

INSPECTION REPORT

DEVONPORT HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Peverell, Plymouth

LEA area: Plymouth

Unique reference number: 113531

Headteacher: Mrs E B Dunball

Reporting inspector: Tom Ferris
4344

Dates of inspection: 17 – 20 January 2000

Inspection number: 186009

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Grammar
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	11 to 18
Gender of pupils:	Girls
School address:	Lyndhurst Road Peverell Plymouth
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Miss A Copsey
Date of previous inspection:	18 – 22 September 1995

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is a selective grammar school for girls from the age of 11 to 18. It is maintained by Plymouth local education authority. There are 802 girls on roll, 185 in the sixth form. The ethnic mix of the girls is predominantly white, with a very small number from ethnic minority backgrounds. Only a very small number of the girls have special educational needs or have English as an additional language but none are in the early stages of acquiring English. The attainment of the girls when they enter the school is well above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Devonport High School for Girls is a very good school that caters very well for its selective intake. Very good leadership ensures that success of all kinds is aimed for and celebrated. Very good teaching helps the girls reach high standards in their examinations and to progress at a very good rate. The school is very successful in promoting the personal development of its pupils. Its many strengths far outweigh its weaknesses. It provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The girls achieve very high standards, particularly at GCSE and A-level.
- Very good teaching enables the girls to learn effectively.
- The girls have very positive attitudes to their work.
- The school provides very good opportunities for extra-curricular experience.
- The headteacher provides clear vision and direction, which has ensured very good relationships and a shared commitment to success of all kinds.
- The level of care and support provided by the staff enables the girls to make the most of their opportunities.

What could be improved

- The provision for information technology is not as well co-ordinated as it could be.
- Although the Key Stage 3 results compare very favourably with the national averages, the most able girls could do even better.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in September 1995. It has made good improvement since then. The GCSE results have gone up from 96 per cent to 99 per cent of the girls achieving five or more passes at A* - C. The rising trend in the results has been faster than the national trend. Results at A-level have also improved, in line with the national improvement. The girls' attendance has gone up from 92 per cent to 95 per cent. The school has made good improvement in most of the areas identified as issues at the time of the last inspection. The school now fully meets the requirements of the Code of Practice

for pupils with special educational needs. It also fully meets the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching is much more thorough. Assessment is good in Years 10 and 11 and in the Sixth Form; inconsistencies at Key Stage 3, however, are confusing for the girls and their parents. The school's strategic planning is better – appropriate improvements have been made, for example, to the accommodation and to the quality of computers. The school has not, however, found a satisfactory way of providing a daily act of collective worship and there remain some omissions in the governors' report to parents.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 14, 16 and 18 year olds based on average point scores in the national tests at the end of Year 9, GCSE and A-level/AS-level examinations in 1999.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
Key Stage 3 tests	A*	A*	A*	C
GCSE examinations	A*	A*	A*	B
A-levels/AS-levels	A*	A*	A*	

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Results at A-level were very high in 1999, placing the school in the top five per cent of schools nationally. In English and religious education the results have been outstanding in the last two years. In 1999, particularly good results were also achieved in business studies and geography. The trend in the results has been upwards, in line with the national trend.

At GCSE, the school's results place it in the top 5 per cent of schools in the country. The trend has been upwards, at a faster rate than the national trend. Results in religious education have been outstanding. In 1999, they were also very good in English, biology, chemistry and Spanish. The girls performed less well in music and much less well in art. At GCSE the results are better than those achieved in grammar schools generally.

In the national tests for 14 year olds in English, mathematics and science, the school's results also place it in the top 5 per cent nationally. Taking the three subjects together, the results match, but are not better than, those achieved in other grammar schools. They are better in English, similar in science and below in mathematics.

The girls achieve very well from the age of 15 to 18 and particularly so in Years 10 and 11. Most make good progress from the age of 11 to 14 but there is scope for the more able girls to do even better in the national tests, especially in mathematics and science.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The girls are enthusiastic about their work and have very positive attitudes towards the school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Standards of behaviour are very high. The girls show consideration and respect for one another and their teachers.
Personal development and relationships	The girls respond very well to intellectual and other challenges. Many are very willing to get involved in a range of activities beyond their lessons.
Attendance	The girls' attendance is very high. They enjoy coming to school. There is virtually no unauthorised absence.

The girls' very positive attitudes contribute enormously to a climate in which success of all kinds is prized and in which supporting one another is second nature.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The teaching is very good overall. It is strongest in Years 10 and 11. High expectations, good planning, very good knowledge of and enthusiasm for the subject lead to the girls being able to learn at a very good pace. Good explanations, demonstrations and questioning all ensure considerable depth of knowledge and understanding. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. The teaching was good or better in 80 per cent of all lessons seen and very good in 33 per cent. The skills of literacy and numeracy are well taught. The teaching meets the needs of all the pupils, though at Key Stage 3 the more able could be stretched even further. Particular strengths in the girls' learning include their willingness to apply intellectual effort and their ability to organise themselves when working in pairs or small groups. The teachers' very good knowledge of examination requirements and their revision programmes for both GCSE and A-level help ensure that well above average performance in class is often translated into very high standards in examinations.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum provides a very good range, breadth and depth of learning. The range and quality of the extra-curricular provision are very good. Weakness in the co-ordination of information technology leads to the girls getting different levels of provision and experience in Years 10 and 11.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good support for those with special educational needs and for those whose achievements are relatively weaker.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision for spiritual development. Very good provision for social, moral and cultural development. Well-thought-out programmes for personal, social and health education. Numerous opportunities to take on responsibility.
How well the school cares for its pupils	High levels of care and support through the pastoral system and by subject teachers. Staff and girls work well together to overcome any academic or personal problems that arise.

In English and religious education particularly, the school provides a curriculum of considerable breadth and depth. Art has been the main area of weakness. The school has appointed a new head of art and some very good teaching of the subject was seen during the inspection. A strong feature of the school's provision is the willingness of the teachers to provide extra help to girls who may not have fully understood specific topics or ideas. Close monitoring through the pastoral system ensures that changes in performance or attitude are picked up and dealt with quickly.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good leadership from the headteacher, very ably supported by the deputies and the governors. Creation and maintenance of a climate in which success of all kinds is both celebrated and respected and in which staff are increasingly self-critical.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are very well informed and are fully involved.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good at Key Stage 4 and in the Sixth Form. More use could be made of performance information at Key Stage 3.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning is good. The school makes good use of its existing resources. It has made appropriate improvements to parts of its accommodation. Staff work hard to minimise the effects of the less than satisfactory nature of much of its accommodation.

The headteacher provides very good vision and direction to the work of the school. Her excellent relationships with the girls and their parents and her ability to get colleagues involved have been key factors in the creation of a strongly shared sense of purpose. The girls are very well prepared not just for academic success but for life after school.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The standards achieved. • The quality of the teaching. • The values the school promotes. • Its welcoming approach to parents. • The quality of leadership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The way in which the school keeps them informed of their daughters' progress.

The inspectors fully endorse the parents' positive views. The inspectors also support the view that the school could keep parents better informed of their daughters' progress – through, for example, sharing the results of the internal progress reviews and improving the consistency with which the teachers give good information on progress since the last written report.

In the questionnaire returns some parents indicated that they felt the school does not provide enough interesting activities outside lessons. The inspectors do not share this view. The staff work hard to provide a very good range of activities. With the provision of more adventurous activities the school's provision would, however, be even better. Also in the questionnaire, but not at the parents' meeting, some parents indicated that they disagreed with the view that the school works closely with parents. Again, the inspection team is not of this opinion. However, suggestions by some parents at the meeting that the school could make more use of homework diaries for communicating with parents and might provide an annual list of events are well worth consideration.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The girls achieve high standards, particularly at GCSE and A-level.

1. The girls achieve very high standards at A-level, at GCSE and in the national tests for 14 year olds, placing the school in the top five per cent of schools on each of these indicators. In English and religious education, the results at A-level have been outstanding. In English, for example, two thirds of the girls entered in the last two years achieved A or B grades. In religious education all of the girls entered achieved A or B grades. In 1999 most of the girls entered in business studies, geography, physics and Spanish also achieved the highest grades.

2. The school's results in GCSE have risen steadily since 1995 when the school was last inspected. The upward trend has been faster than the national trend. In 1999, the results placed the school in the top five per cent of all schools. The girls' results in religious education were exceptionally good when compared to their results in other subjects. Their results in biology, chemistry, English and Spanish were also particularly good. The girls performed less well in music and much less well in art. At GCSE the school performs very well compared to other grammar schools. In 1999, the girls' average points score was above the average for selective schools; the proportion of girls achieving five or more grades at A* - C was well above the average. The school has set itself challenging targets for GCSE and is meeting them.

3. In the national tests for 14 year olds, the results also place the school in the top five per cent of all schools. The trend in the results in English, mathematics and science taken together has been broadly in line with the national trend. Overall, the results match those achieved in grammar schools generally. In English the girls achieve above the average for selective schools; in science their results are in line and in mathematics they are below, as fewer achieve the highest levels compared to other grammar schools.

4. High standards of work were seen in many lessons in the course of the inspection. This was particularly so in Years 10 and 11 and is clearly a major factor in the very good results achieved at GCSE. In a Year 11 English lesson, the girls analysed in impressive detail how an advertisement for alcohol attempted to manipulate its intended audience. Girls in a Year 11 mathematics lesson successfully adapted their previous work on straight line graphs to the handling of quadratic graphs. In a Year 10 religious studies lesson, most of the girls could explain both immanence and transcendence in the context of Islam.

5. Work of a high standard was also evident in a number of lessons in other years. For example, in a Year 13 lesson on genetics, the girls quickly gained a thorough knowledge of di-hybrid crosses and were able to understand complex examples. In a Year 12 English lesson, the girls were able to unravel the complexities of character and the author's viewpoint in "The French Lieutenant's Woman", supporting this with close reference to the text. In a Year 9 mathematics lesson, the girls were able to work out and explain confidently how many hidden faces there would be for any number of cubes placed together on a surface. In a particularly fluent and captivating piece of writing, a girl in Year 9 described a holiday through the eyes of a four year old, simultaneously reflecting on the experience from an adult's point of view. In a Year 8 science lesson, the girls showed a particularly good understanding of the different types of joints in the human body.

6. The girls' literacy skills are of a high standard. They read widely and respond positively to their teachers' encouragement to take on more challenging fiction. Their

confidence and facility in discussion are strengths. They are skilled at articulating and defending a point of view, but also listen carefully and respond to one another. Most of their writing is accurate and expressive by the end of Year 9 and the best imaginative writing by this age reaches a very high standard. A minority of girls of below average ability for the school, however, still have problems in constructing more formal pieces. By the end of Year 11 almost every girl writes fluently for a range of purposes, while in the Sixth Form they are able to express a convincing argument in writing and support it with telling evidence. The quality of investigative writing in science is high. The girls' understanding and confident use of technical vocabulary is also a strength in all subjects.

Very good teaching enables the girls to learn effectively.

7. The very good quality of the teaching, particularly but not only in Years 10 and 11, is one of the main reasons the girls learn at a very good pace and that they are so successful in their examinations, especially in GCSE and A-level. The teachers' enthusiasm for the subjects they teach, based on very good knowledge, communicates itself to the girls, stimulating them to want to extend their own understanding. This often manifests itself in very good explanations and demonstrations. In a Year 9 English lesson on "Romeo and Juliet" the teacher's effective explanation of what is happening enabled the girls to understand not just the story but the depth and impact of the conflict between the Capulets and the Montagues. In a Year 11 volleyball lesson, the teacher's effective demonstration of new skills enabled the girls to make rapid progress.

8. Much of the teaching is characterised by a high level of challenge and by effective questioning. In a religious studies lesson in Year 12, the teacher was clearly aiming to get all the girls to high grades at A-level. She expected them to be able to deal with difficult concepts, e.g. "realist" and "anti-realist" views of God, and to be able to justify their views. The high level of challenge in the teacher's questions, e.g. "If God is timeless, how can He intervene in a universe that is determined by time", led to a high level of discussion among the girls. In a Year 11 history lesson on the birth of the state of Israel, the teacher's own knowledge of and fascination with the subject effectively led to demands on the pupils that were more characteristic of A-level than GCSE. His clear explanations and good questioning enabled all to achieve a high level of understanding of very complex issues underlying the causes of the Arab-Israeli war of 1948. This in turn gave them the confidence to ask their own challenging questions: for example, "How could Ben Gurion simply declare a new state?"; "What was our (i.e. the British) role in all this?"; "Why were we simply pulling out?"

9. The teachers plan their lessons well; they know clearly what they wish the girls to learn and understand; and they use their time well. They often plan quite stimulating approaches to specific topics. For example, in a Year 9 dance lesson, the teacher's imaginative ideas to promote different types of movement (window shopping, ice-skating, walking on hot coals) enlivened the pupils' warm-up activity. In a Year 13 English lesson introducing "The Tempest", in a very original and stimulating approach, the teacher presented the front page of the play, the 'dramatis personae', as a historical document, asking the girls to make hypotheses about society and politics from this. This led to a high level of intellectual engagement as the girls explored why socially superior characters, e.g. dukes and kings, appeared to be out of their usual context.

10. Another strong feature of the teaching was not directly visible during the week of the inspection. This was the very good revision programmes and examination preparation that the teachers provide in the run up to the GCSE and A-level examinations. Evidence from talking to the teachers and the girls themselves indicated this to be a very important feature

in transforming well above average performance in class to high standards in the examinations.

The girls have very positive attitudes to their work.

11. The girls are very enthusiastic about school. In lessons they are very interested in their work and are willing to take responsibility for their own learning. For example, the girls often take notes without being prompted and organise themselves into groups with the minimum of fuss. They listen carefully to their teachers. Because of the excellent relationships with one another and with their teachers, they feel confident to express their opinions, without fear of ridicule. They concentrate very well on their work, and it was rare to see any girl drifting off task.

12. The girls value the opportunities to take initiative. During a discussion with an inspector, they said that they enjoyed the responsibility of planning events such as form assemblies and fundraising events. A group of sixth formers, elected by their peers for this purpose, lead and manage the School Council. Other pupils produce the regular newsletter to parents or the annual school newspaper. A further group of pupils is in the process of making improvements to the school web page.

13. Relationships throughout the school are excellent. An atmosphere of mutual respect and support is evident in all aspects of school life. The teachers value the girls as individuals, and girls said that the staff 'make them feel special'. The school is a very open and friendly place where humour is often used to good effect. The teachers, including senior managers, are very approachable. The girls work very well in groups, and are very supportive of each other. They are helpful and polite to visitors and talk to them with confidence.

14. The behaviour of the girls in lessons and around the school is excellent. Codes of conduct are discussed in lessons and assembly and the girls understand that the teachers have high expectations of good behaviour. No inappropriate behaviour was seen during the inspection and girls said that bullying was extremely rare. The girls behave extremely well at lunchtime and are allowed in classrooms without close supervision. They are trustworthy and show respect for school property.

15. The girls enjoy coming to school, which is evident in the very high attendance rates. Truancy is very rare. Some girls arrive at school very early, for example for music practice. Lessons begin promptly and girls often continue to work after the bell has gone for the end of the lesson. Many girls stay on after school taking part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities with enthusiasm.

The school provides very good opportunities for extra-curricular activities.

16. The school provides extensive opportunities for the girls to learn and widen their experience outside the regular timetabled curriculum. The range includes: sport; music; a wide variety of clubs; extra support in subjects; specially designated days, for example on aspects of healthy living; a large number of outside speakers; participation in a variety of competitions; numerous trips and visits, including residential experience.

17. There is a high level of participation in lunchtime sports clubs - approximately 200 girls each week - and many of the girls are involved in school teams. Teams take part regularly in matches with other schools and in local, regional and national championships. Over thirty girls have recently represented Plymouth or Devon in a variety of sports

including netball, hockey, basketball, athletics, cross-country and table tennis. Several have represented England in fencing and basketball.

18. There are good opportunities for the girls to learn to play musical instruments and to participate in the school choir and in the junior and senior orchestras. Both choir and orchestra are involved in major events each year, for example, the recent carol service for the whole school at St Andrew's Church in Plymouth. There is an annual dramatic performance, often in association with the boys' grammar school.

19. The school organises a considerable number of visits to theatres and many girls participate. A wide range of other visits is organised, for example to universities for lectures and demonstrations, and field trips to places of geographical and biological interest. Many of the older girls take part in residential courses to study aspects of ecology, geography and religious education. Most girls in Year 9 take part in the annual outdoor pursuits week at Bude. Trips abroad include exchange visits to France, Germany and Italy; skiing in France; and a business studies project at Eurodisney. Last year a number of girls in Year 12 participated in 'Dialogue 2000' during which they stayed with families in Normandy. They spent one week in school; one week doing work experience; one week on a scientific/geographical project at Mont St Michel with their partners; and one week on holiday with the family. Twenty older girls are currently participating in 'World Challenge', preparing for a month's expedition to Costa Rica.

20. Many girls enter in local and national competitions and regularly win prizes. These cover a range of subjects, such as science and engineering, consumer affairs, public speaking and finance. The school won the national 'Young Consumers' Competition. Almost half of the girls in Year 12 are involved in the 'Young Enterprise' scheme; they are very enthusiastic and many have been successful in their business ventures.

The headteacher provides clear vision and direction that has ensured very good relationships and a shared commitment to success of all kinds.

21. Almost everyone to whom the inspectors talked - parents, teachers, governors, the girls themselves - spoke very highly of the quality of leadership provided by the headteacher. They highlighted her excellent relationships with the girls and their parents, her sense of humour and her ability to get colleagues involved. She has been very influential in establishing, and then maintaining, a strongly shared sense of purpose as to what the school is about. Striving for academic success has been a major feature in this and results at both GCSE and A-level have steadily improved. A striking feature of the school is the way in which the girls take pride in one another's contributions and successes. The sense of purpose is also characterised by the desire for the school to be a humane and supportive institution, one which encourages the girls to reflect on their role in society and in the wider world once the formal stage of their education is over. In an assembly, for example, the headteacher encouraged them to reflect on the part that some of them might have in discoveries and developments that would benefit everyone in the new century.

23. In her management of the school she is very ably supported by the senior managers and by the governors. Senior managers and governors have a very good awareness of strengths and relative weaknesses in the school. An extensive programme of monitoring lessons has enabled managers to help disseminate good practice in teaching and to investigate areas where the girls have not been doing quite so well. The teachers feel well supported and encouraged to put in place a wide range of different approaches in their teaching. The governors keep themselves well informed by regular visits to the school. They are also clear about their role as a "critical friend", for example in beginning to get involved in helping the school elaborate its strategy for information technology.

The level of care and support provided by the staff enables the girls to make the most of their opportunities.

23. The high level of care and support provided through the pastoral system has a very positive impact on the girls' learning. The ethos throughout the school community is very friendly and supportive. The excellent relationships through the school enable the girls and staff to work together to try to overcome any academic or personal difficulties that arise.

24. Very good systems are in place to monitor the girls' general academic progress. During a discussion with an inspector, some Year 10 girls said that they felt that the teachers really cared about their learning and were always willing to re-explain topics that they did not fully understand. Teachers are also willing to provide valuable lunchtime lessons, and some girls are offered a helpful mentoring programme. The school has very good systems to identify swiftly any girls who are not working as well as they could. 'Cause for concern' forms are used amongst staff to collect a 'snap shot' on a girl's performance. Tutors, heads of year and senior management follow up any problems. Annual progress reviews are prepared on all girls and highlight any underlying concerns. These are tackled systematically through the pastoral system.

25. Good systems are in place to monitor the girls' personal development. Staff are vigilant of any changes in a girl's attitude to school. Any problems, for example with behaviour or attendance, are dealt with effectively through the pastoral system. Another striking feature of the level of care shown can be seen in the discussions between each of the senior managers and four girls from a different class each week.

26. Very good procedures are in place for child protection. A deputy head is the designated member of staff with responsibility for child protection and all staff have received awareness training. The school pays high regard to health and safety. Staff carry out risk assessments of specific areas; governors also make checks. Good procedures are in place to ensure that pupils who are ill or injured receive good care and attention. Although there are no qualified first aiders, sufficient staff have received basic training.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The school's provision for information technology is not as well co-ordinated as it could be.

27. There have been significant improvements in information technology (IT) since the last inspection. The two computer suites now contain more up-to-date equipment and are more heavily used than previously. At lunchtimes, demand clearly outstrips supply. There is a clear structure to the IT programme in Years 7 to 9. As a result, all the girls have acquired basic IT skills, such as word-processing and the ability to send e-mails and use the Internet. There is appropriate provision in the Sixth Form for all girls to extend their skills.

28. There are nevertheless weaknesses at both Key Stage 3 and 4, and in the overall level of resources for IT. At Key Stage 3 the teachers have only just started to assess the girls' progress against the criteria of the National Curriculum as they progress through the key stage. Consequently, their planning does not take into account sufficiently the considerable range in the IT skills that different girls have already acquired. At Key Stage 4, IT is taught through subjects rather than as a subject in its own right. No one member of staff, however, has a clear oversight of what is taught; nor is it clear who has responsibility

for the quality of IT at the key stage. As a result, the girls' experience is too dependent on the subjects they take and the level of interest and expertise of their teachers. The pupils themselves were clear that those who did not have IT equipment at home were at a particular disadvantage. As for equipment, although the school has considerably improved the quality, the ratio of computers to pupils is half the national average for secondary schools.

Although the school's results in the Key Stage 3 tests compare very favourably with the national average, the most able girls could do even better.

29. Taking the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science together, the girls' performance is very high compared to the national average. However, their results are no better than those achieved in grammar schools nationally. By contrast, at GCSE their results are above the average for grammar schools. Indeed, the proportion achieving five or more GCSEs at A* - C is well above the average for selective schools. So there is clearly scope for even better performance by the end of Key Stage 3.

30. Of the three subjects, English is the one in which the girls' performance is above the average for grammar schools. This is so in respect of the proportion achieving levels 6 and 7 and of the average points score of all the girls. Nevertheless, even in English, the girls' performance is not quite as good, relatively, as at GCSE. There are two areas in which the department can profitably focus in seeking further improvement: firstly, in helping the girls structure their writing better; and secondly, in preparing them more effectively for the writing test. The department is already taking appropriate action in this regard.

31. In mathematics, the overall performance of the girls is below that of grammar schools, mainly because of the lower proportion achieving levels 6 and 7. The department should aim to increase further the level of challenge, particularly for the more able, and to provide revision programmes similar to those in place for GCSE and A-level. Greater consistency in assessing the girls' work in relation to National Curriculum levels through Years 7 to 9 should help ensure that little time is lost on the consolidation of skills in which girls are already competent.

32. In science, the girls' performance is in line with the average for other grammar schools in respect of the average points score of all the girls and in the proportion achieving level 6 or above. It is below the average in respect of level 7 and above. This is in large part a consequence of the situation prior to September 1999 in which the three sciences operated to a considerable extent as separate departments. As a result there was no common practice in assessment across the department and National Curriculum levels were not used in tracking the girls' overall progress in science. This situation is now changing, following the appointment of a new head of science. The department's plans to improve assessment and to measure "value-added" are appropriate.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

33. The school should now:

- (1) improve the provision of information technology by clarifying management responsibilities, improving assessment, monitoring the experience of all the girls at Key Stage 4 and by increasing the level of equipment;
- (2) aim for even higher results at Key Stage 3, especially for the more able.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed:	49
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils:	19

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	33	47	20	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils on the school's roll	617	185
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	21	

Special educational needs

	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	10	4

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	12

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5
National comparative data	9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	1

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	1999	n/a	122	122

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Girls	121	119	119
	Total	121	119	119
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	99 (98)	98 (100)	98 (100)
	National	63 (65)	62 (59)	55 (56)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	93 (96)	93 (98)	85 (90)
	National	28 (35)	38 (36)	23 (27)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Girls	122	122	122
	Total	122	122	122
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	64 (61)	64 (64)	60 (59)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	98 (93)	97 (99)	98 (95)
	National	31 (30)	37 (37)	28 (30)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4

Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	n/a	125	125

GCSE results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A*-G	1 or more grades A*-G
Numbers of pupils achieving the standard specified	Boys	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Girls	124	125	125
	Total	124	125	125
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	99 (99)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	46 (45)	91 (90)	96 (94)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	64 (65)
	National	38 (37)

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

Attainment at the end of the sixth form

Number of students aged 16, 17 and 18 on roll in January of the latest reporting year who were entered for GCE A-level or AS-level examinations	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	n/a	79	79

Average A/AS points score per candidate	For candidates entered for 2 or more A-levels or equivalent			For candidates entered for fewer than 2 A-levels or equivalent		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
School	n/a	25.2 (27.1)	25.2 (27.1)	n/a	8.0 (5.0)	8.0 (5.0)
National	n/a	18.1	17.9 (17.6)	n/a	2.8	2.8 (2.8)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	2
Indian	3
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	4
White	598
Any other minority ethnic group	8

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: Y7– Y13**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	45.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y7 – Y13

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	28

Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y13

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	78%
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Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y13

Key Stage 3	28
Key Stage 4	22

Financial information

Financial year	1998/1999
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	£
Total income	1,740,900
Total expenditure	1,751,728
Expenditure per pupil	2,269
Balance brought forward from previous year	12,121
Balance carried forward to next year	1,293

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	802
Number of questionnaires returned	224

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	29	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	71	25	1	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	57	39	0	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	47	9	0	2
The teaching is good.	56	40	1	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	32	50	13	3	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	28	4	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	86	13	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	34	49	9	3	5
The school is well led and managed.	77	21	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	70	26	1	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	39	45	10	2	4

Other issues raised by parents

Some parents felt that communication with the school could be enhanced by more use of homework books for comments by parents and teachers. Some also said that they would appreciate an annual calendar of events.