two strengths underpin much of the teaching, these being teachers' good subject knowledge and their skilful management of pupils' behaviour. In addition, there are no aspects of teaching which are unsatisfactory overall and no generic weaknesses across subjects.

21. Teaching is very good in music and drama, and good overall in mathematics, science, design and technology, geography, history, modern languages and religious education. It is satisfactory overall in all other subjects. Teaching of the school's personal and social education programme is sound overall, with examples of good and very good teaching in some lessons. Very good teaching was observed in nearly all subjects, including those not reported on. The small amount of unsatisfactory teaching is due to one or more of the following factors: inadequate planning, wherein the purpose of the lesson is unclear; the use of activities or methods which do not promote learning; and insufficient teaching taking place, leading to a slow pace of learning.

22. Teachers use their good subject expertise effectively in teaching their lessons. Most lessons are conducted at a good pace and provide appropriate challenge for pupils. Lessons are planned and prepared well although, in some instances, learning outcomes are not sufficiently clear; there is an over-emphasis on what the teacher will do rather than on what pupils will learn. In the best lessons, what pupils are expected to learn from the lesson is discussed at the start; lesson aims are revisited at the end to summarise and reinforce the learning that has taken place, for example, as in a Year 10 vocational lesson where pupils learned how to use mind maps to support their work in English.

23. In general, teachers make good use of available resources to motivate pupils and to teach new knowledge and skills. For example, pupils are encouraged to think mathematically the moment they enter the mathematics department through the particularly good use of display. Most teachers use an appropriate range of methods and activities to achieve pace and variety in their teaching. They give clear explanations and demonstrations and make effective use of routine practice and practical work. Some staff employ teaching methods expressly designed to combat any inequality of attention and opportunity. For example, in English, pupils sit boy/girl in all classes and teachers, as in modern languages, pay close attention to an equitable gender divide in teaching groups and sets. In religious education, teachers also pay close attention to the construction of discussion groups.

24. Teachers use questioning well at the start of lessons to recap on previous learning. Some also make good use of questions throughout lessons to extend pupils' thinking as, for example, in a Year 11 design and technology lesson, where pupils were challenged to think through marketing issues for a new food product. Most strike an appropriate balance between direct teaching of the whole class and working with individuals or small groups. A strong feature of much of the teaching is the high level of individual support and guidance given to pupils both during lessons and during clinics, held at lunch times or after school.

25. A real strength of the teaching is the skilful way in which teachers manage pupils. Most have high expectations for standards of behaviour; clear routines result in good discipline in almost all lessons. Good humour and a purposeful atmosphere are evident in most lessons. Relationships are very good and are based on mutual respect between teachers and pupils; teachers are 'friendly but firm'.

26. Although satisfactory overall, a relative weakness is teachers' use of day-to-day assessment to help pupils understand what they need to do to make progress. Practice varies considerably both within and across departments. Although teachers know their pupils well, and pitch work accordingly to ensure appropriate challenge, not all use this knowledge as effectively as they might to give helpful feedback to pupils. For example, although most teachers give appropriate praise and verbal feedback to motivate pupils during lessons, a few offer praise for inadequate work. Most mark pupils' work regularly but, in many subjects, marking does not help pupils know how to improve their work. Similarly, since learning outcomes for lessons or topics of work are sometimes unclear, for example, in Key Stage 3 English lessons, pupils are not sufficiently aware of what they are aiming for, or of the progress they have made during a lesson or a series of lessons.

27. The inspection team could find no evidence to substantiate the concerns of some parents over homework. Scrutiny of pupils' work, planners and lesson observations indicate that although, very occasionally, teachers do not adhere to the homework timetable, in the vast majority of cases homework is set regularly and is used appropriately to reinforce and extend learning.

28. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. The majority of teachers are aware of pupils' needs, and the content of individual education plans; they select appropriate tasks and activities to help learning. In many lessons, these activities are not adapted for particular pupils, but good intervention and support from teachers or learning support assistants ensure that pupils gain success. Good planning often takes place between learning support assistants and teachers and this underpins successful teaching. Learning support teachers and support staff are knowledgeable, well prepared and use a good range of strategies and resources to bring a marked improvement in pupils' attainment. They like and respect the pupils with whom they work and show a sense of humour and warmth, making learning a positive experience. In withdrawal sessions, teaching is frequently of a very high quality. Sufficient time is given for repetition and practice; an appropriate pace is maintained throughout.

29. The good quality teaching noted in the last report has been maintained and, to a certain extent, extended. Expectations of pupils are now at least satisfactory, and usually good, in almost all subjects. Exceptions are to be found at Key Stage 3 in art and physical education; otherwise, pupils are challenged and extended appropriately in most lessons. The proportion of good or better teaching has improved from around 50 per cent to just over 60 per cent, reflecting the progress made by the school in its recent endeavours to improve the quality of teaching.

The curriculum and assessment

30. Curricular provision is good at both key stages. The school's curricular policy and aims are appropriate and stated clearly in the school prospectus. All required curricular policies are in place, including those for literacy and the teaching of key skills. The curriculum is well designed to meet all pupils' interests, aspirations and learning needs; it makes a strong contribution to the good progress and standards attained by the end of Key Stage 4.

31. The curriculum covers 25 hours of teaching time, in line with recommendations and is extended through an additional 30 minutes each day for registration, tutorial work and assemblies. Some short-term problems with timetabling this year have led to some pupils not receiving a balanced number of lessons across the two-week timetable in subjects such as mathematics, modern foreign languages and physical education. Other pupils, in certain year groups, have been taught by more than one teacher for some subjects.

32. At Key Stage 3, the curriculum is well balanced and meets statutory requirements. All National Curriculum subjects have sufficient time and, in addition, personal, social and health education and drama are taught through the key stage. The latter is provided to counteract underachievement and, in particular, to raise boys' self-esteem and confidence. Information technology is taught as a separate subject but few departments use it effectively to help pupils' learning in subjects. In Year 7, pupils study either French or German and in Year 8, about half the year group learns a second language. A very good key skills course is in place for those pupils not taking two languages. It is well planned and focuses on pupils' learning strategies; it aims to improve literacy and numeracy skills so these can be used more confidently in other subjects. Pupils are taught mainly in their tutor groups, with some setting according to ability occurring in Year 8 and Year 9 for mathematics and science. Good links are made with primary schools to ensure that the curriculum provides continuity for learning. Good arrangements are also made for pupils to choose their Key Stage 4 options sensibly.

33. At Key Stage 4, good use is made of a variety of courses that are flexibly arranged to suit pupils' interests and learning needs. These include short and long GCSE courses, intermediate GNVQs and a vocational option. The vocational course offers a broad programme of study and benefits from links with a local college. All pupils continue to study English, mathematics, science, physical education and personal, social and health education with optional long or short courses in design and technology, modern foreign languages and religious education. In addition, pupils have further choice of humanities and creative arts subjects, business studies and GNVQ courses in health and social education and leisure and tourism. The GNVQ courses are presently in their third cohort and have achieved 100 per cent success in their first year. A weakness in the otherwise very good curricular arrangements is the lack of co-ordinated provision for information technology across the key stage; in this respect the school does not fulfil statutory requirements. Visits and links with further education colleges provide pupils with good guidance for choosing post-16 courses.

34. The provision for personal and social education includes health, sex and careers education and information about the misuse and dangers of drugs. The content is planned carefully but, in some instances, the sequence of topics does not relate well to pupils' interests. At present, there is insufficient co-ordination of the planning of work in personal and social education lessons with that in tutorial time and assemblies.

35. Careers education is satisfactory overall. The programme starts in Year 7 and is included as modules in the personal and social education programme, with some teaching and support work in tutorial time. In Year 9, the school organises an ACE (Aiming for a College Education) day; it does not otherwise promote an understanding of careers through events such as conventions or business education days. Some pupils take advantage of the service provided by local business people for interview practice, but this is not universal across Key Stage 4. However, all pupils take part in two weeks of work experience in Year 10 and all have a careers interview with an adviser. The scheme of work provides for progression in lessons, but it does not give sufficient guidance on how form tutors are to support the teaching of careers education or how they prepare or debrief pupils from their work experience.

36. The curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good, particularly at Key Stage 4. Early identification of pupils' difficulties ensures participation in the full curriculum at Key Stage 3. Where withdrawal work takes place, pupils are not disadvantaged, as there is close liaison between learning support and subject teachers. At Key Stage 4, the good range of courses ensures that pupils are able to cope with demands made on them and gain success. A small group of pupils follow a specially designed course which allows them to gain experience of community work and vocational courses at a local further education college.

37. Curricular planning is good. The curriculum committee of the governing body is fully involved in reviewing examination results and curricular provision. Senior managers have identified a review of Key Stage 4 on the school development plan to ensure that changes can be planned for and implemented in line with the release of the new curriculum Orders. All subjects have schemes of work. The majority of these provide good guidance for teachers and underpin continuity in learning.

38. Overall, extra-curricular provision is good. Opportunities in music and drama are particularly strong; the school successfully involves large numbers of pupils in concerts, productions and dance and gymnastics competitions. There is growing support by pupils for sporting activities and the school has achieved success in local competitions. An average number of pupils represent the district or county in sporting fixtures. Many pupils take part in ski trips, foreign exchange visits and adventure weeks. A good range of clubs is provided and pupils are fortunate that most subjects provide clinics for Year 11 pupils who need additional help outside lesson time.

39. A broad and balanced curriculum has been maintained since the last inspection. Improvement has been made to the amount of time provided for religious education and to the overall quality of subject schemes of work. Very good progress has been made in the provision for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are well supported and detailed individual education plans are in place for all pupils at stage 2 and above on the special needs register.

40. The school's assessment practice is good overall. At both key stages, there are effective systems in place, at both whole school and departmental level, to assess pupils' attainment. The information so gained is used satisfactorily to inform curricular planning and to help pupils make progress.

41. The underlying strength of the school's practice is the collection and use of a wealth of assessment data, stored on the school's administrative computer. Key Stage 2 national assessments, together with other standardised test results, enable individual profiles to be built up during pupils' school life. These not only summarise past attainment but predict likely future performance. Profiles are supplied to heads of department who use them effectively in a variety of ways. In mathematics, for example, the information is used to set pupils and to provide targets for class teachers. Teachers are starting to use the information, together with their own assessments, to monitor who is underachieving and who needs further help. This has helped to ensure that, in general, expectations of pupils are appropriate and that lessons provide appropriate challenge. The practice is established more strongly at Key Stage 4 than at Key Stage 3. For example, in Year 11, senior staff use the data to draw up an initial 'grey' list; this is compared with teachers' assessments in order to identify pupils who need additional support with revision skills and ways of coping with examination pressure.

42. The assessment of pupils' attainment in different subjects, and the use made of the information so gained, is variable. Overall, practice is good, but there are weaknesses at Key Stage 3 in English, art and religious education and in information technology, which does not have a coherent assessment policy across the school. Most subjects have at least satisfactory arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment, including half-termly tests and internal examinations. Most departments now make effective use of subject-specific information to inform curricular planning and teaching. For example, an analysis of examination results is used purposefully by departments when considering a change of GCSE examination boards. Modern languages teachers have introduced more overt teaching of grammar, following their analysis of end of Key Stage 3 tests. Many other departments review the content and style of their teaching after module tests.

43. The use of subject specific assessment information to give feedback to pupils, so that they know what to do to make progress, is less secure. At Key Stage 4, all departments share GCSE coursework assessment criteria with their pupils. Thus, pupils are clear about what they need to do in order to raise their level of attainment. In history, pupils mark each other's work to examination criteria, thus gaining further insight into the demands of the examination board. At Key Stage 3 some departments have adopted the policy of sharing assessment criteria for half-termly tests with their pupils. This practice is particularly effective in science, drama, modern languages and resistant materials; it is relatively weak in English and art. Targets are given to pupils following such tests and, occasionally, after the marking of other exercises. Again, departments are not equally effective in setting clear targets or in the follow-up procedures.

44. The procedures for identifying and supporting pupils with learning difficulties are very good; procedures for annual reviews are held in accordance with requirements. Assessment data is used well to select pupils who need additional support. Regular testing enables learning support teachers to identify the progress being made by pupils. At present, there is no clear system for recording centrally the progress that pupils make in lessons against the targets on their individual education plans, nor the progress that pupils on the special educational needs register make as they move through the school. The learning support unit has provided clear and useful individual education plans for all pupils on stage 2 and above of the Code of Practice for use by teachers through the school. Subject teachers have a good understanding of their responsibility towards the targets on these plans but, in general, they have not adapted them to be subject specific, nor defined the steps needed for pupils to improve.

45. The school has successfully addressed most of the issues contained in the action plan drawn up following the previous inspection. The strong consultative approach to assessment procedures continues to develop, for example, all departments have been

involved recently in the building of a new marking policy. This has not yet been implemented consistently across or within departments. A newly-established teaching and learning group is already an effective forum for the sharing of good departmental practice.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

46. Overall, provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school has agreed to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by providing opportunities for pupils to develop and enrich their spiritual awareness, to distinguish right from wrong, to develop their social skills, to broaden their perspectives and to develop aesthetic sensitivities. Much work has been done recently to identify and analyse existing provision. The school has appointed a co-ordinator to ensure that all members of staff have the same understanding of this provision and to chart the opportunities which arise. As a result, there is a new policy in place which is intended to improve the provision, both within the curriculum and in school life more generally. This policy is not yet implemented fully across all departments.

47. In the audit, the school correctly identified spiritual provision as the area most in need of attention. Current provision is not yet satisfactory overall. There are two assemblies a week for each year group. These are often thought-provoking and make a significant contribution to pupils' moral, social and cultural development, but few of those observed had a spiritual content or constituted an act of collective worship. Although the audit identified topics which subject departments felt contributed to pupils' spiritual development, this aspect of provision is not yet reflected in schemes of work. As a result, opportunities which arise for reflection of a spiritual nature are often missed. There are exceptions; religious education makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual development in both the specific and the more general sense. Drama lessons allow pupils to develop a sense of spiritual awareness and self-knowledge.

48. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. The school's code of conduct sets out clearly what is considered to be right and wrong. All subjects emphasise these principles and many provide good opportunities for pupils to discuss moral issues. In drama, for example, pupils can explore the moral implications of methods of handling mental illness and marital relations. In personal, social and health education lessons, pupils discuss attitudes, both their own, and those of society in general, to such issues as drugs and discrimination. In religious education, pupils consider aspects of justice and freedom. Members of staff, both teaching and non-teaching, set good examples for pupils to follow. The head gives a strong lead to the school as a whole.

49. The quality of provision for pupils' social development is very good. The very good relationships in the school are an important part of this provision. All subjects provide opportunities for pupils to work together. This can be through team work and other collaborative sporting activities in physical education for example, or through the frequent use of pair and group work in history and modern foreign languages. The personal, social and health education programme makes an important contribution, through the study of social skills and the discussion of social issues. Pupils also explore social issues through improvisation in drama lessons. Drama and music productions give many opportunities for pupils to develop social skills on and off stage. The range of responsibilities open to pupils through the year structures and prefect systems also promotes their social development. Extra-curricular activities, such as residential trips and visits, provide further opportunities.

50. Cultural provision is satisfactory overall: there is some variation between subjects. It is good in music, both as part of the curriculum and through extra-curricular activities. Many pupils have extra instrumental lessons. There is a good background of cultural information in modern foreign language courses, including a programme of exchange visits. The

contribution of other curriculum subjects to pupils' cultural development is satisfactory, but the opportunities which arise are not always built into planning. This reduces their potential effect. Provision for pupils' multi-cultural development is strongest in music, where pupils experience the music of Europe, India and Africa. For example, pupils learn about African music styles in Year 8 and develop this as part of GCSE coursework to impressive effect, as was seen in a Year 10 group composition lesson. Further opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures are provided in such subjects as religious education and history.

51. The last inspection report identified spiritual provision as an area in need of development. The school has done much work to identify opportunities for such provision but, except for such areas as religious education and drama, the effect of this work has yet to reach the classroom. Standards of moral and cultural provision are similar to those reported at the last inspection. Social provision continues to be very good.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

52. The quality of the academic support provided for pupils is very good. The systems for this support are well structured. Extensive data is collected and kept up to date. This information is used to provide very effective support for pupils during their time at the school. The main responsibility for this is given to tutors. They routinely check pupils' planners to see progress towards subject targets. This is done in tutor periods and separate interviews, as necessary. The regular checking of planners is supplemented by progress reports, known as 'monitors', and a full annual report. The monitoring process depends on subject departments setting targets for pupils. Tutors and senior tutors check to see that this happens. The process is still new: some variation occurs. Both procedures - the planner checks and the monitors - combine to record progress for all pupils and identify those who are not doing as well as they might. Additional support is given at lunch and after school clinics for pupils who need help. The quality of support contributes to standards attained.

53. Personal support and guidance are also very good. Except for the Year 7 senior tutor and assistant, tutors stay with their groups. They come to know their pupils well and use this knowledge effectively. The good relations between tutors and pupils are part of the quality of support. The matron plays an important role in supporting pupils. As well as being the school nurse, she has very good contacts with local agencies. She runs individual counselling and group support sessions in the school. Pupils have great confidence in the service she provides.

54. Procedures to promote good behaviour and discipline are very good. They are currently being reviewed. This consultation will help to ensure that school rules reflect the views of all involved: staff, governors, parents and pupils. Expectations are made clear. Pupils have a contract and code of conduct. There is a greater emphasis on reward and celebration than on sanctions. Good relations, good humour, common sense and patience are used effectively to manage pupils. Disciplinary routines are nonetheless clear and applied consistently when necessary. As part of this process, senior tutors observe lessons and monitor the behaviour of individual pupils. Bullying is given a high profile through the Anti-Bullying Committee on which parents are represented. It is handled effectively when cases occur.

55. The procedures to monitor and promote attendance are good. Day-to-day recording is efficient. Monitoring by senior tutors, matron and the education welfare officer is very thorough. Child protection procedures are also good. The deputy head, Key Stage 4, is the designated teacher, assisted by matron. There is clear guidance for members of staff and very good liaison with appropriate agencies. Health and safety procedures are good. Provision for pupils' welfare is good. Health and fitness education is included in personal, social and health education lessons. There are good procedures to ensure pupils' safety in

school and on visits outside. Prompt action was taken in response to the few concerns that were drawn to the attention of the school during the inspection.

56. Since the last inspection, pastoral support has improved yet further, especially in the developing area of academic monitoring.

Partnership with parents and the community

57. The quality of information provided for parents is good. There is an extensive range of information about the school itself, which is provided at appropriate stages. Apart from the prospectus and parents' handbook, there is an induction booklet for Year 7, and booklets on options and coursework. These are all helpful. There are two curriculum meetings every September, one for Key Stage 3 and one for Key Stage 4, where parents can learn about what their children will study during the year ahead. Parents receive a summary of the school's activities in the governors' annual report and are kept up-to-date by newsletters.

58. The information provided for parents about their children's progress is now good. The style of reports has been changed, as of this year, to give parents more information about attainment, what their children understand and can do. Previous reports did not always give enough information about this. Monitoring cards will give parents a snapshot of progress. These are sent out at different times to the full report - the first is due shortly, for Year 8. There is one parents' evening a year, which parents and their children attend together.

59. The level of parents' involvement is good, both in the school and with their children's work at home. Parents sign planners and use them appropriately for home/school dialogue, for example, to explain cases of absence. Pupils' targets for individual subjects are signed by parents too. Parents say that they always feel welcome in the school. They help with trips, and wield painting brushes to redecorate and brighten dilapidated areas. The Cranbourne School Association is a group of active and energetic fundraisers. Parents strongly support the school and what it provides for their children. They like the atmosphere of mutual respect and the very good relations between the pupils and members of staff. Parents like the way the school cares for their children. They approve of the mature attitudes to work and the self-confidence that the school promotes. Parents are particularly pleased that their children like the school and are happy there.

60. The school has good links with the local community. Local businesses provide sponsorship and are generous with time, by holding practice interviews for example. Subject departments, such as mathematics and religious education, have good links with the cluster of primary feeder schools. There are good contacts too with further education colleges in connection with A level mathematics and the Young Linguists' programme. The drama department has good links with the Basingstoke Haymarket Theatre while design and technology has effective links with local industry and business. The personal, social and health education programme uses speakers from local support agencies. Such contacts help pupils personally and academically. All Year 10 pupils have a period of work experience. Good and appropriate liaison is made with external agencies to support pupils with special educational needs.

61. The school also serves the immediate community which makes much use of the facilities it offers. The swimming pool, the sports hall and classrooms are used in the evenings and at weekends. The school produces the local neighbourhood watch bulletin and holds frequent car boot sales. These activities provide a centre for the local community as well as useful income for the school. In addition to the help given by older pupils to younger ones within the school itself, pupils contribute to the wider local community by, for

example, concerts in the town and by the work done by pupils on vocational education courses.

62. The good standards noted in the last inspection report have been maintained.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

63. Overall, leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides very good leadership, in a pleasant, personable manner. Her leadership is based firmly on a desire to retain the school's caring ethos and a concern for academic excellence. In the year since her appointment, she has established a very clear sense of direction for the school by re-focusing its aims and longer-term intentions through consultation with staff and governors. She is supported very well by an effective senior management team, whose professional experience and skills complement each other very well. Corporately, they have succeeded in establishing a common sense of unity and purpose within the school, focused on raising attainment.

64. Governors are very supportive of the school and are well informed; increasingly, they are involved in strategic decision making and in monitoring the quality of education provided by the school. With senior managers, they provide good curricular leadership by keeping the curriculum under review and by taking a pro-active approach to developments. For example, recently, a governor spent considerable time evaluating the quality of assemblies and their impact on pupils' development. The strength of leadership provided by middle managers varies from satisfactory to very good; overall it is good. The GNVQ programme is very well led; documentation is extremely thorough and complies fully with the recording and assessment arrangements of the awarding Body and external verifier. The learning support unit is well led and organised.

65. The school's aims and values, based on concern and respect for individuals, are encapsulated in its mission statement, which seeks to bring the best out of each pupil. They are reflected clearly in many aspects of school life; for example, in the curriculum, where key skills and vocational courses meet the needs of individuals effectively, and also in recent school policies. For example, the recent marking and assessment policy allows departments the freedom to interpret school guidelines in ways which are helpful to individual subjects. Pupils are made explicitly aware of the school's values through assemblies and pastoral care. As a result, the climate for learning is a strength of the school. It is based on a drive to raise standards of work and behaviour, together with the provision of encouragement and appropriate opportunities for individuals, who thus want to learn. Relationships within the school are very good.

66. The school is managed very well. There are clear staffing structures; roles and responsibilities are well defined. A new system of meetings has been implemented to improve communication and to raise the profile of heads of department; it is too early to evaluate its effectiveness. A new-style school development plan has been introduced to achieve the recently negotiated aims. It is clear, succinct and useful, with two main areas of focus: to improve the quality of teaching and learning and to cultivate an ethos of success. It identifies relevant aspects of school life for improvement and outlines, in appropriate detail, what the school plans to do to improve provision. Staff have been involved effectively in the process of improvement through the formulation of departmental development plans. These focus on improving teaching and learning in each subject, by evaluating curricular provision and assessment procedures. Departmental planning is satisfactory overall; often, it is good.

67. A system of monitoring has been put in place to underpin the implementation of development plans and to evaluate the quality of other aspects of provision, including teaching. This is not working consistently well at present. The head and deputies work successfully with their link departments to monitor the implementation of development plans and academic standards. However, monitoring of teaching, curricular provision and the implementation of recent policies and procedures by heads of department varies considerably: in some instances it is good; in others, it is unsatisfactory. For example, middle managers are responsible for ensuring that the school's marking policy is implemented effectively within their department. However, inspection evidence indicates that, often, marking is inconsistent and ineffective within departments. The recent audit of spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision across subjects is not always evidenced in practice. Even when monitoring takes place regularly, it is less effective than it might be as there is often no clear purpose and no agreed criteria against which middle managers can make judgements.

68. The school complies with most statutory requirements, including those for special educational needs. Governors are aware that the requirement for a daily act of collective worship is not met fully; they believe that the school should not attempt to implement procedures which it cannot carry out well. Hence, they have agreed that the school should concentrate on improving the quality of its assemblies. In addition, certain curricular requirements for information technology are not met, particularly at Key Stage 4. The school has an appropriate range of policies, although it is aware that many need up-dating. The Hampshire equal opportunities policy, followed by the school, is a clear, precise and helpful document. There is no equal opportunities group, as the headteacher believes that equal opportunities issues come under the umbrella of the wider issue of underachievement, which currently occupies the whole school. The special educational needs policy is clear and provides good guidance on procedures and practice within the school.

69. Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection in securing improvements, although progress on different fronts has been variable. The school has addressed most of the key issues in the 1995 report successfully. Academic monitoring remains very strong; teachers know their pupils well. Most use this knowledge effectively to ensure that pupils are challenged appropriately in lessons. Very good progress has been made in improving provision for non-statemented pupils with learning difficulties. Some headway has been made in developing the learning resource centre to support learning across the curriculum, but there is still a shortage of books. Sufficient time is now allocated for religious education at Key Stage 4. The school is well aware that statutory requirements for a daily act of collective worship remain unmet.

70. In addition, good behaviour and attendance and good quality teaching have been maintained. GCSE results have risen, but the rate of overall improvement has been slower than that nationally. Recently, the school has made significant improvements in the planned provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; plans are not yet implemented fully. The school has also redefined its aims and future direction; new management structures have been put in place to help realise these aims. Given its strong foundation and the very effective leadership, the school is very well placed to secure further improvements.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

71. There are sufficient well-qualified staff to teach the school's curriculum and an appropriate match between the experience and qualifications of staff and teaching commitments. Teachers of the school's vocational programme are well qualified; they are able to draw on some industrial experience to inform their teaching and on numeracy, literacy and information technology experience to inform the key skills programme. There is

a good range of visiting teachers, notably 10 peripatetic music staff. Two foreign language assistants provide an effective addition to modern language teaching.

72. The special educational needs co-ordinator, with two other teachers and a team of learning support assistants, provide very good support for pupils with special educational needs in classrooms and before school and at break and lunch times. Their work is valued by teachers and pupils alike; it enables pupils to make good progress. All other support staff contribute very effectively to school life and ensure the smooth delivery of the curriculum. All have clear roles and responsibilities.

73. Provision for staff development is good. There is a very good induction programme for newly qualified and new teachers, who also receive good support from their heads of department. Teaching staff are given personal professional interviews, a replacement for the former appraisal system which is under review for 2000. These interviews, and associated lesson observations, are influential in identifying training needs and are well regarded by staff. Training is provided to meet both whole school and, where possible, individual needs. For example, heads of department received extensive in-service training to explain the collection and analysis of assessment data. The improved accuracy of assessments and the understanding of value added information has resulted in the raising of departmental expectations. Staff development is good in most subjects, notably in science, modern languages and history, where visits by LEA advisers are used particularly well. In some subjects, such as geography, there has been insufficient training for staff who are not confident in the use of information technology. The school has productive links with initial teacher training institutions and has been involved in the training of 15 students over the past two years.

74. Overall, accommodation is at least sufficient to provide for effective teaching in all subjects; it is often good. Provision for music is very good. The facilities to support the GNVQ programme are of a high standard and simulate a business environment well; they provide very good access to a computer network and to appropriate software. The learning support unit is attractive and furnished to provide work stations conducive to learning.

75. Many rooms are pleasant and are improved by attractive displays of pupils' work and subject-specific material. That other parts of the school form a pleasant environment for work and relaxation is due largely to the efforts of all who work there. Teaching staff, non-teaching staff and parents make great efforts to maintain and improve the fabric of the school buildings through construction, painting and gardening projects. For example, the recent addition of a much needed and useful dining area has improved eating facilities considerably. Pupils co-operate and internal vandalism and graffiti are minimal. Despite these efforts, some areas of the school, such as the roof and some internal walls, and some subject facilities, need urgent attention if the school is to continue to provide appropriate accommodation.

76. Accommodation for physical education, although plentiful, remains in a poor state of repair; for example, hard court areas need resurfacing and the swimming pool is dilapidated. In design and technology, food, textiles and graphics, rooms are small for their designated purpose. The lack of lifts and sufficient ramps hinders the use of buildings by pupils with physical disabilities. The teaching of careers is not supported by either an attractive, visually stimulating well-sited careers library or interview room. Information about careers opportunities is not readily available for pupils and access to CD ROMs and other computer-based careers information is not sited near to the careers library.

77. Resources for learning are adequate for the school's curriculum and range of pupils, but there are weaknesses in certain areas. Resources are adequate to support learning in most subjects; those for music and history are good. Resources for information technology

are unsatisfactory. In spite of a new network of 60 personal computers, the ratio of computers to pupils is below the national average and includes many old machines which are not fit to go on a network. Most subjects have only one machine for departmental use. Although resources for pupils with special educational needs are adequate overall, there are insufficient computers to support pupils' access to up-to-date learning packages.

78. Some headway has been made in developing the learning resource centre to support learning across the curriculum as identified in the last report. There have been improvements at an operational level; the centre is used by a variety of subjects and there is now a development plan. However, despite the drive and enthusiasm of staff, the centre remains short of books. The ratio of books to pupils is well below national recommendations. Staff are optimistic that this will change as a result of a substantial injection of money next term, which will also fund six new computers on line to the Internet.

The efficiency of the school

79. Although no significant concerns over efficiency were identified in the last inspection report, governors and senior managers have had to make improvements in the overall efficiency with which funds are deployed in recent years. By 1997, the school was overspending its annual budget, largely due to unrealistically high staffing costs. The key financial priority was to achieve a balanced budget, underpinned by sufficient and sustainable levels of teaching and non-teaching staff. This has largely been achieved. Now, the efficiency with which the school uses its available resources is good.

80. Financial planning is good overall. Planning of the annual budget is very skilful and is based on increasingly accurate information. Funding is allocated appropriately to the various areas of operation; links with improvements identified and costed in the school development plan are clear. Increasingly governors and senior managers make effective use of local, if not national, data on spending patterns to inform budgetary decisions. Longer term financial planning is well developed in terms of likely pupil numbers, projected income and its implications. Governors are aware that they need to establish longer-term spending priorities, given future budgetary restraints.

81. All departments have a development plan. Money is allocated to departments according to an agreed formula and, more recently, in response to a development bid based on plans for improvement. Increasingly, middle managers are aware of the true costs of planned developments. Departmental funds are spent efficiently to support teaching and learning.

82. Financial administration and control are very good. There are clear financial procedures; appropriately detailed information is produced for the headteacher, for governors and for relevant teaching staff as required. The governors' finance committee meets regularly to oversee financial matters and to monitor expenditure. The last audit report, in 1996, stated that internal controls were satisfactory but identified several points for development. These have all been addressed. Specific grants are used for the purposes intended. The budget for special educational needs is carefully accounted for and is used well. Day-to-day administration is very good; the school functions smoothly due to good support from its administrative and site staff.

83. In general, staff are deployed effectively; good use is made of their specialisms and expertise. The deployment of learning support staff is good and the special educational needs co-ordinator uses her time flexibly to give maximum support to pupils and teachers. Other curriculum support staff provide a valuable service. Staff make good use of available resources. Very effective use is made of fairly 'tatty' accommodation to create a pleasant,

productive working environment. Departments have specified areas and most staff have a teaching base.

84. The high standards noted in the last report have been maintained. Increasingly, decisions are made with due consideration for both cost effectiveness and educational outcomes. For example, the school has accompanied the reduction in staffing levels with an increase in administration and support staff, thus enabling teachers to spend more of their time on preparation and teaching. This works well at present; the school is well aware of the need to monitor future teaching loads to ensure the 'optimum' balance is maintained. The school is also aware that it allocates rather more on staffing at Key Stage 3 than is provided for in the funding formula; the reasons for this 'anomaly' have been explored. Governors and senior managers make use of the increasing amount of data on attainment and spending patterns in schools to evaluate academic and other outcomes against the local, and increasingly the national, picture.

85. The school enables pupils to make good progress in their learning; by the end of compulsory schooling, attainment is above average. Behaviour and attendance are good; teaching is of good quality. The school makes efficient use of all available resources; below average funds are used effectively to promote learning. Hence, the school provides good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

86. Attainment in English has improved since the previous inspection, when it was in line with national averages at the end of both key stages. Pupils' average level in the 1998 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 3 was above the national average for all schools and broadly in line with that for similar schools. Since 1996, average test results have improved at a faster rate than the national average; results for 1999 are very similar to those for 1998. The proportion of pupils achieving GCSE grades A* to C in recent years has also been above the national average in both English language and English literature. The school achieves these results in English literature whilst entering a much higher percentage of its pupils for the examination than most schools. At both key stages, girls attain higher standards than boys, in line with the difference reported nationally, although the gap in attainment at GCSE narrowed significantly in 1998, before widening again in 1999.

87. Pupils' work in lessons is in line with these standards. Towards the end of Key Stage 3, pupils listen attentively to the teacher and each other. They often give only short answers to teachers' questions but, when given the opportunity, many can talk fluently in standard English. Some Year 9 pupils confidently explained the benefits of being allowed to be an individual in a family, compared with belonging to an oppressive fascist organisation as depicted in their class reader, *The Wave*. Pupils read aloud in class accurately and often fluently, with good expression. Most refer to the text to back up their views and are helped to do so through their ability to highlight and annotate texts as they read. Few pupils read widely for pleasure, despite the introduction of silent reading at the beginning of most English lessons. Many pupils draft and re-draft their writing effectively. Final drafts are neat, with appropriate basic punctuation, although several pupils remain unsure about spellings. Most can write at length and plan their work well. For example, one Year 9 class wrote well-structured, short essays outlining conflicting views about the killing of kittens expressed in Seamus Heaney's *Early Purges*.

88. At Key Stage 4, pupils still listen attentively. They are reticent during whole class discussion but talk more readily in small groups, listening and responding to each other's views. They read aloud fluently, for example when reading from *Educating Rita* in a convincing Liverpool accent. The notion of reading for pleasure is still not well developed, but pupils in the higher band have a good understanding of characterisation in set texts. They identify Lady Macbeth's increasing self-doubt and guilt by referring to specific lines in Shakespeare's play. Pupils in the lower band need a lot of support from the teacher, but can identify and discuss ways in which Polanski's film version of the opening scene in *Macbeth* differs from Shakespeare's. Nearly all pupils can write at length and skills of drafting and re-drafting are well established. A strength of pupils' writing in Year 11 is their ability to analyse critically what they read. However, there is less evidence of narrative or descriptive writing and pupils' imaginative use of vocabulary is underdeveloped.

89. Pupils make good progress over time during Key Stage 3 but, in observed lessons during the inspection, progress was satisfactory rather than good. It was faster in lessons where pupils were asked to work in pairs or groups, especially when teachers gave clear deadlines for the completion of work. However, in several lessons, teachers led whole class discussions for too long and provided limited opportunities for pupils to participate. Key Stage 3 pupils are unsure about their levels of attainment and how to improve because they are rarely given a grade or a mark for their work. During Key Stage 4, pupils are much more aware of what is needed to improve. Again, the best progress takes place when pupils are allowed to work together for part of the lesson. Pupils in the lower band make good

progress because teachers manage the classes well and have high expectations of pupils. At both key stages, pupils on the special educational needs register make similar progress to that of their peers. At Key Stage 3, such pupils benefit from good support from classroom assistants and from individual help during reading sessions at the beginning of lessons.

90. Pupils are always attentive, courteous and well behaved in lessons, rather than enthusiastic. Relationships with teachers are based on mutual respect and pupils collaborate well in groups and pairs. Boys and girls work well together and respond positively to the department's policy of their sitting together in class whenever possible.

91. Overall, teaching is satisfactory. It is good in nearly a third of lessons and occasionally very good. Teachers have responded to comments in the previous inspection and now provide an appropriate degree of challenge for pupils. They have a secure knowledge of their subject, especially class readers, set texts and the use and effect of literary techniques. They help place the reading of plays into context, for example by reminding pupils of the setting in Frank's office before they read an extract from *Educating Rita*. Standards of discipline are high and class management skills are very good, with firm insistence on pupils being attentive. Teachers plan the content of lessons well but, at Key Stage 3, they seldom tell pupils exactly what they are expected to achieve in lessons or how they will be assessed. Most teachers provide pupils with good, detailed advice when marking their books but no marks or grades. They use a limited variety of teaching methods and the emphasis on teacher exposition and teacher led discussion results in a lack of pace in many lessons.

92. The head of department provides good support and induction for several teachers who have joined the department this year; overall, leadership and management are satisfactory. Teachers are committed to helping pupils attain high standards. The department will benefit from the allocation of specific responsibilities to new members of staff, once they are established. The monitoring of teaching is at present insufficient and lacks a clear focus.

Drama

93. Overall, attainment in drama is high. Pupils' attainment at age 14 is well above average. At age 16, attainment varies from year to year, depending upon the pupils who choose to study the subject; often GCSE results are well above average. Pupils make very good progress due their own enthusiasm for the subject and to very good teaching. The department has clear aims and high standards, which have established drama as an important part of the school's curriculum.

Mathematics

94. Pupils' attainment in the 1998 Key Stage 3 tests was above the national average for all schools and in line with that for similar schools. Boys' attainment was marginally better than that of girls. Slightly better test results were achieved in 1999. GCSE results have improved since 1996, when they were in line with national figures. Boys' performance has improved faster than that of girls. The best performance was in 1998, when 58 per cent of pupils attained grades A* to C. This was well above results for all schools nationally; in addition, performance in mathematics was stronger than that in English and science. In 1999, there was an improvement in the proportion of pupils gaining A* grades, but a slight decline in the proportion of those attaining A* to C grades.

95. Inspection evidence is consistent with examination results. Pupils' attainment, towards the end of both key stages, is above national expectations. Higher attaining Year 9 pupils have developed an secure understanding of algebra; lower attaining pupils are able to

use their numerical and algebraic skills, for example, whilst trying to find a rule for the next number in a sequence of numbers. However, there is a lack of number awareness and fluency for mental mathematics within this key stage.

96. Higher attaining Year 11 pupils meet the challenge of vector algebra successfully, building upon their knowledge of co-ordinates and applying Pythagoras' theorem with confidence. Lower attaining Year 11 pupils have a good understanding of number when substituting into formulae. Standards of presentation are variable; they are good in GCSE coursework. In much other work, pupils show insufficient working and seldom explain their thinking clearly.

97. Progress at Key Stage 3 is satisfactory overall. Pupils respond well to challenges presented to them in the form of puzzles or, as in Year 8, when discovering shortcomings in their questionnaires. The progress of some classes is adversely affected by teaching that is split between two teachers. Lower attaining Year 7 pupils find difficulty in interpreting wordy problems; this hinders their mathematical development. Progress at Key Stage 4 is good overall. For the express classes in Year 10, it is very good; pupils build quickly upon their experience of drawing a sine curve to secure a good understanding of various sine wave transformations. Careful setting arrangements and monitoring procedures, together with teachers' knowledge of their pupils, make a strong contribution to the good progress made at Key Stage 4. Pupils with special educational needs usually work in smaller classes and make good progress, due to the team efforts of teachers and learning support staff.

98. Pupils' behaviour is usually good and often very good. Pupils are keen to learn; they participate well and ask questions readily to gain further understanding. Pupils sustain their concentration throughout lessons; they listen well to both the teacher and their peers. Pupils' relationships with each other and with their teachers are good, as illustrated by the maturity of a Year 10 class working on the school field, trying to find a tree's height using only a clinometer and metre rule.

99. Teaching is good overall, with a number of lessons promoting very high standards. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and a strong commitment to their pupils. They make good use of resources to encourage pupils to think mathematically; for example, a laptop computer was used skilfully to enhance pupils' mathematical experience in a Year 10 lesson. Teachers' control of pupils is very good; encouragement is provided through the use of humour, smiles and praise. In the better lessons, teachers use their voices effectively to convey their enthusiasm for the subject and to set the pace. Lessons are constructed carefully and anticipate difficulties that pupils are likely to meet. Group work and open-ended tasks successfully present opportunities for pupils to develop their study skills. Homework is set purposefully, with pupils consolidating classwork or preparing for forthcoming lessons. Good use is made of an effective question and answer technique, to establish levels of understanding and to develop the lesson. Whilst teachers usually share the lesson's objectives with their classes, these are sometimes unclear and rarely reviewed at the end of lessons to gauge learning. The regularity and purpose of teachers' marking are variable and, occasionally, opportunities are missed to provide pupils with prompt feedback. The use of targets is not fully developed and current procedures require further evaluation.

100. The head of department leads well, with a clear sense of purpose; she ensures that expectations are raised and achieved and that pupils enjoy their mathematics. Improvements in setting arrangements and the effective analysis and use of assessment information have allowed teachers to tailor their work more closely to individual needs and to raise standards. New schemes of work have been written but, for some year groups, these lack examples of good practice. As in the last inspection, inadequate resources restrict the use of information technology to support pupils' learning.

Science

101. In 1998, the attainment of pupils in the National Curriculum Key Stage 3 tests was above the national average for all schools but below that for similar schools. In 1999, test results were slightly better. In recent years, boys have attained better overall results than girls. In the 1998 GCSE examinations in double award science, the proportion of pupils who obtained grades A* to C was well above the national average for all schools; the smaller number of pupils who tackled single award science failed to get any grades in this range. Overall, almost all pupils gained an A* to G grade and four per cent gained an A* grade; both results were above the comparable national average. Again, boys perform better overall than girls, although a much higher proportion of girls than boys gained A* grades. In comparison with other subjects taken at GCSE, pupils achieve less well in science than in many other subjects. In 1999, all pupils were entered for double award science; results overall were roughly the same as those for 1998.

102. Attainment in lessons is broadly in line with performance in tests and examinations but, towards the end of Key Stage 3, pupils reach higher standards than are indicated in the tests. In particular, pupils have strengths in the skills of observing, measuring, predicting and evaluating, all of which are important in the understanding of science concepts. This is apparent in coursework and in exercise books. A group of lower attainers showed good understanding of the basic principles of selective breeding and artificial selection. Although floundering in the use of symbolic equations, pupils also have an average grasp of chemical concepts. By Year 11, pupils have an extremely good grasp of key physics concepts, for example, force, mass and acceleration. They are confident in the use of electrical circuits and static electricity. Pupils undertake personal investigations to great effect, using the Internet and other media to extend their knowledge and understanding of, for example, nutrition and eating disorders.

103. Pupils of all attainment levels make good progress across both key stages. At Key Stage 3, this is in response to a scheme for the development of scientific thinking and other work on scientific modelling undertaken by teachers. Pupils with special educational needs benefit particularly well from these approaches and the support of learning assistants. At Key Stage 4, this attention to basic science improves both attainment and pupils' motivation.

104. Pupils show great interest in their work. They maintain their concentration well in hour-long lessons and are careful and conscientious when carrying out practical work. They are well behaved and considerate to one another and can work well in small groups or pairs. When given responsibility, for example, to run a demonstration experiment using a computer and measuring equipment, they showed maturity and good levels of scientific understanding. They also led the rest of the class through the investigation and responded well to queries and suggestions.

105. Teaching is good overall. Class control and the management of pupils in lessons are strengths of the teaching, contributing to the general good humour and purposeful atmosphere in nearly every lesson. Lessons are well planned and teachers are given excellent support by technical staff. Homework is appropriate and effective; some of it is good, for example, when pupils were asked to build a very simple model rather than writing. Marking of work is very effective, except where one teacher has been away for some time and teaching has lacked continuity.

106. The department is led well; the ethos for learning is good. Teaching has benefited from the thought that teachers have given to the development of conceptual understanding at Key Stage 3. The assessment of pupils' work is carried out carefully and good use made of its outcomes; for example, to place pupils in the most appropriate sets and to direct them to the appropriate tier for the GCSE examination. The department has made progress since

the last inspection in the teaching of scientific investigation, in the use of information technology and in the monitoring and evaluation of teaching. Although these have not yet resulted in great improvements in attainment, the department should pay continued attention to these aspects and to demanding more of the higher ability pupils, especially the boys.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

Art

107. The proportion of pupils achieving grades A* to C in the GCSE examinations in 1998 was slightly above the national average for all schools. Examination results show a consistently improving trend from 1996, when they were below national averages. The attainment of girls has been higher than that of boys, but this position was reversed in 1999. In 1998, GCSE results in art were weaker than those achieved in many other subjects.

108. In work seen during the inspection, attainment at age 14 is average, with some good features. Drawing and fine mark-making skills are well developed and expressive; pupils draw accurately in line, making good use of pastels and crayons. Pattern and colour are well understood; painting skills are less secure. Knowledge and skills in the use of three-dimensional media and work in a variety of scales are underdeveloped and lack breadth of experience. Most pupils recognise the work of some artists, but many are unclear as to how their own work has benefited from such study.

109. At age 16, attainment in lessons is in line with that expected for pupils of the same age. Many pupils demonstrate high standards of drawing skills; all are able to record from observation with some accuracy. Painting skills are broadly average and show some breadth of technique; this work is more imaginative and individual. At both key stages, composition and design skills are underdeveloped. Pupils are familiar with research and with the gathering of visual information, but many lack the understanding to sustain investigation and develop design options. As a consequence, there is some underachievement. Overall, pupils with special educational needs achieve standards in line with those expected nationally.

110. At both key stages, progress is satisfactory overall, although variable across different aspects of the subject. At Key Stage 3, pupils are well challenged in drawing and colour work, but there is insufficient challenge within some painting, design and three-dimensional projects. Pupils acquire some subject knowledge of artists and other cultures, but they have insufficient opportunities to develop and apply understanding. At Key Stage 4, pupils begin well and make rapid progress in their understanding of expressive processes and the creative use of media, but this is not sustained consistently. Progress on the short course is variable and is dependent on attitude and effort. Pupils' understanding of the work of artists develops more effectively at Key Stage 4.

111. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and overall response in lessons are generally good and, in the full GCSE course, they are more consistent. At Key Stage 3, pupils enjoy their art lessons and the majority are enthusiastic, well-motivated and hard working. Concentration and independent study are usually well sustained, except where activities are undemanding or expectations are low. Behaviour is good overall. Relationships are usually very good and there are high standards of mutual respect for each other's work.

112. At both key stages, teaching is satisfactory overall, but standards are more variable at Key Stage 3. The majority of lessons are well organised and managed and have good pace. Although activities are carefully considered and have clear aims, short and long-term planning is underdeveloped, particularly at Key Stage 3, where learning outcomes and teaching objectives are not specific and fail to determine appropriate expectations for all abilities. Teachers often make reference to the work of artists, craftspeople, designers and

other cultures within their teaching, but this has not been sufficiently integrated into curriculum and lesson planning. The use made of the sketchbook is developing, but it is insufficiently used for design and the sustained investigation and development of ideas.

113. The subject benefits from effective day-to-day management, but stronger leadership is needed to direct the development of effective departmental and curricular planning, and the work of the team. There has been progress since the last inspection, with an increased emphasis on the work of artists and a significant improvement in examination standards. However, some issues remain in need of review and further development. Curriculum planning does not yet ensure progression or determine expectations and outcomes. The contribution of the subject to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils needs clarification. Assessment and reporting practice meet requirements, but marking and recording of grades by staff are inconsistent and are not used to ensure lesson planning meets pupils' needs. The display of pupils' work values creativity, contributes effectively to the celebration of achievement and enhances the school environment significantly.

Design and technology

114. By the end of Key Stage 3, attainment is in line with national expectations overall. Girls attain higher standards than boys. By Year 9, pupils have developed sound design skills and are able to produce specifications for a product which they will make and later evaluate. However, standards in written work and presentation are variable and sometimes unsatisfactory. Pupils' skills in making are good and they work confidently and competently with a range of materials, tools and equipment to make products of good quality. For example, Year 9 pupils use a variety of colour and texture techniques, such as batik, quilting and appliqué, as they design and make a cushion cover.

115. Overall, GCSE grades A* to C in 1998 were above the national average for the third of the cohort who took the examination. Pupils attained very highly in resistant materials and graphic products. Pupils who take GCSE food also achieve the basic food hygiene certificate. In 1999, results were high for pupils taking the full GCSE courses and satisfactory for those taking short courses. In lessons, Year 11 pupils demonstrate good research and analytical skills as they develop their design briefs. Higher attaining pupils are able to investigate solutions outside of their immediate environment. Pupils' work is enhanced by the use of information technology, particularly in graphic products, where they make good use of computer aided design. Pupils are very articulate when talking about their work and use correct technical language. In Year 11, pupils who take resistant materials make good use of their numerical skills, as they produce very accurate drawings for their major coursework project on the storage of products.

116. Progress is good overall at both key stages. Pupils are able to consolidate and transfer knowledge and skills from Key Stage 3 as they become more independent in their choice of design and practical work at Key Stage 4. There is good progress in developing knowledge and understanding of industrial practices. For example, in Year 9, pupils learn about sensory analysis of food products, as a means of testing their design ideas. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by staff and by special worksheets; they make similar progress to other pupils at both key stages.

117. Pupils show real enjoyment of all aspects of design and technology and are proud of their work. In some lessons, there is a real buzz of excitement. Pupils listen well and are prepared to answer questions and offer their own suggestions. Behaviour is always good and pupils use potentially dangerous tools and equipment appropriately and safely. They work together well and share and respect each other's views and ideas.

118. Teaching is predominantly good with some very good teaching. Teachers are very committed and enthusiastic and have very good knowledge, understanding and skills in the subjects they teach. Lessons are well planned, with different strategies for pupils of different attainment to ensure all pupils make good progress. Aims, objectives and expected outcomes are shared with pupils. There is good use of questioning, often specifically directed to extend pupils' thinking. Teachers have good relationships with pupils. Marking is inconsistent and variable, particularly at Key Stage 3. Although work is marked regularly, there are few constructive comments which would help to improve standards. Homework is always set and is appropriate to take learning forward.

119. There is good overall leadership, a good ethos for learning and a clear vision for the future. The department is developing very good analyses of assessment data to inform planning and to raise standards further, particularly at Key Stage 4. There is a realistic development plan, which includes improving the use of information technology in food and textiles, when access to better resources becomes available.

120. Since the last report there has been little improvement in the organisation and presentation of written work at Key Stage 3. It is unsatisfactory for some pupils. Marking is still variable in that it is not used sufficiently to help pupils improve standards of written work and presentation, particularly at Key Stage 3. These two issues are ongoing and need attention to make a good department even better.

Geography

121. Since the last inspection, apart from a poor year in 1996, GCSE examination results have slowly improved. In both 1998 and 1999, the proportion of A* to C grades was above the national average. However, in 1998, pupils performed less well in geography than in many other subjects. In general, girls' results have been better than boys' results. In 1999, the gap widened considerably with girls' results being well above the national average. Teachers' assessments at the end of Key Stage 3 suggest that the trend of improvement is continuing; the proportion of girls reaching the level expected for their age is well above that found nationally, while boys' performance is in line national figures.

122. In lessons, attainment at age 14 is in line with national expectations. Pupils make good use of number and are adept at gathering data, tabulation and the construction of appropriate graphs. Skill in mapwork and good spatial awareness are the result of the early introduction of pupils to enquiry work. Note-taking is often good and there are good examples of extended writing, as in Year 9 studies of aspects of life in Brazil. There is good development of essential vocabulary, encouraged by classroom displays and glossaries in exercise books.

123. Attainment at age 16 it is in line with national expectations. Pupils have a good general knowledge and express themselves clearly both verbally and in writing, but spelling and grammar are weaker than the volume and content of written work. Presentation is not a strong point, but will improve when new rules of presentation begin to bite. Pupils use their own computers to download material from the Internet and to word process. This activity is encouraged by the teachers and has resulted in some fine Year 11 coursework on Basingstoke services and on drought areas in climatic studies.

124. Across both key stages, progress in lessons and over time is good overall. Higher attainers produce imaginative pieces of extended writing, based on skills learned at Key Stage 3 and augmented by the use of home computers. At all levels of attainment, understanding of more complex geographical relationships increases, as seen in Year 7 work on interpreting flood hydrographs. Pupils develop from Year 7 the ability to hypothesise, gather evidence, analyse and reach conclusions. Lower attainers and those

pupils on the special educational needs register are very much a part of every lesson and high expectation applies to them as much as to anyone else. This attitude ensures that they make satisfactory progress in line with their levels of attainment. The higher level of girls' attainment in GCSE examinations is not reflected in the progress made in lessons.

125. Pupils' response to the subject is good; the numbers opting for geography at Key Stage 4 are increasing. Pupils are courteous, attentive and involved in all aspects of the subject. They work equally productively on their own, in pairs or in groups. They share information and are confident in what they do. They are well motivated and show an understanding of global issues.

126. Overall, teaching is good. Teachers are knowledgeable, committed to their work and combine innovation with experience. Lessons are based on schemes of work which are being updated and conform to requirements. Teachers use a variety of techniques and put resources to good use to maintain interest and to keep pupils on task. Pupil management is very good and, while high standards are insisted on, teachers are, for the most part, patient and friendly.

127. The department is well managed. A new head of department is addressing shortcomings in curricular provision and assessment practice vigorously. There has not yet been time for her efforts, and those of the staff now teaching geography, to impact upon pupils' attainment. Several of the points raised in the last report have been addressed successfully. Pupils are now well motivated; their use of number has improved, as have their use and understanding of a technical vocabulary. In two areas, a positive movement forward is still required. Links with the local community remain underdeveloped. Although written into new schemes of work, the use of information technology to support learning is still inadequate. Hardware and training to improve staff expertise in its use have not been made available.

History

128. In recent years GCSE results at grades A* to C have been above or well above national averages for all maintained schools. Results at grades A* to G have also been above national averages and there has been no consistent difference in the attainment of boys and girls at GCSE.

129. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 is above the nationally expected level. Most pupils have a basic chronological frame of reference, and a secure knowledge of the major events and changes in the periods they have studied. For example, Year 9 pupils have developed a good overview of the main social and economic changes in Britain between 1750 and 1900. Pupils work well with sources, and can also explain how and why aspects of the past have been interpreted in different ways. The quality of oral work is generally good, and higher attaining pupils produce some persuasive, well-structured writing. At Key Stage 4, attainment in lessons is above the national average. Pupils have mastered the content of the course effectively, and have a good understanding of many of the underlying issues such as the impact of propaganda and indoctrination in Nazi Germany. They extract and use information from historical sources successfully and many pupils produce well structured, analytical writing.

130. Most pupils make good progress at Key Stage 3. They extend their knowledge and understanding of different periods and develop relevant skills, especially in the use of sources. Pupils also make good progress at Key Stage 4. They are well motivated and keen to know how they can improve; marking each other's work using the GCSE criteria helps to encourage this attitude.

131. Pupils' response to history is good. They enjoy the subject and are interested in the topics they study. Pupils collaborate well when working together in groups or in pairs. Behaviour in class is consistently good. They respond positively to opportunities to undertake personal study; for example, Year 10 pupils are actively involved in researching aspects of family or local history in connection with their work on the First World War.

132. The overall quality of teaching in history is good; it is sometimes very good and never less than satisfactory. Teachers know their subject very well, and have high expectations of what pupils can achieve at both Key Stages 3 and 4. Work is nearly always challenging and teachers' explanations and questioning are particular strengths. Lesson planning is thorough and well based, although on a few occasions lesson objectives are not sufficiently focused or shared with pupils. The marking of pupils' work is good and homework is well used and set regularly.

133. The department is led and managed well. Close collaborative working among staff helps to make it a strong department in the school. Effective assessment procedures, and good accommodation and learning resources, all contribute to the high standards achieved in the subject. Since the last inspection the quality of teaching has improved and schemes of work have been revised. All aspects of the National Curriculum are now addressed at Key Stage 3 and opportunities for pupils to enquire for themselves have been extended.

Information and communications technology

134. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 is just in line with national expectations overall. Attainment in discrete information technology lessons is as expected in communicating and handling information and in modelling. Pupils use word processing, desktop publishing, databases and spreadsheets well and have good generic skills. They produce good quality documents, incorporating graphics from different sources and using different text and font effects for different audiences. Attainment is lower than expected in measuring and control, as pupils are not given many opportunities to improve their competencies. There is little evidence of drafting and redrafting of work and very little work is annotated by the pupils for future reference.

135. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 is below national expectations overall, as most pupils have limited opportunities across the curriculum to improve their skills. Standards are satisfactory in communicating and handling information and modelling, but unsatisfactory in measuring and control, since these aspects are not covered during Years 10 and 11. Pupils who take GCSE information studies are able to work within a business context; they produce work of a high standard and achieve good results. A* to C grades have been above the national average for the last three years. Results in 1999 were very high, with 82 per cent attaining grades A* to C. In addition, 20 pupils achieved a pass in CLAIT. Pupils who take graphic products attain high standards in computer aided design. At both key stages, most pupils can use CD ROMs and the Internet for research purposes.

136. Progress is sound at Key Stage 3 in communicating and handling information and in modelling. Over time, there is good progress in pupils' understanding of information technology in the wider world of business. In Year 9, pupils analyse problems being faced in a veterinary practice and plan and develop possible solutions, combining the use of word processing, desktop publishing, databases and spreadsheets. However, progress is unsatisfactory in measuring and control as pupils' experiences are only at lower levels. At Key Stage 4, progress is sound for GCSE and CLAIT pupils and those taking GNVQ key skills but, for all other pupils, progress is unsatisfactory as opportunities from cross-curricular information technology are limited and entitlement is not ensured. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported to ensure they make good progress both in lessons and in the learning support unit.

137. Pupils show very positive attitudes to using computers and work well in the separate information technology lessons. Behaviour is always good and pupils work well when they are sharing computers or working in close proximity to other pupils. A number of pupils choose to use information technology for research or presentation of work for other curriculum subjects; much of this work is done in their own time on computers at home or during lunchtimes or after school.

138. Teaching of information technology lessons is sound overall; there is some good and very good teaching. Teachers of discrete information technology lessons have good knowledge, skills and understanding of the subject, but not all other staff are competent and confident to include opportunities for information technology in their subject. Information technology lessons are well planned and, in the good and very good lessons, there is a range of tasks to keep pupils' interest as well as good questioning techniques to make pupils think critically. Pupils are organised well and there is effective use of resources and time. Relationships between staff and pupils are happy and friendly and there is a good ethos in lessons. However, marking of pupils' work does not help them know how to improve; there is little use of target setting. Homework is set and is appropriate for GCSE classes.

139. At present there is no overall planning, monitoring, tracking or co-ordination of pupils' information technology experiences and capability across the curriculum and equal opportunities and entitlement are not ensured at Key Stage 4. The relatively new head of department has a clear vision for the future and the school has a good development plan, which it is just starting to implement. This aims to give breadth and depth to pupils' information technology capability from cross-curricular experiences. A large number of computers are ageing and the pupil to computer ratio is lower than the national average. The information technology rooms are used well, but access to computers for many departments is very difficult.

140. Since the last inspection there has been little improvement and the use of information technology across the curriculum is still at a developing stage. Pupils do not attain equally in all the strands of information technology and entitlement is still not secure at Key Stage 4. These issues are being addressed, along with the formation of a coherent assessment policy, as part of the school development plan.

Modern languages

141. GCSE results at A* to C grades have improved since the last inspection when they were already in line with national averages. In 1998, French and German results were above the national averages for all maintained and similar schools. In German, the whole ability range takes the examination, whereas nationally only the higher and middle attaining pupils tend to take German at this level. In comparison with performance in other subjects, pupils obtained higher results in both French and German. The gap between the performance of boys and girls was less than is the case nationally.

142. At Key Stage 3, observation of pupils in lessons and scrutiny of their exercise books show that pupils' attainment is in line with the standards expected nationally. Teachers' assessments of pupils' performance at the end of the key stage in 1998 and 1999 confirm these findings. Most pupils are fairly confident in speaking the foreign language and in holding very simple conversations about themselves. A significant proportion have good accents and intonation, through copying the teachers' good models of pronunciation. By the end of the key stage, the best written work in exercise books and on display is detailed and extended. Higher attainers already show familiarity with tenses. In Year 8, approximately half the year group begin to learn a second foreign language and, at the end of Year 9, these

pupils take the Certificate of Achievement. Pupils make a good beginning in the new language and generally make good progress in all language skills.

143. At Key Stage 4, pupils' attainment is above national expectations. Pupils make broadly good progress in listening and speaking, in line with examination requirements. Making tapes about themselves and their families is a valuable contributory factor in raising pupils' confidence. There is very little English-sounding pronunciation. Pupils learn to use dictionaries sensibly. Some very good developmental work among teachers has helped to raise pupils' standard of writing across all attainment levels, particularly that of middle attainers. Awareness of and accuracy in tenses are a feature of higher attainers' work.

144. At Key Stage 3, pupils make satisfactory progress overall. Pupils have slightly less time for languages over the fortnight, particularly in Year 7, than is the case, on average, nationally, and teachers have to work very hard to cover the programmes of study. However, during Key Stage 4, where pupils have more lessons, they make good progress. In addition, the imaginative approach to the syllabus content at this key stage contributes very well to increasing pupils' generally good motivation. Pupils with special educational needs generally make satisfactory progress, but in Year 7 they sometimes find it difficult to keep up, given the large mixed-ability classes and the relatively infrequent lessons. During Key Stage 4, pupils benefit greatly from the smaller classes and generally make good progress.

145. The majority of pupils are interested in the languages they learn and most of those who do a second language enjoy the experience. All pupils listen attentively and understand most of the teachers' instructions. The vast majority behave and concentrate well in lessons. In a small number of lessons, where the teaching is not focused and control is not firm enough, pupils tend to become unsettled and chat. The number of pupils going on the exchange to France is high and some Year 7 pupils have shown great initiative in applying for this. Twelve pupils were preparing to travel to Germany the week after the inspection. Gifted pupils who join the town's Young Linguists' Club to study a third language, often carry their interest right through to good grades at GCSE in Spanish, Italian, Russian and Cantonese.

146. The quality of teaching is good overall. Half the lessons seen were good and another quarter were very good. The rest of the lessons were satisfactory, except for a small number that were unsatisfactory because of a lack of direction and firm control and pace. All teachers have a good or very good knowledge of the languages they teach, and nearly all use the foreign language consistently well. English is used appropriately at the beginning of most lessons to make learning objectives clear. Teachers generally have high expectations of their pupils' behaviour and performance. Lower attainers receive a lot of support from teachers who provide ample repetition and a more limited range of vocabulary. At Key Stage 4, the extra challenge that teachers present, in asking pupils to build up their knowledge of vocabulary and grammar round an imaginary world of people living in blocks of flats in France and Germany, is responded to very well by the pupils. Teachers use a wide range of methods and cover a number of activities in each lesson, including, for example, using the Internet to sift through details on certain towns in France. The best practice in using the overhead projector is not yet shared among all teachers. A significant number of teachers have a very good intuitive understanding of how pupils progress in writing and speaking and provide pupils with excellent materials and explanations. Homework tasks are usually appropriate.

147. The head of department gives a very good lead and is very well supported by other members of the team. Overall, all aspects of management are good, but monitoring of teaching is not adequate. The development of consistent practice in marking would also help to raise standards. The very good display in nearly all classrooms contributes well

towards developing a very good language-learning environment. Since the last inspection GCSE results have improved and the overall good quality of teaching has been maintained.

Music

148. By the end of Key Stage 4, attainment in music is well above average. For the past four years, GCSE results have been well above national averages for all maintained secondary schools. The percentages of pupils attaining A* to C grades are very high in comparison with national averages. Results at A* to G have been in line with national averages. In 1998, pupils' performance in music was stronger than that in most other subjects. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls, but more girls than boys take the subject for GCSE. A high proportion of pupils have additional instrumental lessons.

149. In lessons, Year 11 pupils attain above average standards in improvisation, and demonstrate very effective use of drone and ostinato in creating group compositions of gat and jhalla sections of an Indian raga. They know and understand a very good range of technical vocabulary, and have a good knowledge of an appropriate number of composers and styles. Standards of individual performance on various instruments are such as to suggest that the majority of pupils will attain high grades for this section of the GCSE examination.

150. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 is above average. Teachers' assessments over the past three years have shown an increasing number of pupils achieving or exceeding the expectation for the end of Key Stage 3, with the proportion of such pupils in 1998 being well above national norms. In lessons, attainment is above average. Year 9 pupils perform songs such as 'Doo - wah' effectively in a number of parts and make good attempts at improvising scat singing. They improvise very good rhythmic responses, sustaining concentration over 16 beats. They critically appraise their own and each other's work using appropriate vocabulary. Again, a high proportion enhance their musical attainment with additional instrumental lessons, which they can choose from the whole range of orchestral instruments or piano or guitar. Individual singing lessons are also offered. Further enhancement and experience come from participation in the large number of extra-curricular groups which exist in the school. These include senior and junior choirs, bands, a boys' barber shop chorus, and a girls' madrigal group, all of which are very well supported.

151. Pupils' progress over Key Stage 3 is very good. Year 8 make excellent progress learning African songs such as Kye Kye Kule and Wo ma mez, moving rapidly from hesitant first attempts to enthusiastic finished performances. High, average and low attaining pupils make similar very good progress as do those with special educational needs. Pupils' progress across Key Stage 4 is also very good. Year 11 gat pieces develop well. Over time, there has been improvement year on year in the results of Key Stage 3 teacher assessments, and GCSE results over the past four years show that very good progress has been consistently maintained.

152. Attitudes, behaviour and personal development are very good at both key stages and contribute significantly to the high standards attained. There is a high level of interest in the subject, evident in the good take-up for the subject at Key Stage 4, and also in the substantial number who have additional instrumental lessons, for which they pay not inconsiderable fees, and in the very good support for a wide range of extra-curricular musical activities. Behaviour is very good and pupils sustain concentration well in lessons. Collaborative working is outstanding.

153. The high standards achieved are due in no small measure to the high quality of teaching, which is very good at both key stages. Teaching in the instrumental lessons seen

is good. Teachers' knowledge and understanding are very good, including understanding of other cultures' traditions, and are also very good in the areas of directing and coaching musical groups. Methods and organisational strategies are very good; for example, excellent choices of lesson material are made for Year 8 and Year 10 African studies and for Year 11 Indian music studies. Lesson plans, which are generally very good, might usefully include additional relevant material for use if things go particularly well in the time allowed, and there is a little extra time to use profitably. Management of pupils is very effective.

154. The department is led well. Good curriculum plans are in place, together with good assessment procedures. Documentation is of a high standard. The management and organisation of the instrumental scheme are very good. Since the last inspection, above average standards of attainment have been maintained, and have in fact improved and progressed since 1997. Resources for music have improved considerably, particularly in the provision of electronic keyboards and computer software.

Physical education

155. Overall, attainment is below that expected nationally. By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils' skills in games such as netball, football and badminton are not well developed. Their understanding of tactics and strategies is below that to be expected. Pupils' levels of fitness and their knowledge of the principles contributing to a healthy life style are weak. In 1999, GCSE results showed considerable improvement from the previous two years. In 1997 and 1998, results were well below both the school and national figures, showing a marked decline from the above average results in 1995. By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils' performance is almost in line with national expectations, but the majority do not use their observational and analytical skills well to help them to refine and improve movement. A significant minority of pupils at both key stages is under achieving and higher attaining pupils are not well challenged in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated well and attain appropriately.

156. Progress overall has been unsatisfactory. Improved planning, linked to the National Curriculum, has led to satisfactory and often good progress in lessons. These recent changes have not yet had an impact over time and many pupils have not systematically developed the knowledge, skills and understanding to participate in a range of activities with good technical skill or precision. Progress in the GCSE course is good, leading to higher attainment and improved examination results.

157. Pupils' attitudes are generally positive and sometimes very good. Even though many pupils are lethargic, they are well behaved and pay attention immediately when teachers are giving instructions. Good relationships are established in classes and pupils respond well to routines and procedures. When set a task, most pupils concentrate and try to complete it. Almost all pupils are aware of safety procedures and respect equipment. When working together, pupils collaborate well and are respectful and considerate of each other.

158. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. In over a third of lessons it is good, but in nearly one fifth it is unsatisfactory. Teaching at Key Stage 4 is nearly always good, particularly in the GCSE classes. In these lessons, teachers identify clearly what they want pupils to learn and have high but appropriate expectations of the progress that pupils should make. At Key Stage 3, frequently, teachers do not challenge pupils to perform at sufficiently high standards and do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to plan and evaluate their own work. An example of pupils performing well as a result of good teaching occurred in a basketball lesson. Pupils worked out the most effective method of shooting and gained a good grasp of the principles of the lay-up shot; they had to find solutions and perform successfully. A strength of teaching is teachers' good organisational and management skills. Teachers expect pupils to behave and ensure that equipment is available and moved

sensibly. In the better lessons, teachers give good individual guidance to pupils on how to improve their work; this was done very effectively in a trampoline lesson. Too often though, guidance is directed at the whole class and many pupils are not clear about what they have to do to improve. The unsatisfactory lessons were caused by teachers setting tasks without considering what pupils were going to learn and few checks were made that improvement had taken place before the next activity was introduced.

159. The recently appointed head of department is providing good leadership. A great deal of work has taken place ensuring that schemes of work are in place and are used by all teachers. These provide good guidance for teachers and a consistency of approach but they do not always provide for continuity in learning. The curriculum is broad at both key stages giving pupils experience in four areas of activity. Assessment procedures are securely in place and used by all teachers. As yet, the results of assessment are not influencing curriculum planning as effectively as they might. The accommodation is used well but is in a poor state of repair.

160. In recent months, good improvements have been made in response to the last inspection report. Policies, procedures and documentation are now clear. GCSE results have been analysed with positive and appropriate measures taken for improvement. Clear priorities for raising attainment are identified in the development plan and there is a determination and capacity for success in the department. The department is working hard to promote a good range of extra-curricular activities that include boys and girls in sports, dance, gymnastics and swimming clubs. Attendance rates are good and the school has competed successfully in local competitions.

Religious education

161. GCSE results, particularly those of boys, have improved considerably since the last inspection. The proportion of pupils gaining grades A* to C is now significantly above the national average for all schools.

162. Attainment by the end of Key Stage 3 is broadly in line with national standards. Pupils are developing a broad knowledge of the major world religions and are building up an appropriate subject vocabulary. Current issues are discussed openly and readily; pupils often make sound, sensitive judgements based on researched evidence. For example, detailed work on racial marches in the USA demonstrated Year 9 pupils' ability to understand the meaning of justice and tolerance. By the end of Key Stage 4, the majority achieve above the national expectation. Most are able to produce lengthy coursework assignments, sometimes using information technology skills in presentation, on topics such as Islam, marriage and divorce. Some lively discussions were heard on the role of worship and the decision to marry or not in modern society, including an excellent role-play of a church marriage by a Year 10 group.

163. The interest and involvement of most pupils enable good progress to be made at both key stages. Pupils display good recall of earlier work and tackle new challenges with enthusiasm and commitment. They use developing literacy and oral skills to advantage in various activities, although access to information technology is limited. Concentration is well maintained; pupils show strong independent learning skills and behaviour is normally exemplary. Group work is undertaken in sensible fashion; the views of others, however contradictory, are listened to with respect. Pupils with special educational needs make appropriate progress, but do better when support staff are present, or when resources are specifically targeted to their needs.

164. Teaching is good overall; occasionally it is very good. All teachers have strong subject knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject. Lessons are well planned to maximise

the use of time. Challenge of both oral and written tasks, and teachers' expectation of pupils, are clear and appropriate. A good pace is adopted and a variety of activities keep pupils fully involved. Teachers are quick to encourage and praise as necessary. Humour is often injected, so that a controlled learning experience can take place. Resources of various kinds are used, although limited stock in the library restricts research opportunities. Although some marking of pupils' work is supportive and thorough, enabling pupils to identify attainment levels, overall, marking of pupils' class and homework is inconsistent. The department has yet to determine its priorities on marking and reconsider its policy statement in the light of those priorities.

165. The department is led very well and managed effectively. Since the last inspection, the allocation of curriculum time for all pupils to study the subject has been increased and now meets statutory requirements. All pupils now take GCSE short courses at Key Stage 4. Schemes of work have been adapted to introduce a more comprehensible technical language structure for pupils; opportunities for pupils to develop research skills have been increased.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

166. A team of 13 inspectors spent a total of 50 days in the school collecting evidence. They observed 197 lessons, covering all subjects of the National Curriculum and all other subjects offered by the school, such as business studies, drama and GNVQ and vocational courses. All teaching staff were observed, many on several occasions. All the available work from a representative sample of pupils was scrutinised; pupils' work was also examined during lesson observations. Formal discussions took place with the pupils whose work was analysed; informal discussions occurred with many more.

167. In addition, inspectors observed 11 assemblies, 23 tutor sessions, 11 extra-curricular activities and seven personal and social education lessons. Discussions were held with governors, the headteacher, members of the senior management team, heads of department, senior tutors, tutors and other teaching and non-teaching staff. A wide range of documentation was read both before and during the inspection. The registered inspector held a meeting attended by about 65 parents and considered the views of 258 parents who completed questionnaires.

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 - Y11	1170	10	321	59

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (Y7 – Y11)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	64.82
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.05

Education support staff (Y7 – Y11)

Total number of education support staff	18
Total aggregate hours worked each week	434

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes:	75.7
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Average teaching group size:	KS3	27
	KS4	21

Financial data

Financial year:	1998 - 1999
	£
Total Income	2479241
Total Expenditure	2550024
Expenditure per pupil	2211.64
Balance brought forward from previous year	185164
Balance carried forward to next year	114381

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

1170

Number of questionnaires returned:

258

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	26.7	64.7	6.3	2.4	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	31.4	57.6	7.1	3.9	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	13.9	51.5	27.4	6.8	0.4
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	17.6	58.0	16.8	7.5	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	23.0	51.2	12.1	12.9	0.8
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	26.0	64.0	8.0	1.2	0.8
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	28.0	57.3	9.9	4.3	0.4
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	17.9	61.5	8.7	9.9	2.0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	24.9	56.9	15.8	2.4	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	20.8	59.2	16.0	3.6	0.4
My child(ren) like(s) school	32.5	56.7	6.7	3.6	0.4