

INSPECTION REPORT

DURRINGTON HIGH SCHOOL

Worthing

LEA area: West Sussex

Unique reference number: 126083

Headteacher: Ms. S. Crowther

Reporting inspector: Mr. T. Byrne
2561

Dates of inspection: 30 April – 3 May 2001

Inspection number: 186287

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	12 - 16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	The Boulevard Worthing West Sussex
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. P. Reynolds
Date of previous inspection:	11 December 1995

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2561	Tony Byrne	Registered inspector		What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The schools results and achievements How well are pupils or students taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9334	Jenny Mynett	Lay inspector		How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
12356	Richard Dickason	Team inspector	Science	
21971	John Glennon	Team inspector	Religious education	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Key stage 4
11672	Peter Harle	Team inspector	Music	
18261	Anthony Hill	Team inspector	Art Special educational needs	
2991	Alan Jones	Team inspector	Mathematics	
8052	Kenneth McKenzie	Team inspector	Information technology Business education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils or students?
25748	Roger Moyle	Team inspector	Physical education	
1994	Helen Olds	Team inspector	History Equal opportunities	
16950	Caroline Orr	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages	
20247	Roger Parry	Team inspector	Geography	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils or students? How well does the school care for its pupils? Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Key stage 4
21837	Christine Peet	Team inspector	English English as an additional language	
4703	Clive Potter	Team inspector	Design and technology	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

With 1456 pupils on roll, Durrington High is a much bigger than average comprehensive school for pupils aged 12-16, in the western area of Worthing. The proportion of boys in each year group is greater than the proportion of girls. Pupils are mainly of white ethnic origin, with approximately 2% from other ethnic backgrounds. The school receives pupils mainly from three local middle schools. The area served is suburban, providing pupils from diverse socio-economic backgrounds. The attainment of pupils on entry is broadly average; the latest results of National Curriculum tests for pupils aged 11 show that just over half of the year group attained below the national average. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is in line with the national average and the school has data that shows the proportion is above average within the county. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is above average, although the number with statements is in line with the average nationally. The percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language is a little above average. At the time of the inspection a high proportion of lessons was taught by supply teachers who were covering for staff who were ill, or filling temporary vacancies caused by staff movement and recruitment difficulties, which are affecting the LEA generally. Whilst the work of supply teachers was taken into account, the team based its judgements on teaching mainly on the work of permanent staff.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Durrington High provides satisfactory education with some good features; there are more strengths than weaknesses. There is an ambitious vision of education that is made a reality in some strong areas. However, the pace of change for the better is not quick enough and the quality of education and the expectations staff have of pupils are not consistent enough to deliver what the school aspires to be. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Most pupils make satisfactory progress and those who are gifted and talented, or who have statements of special educational need, make good progress. Considering the levels of attainment on entry and the progress made by most pupils, standards on leaving and the good care the school provides, but improvements being slowed by inconsistencies, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Equality of opportunity in the curriculum and provision for social development
- Use of pupil performance data to analyse progress
- Care for pupils, including monitoring overall academic and personal development
- High standards and very good teaching in art, information technology and business studies
- Innovative curriculum at Key Stage 4, offering balance and a wide range of choice
- Management of the excellent accommodation and facilities to support learning

What could be improved

- Standards in modern foreign languages, religious education and resistant materials in design and technology
- Implementation of the policy for numeracy
- Standards of behaviour in some lessons and around the school and punctuality and the response of pupils to temporary staff
- Pace of improvement and challenge to implement policy consistently and achieve consistent quality in teaching
- Assessment in class and in marking and the use of homework to support learning

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 previously inspected in December 1995. The quality of teaching has been carefully audited; there has been improvement, but there is an element of inconsistency. The management of assessment information has become a strength at senior management level and in most departments, but day-to-day assessment is a weakness. Reports are now clear and regular, though parents would still like earlier warning of any slipping back by pupils. Access to information and communication technology is now good. Attendance is satisfactory, but punctuality is not. Health and safety associated with the construction of new buildings is of course no longer an issue now that work is complete and regular procedures are good. More assemblies take place with a Christian ethos, but there is not a daily act of worship. Standards remain broadly in line with expectations of the age group nationally. Overall, improvement is satisfactory.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
GCSE examinations	C	C	C	B

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

In 2000, results in National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 9 were in line with the national average and above average for similar schools. Results have matched the national average for the past three years and, at times, each of the three subjects has returned above average results. The attainment of boys and girls is very similar. In other subjects, attainment is in line with what is expected of this age group, except in modern foreign languages, where attainment is slightly below average at the end of the key stage. Overall, in the work seen, standards are good in English and satisfactory in mathematics and science. In GCSE examinations at age 16, results are in line with the national average. Results for girls and boys were close to national averages. Standards were above average in comparison with similar schools, although in 2000, pupils did not make such good progress in comparison with what they had achieved at age 14 as pupils did in 1999. In work seen standards are good in English and satisfactory in mathematics and science. The trend of results at the end of both key stages has followed the national trend closely for several years.

Pupils enter the school in Year 8 with a level of attainment that is a little below the national average for the age group according to results obtained in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6. Whilst the school is at the lower limit of the group of similar schools with which its results are compared on the basis of free school meals claimed, the school has evidence that a significant number of pupils come from backgrounds that are not advantaged. Some pupils have had limited experience of modern foreign languages and ICT when they begin Year 8.

Pupils' attainment is in line with expectations for the age group or better in over 70 per cent of lessons in Key Stage 3 and in 80 per cent of lessons in Key Stage 4. Standards in art and design are above average and by the end of Year 11; pupils have made progress in ICT to standards that are well above average. In physical education, pupils attain good standards and there is an impressive range of representation at county and national levels. Standards in some classes in modern foreign languages and in resistant materials in design and technology are unsatisfactory.

In English, standards are above average for pupils at 14 and 16 years of age. Pupils have good speaking and listening skills. Most read fluently and many can write sustained and sometimes evocative prose. Wall displays feature and celebrate the achievements of many pupils. In mathematics, standards are satisfactory at the end of Year 9 and at the end of Year 11, except for pupils with special educational needs, who do not make as much progress as they should. In science, standards are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages and pupils with special educational needs make good progress. In ICT, standards are in line with national expectation by the end of Year 9 and rise to a good level by the end of Year 11. In religious education, standards are in line with what is expected of pupils aged 14, but attainment at the end of Year 11 is below average, due to the reduced amount of time spent on the subject.

In art, pupils develop high standards in textiles, pottery, three-dimensional work and drawing. Standards are above average in both key stages. In design and technology, standards are below average at the end of Year 9, but attainment is average for most pupils by the end of Year 11, except in resistant materials. In geography, standards are in line with what is expected at the end of both key stages, with many instances of work that are above average and above average attainment in GCSE results in 2000. Standards are average in history and show promising signs of improving above that level. In modern foreign languages, standards are below average. In music, pupils reach the standard expected of the age groups at the end of Year 9 and at the end of Year 11. In physical education, attainment is in line with what is expected of the age group by the end of Year 9, but the attainment of most pupils is good by the end of Year 11. The school fell short of the challenging target it had set itself for the proportion of pupils achieving five or more GCSE passes at grades A*-C, but a more accurate approach to calculating realistic but aspirational targets has subsequently been adopted.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. Many pupils have positive attitudes but a minority do not take work seriously.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Unsatisfactory. In some lessons unsatisfactory behaviour disrupts learning. Conduct around school is at times thoughtless and rules are often disregarded.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils often get on well with each other and staff. They take on specific responsibilities well.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory but punctuality is unsatisfactory at the start of sessions and between lessons.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 11-14 years	aged 14-16 years	aged over 16 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	N/a

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 majority of teaching is good. It is good or better in almost 70 per cent of lessons, a little more frequently good in Key Stage 4 than in Key Stage 3: it is very good or excellent in over 40 per cent of lessons and it is at least satisfactory in 93 per cent. There is a small element of unsatisfactory teaching, some of which is attributable to temporary and some to permanent staff. In many departments good progress has been made in achieving consistent quality, but in some subjects there is not enough consistency and staffing difficulties have delayed improvement.

When teaching is good, there are high expectations of what pupils will do and what they can achieve. Clear and appropriate targets are set for pupils, taking account of the different attainment levels within a class. The planning of lessons is good, leading to effective use of time and resources. Methods are shared and the learning within the lessons is varied and efficient. Preparation takes care to involve all pupils. Methods chosen are usually suitable and contribute to good management of behaviour and relationships with pupils are good.

In lessons where there are weaknesses in teaching, there is a lack of variety in the approaches, activity being focused on the teacher talking for too long, or pupils working from textbooks without variation. This leads to a lack of pace and sometimes to a restless atmosphere. Sometimes lack of respect or attention from pupils is not challenged early enough. Expectations are low about how much pupils can do, their response and how well they will perform. Assessment is sometimes weak in helping pupils to improve. Day-to-day assessment of work is not always sufficiently regular and clear. Setting of homework is not regular and lack of consistency means that it does not support learning as well as it should. These weaknesses are often exacerbated when pupils are not working with their regular teacher. Implementation of the policy for teaching literacy is inconsistent. Marking of work is sometimes unsatisfactory.

Across the curriculum at both key stages opportunities to teach numeracy are not fully realised in teaching. The development of numeracy is ineffective.

The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory; it is good when specialist teachers work with pupils and when support is provided in lessons, but when pupils are part of a mainstream class, subject teachers do not always provide adequate support for these pupils to make good progress.

In English, there is a high proportion of very good and excellent lessons which are conducted at a good pace. In mathematics and science, there is some good teaching but it is less consistently offered. Although relationships are securely founded in some science classes, in others poor relationships lead to lack of focus by pupils. In mathematics, teaching with very high expectations secures a good response, but there are lessons in which lack of application by pupils is tolerated and assessment is not used well to target and guide pupils. Good planning in history produces interesting lessons; however sometimes, unacceptable behaviour is not challenged early enough, reducing what pupils learn. Teaching is good overall in geography, with very good organisation of work and use of time; it is less effective when pupils talk when they should be listening and the quality of assessment is variable. In religious education, there is good class management but appropriate account is not

taken of the most and least able pupils. There are very effective methods in some subjects in design and technology; good planning and clarity of focus are evident in food technology and graphic products; in resistant materials there is a good basis for Key Stage 3 work, but poor management of behaviour in a minority of lessons detracts from learning and at times exposes pupils to risk. Information technology and business studies engage interest through rapid pace backed up by good support for individuals. In music, though many classes are new to the teachers, due to staff changes, thorough planning supports good progress. Good organisation and control in physical education lessons creates good opportunities for progress through independent learning. Very good teaching in art enables pupils to obtain the high standards evident in the displays of work throughout the school. There is good planning in lessons in modern foreign languages taught by permanent staff and relationships between teachers and pupils are usually good. However in this subject, temporary staff have limited teaching methods, which lead to a slow pace and expectations of behaviour are too low. Progress made by pupils in both key stages is at least satisfactory in 90 per cent of lessons. Learning is good in 65 per cent of lessons, occasionally lagging behind when teaching is good because of the disaffected attitude of a few older pupils. The effort put in is good when behaviour is satisfactory, as is output and pace of work. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good, with particularly broad and appropriate provision at Key Stage 4. Arrangements ensure equality of access. Equality of opportunity is a strength of the school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good features in provision, although in some lessons where support is not available, provision is less good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Most pupils are not at an early stage of acquiring English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good, with very good provision for social development. There is a strong response to social issues and pupils support charities enthusiastically. Experiences in many subjects contribute to pupils' personal growth.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Mainly good and a strength of the school, but there is inconsistent application of rules, rewards and sanctions.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. Leadership by the headteacher is good. A number of successful initiatives have contributed to improvement, but the pace of improvement is intermittent. Partly because of changes in personnel, progress in completing the action plan is variable. Overall, management by key staff is satisfactory.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. They are highly supportive, but the challenge they make to the school to improve rapidly is not sharp enough.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. There is good analysis of performance data and audits are conducted effectively, but outcomes and recommendations are sometimes not implemented consistently.
The strategic use of resources	Good, except that, too often, supply staff are not sufficiently supported in making an effective contribution.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children are expected to do their best• Children make good progress• The teaching is good	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consistency in setting homework• Working closely with parents• Behaviour• Information about progress

Parents returned 402 questionnaires (about 27 per cent), providing quite a good sample of parental opinion. The inspection team agreed that, on the whole, expectations are high in relation to academic standards. Progress is usually good. Teaching is good. There are inconsistencies in the setting of homework, even though the school has worked with a volunteer group of parents on this issue. The school makes extensive efforts to work with parents, although recent staffing problems have caused some unintentional interference; better use could be made of the communication route provided by pupil planners. The "Little and Often" reports are an effective attempt to keep parents informed. Behaviour is in need of improvement.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In 2000, results in National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 9 were in line with the national average and above average for similar schools. Results matched the national average for the past three years and at times each of the three subjects has returned above average results. The attainment of boys and girls is very similar. In other subjects attainment is in line with what is expected of this age group, except in modern foreign languages where attainment is below average at the end of the key stage. Overall in the work seen, standards are good in English and satisfactory in mathematics and science.
2. In GCSE examinations at age 16, results are in line with the national average. Results for girls and boys were close to national averages. Standards were above average in comparison with similar schools, although in 2000, pupils did not make such good progress in comparison with what they had achieved at age 14 as pupils did in 1999. In work seen, standards are good in English and satisfactory in mathematics and science.
3. Pupils enter the school in Year 8 with a level of attainment that is a little below the national average for the age group according to results obtained in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6. Whilst the school is at the lower limit of the group of similar schools with which its results are compared on the basis of free school meals claimed, the school has evidence that a significant number of pupils come from backgrounds that are not advantaged. Some pupils have had limited experience of modern foreign languages and ICT when they begin Year 8.
4. Pupils' attainment is in line with expectations for the age group or better in over 70 per cent of lessons in Key Stage 3 and in 80 per cent of lessons in Key Stage 4. Standards in art and design are above average and by the end of Year 11 pupils have made progress in ICT to standards that are well above average. In physical education pupils attain good standards and there is an impressive range of representation at county and national levels. Standards in some classes in modern foreign languages and in resistant materials in design and technology are unsatisfactory.
5. In English standards are above average for pupils at 14 and 16 years of age. Pupils have good speaking and listening skills. Most read fluently and many can write sustained and sometimes evocative prose. Wall displays feature and celebrate the achievements of many pupils. In mathematics standards are satisfactory at the end of Year 9 and at the end of Year 11, except for pupils with special educational needs, who do not make as much progress as they should, and except for the implementation of numeracy policy, which is inconsistently applied. In science standards are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages and pupils with special educational needs make good progress. In ICT standards are in line with national expectation by the end of Year 9 and rise to a good level by the end of Year 11. In religious education standards are in line with what is expected of pupils aged 14, but attainment at the end of Year 11 is below average, due to the reduced amount of time spent on the subject.
6. In art, pupils develop high standards in textiles, pottery, three-dimensional work and drawing. Standards are above average in both key stages. In design and technology, standards are below average at the end of Year 9, but attainment is average for most pupils by the end of Year 11, except in resistant materials. In geography, standards are in line with what is expected at the end of both key stages, with many instances of work that is above average and above average attainment in GCSE results in 2000. Standards have been below average in history in GCSE examinations, but work in class shows promising signs of improving above that level. In modern foreign languages standards are below average. In music pupils reach the standard expected of the age groups at the end of Year 9 and at the end of Year 11. In physical education, attainment is in line with what is expected of the age group by the end of Year 9, but the attainment of most pupils is good by the end of Year 11.
7. The school fell short of the challenging target it had set itself for the proportion of pupils achieving five or more GCSE passes at grades A*-C, but a more accurate approach to calculating realistic but aspirational targets has subsequently been adopted.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Overall, pupils' attitudes to school are satisfactory. Parents are pleased at the way the teachers expect their children to work hard and achieve their best, and they feel this helps them make good progress. Parents also commented that their children generally like school. Many pupils have positive attitudes and they work to improve their performance. However, there is a significant proportion that does not take work sufficiently seriously. These pupils either do not attend school regularly or do not work hard enough in lessons. Where lessons are interesting and involve tasks that are well matched to their ability levels, pupils are enthusiastic, well motivated and eager to contribute. Pupils are supportive of the clubs and other activities in the school. Many participate in the extra-curricular activities.
9. Whilst the majority of pupils behave perfectly well, standards of behaviour in some lessons and around the school are unsatisfactory. Most pupils are well behaved and form supportive relationships with each other and their teachers. However, a significant number of pupils exhibit very challenging behaviour and are at times a disruptive influence in class. When lessons are well managed with effective implementation of the school's behaviour strategy these incidents of poor behaviour are contained. Staff shortages have resulted in a large number of classes currently being taught by supply and temporary teachers. As these teachers do not know the class a significant number of pupils see this as an opportunity to misbehave, and 'play up' in lessons. Pupils commented that the poor behaviour of some pupils in some lessons makes it difficult to learn. This is more apparent in the lower attaining sets. In about ten per cent of lessons attitudes and behaviour are unsatisfactory. Pupils' lack of respect for their environment is apparent through the thoughtless litter left around the school after break and lunchtimes, the discarded chewing gum and evidence of graffiti in the toilets. Cleaning staff have to clear up after pupils three times a day. Pupils' behaviour has not improved significantly since the previous inspection, when the report highlighted a number of concerns. There is a rising trend in the number of pupils being excluded temporarily; since September there have been 56 incidents of fixed period exclusions compared with 59 for the whole of the previous year. However, there is a reducing trend in permanent exclusions. Behaviour around the school can be boisterous during the breaks and changeover periods between lessons. Some pupils move noisily around, bumping into each other as they make their way to the next lesson. Whilst a small number of pupils are off-hand or thoughtless, most are friendly and polite. The inconsistent implementation of the uniform policy means that pupils frequently disregard the dress code. Smoking in the toilets is also an issue. A number of pupils reported that the rewards and sanctions policy is ineffective and inconsistent. Pupils, particularly older ones, do not value it sufficiently for it to act as an incentive. In addition sanctions such as detentions are not seen as a deterrent for misdemeanours. However, pupils generally feel that the school provides a safe and happy environment where they can meet their friends. They report occasional incidents of bullying, but know who to go to if there are problems. They consider that the school takes any incidents seriously and deals with them promptly and effectively. As a worthwhile initiative, Year 10 pupils train as 'peer educators' and work with Year 8 pupils during the focus on bullying in the personal and social education lessons.
10. Relationships in the school are often good, both between staff and pupils, and amongst the pupils themselves. There are many opportunities for pupils to work co-operatively. For instance, in dance, small groups were collaborating well with their improvisations, and groups were working effectively with instruments in a music lesson to compose a mock baroque piece. This friendly and supportive atmosphere often promotes a good working environment and makes a positive impact on learning. Pupils listen to each other and are happy to talk about their feelings, knowing others will respect their views.
11. The personal development of most pupils is good. When asked, pupils willingly undertake responsibilities both in class and around the school. Some pupils act as librarians, and classes elect form representatives for the year councils. There are opportunities for older pupils to take initiatives in Young Enterprise projects. Pupils play for school teams and take part in performances. The school council provides a voice for pupils to express their opinions, and the prefects' committee raises money for charities. The prefects are seen to represent a 'help may be obtained here' function for younger pupils, and have duties such as showing visitors around the school.
12. Attendance is satisfactory. Punctuality at the start of sessions and at lessons is unsatisfactory. To reinforce the importance of preparing for examinations, Year 11 pupils who take holidays in term-time are recorded as having unauthorised absences. A small percentage of the unauthorised absences relates to a small number of pupils, who rarely, if ever, attend school.

The lack of attendance on a regular basis by some pupils is having a significant impact upon their education and standards of attainment. Punctuality to school in the morning is a cause for concern with many pupils arriving late on a regular basis. During the course of the day pupils are often late into lessons. Registers are taken at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions, and by class teachers in each lesson to monitor truancy. Although there are spot checks, there are not enough effective systems in place to enable staff to easily follow up suspected truants, other than going through the registers. The school is not fulfilling the statutory requirement to close the registers at a set time each morning. This means that the registers are not being completed correctly. Those who arrive very late at school after the registers are called are not recorded as having an unauthorised lateness. This inaccurate recording does not provide enough correct information required by the education welfare officer to follow up these incidents to enable her to take persistent cases to court. The school took action immediately following the inspection to put this matter right by notifying parents of an appropriate time at which registers will be closed.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

13. The majority of teaching is good. It is good or better in almost 70 per cent of lessons, a little more frequently good in Key Stage 4 than in Key Stage 3: it is very good or excellent in over 40 per cent of lessons and it is at least satisfactory in 93 per cent. There is a small element of unsatisfactory teaching, some of which is attributable to temporary and some to permanent staff. The school has invested considerable time in observing teaching to produce a guide to effective practice and from this, departments have identified their own key points for improvement. In many departments, good progress has been made in achieving consistent quality, but in some subjects there is not enough consistency and staffing difficulties have delayed improvement.
14. When teaching is good, there are high expectations of what pupils will do and what they can achieve. Clear and appropriate targets are set for pupils, taking account of the different attainment levels within a class. The planning of lessons is good, leading to effective use of time and resources. A Year 11 information technology lesson had pupils making excellent progress because objectives and timing were precise and feedback was given which informed and motivated pupils. Methods of teaching a topic are shared within departments and the organisation of learning within the lessons is varied and efficient. Lessons are well prepared and care is taken to involve all pupils. For example, in an English lesson with a lower ability Year 8 class, the teacher distributed her questions widely, letting the pupils know that she wanted to hear from pupils who had not yet answered. In some lessons, teachers create good opportunities for independent learning, especially when pupils engage in research, or evaluate their own work and that of others. Teaching methods chosen are usually suitable and contribute to good management of behaviour. In these lessons, relationships with pupils are good. Excellent relationships are a stimulus to high achievement in an art class in Year 11 where the teacher's expertise and high expectations and trust earned the pupils' full commitment.
15. In lessons where there are weaknesses in teaching, there is a lack of variety in the approaches used, activity being focused on the teacher talking for too long, or pupils working from textbooks without variation. This leads to a lack of pace and sometimes to a restless atmosphere. In a mathematics lesson with an average ability Year 8 class working from a textbook, the behaviour of the majority deteriorated as the teacher concentrated on individuals. Sometimes lack of respect or attention from pupils is not challenged early enough. This was the case in some lessons in modern foreign languages taught by temporary staff and in a science lesson with Year 11 where pupils achieved less than they should have as some talked instead of concentrating on a video recording. Expectations are low about how much pupils can do, how they will respond and how well they will perform. An example of this occurred in a lesson in resistant materials with a Year 9 class where pupils' attention wandered and some behaviour was potentially unsafe. The use of assessment is sometimes weak in helping pupils to improve; for example, day-to-day assessment of work is not always sufficiently regular and clear. Setting of homework is not regular and the lack of consistency means that it does not support learning as well as it should. These weaknesses are often exacerbated when pupils are not working with their regular teacher.
16. The school has a literacy co-ordinator. A working party now meets regularly and a whole school policy has been formulated. However, implementation of the policy is inconsistent. Literacy is taught as a discrete course in English. Detailed schemes of work have been developed for use with all sets in Years 8 and 9. These are carefully structured and divided

into units that identify key skills, integrate them into tasks and review skills already learned. A literacy summer school has been planned to target Level 3 pupils before they enter the school in September 2001. Literacy liaison meetings with feeder schools, set up some time ago to promote continuity across Key Stage 3, are about to be resumed. At the moment there is some good practice in various areas of the school, notably the use of key words in design and technology, science, physical education, history and geography. In mathematics, attention is given to the spelling of terminology. There were good examples in a top set Year 9 modern language lesson of pupils being extended in their reading. It is intended that departmental action plans will form the basis for planning literacy initiatives for September 2001. Marking of work to improve literacy is unsatisfactory.

17. Across the curriculum at both key stages opportunities to develop numeracy are not fully realised in teaching, nor is the teaching of numeracy supported by a policy. In mathematics, there is now a greater emphasis on regular number work and sensible restriction of calculator use allows regular practice of mental arithmetic. In science, design and technology and geography measuring skills are developed in experimental and investigative work. Data handling skills are well developed across the curriculum. In geography, data on population, climate and rainfall is organised in line and bar charts. Food technology and graphics use pie charts to present data. Science develops graphicacy skills when analysing experimental data. Business and information and communication technology organise data in spreadsheets from which range of charts are generated. Recently, limited provision has been made to support pupils with low-level number skills. Withdrawal sessions allow pupils more intensive practice of routine mental arithmetic and basic number operations. There are few planned experiences across the curriculum for developing pupils' estimating skills.
18. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is satisfactory. The quality of teaching is very good in lessons where pupils with statements of special need are withdrawn for one to one support. SEN teachers know the pupils well and use appropriate resources to enable them to make very good progress in gaining access to the school curriculum. Where pupils who are becoming disaffected or who are experiencing difficulties in settling to lessons are withdrawn to the special resource (PL3) for short periods of time, the quality of teaching is also very good. The teacher and learning support assistant work very well together in managing this flexible resource effectively. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good when specialist teachers work with pupils and when support is provided in lessons. When pupils are part of a mainstream class, subject teachers do not always provide adequate support for these pupils to make good progress.
19. One pupil at an early stage of acquiring English receives some support within the school but the school is unable to obtain specialist support from the LEA for one pupil.
20. In English, there is a high proportion of very good and excellent lessons. Well planned lessons based on good subject knowledge and high expectations make for enjoyable lessons which are conducted at a good pace. In mathematics and science there is some good teaching but it is less consistently offered. Although relationships are securely founded in some science classes, in others poor relationships lead to lack of focus by pupils. In mathematics, teaching with very high expectations secures a good response, but there are lessons in which lack of application by pupils is tolerated and assessment is not used well to target and guide pupils. There is good planning in history leading to interesting lessons; however, sometimes, unacceptable behaviour is not challenged early enough, reducing what pupils learn. Teaching is good overall in geography, often based on very good organisation of work and use of time; teaching is less effective when pupils talk when they should be listening and the quality of assessment is variable. In religious education, there is good class management but appropriate account is not taken of the most and least able pupils. There are very effective methods in some subjects in design and technology; good planning and clarity of focus are evident in food technology and graphic products; in resistant materials there is a good basis for Key Stage 3 work, but poor management of behaviour in a minority of lessons detracts from learning and at times exposes pupils to risk. Information technology and business studies engage interest through rapid pace backed up by good support for individuals. In music, though many classes are new to the teachers, due to staff changes, thorough planning is supporting good progress. Good organisation and control in physical education lessons creates good opportunities for progress through independent learning. Very good teaching in art enables pupils to obtain the high standards evident in the wide-ranging displays of work throughout the school.
21. There is good planning in lessons in modern foreign languages taught by permanent staff and relationships between teachers and pupils are usually good. However in this subject,

temporary staff have limited teaching methods which lead to a slow pace and expectations of behaviour are too low.

22. Progress made by pupils in both key stages is at least satisfactory in 90 per cent of lessons. Learning is good in about 65 per cent of lessons, occasionally lagging behind when teaching is good because of the disaffected attitude of a few older pupils. The effort put in is good when behaviour is satisfactory, as is output and pace of work. Pupils' knowledge of their learning is satisfactory, though it can be better than this when they are convinced of the worth of the subject by the expertise of the teacher, as, for example, was the case with Year 11 pupils who spoke with such passion about how much they had gained from their drama course. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall, though progress is good when they have specialist support. Pupils who have statements of special educational needs benefit from the very good provision made for them and they make very good progress. Using the good quality individual education plans (IEPs) drawn up by the SEN staff, the SEN teachers ensure that the one or two weekly withdrawal lessons are used effectively to raise standards of literacy. The recent initiative to withdraw small groups for numeracy lessons is beginning to benefit those few pupils who are withdrawn. In lessons where there is some evidence of joint planning between LSAs and class teachers the pupils make at least good, and often very good progress. Such progress is seen in lessons of English, science, geography, physical education, art and design and music. In practical lessons such as design and technology and information and communication technology, where there is no support, the progress of SEN pupils is satisfactory. In mathematics, the lack of resources to meet the wide range of pupils' abilities holds up the progress of SEN pupils.
23. Pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?

24. The overall range and quality of learning opportunities are good. The school is providing learning opportunities which are suitably broad, balanced, and well matched to the needs of all pupils. Students with special education needs have access to the whole curriculum, and provision for them is good. The school day has been lengthened since the last inspection, which has allowed more flexibility in the curriculum; the ten-day timetable is used effectively in this respect.
25. The school is clear about the rationale for the curriculum and has identified areas for further development; for example, personal and social education (PSE). The curriculum has some strong features, particularly in the areas of English where there are very good literacy strategies, history with a very good range of learning opportunities at both key stages and ICT with timetabled lessons in all years.
26. There are, however, some less satisfactory features for example, the school lacks a numeracy policy. There has been no audit of numeracy across the curriculum and arrangements are ad hoc. Aspects of the scheme of work for mathematics need to be updated. There is insufficient time to cover the agreed syllabus for religious education in Years 10 and 11.
27. In Years 8 and 9 pupils follow the National Curriculum subjects together with personal and social education. Drama is also taught to all pupils. A second modern foreign language is taught in Year 9, although pupils do not choose to go on to take two foreign languages at GCSE in sufficient numbers to make the option viable.
28. The provision for Years 10 and 11 is good, except for religious education. In addition to National Curriculum requirements there is an appropriate range of additional courses. For example GNVQ leisure and tourism at foundation level for those pupils disapplied from French, this will be extended to include intermediate level this year. All pupils follow an accredited course in ICT achieving certificates of competence and can also take GCSE in ICT or information studies. A double subject option in GCSE business and information systems is very successful.
29. The specialist provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) is good and is managed efficiently to give support to those pupils and to the staff who teach them. The provision for statemented pupils is a particular strength that enables the full requirements of the individual statements to be met. It ensures that those pupils make at least good and more often

very good progress with their studies. The very good special resource (the school's "PL3" programme) enables pupils who have had a problem attending school to ease their way back into lessons. It also enables pupils who are experiencing difficulties in particular lessons to be temporarily withdrawn whilst the situation is resolved. The general provision for pupils with SEN in lessons where there is no specialist help is unsatisfactory in meeting the needs of the large number of pupils on the Code of Practice register. The impact is particularly noticeable where there are classes with large numbers of SEN pupils, and more especially where a supply teacher takes the lesson. The level of communication between the personal learning support department (PLS) and subject departments is variable.

30. Religious education in Years 8 and 9 and the religious and moral education programme in Years 10 and 11 provide pupils with insights into values and beliefs and enable them to reflect upon their experiences. The well-established personal and social education programme, which includes all necessary aspects, is effective and fulfils most of its aims and objectives. The programme benefits from the strong commitment of the co-ordinator, tutors and specialists from external agencies. The school is currently developing provision for education in "citizenship" through the subjects of the humanities curriculum.
31. The local and wider community makes a positive contribution to the learning, social and personal development of all pupils. However the RE curriculum would benefit from wider links with local faith communities. The work related curriculum and careers guidance is good. The work experience provision is very successful and well supported by local placement providers.
32. Many subject departments enjoy a purposeful and constructive relationship with the middle schools, which provide most of the intake. These links help to provide continuity in the curriculum. To help improve the flow of information and put curriculum links on a more firm footing in all curriculum areas, a member of staff has recently been given overall responsibility for co-ordinating this work. Links with the local sixth form college and other further and higher education institutions are well developed and successful.
33. The school has a teacher who coordinates support for pupils identified as being gifted and talented. Teachers provide suitable tasks in lessons for these pupils, and in a number of subjects arrange extra activities. For example in mathematics and science teachers organise a residential week of intensive work towards the end of the summer term at a local centre. The co-ordinator oversees the progress of these pupils through regular meetings. He works closely with the middle school liaison teacher to identify gifted and talented pupils early.
34. Overall, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
35. Provision for pupils' spiritual development has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Each pupil attends assembly twice a week and goes to a tutor period on other days. The school has attempted to improve the spiritual aspect of assemblies by inviting local church youth workers to lead them according to a set programme. There is still, however, no collective worship or time given for reflection in assembly. Similarly, in the tutor periods seen during the inspection, there was no attempt at a corporate act of worship. Thus, as at the time of the previous inspection, requirements for collective worship are not met. Some of the assemblies nevertheless contain spiritual themes. Year 11 pupils were, for example, encouraged to believe that they all are of value whatever their imperfections, and this was linked to references to the Bible. A number of subjects contribute strongly to pupils' spiritual development. In religious education, the importance of the spiritual life to members of all faiths is emphasised. Older pupils question what is truly valuable in life and conclude their course with a consideration of their own personal spiritual standpoint. In the expressive arts, self-image and the expression of inner feelings are particularly strong. This is seen through dance and gymnastics, and the composition and performance of music. Above all, the displays of art, both in the department and around the school, provide a highly stimulating reflection of pupils' expression of themselves.
36. The school makes good provision for the moral development of pupils. The code of conduct makes clear what forms of behaviour are expected and what is unacceptable. Most pupils abide by this code although there is a significant minority that in some circumstances fails to do so. There is also specific moral teaching in various subjects. The whole of the religious education syllabus in Years 10 and 11 is based on a moral approach to life. This aspect also features in the teaching of younger pupils, who show a ready tolerance for the beliefs of others. In both history and geography, the morality of such topics as the atomic bomb being dropped on Hiroshima, and the destruction of the Brazilian rain forest are considered. The Internet is

used to research moral issues such as the Holocaust. Moral aspects in English literature are dealt with in lessons on texts such as “Macbeth” and “An Inspector Calls”. In physical education, stress is placed on fair play and the importance of accepting the referee’s decision.

37. The provision for social development is very good. Awareness of the needs of others and our responsibility to help people in need is shown in the extensive support that the school gives to charities both international and local. Much of the fund-raising is undertaken by pupils themselves. For example, the prefects organised a bucket collection to raise funds for a local special school. The role of the prefects is to support the school, for example at parents’ meetings, and to assist new pupils to settle in. The year councils and the school council give some pupils the chance to experience responsibility and decision-making in a real situation. Year 11 pupils form a “prom committee” to organise the leavers’ farewell event. In most subjects pupils work together in pairs or group work. This applies most strongly in drama and in physical education where they learn their responsibility towards others in their team or production group. The full programme of educational visits provides further social experience. In some subjects there is specific teaching about social topics. In history and geography, social changes and the effects of urbanisation are studied. There is a growing amount of playing together in musical ensembles. Many assemblies have social themes. An effective assembly was seen in which two sellers of “The Big Issue” spoke about their experiences.
38. There is good cultural provision. Pupils go on visits to art exhibitions and theatres. Drama companies visit school. A joint English and history trip was recently made to the battlefields of the First World War to deepen understanding of the historical events and associated poetry. Pupils visit Germany every other year and some write to pen friends in France. In some subjects pupils are given the chance to experience cultures other than their own. Pupils learn about African, Indian and American music. The physical education programme features dance from other cultures, although this is limited to girls. In religious education, pupils study the major faiths of the world. In art, there is good coverage across cultures, specifically Indian, African and Aboriginal. Examples of these are well displayed around the school for all to share. Other subjects include cultural provision in their schemes. For example, in mathematics, pupils are made aware of the number systems of ancient civilisations.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. The school provides a caring and supportive environment through a well-developed pastoral system. Provision for pupils’ health, welfare and guidance makes an effective contribution to their personal and academic development. Pupils are allocated to class tutors when they join the school and generally remain with the same tutor and head of year as they progress through the school. The class tutors, year heads and the subject specialists therefore know their pupils well and are able to respond quickly when they see a need. Pupils spoke warmly of their class tutors, often seeing them as friends. The school actively seeks to ensure that pupils have equal opportunities, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. The girls are outnumbered by boys but are in no way overshadowed by them. There are appropriate links with partner institutions. The entry process from primary schools, and the later transition to various colleges, are well planned, and handled sensitively and help pupils to continue to progress well in their learning.
40. The consistent implementation of well thought-out procedures for promoting discipline and good behaviour is unsatisfactory. The code of conduct is clearly displayed on walls and included in pupils’ planners. The behaviour policy offers clear guidelines and procedures for promoting good behaviour and dealing with incidents of unsatisfactory or disruptive behaviour. However, some pupils disregard them and too few pupils are motivated by the system of rewards and sanctions. This results in too frequent examples of unsatisfactory behaviour in classrooms, or around the school. Some initiatives have made a positive impact. Report sheets, case managers who support individual pupils, and pastoral support plans for those at risk of exclusion, have gone some way towards helping to manage some of the behaviour problems in the school.
41. Procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are good. The school takes the issue of bullying seriously and addresses it through the personal and social education (PSE) lessons. Pupils report that any incidents of bullying which do occur are generally handled sensitively and effectively.

42. Procedures for monitoring and encouraging good attendance are satisfactory. Over the past eighteen months there has been an improved focus on this area: parents are now contacted on the first day of absence to encourage pupil attendance and reduce truancy and appropriate administrative systems are in place. However, the school registers are not being maintained accurately and unpunctuality is not being monitored satisfactorily. The education welfare officer (EWO) is addressing many issues that had persisted for too long. She has followed up lateness and referring pupils with poor attendance records. She has raised concern over communication difficulties and problems in providing work for home and exam preparation for two pupils who have long-term absences for medical reasons. Improved links are being established with the EWO, who is involved in 'fast-tracking' cases to court where all else fails.
43. Monitoring of pupils' academic and personal development is very good. This is one of the strengths of the school. The arrangements for supporting pupils within tutor groups are very effective. Form tutors and heads of year get to know the pupils very well. The good tracking and targeting arrangements detailed in the "Little and Often" reports issued termly help to identify and record achievement, effort and behaviour. The annual joint review processes provides an opportunity for target setting and one to one dialogue with tutors. Pupils spoke very positively about this experience and highly valued the dialogues. The process, 'makes you feel responsible for your own life', 'you are treated as an individual, an adult', and they found it 'comforting'. As a result of these reviews, form teachers can give good personal support and guidance to pupils in their care.
44. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good overall and the statutory requirements are fully met. Arrangements are thorough for pupils entering the school, based on the transfer of information from middle schools and a wide range of assessments made at the beginning of Year 8. The assessment systems manager provides a considerable amount of useful data for teachers. Each department carries out a detailed analysis of GCSE examination data and targets are set for the following year. The "Little and Often" termly assessments and reports, provide valuable information for both teachers and parents. Pupils are assessed against nationally expected levels in Key Stage 3 and GCSE grades in Key Stage 4. These assessments are centrally stored on computer, and are used as the basis for tracking progress and individual target setting. Most subject areas make use of this information, both to guide pupils into appropriate teaching groups and to provide teachers with comprehensive information on each pupil.
45. The use of assessment data to guide curricular planning is good in most subjects. For example, in modern languages, physical education and geography, assessment information has been used to modify schemes of work. In science, time allocations and arrangements for modules have been altered after analysis of results. There is no systematic approach to assessment in mathematics; performance data is not being used to guide planning and marking is uninformative.
46. Analysis and application of assessment data since the last inspection has moved forward a long way. Procedures, at senior management level are well-advanced and include provision of data on both the value added factor and on high attaining pupils. Target setting and pupils' self-assessment are well supported in tutor reviews. A very good survey of marking with recommendations has been produced, but the quality of marking is inconsistent.
47. The school's procedures for child protection are good. The school follows the local authority's policy and guidelines, with the senior teacher as the designated contact point. Regular updating and training keeps staff well informed of any changes.
48. Systems for ensuring pupils' health, and welfare are good. There are good arrangements to take care of pupils who may fall ill during the day. Members of staff have received first-aid training, and there are effective procedures to meet the medical needs of pupils during the day. There is a well-resourced medical room with comprehensive records and reports.
49. Members of staff undertake appropriate health and safety checks and risk assessments regularly. The premises manager reports on health and safety matters to the governors, who take an active role in fulfilling their responsibilities for health and safety.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents are generally quite supportive of the school. They think that teachers have clear expectations, encouraging pupils to work hard and achieve their best, and that the pupils make good progress. However, a significant number of parents who responded to the questionnaire felt that behaviour was unsatisfactory; that they were not kept sufficiently informed about the progress of their children; and that the school did not work closely with parents. A small number of parents reported problems in communication between home and school where letters or concerns were not dealt with promptly or effectively. There were also a number of concerns expressed about homework – to do with both the amount and frequency of it.
51. The information provided for parents is extensive and clear, reflecting very good efforts to communicate, as highlighted in the school development plan. The attractive school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents provide comprehensive information about the school and its activities. Formal consultation evenings are offered and provide a review of pupils' progress and achievements. Pupils are also encouraged to attend. Parents had previously expressed concerns about the annual pupil reports, which have subsequently been redesigned, along with the provision of the 'Little and Often' data sheets. Together with the curriculum information books, they provide details of what is being covered; information regarding progress and attainment, plus targets for improvement. Despite this amount of information, some parents still reported that they are not made aware sufficiently early if there are concerns about their child's progress. Open meetings, consultations about the national tests, option choices, careers evenings and occasional workshops are held to keep parents updated and suitably informed about new initiatives. Communication with parents remains a priority in the school development plan.
52. The school offers a number of opportunities for parents to become involved in their children's learning. These include focus groups addressing issues such as homework and school uniform. Parents are invited to help out with different activities around the school, and a small number listen to pupils read or assist with work placement offers. A small group helped to devise and run some modules within the personal, social and health education programme. School performances are very popular and well attended. Parents are encouraged to support the homework schedule, and the pupils' planners are designed to be a regular day-to-day link with the school. Parents are required to sign them at least every other week. However, this is not an effective means of communication, as teachers do not consistently check the planners, particularly where there are temporary and supply teachers taking a class. The Durrington High School Association (DHSA) used to be active, running a number of social and money-raising events each year, which helped to fund the mini bus and sound equipment in for the school. The association is currently inactive, although the school has made several attempts to revive it.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. The leadership of the headteacher is good; it is clear and well organised and in the context of a large school she manages to maintain close contact with pupils, staff, parents and governors. The approach adopted towards improvement of standards, teaching and learning is coherent and well documented with appropriate reference to external advice. A number of successful initiatives have been followed through: a major review of teaching; curriculum developments for the most able and for pupils who benefit from work placements; pastoral support plans for individual pupils; availability of assessment data and frequent pupil reviews. All of these have enhanced the quality of education and contributed to a climate of development. However, difficulties in stabilising the leadership group, arising from promotions, retirements and other factors have delayed change. The pace of improvement since the previous inspection has been intermittent. There has been variable progress in completing the action plan. Leadership overall is satisfactory.
54. The most recent school development plan appropriately consolidates issues in the previous plan which have not been embedded sufficiently. The headteacher has a clear strategic view of a restructured management team that will be in place in September to develop the way the school supports pupils' learning.
55. Governors are highly supportive. They carry out business thoroughly and efficiently; for example, at the meeting of chairs of committees which has a valuable strategic function and actions urgent matters. Meetings are focused and business-like; information for parents is clear

and helpful. They fulfil their statutory duties with the sole exception of ensuring a daily act of worship. Governors are suitably involved in the life of the school, visiting lessons on “governors’ days” and attending performance events. They have confidence in the plans and systems in place but are frustrated by recent difficulties, especially the difficulty of recruiting suitable staff to fill vacancies caused by staff movement.

56. Governors pursue the principles of best value to some extent; for example, they insisted on a penalty clause in a cleaning contract. On the other hand, a worthwhile initiative to employ more administrative staff to allow teachers to focus on professional tasks was not accompanied by precise measurement of what difference it makes. Governors are supportive and unflagging in seeking improvement, but the challenge to the school to improve rapidly has not been sharp enough. Their contribution to monitoring and improvement is satisfactory.
57. The majority of subject areas are well led and have good plans. Leadership is particularly strong in art and design, in English and in ICT/business studies and in history. The general leadership of modern foreign languages is good and supportive links with senior management exist. The general strategy for developing the department has been good, but there is no adequate plan to resolve the current staffing difficulties. The monitoring of teaching by senior management to define good practice has been very good and has resulted in good outcomes in some subject areas, but the recommendations are not embedded in other subject areas and progress is not rapid enough. On the whole, action to secure improvements is satisfactory.
58. Control of financial matters is good. Spending decisions support governors’ planned priorities; expenditure is well managed to the full extent of the budget. The school has made good use of grants associated with projects and staff development. Accommodation is excellent and well maintained. The building contributes well to teaching and learning, providing comfortable work spaces and social areas and display space. The light and airy nature of the building is inspiring. Learning resources are good, including the library. Induction arrangements for staff are well organised. The school is making increasing use of ICT for administrative purposes, though as yet the good collation of assessment information is not fully exploited in a few departments. Generally the match of teachers’ qualifications and experience to the curriculum is satisfactory, though some supply staff do not have sufficient guidance on what to teach and what to expect as a minimum standard of conduct by pupils.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

59. To ensure that the school improves steadily and consistently, governors should address the following issues, in line with their development plan’s priorities.
- (1) Improve behaviour in some lessons and around the school and punctuality to school and to lessons by:
 - Ensuring all lessons have good pace and tasks likely improve to pupils’ attainment;
 - Insisting on higher standards of conduct and respect for school rules;
 - Consistently applying a motivating system of rewards and sanctions;
 - Making punctuality matter.*(Paragraphs 9,12,15,40)*
 - (2) Accelerate the pace of improvement by ensuring consistent implementation of policy and consistently good quality of teaching.
(Paragraphs 13, 16, 17,20, 21, 22, 53, 56)
 - (3) Improve day-to-day assessment, marking and the usefulness of homework.
(Paragraphs 15, 16, 45, 46)
 - (4) Raise standards in modern foreign languages and resistant materials.
(Paragraphs 3, 4, 6, 15, 21, 57, 106, 107, 109, 110 and 132 – 139)
 - (5) Improve the response of pupils to temporary staff by:
 - Providing better guidance to temporary staff on methods and content;
 - Making it clear what temporary staff should expect and get in terms of pupils’ response.*(Paragraphs 9, 13, 15, 21, 40)*

OTHER ISSUES FOR THE SCHOOL TO CONSIDER

There is insufficient curriculum time for religious education in Key Stage 4.

Further improving early communication and prompt response to parents.

The school does not offer a daily act of collective worship.

Though registers were not being closed at an appropriate time at the time of the inspection, the school subsequently took prompt action to notify parents that in future this requirement will be applied.

ADDITIONAL FEATURE SPECIFIED FOR INSPECTION

KEY STAGE 4

60. The school has adapted the National Curriculum at Key Stage 4 to provide for a wide range of interests and aptitude. The curriculum is broad and balanced, except for religious education. Equality of access is very good and pupils with special needs are well supported and fully integrated into the curriculum. The provision at Key Stage 4 is good.
61. In science and ICT, some pupils follow the "science plus" scheme and take certificates of competence in information technology. Both of these courses motivate pupils by providing a series of short-term goals.
62. In the modern foreign language department, the modular arrangement works well. The department has also recently replaced the certificate of achievement option with a more challenging national vocational qualification (NVQ) course. There is opportunity at Key Stage 4 for pupils to build upon their experience of taking two languages in Year 9, but the low potential uptake by pupils of the offer prevents continuity.
63. The ICT and business department ensures that all pupils in Years 10 and 11 receive their entitlement to develop their ICT skills. All pupils follow an accredited ICT course. This work is often done in a business context through the business and information studies double option GCSE course. The course is used in a flexible manner enabling information studies to be taken separately. GCSE ICT is also offered. These very successful courses ensure that pupils have a good level of ICT skills that can be exploited in other subjects.
64. The design and technology curriculum provides a good range of options which cater well for different interests; for example, it has introduced GCSE engineering.
65. Careers education is mostly provided through the PSE provision, at Key Stage 4; this builds upon the work begun in Years 8 and 9. Pupils are prepared well for their work experience at the end of Year 10 and follow up is thorough. Because the activity has to be extended over three weeks in order to secure adequate placements for such large numbers of pupils, the school makes good use of governors and friends of the school for support visits in order to minimise the time teachers have to spend out of school. The PSE programme becomes much more career focussed in Year 11 to help pupils with their post-16 choices. All pupils on the SEN register have an interview with a careers officer; other pupils can have an interview if they have a specific issue to discuss. Links with colleges are very good, pupils are provided with detailed, impartial information about post-16 options. About ten pupils currently have a programme of extended work experience, which has been commended in a report by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of schools. Some of these pupils are following an NVQ 1 course with a local employer.
66. Leisure and tourism, which started in September 2000, is offered as an alternative choice to a modern foreign language and a subject chosen from one group of option subjects. It provides a course that is attractive to pupils for whom a full number of GCSE subjects would be inappropriate. The teaching team of four is enthusiastic and creative in producing a successful course that meets assessment requirements for Part 1 GNVQ Foundation Level. Good use is made of practical activities that gather evidence on leisure and tourism in and around Worthing. Pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills improve, as well as their personal development. Work experience is an integral feature of the course. The school plans to extend this provision next year, and also to start an Intermediate Level course. GNVQ Health and Social Care was also offered this year but did not attract viable numbers.

67. The school has a teacher who is responsible for coordinating support for pupils identified as being gifted and talented. Teachers provide suitable tasks in lessons for these pupils, and in a number of subjects arrange extra activities. For example, in mathematics and science, teachers organise a residential week of intensive work towards the end of the summer term at a local centre. The co-ordinator oversees the progress of these pupils through regular meetings. He works closely with the middle school liaison teacher so that gifted and talented pupils receive early identification. The Sussex Coastal Highways Project, a government-funded initiative, is organised through local higher education institutions working in partnership with schools and colleges. It aims to encourage gifted, talented and more able pupils to consider higher education; especially those might be discouraged from doing so. The school is identified as having pupils that could benefit from this project. Pupils made visits to two local universities this year. Their positive written reports indicate that these experiences provide pupils with valuable insights. Good links exist with local post-16 colleges so that information is shared.
68. The successful Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme provides an interesting and challenging range of extra-curricular activities. A group of pupils in Year 11 participate in the Young Enterprise Scheme outside normal school time. They undertake all the preparation needed for setting-up companies, trading and keeping accounts. They have established a variety of enterprises. Examples are selling revision guides, buying and selling jewellery, and an entertainment company that organises discos. An examination board assesses the knowledge and skills developed from these experiences using GNVQ Level 2 criteria. Pupils enjoy this course and say that the link with business advisers helps them with interviews and in providing evidence for application forms. They have gained valuable insights into the world of business. Pupils on the child development course have good links with the local community.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	153
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	85

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
8	33	27	25	6	1	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

	Y8 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils on the school's roll	1456	0
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	157	0

Special educational needs

	Y8 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	32	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	370	0

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	22

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	46
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	67

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.9
National comparative data	7.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.0
National comparative data	1.1

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	196	163	359

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	119	128	129
	Girls	123	102	77
	Total	242	230	206
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	67 (60)	65 (58)	58 (50)
	National	63 (63)	65 (62)	59 (55)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	21 (37)	36 (35)	25 (25)
	National	28 (28)	42 (38)	30 (23)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	111	119	116
	Girls	113	106	80
	Total	224	225	196
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	63 (74)	64 (67)	55 (61)
	National	64 (64)	66 (64)	62 (60)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	34 (36)	35 (36)	28(37)
	National	31 (31)	39 (37)	29 (28)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4

Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	190	164	354

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	81	173	182
	Girls	81	152	160
	Total	162	325	342
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	46 (46)	92 (92)	97 (96)
	National	47.4 (46.6)	90.6 (90.9)	95.6 (95.8)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	38
	National	38.4

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	3
Black – African heritage	5
Black – other	2
Indian	6
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	4
Chinese	7
White	1410
Any other minority ethnic group	17

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	59	8
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: Y8 – Y11

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	83.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y8 – Y11

Total number of education support staff	18
Total aggregate hours worked per week	407

Deployment of teachers: Y8 – Y11

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	75.1
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Average teaching group size: Y8– Y11

Key Stage 3	25
Key Stage 4	22

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	3269857
Total expenditure	3291058
Expenditure per pupil	2420
Balance brought forward from previous year	41765
Balance carried forward to next year	20114

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	1456
Number of questionnaires returned	402

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	26	57	11	5	1
My child is making good progress in school.	35	52	8	3	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	16	50	18	6	9
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	14	51	23	8	3
The teaching is good.	17	62	9	2	10
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	28	49	17	5	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	39	44	12	2	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	44	48	6	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	20	47	24	5	4
The school is well led and managed.	26	51	10	4	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	24	56	11	3	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	29	44	11	2	13

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

ENGLISH

69. When pupils enter the school in Year 8, test results suggest their attainment is broadly average but with a significant number falling below. Pupils' attainment, as measured by national tests taken at the end of Key Stage 3 in 2000, was broadly in line with national expectations. Attainment was above that of similar schools. Taking the years 1998 – 2000 together the performance of boys and girls was above the national average. The 2000 figures do not take into account a successful appeal made by the school, which resulted in a rise in grades for ten per cent of pupils, mainly at Level 5 and above.
70. At the end of Key Stage 4, GCSE results in English for 2000 were slightly above the national average. The percentage of pupils gaining A* and A grades was below average, but B and C grades were above. A hundred percent gained grades between A and G; this is above the national average. Performance in English literature was below average. Results compare well at A*, A and B, but fall away at C; this is most marked in the boys' results. Higher proportions of pupils are entered for English and English literature GCSE than are entered nationally. Results in English and English literature are an improvement on the previous year, but do not match the literature results of 1998.
71. By the end of Year 9 and Year 11 standards in English are above average. Pupils' listening skills are good. They pay careful attention to their teachers. They respond to questions readily and have the confidence to ask questions and seek clarification when necessary. Pupils listen politely to their peers and take turns in discussion. This is particularly noticeable during group work. Good examples were seen in a Year 9 lesson, where pupils were considering how to direct a scene from 'Macbeth', and in a Year 10 lesson where pupils were discussing the ways in which language and style reinforced the theme of a poem.
72. The majority of the work in all years is literature based. This is a very good feature of the department. As they progress through the school pupils become increasingly confident in their ability to interrogate text; developing research, analytical and interpretative skills. A Year 8 set working in the library used the full range of available resources to gather information about Shakespeare. A Year 11 set looking at rhetoric made an immediate connection between the repetition in the opening lines of a eulogy and the 'Charge of the Light Brigade'. The majority read fluently. They are very attentive when their peers are reading. Many pupils, particularly in the upper sets, use appropriate language to describe literary technique. A pilot reading reward scheme is to be launched with Year 8 to ensure that more pupils pursue reading for pleasure. The school library has a good range of fiction suitable for all ages, abilities and interests, but if the scheme is successful it will be necessary to increase the book stock.
73. Pupils' written work shows steady progress. This is particularly marked in the first term of both Year 8 and Year 10. Pupils at all levels try hard with their writing and take pride in its presentation. By the end of Year 9, spelling is generally accurate, sentence construction usually good and most pupils are able to write in paragraphs. The writing of the most able pupils shows perception, an enjoyment of words, ambitious vocabulary and the use of increasingly complex sentence construction. The progress of these pupils is particularly marked. The range of writing tasks is extensive and shows an imaginative approach on behalf of the teachers. It captures the interest and results in good work from all abilities. There is not much evidence of re-drafting beyond making fair copies. An outstanding feature of writing at Key Stage 3 is publication to wider audiences. Year 8 sets have collaborated to produce printed novels and Year 9 have had poems chosen for publication in '2001; A Poetry Odyssey'. Excellent wall displays feature written work and celebrate the achievement of all. At Key Stage 4, pupils at all levels write at length. They show an increasing ability to develop character and write effective dialogue. At its best the writing of all abilities is evocative. There is good GCSE course work from pupils at all levels; some excellent essays on media technique demonstrate high order skills of analysis, interpretation and evaluation.
74. When pupils enter the school in Year 8 they are taught in mixed ability classes for the first term. Screening takes place using a variety of tests and pupils are then placed in sets according to ability. Setting is reviewed regularly and adjustment made when necessary. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Teachers have detailed information relating to pupils' Key Stage 3 and GCSE targets and special educational needs. These are used to guide planning.

Pupils with special educational needs in Year 8 are withdrawn for extra help twice a fortnight. Pupils with statements of special need receive the agreed support. It is the policy of the department to place pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL) in high sets, where appropriate, in order to expose them to as much 'language' as possible. This appears to work well, particularly with pupils who join the school in Year 8. Most become fluent in both written and spoken English and many gain good GCSE grades.

75. Pupils' learning is very good. Pupils come to lessons expecting to work hard. They lose no time in getting down to work, move easily between activities and co-operate well in groups. The majority stay on task for the whole lesson. Relationships in the classroom are good. Pupils are polite to their teachers and supportive of their peers. Pupils respond well to encouragement. There was a real sense of achievement in a low Year 8 set where pupils, writing newspaper reports, became increasingly ambitious in their manipulation of words. Learning is particularly good when pupils are given some responsibility for their own learning. A very good example was seen in a Year 11 lesson where pupils used the Internet to assess their strengths and weaknesses in analysing non-fiction texts. In the bottom sets, learning is at its best when the numbers are relatively small and teachers have the opportunity to give individual help and encouragement.
76. Teaching is very good. More than a quarter of the lessons seen were excellent. There was one unsatisfactory lesson. The nine permanent members of the department are confident teachers who demonstrate good subject knowledge. They have consistently high, but realistic, expectations and will only accept pupils' best efforts. In the very best lessons teachers display an enthusiasm which is infectious; they capture the attention of all ability levels, building up confidence and promoting enjoyment in learning. Lessons are well planned. They have clear aims and place work in context, directing attention back to previously gained knowledge and forward to new learning objectives. Lesson plans allow for pupils working at different rates; in this way they are suitably challenged but not daunted. Lessons proceed at a good pace and pupils engage in a variety of tasks. Occasionally in the lower sets too long is spent on one activity. Teachers are quiet, calm and controlled in their delivery and pupils respond accordingly. Revision and examination skills are reinforced at the end of key stages. Written work shows evidence of thorough teaching. In a lesson which was well planned, pupils misbehaved with a temporary teacher, making it impossible for effective teaching and learning to take place.
77. Management and leadership of English are very good. The recently appointed head of department leads a team of committed teachers. This is a department that is moving forward. There is evidence of excellent short and long-term planning linked to target setting and raising pupil expectation. A number of new initiatives are in place to further improve examination performance at all levels. Accommodation and resources are excellent, as is the provision for ICT. The department provides pupils with opportunities to participate in a wide range of culturally enriching activities such as theatre visits and writing workshops. There are some weaknesses in assessment. The marking policy is not applied consistently and there is insufficient use of self-assessment. Assessment at Key Stage 3 is not sufficiently closely linked to National Curriculum levels.
78. At the last inspection it was noted that a significant minority of pupils underachieved and were too dependent on their teachers. Clear lesson objectives employed by teachers with high expectations, backed by pupil data and targets, have overcome these problems. The standard of marking is still an issue that needs to be addressed.
79. The school teaches drama at Key Stage 3 and it is a popular option at Key Stage 4. The drama department at the moment is in a state of transition. During the period of the inspection the recently appointed head of drama was on a period of leave. However, the lessons observed (taken by supply teachers) were satisfactory, good and very good. The range of productions and the improvement over three years in GCSE performance (seventy percent A* - C grades in 2000) speak well of the quality of education offered, as did Year 11 pupils who paid oral tribute to all that they had learned and gained from their two year course.
80. The school has a slightly higher than average number of pupils who speak English as an additional language. Of the 28 pupils in the school, 22 are assessed as not being in need of English language support. Five appear fluent in spoken and written English but require some support to deal with the language demands of the curriculum. One Year 10 pupil has very limited English. It is unfortunate that the external funding to provide him with specialist support has ceased. He has been taken into the special educational needs support group but this is

not appropriate for his needs. It is the policy of the English department to place EAL pupils, where appropriate, in high sets so that they are exposed to as much 'language' as possible. However, the school does not have a procedure for analysing the examination performance of EAL pupils. One member of the English department has received some training in teaching EAL pupils but would welcome the opportunity to further her knowledge and expertise. No concerns, except with the one pupil, were noted by inspectors during the inspection. The majority of pupils who have English as an additional language are making satisfactory progress.

81. Literacy is taught well within English; some support is given in other subjects, but support for literacy from marking is unsatisfactory. A working party coordinated by the literacy co-ordinator meets regularly and a whole school policy has been formulated. However, implementation of the policy is inconsistent. Literacy is taught as a discrete course in English. Detailed schemes of work have been developed for use with all sets in Years 8 and 9. These are carefully structured and divided into units that identify key skills, integrate them into tasks and review skills already learned. A literacy summer school has been planned to target Level 3 pupils before they enter the school in September 2001. Literacy liaison meetings with feeder schools, set up some time ago to promote continuity across Key Stage 3, are about to be resumed. At the moment there is some good practice in various areas of the school, notably the use of key words in design and technology, science, physical education, history and geography. In mathematics, attention is given to the spelling of terminology. There were good examples in a top set Year 9 modern language lesson of pupils being extended in their reading. It is intended that departmental action plans will form the basis for planning literacy initiatives for September 2001. Marking of work to improve literacy is unsatisfactory.

MATHEMATICS

82. By the end of Key Stage 3, the attainment of pupils is satisfactory. In 2000 the percentages of pupils reaching Level 5 or above and Level 6 or above were in line with national averages. This matches pupils' performance over the last three years. Attainment in 2000 was slightly above those schools with pupils of a similar background. In 2000, the attainment of boys was higher than that of girls. Over the last three year period the attainment of boys has slightly exceeded that of girls. Last year the attainment in mathematics was broadly in line with that in English and science.
83. By the end of Key Stage 4, attainment is satisfactory. In 2000, the proportion of pupils gaining GCSE grades A* to C was broadly in line with the national average. Results in 2000 show an improvement over 1999. Over the last three years attainment has been broadly in line with national averages and that of schools with pupils of a similar background. The attainment of girls has improved over this period. This was an issue in the last inspection. Girls now reach higher standards than boys.
84. Standards in lessons and the work seen are consistent overall with the results of national tests at each key stage. In most lessons, teaching seeks to engage girls equally, through questioning and individual help. This has made a significant contribution to improving the attainment of girls, particularly at Key Stage 4. Graphicacy skills are satisfactory with pupils able to organise data in chart and graph forms. However, all but the highest attaining pupils have difficulty in interpreting patterns of data presented in these ways. Difficulties in manipulating expressions and equations in algebra relate to weaknesses in understanding and generalising basic number operations. Pupils use equipment such as protractors with confidence and reasonable accuracy, but skills in estimating are less well developed. Investigation work is successful in developing pupils' higher-level problem solving skills and strategies. For example, a Year 8 lesson on ratio required pupils to investigate the number of ways in which a given number of multi-link cubes could be shared. They were encouraged to look for a pattern from their results, use the pattern to make predictions for other possible ratios and test the validity of their predictions. The pupils readily responded to this style of working and would benefit from more opportunities in lessons to develop these skills, particularly at Key Stage 3.
85. There are variations in the quality of learning at both key stages. At Key Stage 3, higher and average-attaining pupils in Year 9 progress at a pace which matches their capabilities, but they are not achieving as well as they should in Year 8. This is because teaching is not taking proper account of pupils' attainment in Year 7 prior to entry. Consequently there is undue repetition of some topics. Lower attaining pupils are well served by the emphasis on numeracy skills which draws on techniques from the National Numeracy Strategy. There is need for

further development in this area. Higher attaining pupils make good progress through Key Stage 4. Extension and enrichment activities prepare them for higher tier entry. The Lodge Hill residential experience provides many opportunities for these pupils to develop their mathematical understanding. For example, the 'Nemesis Trail' mathematics adventure game provides clues to solve problems, based on application of number. Their daily logs are written with maturity and humour and the activities make a significant contribution to raising their attainment in mathematics. The progress of lower attaining pupils is less satisfactory. Both quality and quantity of work are not sustained, particularly in Year 11.

86. The overall progress of pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory. Teachers' records provide details of pupils' specific needs and they seek to adapt their teaching to meet these needs. In lessons where support is provided the quality of learning is good, but provision is limited. The main factor affecting progress is the lack of suitable learning materials which are sufficiently structured and visually stimulating to engage pupils' interest and maintain them on task.
87. Pupils' attitudes to mathematics were at least satisfactory in four out of every five lessons observed, and for one in three they were good to excellent. The positive commitment of most pupils owes much to good relationships which encourage them to give of their best. In a Year 8 lower set lesson on fractions, pupils responded with genuine enthusiasm when set the task of changing mixed numbers to improper fractions. Using diagrams and applying their ideas to everyday situations, for example using money, the lesson came alive for them and they all sustained concentration to produce work of a high quality. However, in some classes the behaviour of a minority can damage a productive working atmosphere, disrupting the work of a class despite actions taken by competent subject teachers.
88. The quality of teaching varies widely. It is at least satisfactory in nine out of every ten lessons, and good to excellent for one in every three lessons. Staff are secure in their subject knowledge. In lessons they sequence and adapt their teaching to make work more accessible to pupils. In the best lessons, teachers explain clearly, test pupils recall and probe their understanding through well directed questioning to assess strengths and weaknesses. In a Year 9 lesson on angle, the teacher checked the work of each pupil before discussing and resolving common misunderstandings with the whole class, enabling pace to be sustained. Some teachers incorporate literacy and numeracy skills routinely so that pupils can tackle mathematics with more confidence. In a Year 11 revision lesson on shape the teacher ensured that pupils understood the meanings of key words such as 'polygon' and could recall facts about angles. This enabled them to tackle GCSE questions with greater assurance. Frequently, homework requires pupils to finish off class work and does not set sufficient challenge and consistent expectation of pupils. Work is checked regularly, but marking does not inform pupils of their current attainment and what they need to do to improve.
89. The department is now placing greater emphasis on regular numeracy work to develop pupils' mental calculation skills, and there is sensible use of the calculator. This is a strength as it supports pupils' learning in other topics, for example data handling. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology to support their learning in mathematics. Greater clarity in curriculum provision is now needed if standards are to be further improved. Schemes of work should now be revised to provide a clear framework of guidance and expectation for teaching staff in their lesson planning. Arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are unsatisfactory. The department is not gathering and using assessment information systematically; to identify weaknesses in pupils' learning at each key stage, to track their progress and to set targets to ensure that they can make the best possible progress.
90. The mathematics department has written a numeracy policy, but its influence in other subject areas is unsatisfactory. There is no evidence that the policy has made an impact on planning and teaching and there are no arrangements to monitor or promote numeracy.
91. There has been a high turnover of teaching staff in the mathematics department. The school has found it difficult to replace key staff and vacancies remain. This places additional demands on committed mathematics specialists. Many pupils are experiencing an unsatisfactory lack of continuity in their mathematics education and this affects standards. The department has carefully identified its priorities for improvement, but has yet to apply consistent and robust procedures for monitoring, evaluating and developing teaching and learning in mathematics.

SCIENCE

92. In tests at the end of Key Stage 3 in 2000, the number of pupils gaining both Levels 5 and 6 was close to the national average and close to the average for similar schools. Over the last three years, boys and girls have done equally well. In the GCSE examinations at the end of Key Stage 4, girls and boys do equally well. Their results are close to both the national average and to the results obtained by other similar schools. 43 per cent of the girls and 46 per cent of the boys gained a grade A*-C. Similar results have been obtained for the last three years with boys and girls doing equally well over this period. In lessons, pupils' achievements overall are also very close to the national average. Boys and girls do equally well and pupils with statements of special educational need do particularly well.
93. The progress made by pupils is good or very good in the majority of lessons; however, it is unsatisfactory in a number of them. When it is good pupils learned difficult ideas about the resistance of wire and its measurement and about the structure of atoms and their place in the periodic table of elements, understanding of these ideas is needed for the higher GCSE grades. Practical skills are good especially amongst the most able, pupils in middle ability groups and those following the Certificate of Achievement course often did very well, they planned and carried out a test to find out which of several fabrics were the most waterproof. They learned which experimental techniques should be used and why they should use them. In other lessons, more able pupils carried out demanding work about forces and pressure that required calculations. At Key Stage 3, pupils learned to measure and record the temperature of ice using a data logger and how to interpret the graph that they produced. However, this high quality of learning did occur consistently in all lessons and where progress was only satisfactory or was unsatisfactory pupils' knowledge was superficial and their practical and investigative skills were poor. They learned some of the facts of science, about static charge, but not the principles that explain how charges differ from one material to another. Generally pupils' numerical skills in science were satisfactory.
94. In a majority of lessons at Key Stage 3, teaching is good or better, on a small number of occasions it is unsatisfactory. At Key Stage 4 in a majority of lessons, it is very good, of the remainder most are satisfactory and a few are less than satisfactory. Overall teaching of science is good.
95. Good lessons have clear objectives and teaching is purposeful. They contain a variety of activities including some that provide opportunities for independent learning; for example, pupils have opportunities to make decisions about their practical work and to interpret the graphs that they draw. Pupils are very thoroughly taught the practical skills that they need to successfully complete their work. In some lessons, teachers very effectively ask questions that check on understanding and extend it further. This is a feature of good teaching that is not used in unsatisfactory lessons. In many lessons teachers have high expectations of pupils of all ages and abilities and good use is made of information obtained from assessment. In one lesson the teacher's summary very effectively related theoretical ideas about changes in state to evaporation and condensation in the water cycle. At other times too much of the lesson is led by the teacher, although less so than during the last inspection, and expectations of the pupils are too low. At these times pupils achieve less than they should and sometimes their behaviour is poor. In a lesson about cells they learned the main features of cells but did not develop their understanding of the purposes served by the parts of the cells. More often skilful teaching promotes high standards for the most and the least able. In these lessons relationships are good and pupils are regularly encouraged to do their best.
96. Pupils' attitudes to their work varied from the positive and enthusiastic majority to a disinterested and badly behaved minority. At its best, many pupils of all abilities work hard and enthusiastically. They cooperate very well with each other and with their teachers, they are especially careful to carry out practical work safely. They are willing to offer tentative answers to difficult questions, to take responsibility for and to make decisions about their work and to explain and evaluate it. These are particularly strong features of pupils' investigative work; they persist even when difficulties arise with electric circuit boards and voltmeters or ammeters. At these times they show a good deal of respect for each other and for their teachers. A minority of pupils do not behave well; they make derogatory comments and show unnecessarily negative attitudes even in well-taught lessons. Some shout to each other, challenge the authority of the teachers and show little interest in learning. This adversely affects the work of other pupils.

97. The department works very hard to produce very thorough plans that provide a framework to ensure that the knowledge and understanding needed for Key Stage 3 programmes and GCSE syllabuses is taught. Course work needed for GCSE examinations is well organised. New courses are being introduced and as this is done there is a need to enhance them in a number of ways. A more systematic approach to aspects of investigation, particularly planning and data evaluation is required. Since the last inspection some progress has been made in using information and communication technology; however, more needs to be done and opportunities to use ICT are insufficiently represented in the new plans: this also applies to problem solving activities. There are too few opportunities for pupils to read and write more extensively. The links formed by the department with a number of universities are valuable support in raising standards. Sharing of good practice in teaching is unsatisfactory.
98. Since the last inspection progress has been made in a number of important areas. Lessons are now always planned, formative assessment and pupil tracking is well organised, ventilation of some rooms has been improved and fume cupboards have been installed. Technical support provided to the teachers is excellent.

ART AND DESIGN

99. The proportion of pupils gaining grades A*-C in GCSE examinations in 2000 was above the national average. Boys' results were well above the national average and comparatively the highest in the school. Girls' results were above national averages, but not so high within the school. The department has offered two to three GCSE syllabuses each year over the past three years and results have shown a slight, but fluctuating improvement over that time. Results have always been in the top three of school examination successes. Textile and three-dimensional studies have yielded particularly good results.
100. By age 14, pupils have made significant progress from when they enter the school, when their experience and understanding of art is variable and generally lacking in breadth and rigour. Their progress through Key Stage 3 is very good, laying a sound foundation of knowledge and skills for those who opt for GCSE at the end of the key stage. Work seen during the inspection reaches a very high standard in textiles and high standards in pottery and three-dimensional studies, as well as in the key areas of painting and drawing. The excellent knowledge and understanding that teachers have of their subject areas contribute to these high standards. Sketchbooks show well-developed drawing skills, enabling good control over line, texture and tone. Pupils use chalk confidently in making observational drawings of skull forms. More able pupils map outlines carefully and develop form by manipulating chalk and charcoal together. They recollect the names of gothic architectural features, such as 'lintel', 'tympanum' and 'jamb figures', although they find it difficult to draw such features from the over-detailed worksheets they use. Using the influence of Constructivist sculptors, such as Naum Gabo, pupils build abstract models from geometric shapes. More able pupils perceive the possibilities for bending, curling and piercing shapes to create more intricate and interesting forms.
101. By age 16 the more able pupils, including some with special educational needs, show inventiveness and flair in their GCSE course work. They make very good progress through the key stage. They are confident in working on large-scale fabric hangings and life size cardboard constructions in action and repose. Their multi-media models present their sensitive personal ideas on war, the environment and other social issues. Drawing and painting skills are used effectively in portrait studies, showing very good observational skills and a sensitive touch with acrylic paints. Pupils' sketchbooks are often developed as works of art in themselves. They show the wide range of contextual research and the very broad range of experience they have in the department. They clearly benefit from the excellent visits made to galleries in this country and abroad. Some of the pupils' studies are developed as large-scale murals that enhance different areas of the school building. The wide range of work undertaken by pupils reflects the freedom that teachers give them to explore ideas and investigate different media.
102. The quality of teaching is very good at both key stages, leading to high standards of work and a sound experience of art and design across a wide range of media. This range is being extended to computer aided art, using the knowledge and skills of the art and design technician. The excellent knowledge and understanding of their subject, along with expert management, lead to some excellent teaching at Key Stage 3. Lessons are taught in a relaxed, hard working atmosphere, in which all pupils are able to make very good progress. A strength of teaching is the commitment to high standards that are well reflected in the very good displays of work in both classrooms and around the school, celebrating the pupils'

achievements. Teachers generally have high expectations of good behaviour and manage the lessons effectively. The management of pupils is more secure at Key Stage 4, where there is a clear focus on examination preparation and a mature commitment to high standards from the pupils. An appropriately broad range of cultures from past and present is used to enrich the curriculum. One of the few weaknesses is that teachers do not make effective reference to the multi-cultural influence on Great Britain; such influences as can be seen in places of worship, styles of dress and the art and craft output from the many cultures that are now established here.

103. The behaviour of pupils in lessons is good and they have generally positive attitudes to work that enable them to make very good progress, without distraction. They are given every opportunity to develop their work as independent learners and this is reflected in the range and maturity of GCSE preparation work. They are respectful of teachers and are confident and courteous in talking about their work to visitors.
104. The well-resourced department benefits from a very high standard of leadership that has carried it through recent change, whilst retaining the high standards seen in the last inspection. The head of department has a clear sense of direction and has built a strong, well-qualified team that works hard to maintain a high standard of teaching. She monitors the work of the department, including teaching, effectively and is a valued mentor for newly arrived and newly qualified teachers in the department. The department has recently loosened its connection with the design and technology department and is looking to strengthen links with other creative and performing arts subjects. This has the potential to enrich the curricular experience for pupils and widen the base of collaborative work across the curriculum.
105. The subject has made advances since the last inspection. Standards of teaching and learning have improved and the subject has retained its strong position on the curriculum. Access to computer aided art and design has improved, but not all staff are fully trained in its use.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

106. Teacher assessments show that in both 2000 and 1999, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 5 and above in design and technology by the age of 14 was below the national average. The percentage gaining GCSE A*-C grades overall, in design and technology in 2000 and 1999, was around the national average. However, the results in food technology in 2000 were above average and average in 1999. In graphic products, results were average in 2000 and below in 1999. Results in electronics were also average in 2000 but above in 1999. The resistant materials results in 2000 were poor and well below those achieved in 1999 when they were around the national average. Child development results in 2000 and 1999 were overall average.
107. Overall attainment at the end of both key stages is average. It is sometimes above in food, electronics, graphics and textiles, average in engineering and overall below in resistant materials. The best work is seen in food, graphics, textiles and some electronics portfolios, where pupils often demonstrate effective project management. Quality of work is being emphasised, which is very evident in the work on display in all material areas. Pupils' understanding of the design and technology process is overall satisfactory, and often good in, for example, food and in graphics, where very good use is often made of ICT, particularly at Key Stage 4. Some pupils' evaluations are not always sufficiently related to the design specification. The programme at Key Stage 3, where all pupils complete units of work covering designing skills and technical graphics, is allowing pupils to develop very strongly the appropriate skills required to design and make products. Reviewing the work of other designers in textiles and graphics and disassembly and evaluation of products in food is a strength. However, some pupils in Years 10 and 11 are not paying sufficient attention to functional and technical design detail and the final working drawing requires attention. At both key stages, pupils in resistant materials lessons are under-achieving at both the designing and making stages, particularly in Years 8 and 9. A weakness is lack of opportunities for pupils to use pneumatics at both key stages, use of materials other than wood, and to experience technological application at Key Stage 4 in resistant materials. Pupils' theoretical understanding of tools and materials and in-depth analysis of tool design and selection of materials is under-developed. Arrangements for pupils to experience computer aided design and manufacture and to apply the skills within their design projects and the introduction of the GCSE engineering course, demonstrate a commitment to relating experiences to the world of work.

108. Pupils' progress and achievement is overall satisfactory at Key Stage 3 and often good at Key Stage 4, particularly in food and some graphics classes. Scrutiny of Year 10 pupils' project work in the newly established design and technology textiles programme, demonstrates very promising progress and acquisition of skills and knowledge. When pupils use practical, problem solving skills and make decisions about the nature and direction of their work, progress is good. Pupils with special educational needs cope well with the making aspects of the work. Pupils are prepared to persevere in the organising, planning and making of their products in most materials areas and they work competently to given instructions and their productivity is good in some lessons. However, the levels of productivity and pace of working in resistant materials are far too low and this is having an adverse effect on pupils' progress and achievement. At Key Stage 4, some pupils struggle to evaluate their own capabilities and reasoning skills are weak.
109. Overall, pupils' attitudes towards design and technology are good. Many pupils enjoy the subject, persevere and take pride in their work. The working atmosphere is often good in some classes as pupils work individually and in small groups, particularly in food and some graphics classes. They work with a sense of commitment. Pupils have a good understanding of the need to behave correctly and to handle tools with care in most classes. However, the attitudes and behaviour of some pupils in resistant materials lessons are poor. This is associated with weak teaching in terms of class and pupil management.
110. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 3 and good at Key Stage 4 overall. Teachers are well qualified in the design and technology material areas. Effective use is made of resources and stimulus materials. Planning is generally good particularly in food and graphics. Overall, practical skills are carefully taught and teachers take sensible account of hygiene and health and safety matters and instil in pupils the need to work safely at all times. Posting the learning objectives, key words, safety matters and homework requirements on the whiteboards in the food lessons for pupils to track, demonstrates good organisation. In some lessons, learning is driven at a good pace by the teacher and some teachers set effective time targets, challenge pupils thinking through determined questioning and conclude lessons with reviews of the learning points. Marking of work by some teachers in food and graphics for example, with written comments to aid learning, is a particularly strong feature. This could be strengthened further by regular, ongoing written tests of pupils' knowledge and regular use of National Curriculum levels. Teaching in resistant materials has several shortcomings. Expectations are too low, a lack of authority makes classroom skills weak and a lack of challenge in lesson activities leads to a concern about safety in the workshops.
111. Subject material leaders in food, electronic, textiles and graphics set good examples. Subject documentation is overall very good as for example, the design and technology audit carried out by the teacher responsible for Key Stage 3 who recognises that the duplication of mechanisms experiences requires attention. Open-ended projects in resistant materials for the more able pupils are not monitored closely enough. Records are well organised and the learning environment in several teaching rooms is well arranged. There are currently no arrangements for all design and technology teachers to meet and to share experiences, moderate pupils' work, for instance the Key Stage 3 assessed results, to inform planning and to raise standards. This is an issue requiring attention. Staff work hard to produce support material to aid pupils' learning. Both the resistant materials and food technology technicians provide good support. An urgent requirement is for the resistant materials technician to secure a health and safety certificate to operate wood machine tools. The provision of the design and technology ICT facilities is excellent. Further analysis of the room's timetable to enhance use of the facility is needed.
112. Satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection and overall, with the new teacher responsibility arrangements, there is the capacity to resolve many of the issues raised and to make further improvement.

GEOGRAPHY

113. Standards in the subject remain broadly as reported at the time of the previous inspection.
114. By the end of Key Stage 3, standards are in line with national expectations and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils understand processes in physical geography such as rainfall. They know how landscapes change by river action using evidence from fieldwork on the River Cuckmere. A number of pupils do not read with sufficient accuracy, so they misunderstand questions and miss letters when they copy place names from atlas maps. By

the end of Key Stage 4 in 2000, 59 per cent of the candidates gained A*-C grades at GCSE, and all pupils gained passes with A*-G grades. Attainment was above national averages in 2000. Work seen shows that pupils attain in line with national expectations, with many pupils producing above average work. The trend of recent years has not been consistent with the steadily rising national average, but over the last four years the school's average is just above national average. Girls' and boys' performances fluctuate over time.

115. In lessons pupils listen carefully, absorb facts and use them to illustrate an argument. For example, Year 11 pupils noted key statistics from a video on felling the Brazilian rain forest. They used this information to shape their own opinions on global warming, and the policy of the government of Brazil. Some pupils have weak study skills and motivation so that their notebooks have much incomplete work. Consequently revision for GCSE towards the end of the key stage is made difficult for them.
116. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress when they are supported by a class assistant, or with carefully structured teaching and resources. Where one or other of these features is missing, the progress of a number of pupils is affected adversely, depending on the nature of their need.
117. Over half of teaching is good or better: a third being very good. About four lessons in ten are satisfactory. Very thoughtful planning is a key characteristic of the best teaching. Teachers provide clear objectives for lessons written on a board so pupils quickly focus on the topic from the start. They list the lesson's key words to help pupils understand them, and pupils add these terms to their own glossaries. This is especially helpful for pupils with special educational needs as it supports their development as independent learners. Learning flourishes in these lessons because teachers use very good methods to challenge pupils through sharp questions that assess the level of their knowledge and understanding. Graded tasks motivate pupils of different abilities to work hard. High expectations of behaviour feature strongly in these lessons and pupils learn very effectively in calm and quiet conditions. At appropriate times their learning and thinking are used well in answering questions. For example, in a discussion on National Parks, Year 9 pupils gave ideas on how to control the number of cars in order to reduce damage in these areas of outstanding natural beauty. Some lessons that are satisfactory overall contain weaknesses, such as not making objectives sufficiently clear, and not providing tasks that permit all pupils to begin on their own. For example, in a Year 10 lesson on flood management, subject words were not defined so that weaker pupils struggled to start work that was not presented in a meaningful way for them. The pupils became disinterested and noisy so that their learning was less effective. Work is marked regularly but the quality of assessment is inconsistent. Some teachers write helpful comments that give pupils targets for improvement, even when they produce good work. Other teachers rely too much on ticking work and anodyne comments such as "nice" that do little to raise expectations for pupils to achieve more.
118. The relatively new head of department gives good leadership and management. The department handbook contains helpful guidance. The re-written schemes of work link topics, resources, assessment and use of ICT systematically. The subject development plan is an ambitious list that would benefit from more structure and ordered priorities for each year, aligned to the school development plan. There is no formal arrangement for the head of geography to meet with other department heads and this appears to be a weakness for professional development in this post. While teaching is observed within the department, identified weaknesses require a more rigorous approach to assist improvements.

HISTORY

119. GCSE examination results in the 2000 were below the national average for A* to C grades. However, all pupils entered gained a grade from A*-G. Boys were close to the national average for higher grades A* to C, although girls were less successful. Overall pupils attained less well than pupils in similar schools. History is one of the weaker examination subjects in the school. Pupils achieved higher standards in modern history than in the school's history project where pupils found the coursework component more difficult. These results were an improvement from 1998 when all grades were below the national average and in 1999 when the results for girls were well below the national standard.
120. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3, as assessed by the teachers, was a little below the standard of other schools in 2000. Attainment in the lessons observed is similar to the national

standard, though some of the mixed ability teaching groups are more successful than others. In Year 8, more able pupils achieve well to describe clearly the effects of the Worthing typhoid epidemic at the end of the nineteenth century and its impact on the health resort. Middle attaining pupils interpret the sources to explain why a church was used as a hospital. Pupils who learn more slowly can give a few reasons for the spread of the disease and pupils with special needs gain a better understanding of the problems arising from the water supply.

121. Towards the end of Year 9 more able pupils read aloud very competently to gain a sense of the effects caused by the dropping of the atom bomb on Japan. Quickly pupils interpret information from source materials, to empathise with the kamikaze pilots and with the fear of Americans that more lives could be lost if the Second World War continued. They balance sensitively the dangers of an American invasion and the consequences of Japanese resistance. Middle attaining pupils describe the devastation of Hiroshima, which 'looks like a desert with few buildings and no people'. With the support of a writing frame pupils with special needs make a written record of events. Many pupils are competent in their use of information and communication technology. They can access the Internet site and download images to enhance their studies through, for example, in a Year 9 lesson, Anne Frank's diary or independently research homework topics.
122. Pupils achieve well for their ability. The majority make good progress with gains in their knowledge and understanding of how to use source materials, interpret historical events and consider the consequences of political and social change. In Year 10 GCSE groups, pupils can distinguish between primary and secondary source materials. Pupils of higher ability can debate very competently the impact of the Tsar's decision to lead the army and gifted and talented pupils, within the group, readily compare events in Russia with those in other parts of Europe in 1917. History revision in both of the Year 11 courses sensibly focuses on the key words used in examination questions and either the interpretation of sources relating to Nazi Germany or the impact of Alexander Fleming's work on penicillin. Their coursework includes clear descriptive analysis of why Stressman's Germany was a 'fun place to be' and work on the Irish Question is often maturely considered, although all but the most able pupils find it more difficult to express their opinion and interpret events in a historical context. Lower attaining pupils tend to give simple descriptions and offer too few explanations for historical events. There is insufficient evidence of drafting for extended writing or of the application of numeracy.
123. Since the last report there have been changes in personnel. The quality of teaching has been a focus for improvement and pupils are more actively involved in lessons. Overall the quality of teaching is good or better in 55 per cent of the lessons in Years 8 and 9. Other lessons are satisfactory. The teaching is consistently good or very good in Years 10 and 11 and is of a quality consistent with better examination results than have hitherto been obtained. There was one excellent lesson in Year 9 and one in Year 11. The teaching shares very clear lesson targets with the pupils. The better lessons are based on very good lesson planning. Individual pupils are well known and both the work set and the activities are well matched to their abilities. The reading of text or the teacher's dramatic explanation of events leads smoothly into individual or group activities. The instructions are clear and pupils settle to their work quickly, for example to tabulate whether the dropping of atomic bombs was necessary in Year 9. On occasions pupils are less attentive. Middle and lower attaining pupils ask for the instructions to be repeated and the teaching provides insufficient support to extend pupil learning through group activities. The support assistants work well with pupils of special need. Confident teaching inspires pupils to participate very well. It involves pupils of all abilities in the question and answer discussion sessions. Skilful teaching interpolates pupils' answers and guides pupils to a better understanding of historical events. In a Year 8 lesson pupils empathise well with the problems of typhoid. In Years 8 and 9 where the teaching is satisfactory there are weaknesses in parts of the lesson for example, where the pace is either too slow or too rapid for the learning to be effective. On occasion the pamphlet resource packs are too extensive for less able pupils to manage and too little work is completed. The standard of work is not always as high as much of the work on display and in the work sample. On occasions the class management is insufficiently firm to keep the pupils focused on their work and pupils misbehave. However, this is in contrast to the learning experiences of most pupils who make very good progress to analyse what might have happened if the atomic bomb had not been dropped. GCSE pupils concentrate very well. More able pupils become absorbed in their learning, as in a Year 10 lesson where they offered mature opinions about life in Russia under the Tsar. Independently they seek more information from the Internet. Through revision, pupils extend their learning very effectively in Year 11 to question the reliability of sources and distinguish fact from opinion.

124. This department is very well led and managed. GCSE pupils in Year 10 follow the Modern History syllabus and the Certificate of Achievement has been introduced for Year 10 pupils who find GCSE coursework too demanding. Textbook and Internet resources are now very good. Standards are improving and GCSE results are targeted to be above the national average by 2002.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

125. Attainment at GCSE in information technology and the double option business and information studies examinations is very good, the proportion of pupils obtaining A*-C is being well above average. In addition all pupils in Years 10 and 11 follow a course which leads to certificates of competence in information technology, the pass rate is very high with many pupils achieving distinctions in some modules.
126. At Key Stage 3 all pupils follow a course that provides a good foundation in basic information and communications technology (ICT) skills, which can be used to enhance learning in the other subjects of the curriculum. In ICT lessons pupils make good progress, often from a low level of skills and knowledge at the beginning of Year 8. By the end of the key stage in Year 9, attainment overall is in line with the national average. Most pupils in Year 9 demonstrate effective keyboard skills and are able to input text and data with reasonable speed and accuracy. In a Year 9 humanities lesson pupils were able to use the Internet to visit and explore the Anne Frank museum in Amsterdam. Through their research they were able to provide answers to a series of questions and "download" and save graphic files to illustrate their answers.
127. At Key Stage 4, because all pupils continue with ICT lessons, they develop a good knowledge of a range of software applications and by age 16, overall attainment in ICT is good. Many pupils are able to demonstrate more advanced features of word-processing, desktop publishing, data-handling and presentation software. Spreadsheets are used well to record, sort, and analyse information with the use of appropriate formulae and a range of different graphs. All pupils are developing their Internet skills appropriately. Some pupils taking the GCSE ICT course have produced very effective Web pages which include animated features.
128. The curriculum has been mapped for ICT applications and pupils have opportunities to use their ICT skills in the subjects of the curriculum. Good use was seen in English, history, geography and physical education but there is scope to use ICT to a greater extent to enhance learning in others; for example, mathematics, music and religious education. The use of ICT for controlling devices and measuring effects is insufficient at both key stages.
129. In all years, pupils respond well in ICT lessons and are able to co-operate effectively when working in pairs. In examination classes most work well under pressure maintaining a high level of concentration during lessons where pace is brisk. Only in a small minority of lessons did concentration begin to flag towards the end.
130. Teaching in ICT lessons is very good. Teachers in the department collaborate very well as a team. Courses are well planned with detailed schemes of work; lesson objectives are clear and shared with pupils, often in some detail. In the best lessons the objectives were reviewed at the end. Explanations are clear and well supported with printed material. Teacher support for pupils who are working with computers is very effective, with detailed diagnostic comments and frequent acknowledgement of achievement.
131. The current level of resources, which is better than the national average, helps to support the high level of taught ICT courses, but some of the machines in subject areas have reached the end of their useful life. There is a clear, well-considered plan for the immediate future, which includes the installation of a new network and extended Internet access. The school has made good provision for staff ICT training and all teachers are currently involved in their New Opportunities Fund ICT training. The improved resources and additional training will provide the opportunity for all subject departments to review and improve their use of ICT to enhance learning. Improvement since the previous inspection is very good. One of the few weaknesses in this strong area is that, whilst use of ICT across the curriculum is mapped, arrangements for monitoring usage are unsatisfactory.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

132. Standards in modern foreign languages are below those expected nationally in all age groups.
133. In Year 8, pupils enter the school with a wide range of language attainment in French. A significant number have little or no French, because of staffing difficulties at their previous school. The modern languages department also has a history of long and short-term periods of staff absence. During the inspection week, supply staff took fifty-seven per cent of timetabled lessons in languages. A small number of classes have been covered by several supply teachers over a considerable period of time. These factors have had a negative impact on standards in recent years, and continue to do so, although standards are improving gradually.
134. In 2000, pupils' attainment in teacher assessments at the age of 14 was below the national average. Results at this age have, however, improved over the past three years. The 2000 GCSE results in French and German at grades A*-C were well below national averages. Pupils performed worse in languages than in their other subjects. Nevertheless, over the past three years there has been a steady improvement in GCSE results, despite the staffing difficulties. In 2000, a relatively large group of pupils gained a Certificate of Achievement with distinction; this was a good performance, particularly for the lower attaining pupils taking the course.
135. Standards of work at the age of 14 in French lessons are below those expected nationally. Pupils make less progress than they should up to the age of 14, partly because of the staffing difficulties. Nevertheless, at the age of 14 the relatively small number of higher-attaining pupils have developed good accents in French, and they take part in short conversations about themselves with some confidence. They listen well to the foreign language and show good recall of words they have already met, when reading texts of some length. They write good descriptions and short accounts, and are beginning to write about the past with some accuracy in use of tenses. The middle and lower attaining pupils develop their skills much more slowly, especially those who have had no experience in the language on entry to the school. In Year 9, most pupils make a satisfactory beginning in German.
136. Standards of work in lessons in French and German at the age of 16 are below those expected nationally. Nevertheless, higher attaining pupils continue to develop their listening and speaking skills well within the closely structured examination framework of regular assessment and useful feedback to pupils on their progress. With good support from their teachers they develop their understanding of tenses, but only relatively few write with real fluency and use a more complex style of expression. The large majority of pupils, middle and lower-attaining, including some of the pupils with special educational needs, make unsatisfactory progress. They need much repetition in listening tasks, and in reading both short and longer passages. The speaking skills of some of these pupils have been particularly badly affected by changes in staffing. Even so, very few pupils took advantage of the extra French and German examination revision classes, which were offered by permanent teachers this term for both oral and written work. The Year 11 Certificate of Achievement course provides pupils with limited goals within a narrow range of topics, and, when taught well, which is not always the case, pupils respond to the success they achieve.
137. In the lessons taught by permanent staff, pupils are interested in French and German and they behave well. They listen with attention and participate well in pair and independent work. In most lessons taught by supply teachers, pupils do not concentrate or behave well enough to make satisfactory progress, because teachers do not manage the pupils firmly enough.
138. The quality of teaching is broadly satisfactory overall, but there are many weak features within this overall picture. Half the lessons seen were good, with a small number of very good lessons, all taught by permanent staff. The remaining lessons taken by permanent staff were satisfactory, but those taught by supply staff were either wholly or partly unsatisfactory. Permanent staff have a very good understanding of the demands of examination syllabuses and plan good activities to ensure pupils reach learning objectives effectively by the end of the lesson. They practise speaking skills with vigour and develop pupils' writing and reading skills methodically and coherently. For example, a Year 9 class learnt well how to tackle a long reading passage, and then went on successfully to practise their writing skills through an innovative dictation game in pairs. The permanent teachers use overhead projectors, video and language games very well to extend the range of learning activities and to generate interest and enthusiasm with good pace and even a sense of fun. For example, a group of lower-attaining Year 10 pupils learnt very effectively how to say the parts of the body in German through mime and song, after first seeing a cartoon of Superman breaking bones in a diving

accident. Unsatisfactory teaching by supply staff was marked by a lack of the firm discipline that would have enabled pupils to behave well enough to learn. A group of Year 10 lower-attaining pupils learnt very little about accommodation in Germany and, except for two pupils, most spent the last twenty minutes of the lesson chatting amongst themselves.

139. The head of the department has a very clear sense of direction for the department. She has made good progress in improving the teaching of a committed team of permanent teachers, and developing schemes of work, record-keeping and extra-curricular activities. The scope for delegation of responsibilities within the department is, however, limited. Liaison with middle schools is inadequate to ensure pupils' smooth transition. The steady rise in GCSE examination results is being impeded by staff absences and the quality of teaching by supply teachers. These factors have impaired the development of the department since the last inspection. Support for the general development of the department by senior management has been sound, but the outcome of the response to the current difficulties is unsatisfactory.

MUSIC

140. GCSE results over four years for both grades A*-C and average points score have been close to the national average; this standard was maintained in 2000. Attainment in lessons and work seen is at the national average at the end of both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. Listening and analysis is good, and pupils show understanding of the way in which music expresses emotion. By Year 9, pupils can use musical language and musical technical terms to explain how a composition is built up and how it communicates a musical idea. For example, pupils in Year 8 used the terms 'solemn' and 'though provoking' to explain the power of the music in the final scene of the show 'Evita'. Composition work is more limited, and a significant number of pupils are over-dependent on keyboard pre-sets. Pupils have a low skill base to use in their own composition work. However, the school has some really skilled musicians, and tapes of Year 11 pupils' compositions for GCSE, showed fluency which was often stylistically clear, and involved musical development. Original works heard included a baroque style piece for two flutes and keyboard, and a solo melody with accompaniment using variation form and ornamentation, indicating a good range of creative effort.
141. Pupils with special educational needs attain well and make good progress; opportunities are provided for abler pupils to work at an appropriate level with extension work either being built into the topics being studied or added on as with ornamentation in the minuet topic on keyboards. Less than three per cent of pupils receive instrumental tuition, and the school extends the local authority teaching service provision; contracts are generally directly with parents, and costs can be subsidised in suitable cases. Only three and a half per cent of pupils take part in musical extra-curricular activities, and there is enormous potential for development.
142. Teaching and learning are both good at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. Comments on teaching should be viewed in the context that the acting head of department has only just taken over some classes, and the temporary second music teacher has been in school for less than two weeks. The good teaching is characterised by good planning and preparation linked to the setting of clear targets. Organisation and management are good, being built on good relationships leading to a good working atmosphere in lessons. Staff have a calm and unruffled approach to teaching which has a very positive impact on pupil attitudes. Teacher feedback is positive and underpins individual development. Pupils are learning by doing, and by listening and analysis. The material in the scheme of work is not always appropriate or relevant, and composition work needs more focus, building on sequential skill development. In lessons with Year 10 and 11, pupils' passion and enthusiasm are added to the excellent relationships to enthuse pupils, who then learn by being encouraged to refine their skills. Overall, the teaching style is fully inclusive.
143. Most pupils have open and positive attitudes, although a small proportion of Year 8 pupils show negative attitudes which adversely affects their progress. For the vast majority there is a positive response to questioning with pupils keen to answer, and a strong sense of corporate intent. The listening atmosphere is often intense. Pupils at Key Stage 4 are very open and positive as well as being strongly mutually supportive; in the Year 11 group there is a real sense of urgency as the final examination approaches, and pupils show perseverance and determination. Option numbers for the September 2001 music GCSE group are three times those of previous years.

144. Overall the curriculum satisfies National Curriculum requirements, but is not well focussed with no clear progressive sequence of skill development through Key Stage 3 to resource both composition and performance. The new system of National Curriculum levels due to be introduced this term is still under development. There are no curriculum links with the Middle Schools. The multi-cultural element of the curriculum needs further development, and information and communications technology will play a full role in Key Stage 3 music when the new equipment is installed and commissioned. The assessment scheme needs to be further developed alongside the curriculum with the identification of clear criteria for success – pupil self assessment is still underdeveloped. Pupils with special needs have full access to the curriculum. The acting head of department is doing a very good job in difficult circumstances. The second music teacher is playing a full role in the department. Development planning in music is at the embryo stage and for the acting head of department it is a new skill. Monitoring of teaching and learning links well to performance management. Staffing is adequate, and provides good teaching; the accommodation is good but drab, and has potential for excellence; resources are good and will be very good in music related information technology when the new equipment is commissioned.
145. The three issues in music which were identified at the last inspection have been partly resolved. Teaching is now at least satisfactory across the department; the issue about information technology has been resolved, and the new equipment, when fully commissioned will provide an exciting extension to the curriculum. The lack of self-assessment remains an issue.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

146. When pupils enter the school at Year 8, their standards in physical education are below average. Standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 9, as judged by teachers' assessments are in line with the national average. Observation of lessons and discussion with pupils confirm this judgement. This represents good achievement given the standards of pupils on entry. By the end of Year 9, most pupils judge and plan performance well; they understand rules and show satisfactory levels of individual and team skills. In Year 9 athletics, most pupils demonstrate satisfactory sprint technique, effectively plan relay takeovers and accurately evaluate performance. Lower-attaining pupils understand basic rules and fitness principles, but poor hand-eye co-ordination in striking games and lack of speed in athletics, limit progress. High attaining pupils show excellent levels of fitness. They consistently use refined skills to out-manoeuvre opponents.
147. In the 2000 GCSE sports studies examination, the proportion of pupils gaining grades A*-C was in line with the national average for all schools and for similar schools. The proportion of pupils with grades A*-G was also in line with the national average. Pupils tend to perform in physical education as they do in their other subjects. The overall trend in results during the last three years is in line with the national average. Standards at Key Stage 4 are good, and when compared with those at the end of Key Stage 3, show good achievement. By Year 11, most pupils can analyse performance and plan improvements. In tennis and rounders lessons they use good tactical and spatial awareness to beat opponents. Lower attaining pupils often show reasonable levels of individual technique, but lack confidence and skill in match situations. More able pupils successfully apply the principles of attack and defence in match conditions. In Year 11 tennis, they use a variety of serves, shots and doubles tactics to outmanoeuvre opponents. Year 11 GCSE pupils are on target to achieve beyond national expectations at the end of Key Stage 4. They have good practical skills, are confident and well informed in discussion work and accurately analyse performance. Their written assignments are well presented and often enhanced by ICT. The Year 11 GCSE dance group (15 girls) is the school's first examination entry for the syllabus. They are on target to achieve beyond national averages at the end of Key Stage 4. Pupils practise and perform their own movement compositions. Their work is expressive and energetic and they accurately judge performance. Higher attainers understand and apply more advanced techniques.
148. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Key Stage 3 and very good in Key Stage 4. Teachers know their subject well; plan lessons very carefully and manages pupils effectively. Teachers' good relationships with pupils have a positive effect on learning. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good in Key Stage 3 and very good in Key Stage 4.
149. Teachers provide opportunities for independent learning in most lessons. For example, in a Year 10 volleyball lesson, all pupils planned skills drills, judged peer performance and

suggested ways to improve; learning was very good. Learning is not as effective in a few lessons, because teaching is too prescriptive. Teachers provide appropriate learning activities for pupils of all abilities and those with special educational needs make progress matching that of others in their classes. In Year 8 tennis lessons, lower attaining pupils learnt well because the teacher simplified instructions, modified tasks and used well-planned demonstrations. The learning of higher attaining pupils, including the gifted and talented, is accelerated by extension tasks, appropriate grouping in lessons, and through an extensive extra-curricular activities programme. Pupils in GCSE dance make very good progress because of the teacher's warm, confident and stimulating style. Their learning is further enhanced by the excellent use of audio and visual support equipment. Individuals and teams achieve well in a wide-range of sports at district, county, regional and sometimes national levels. The subject contributes well to pupils' moral, social and cultural development. Pupils improve their basic skills in most lessons, due to teachers' satisfactory emphasis on numeracy and literacy. Key Stage 3 pupils accurately measure, time and record in athletics. GCSE pupils present fitness test data in graph form. Emphasis on key words improves most pupils' technical vocabulary. Teachers' marking comments improve grammar and spelling. ICT skills at Key Stage 4 develop mainly due to teachers' emphasis on using word processing and to access information through the Internet. At Key Stage 3, pupils are given few opportunities to develop their ICT skills. The good quality of teaching is well supported by good use of assessment to monitor the progress of individual pupils and teaching groups.

150. The recently appointed subject leader is establishing clear aims for monitoring, evaluating and further improving standards. She is well supported by a dedicated team of specialist teachers, though one member of the department was absent through injury at the time of inspection. Good improvement has been made since the last inspection. The boys' and girls' departments have been amalgamated. The quality of teaching and learning has further improved and independent learning opportunities are now a feature of most lessons. The revised schemes of work provide better continuity; relationships generally have improved and GCSE dance has been introduced. In order to improve further, the department needs to develop curricular links with partner middle schools, offer dance to boys and plan more mixed gender lessons at Key Stage 3. The two pitches damaged during recent building work are in urgent need of repair to meet satisfactory standards.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

151. By the age of 14, the standards of pupils in religious education are in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. At this age, they have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the main events and beliefs of Christianity, Judaism and Islam. Most pupils are aware of the main events in the lives of Jesus and Muhammad but there is a wide variation in the amount of detail that can be recalled. For example, one pupil was uncertain whether Jesus was crucified on Good Friday or Easter Day while another could give an accurate account of all the events of Easter week. In addition, pupils have a sound awareness of different aspects of these major faiths: feasts and festivals, places of worship, the use of symbols and their traditional stories of the creation. They know how to look up Bible references. They make fairly simple judgements about moral issues as in a study of anti-Semitism. They show every indication of being tolerant to the beliefs of others.
152. The amount of time allocated to religious education in Years 10 and 11 is less than half the time recommended in the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Consequently by the age of 16 most pupils do not reach the expected standard, as is shown by the GCSE results. In the GCSE short course in religious education the proportions of pupils gaining grades A* to C are below the national average. Results have fluctuated over the past three years with 1999 having been particularly poor. Girls perform better than boys, as is the case in most schools. Although the quality of the work done is satisfactory, the syllabus is not fully covered. Pupils make straightforward and sensible judgements about a variety of moral issues. They understand the teaching of the major world religions about marriage and the family. They express sound opinions about prejudice and discrimination, and have some ideas about the need for punishment. In considering the ultimate questions about the existence of God and the purpose of life they show that they understand the difference between belief through faith and reaching a conclusion through proof. Having considered the evidence they frame their own personal beliefs. Indeed the whole course ends with a lesson in which pupils have to summarise their own approach to life.

153. The quality of teaching is good. During the inspection nearly half the lessons in religious education were taken by supply staff and were of a satisfactory standard. Teaching by permanent teachers at Key Stage 3 is good and at Key Stage 4 is very good. Quality of teaching has improved significantly since the time of the previous inspection. There is only one subject specialist, whose subject knowledge is very good. The subject knowledge of the other permanent but non-specialist teachers is good. The planning of lessons is a very strong feature of the department. The provision of good plans for non-specialist and supply teachers is one of the reasons for the improvement in teaching. The spiritual and moral aspects of the lesson are included in the planning so that in most lessons pupils gain by applying what they have learned to their own lives, particularly in Years 10 and 11. Plans are detailed and linked to previous lessons in the schemes of work. The lesson objectives are clear and usually shared with pupils at the beginning of the lesson. Only rarely, however, is learning reinforced by reviewing at the end of the lesson what progress has been made towards attaining the objectives. The work is usually at the right level of challenge for most pupils but the needs of both the highest and lowest attainers are not taken sufficiently into account. In one Year 9 lesson on the life of Muhammad, the task of transferring facts from a written passage on to a data sheet was too simple for the most able while the passage itself was too difficult for the least able to understand fully. Teachers know which pupils have special educational needs but do not take their individual education plans into sufficient account in lesson planning.
154. Teachers have good class management skills based on good relationships with the pupils. They show that they respect the pupils as individuals and treat them with courtesy even when they are being critical. An outstanding example of sensitivity to pupils was seen when the teacher told a Year 11 class that they need not show him what they had written about their own beliefs as this was private to them. This approach results in ordered classrooms with very little misbehaviour. Pupils stay on task and take good care over the presentation and quality of their work. A minority of pupils, however, do not settle well to their work when being taught by a supply teacher who does not know them well. The good pace to lessons generally holds the interest of pupils. Teachers use videos to good effect. A Year 10 lesson on poverty was enriched by a video of the poor in Brazil, while a video of "The Simpsons" was used to portray the Biblical version of the creation in an accurate and relevant way. However, not enough use is made of computers and the department has few links with local faith communities. Work on places of worship, for example, would have had increased meaning if pupils had been taken to see some real examples. Marking is inconsistent. Some books had not been marked for the best part of two terms before the inspection. Permanent teachers, however, mark books regularly. Work is graded on content and effort but comments, although praising good work, do not show pupils how they can do better. Homework is regularly given and consolidates work that has been prepared or started in class.
155. There has been no head of department for four years, although an appointment has been made for the beginning of the new school year. Teaching is well organised by a senior teacher who has other major responsibilities. In particular, attention is paid to supporting the teaching of non-specialists and supply staff. However, management aspects have suffered. Assessment systems are unsatisfactory. The Locally Agreed Syllabus has no system of level criteria and the department's own criteria are vague and need revision. Consequently the department has no satisfactory way of measuring progress or setting targets. Teaching and learning are not sufficiently monitored. An effective system of monitoring would ensure that all exercise books are marked. At present not enough account is taken of planning for pupils with special educational needs or for the gifted and talented. Resources are satisfactory although the condition of many of the Bibles is dilapidated.
156. The department has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The satisfactory standards of learning in Years 8 and 9 have been maintained. The allocation of time in Years 10 and 11 is still only one lesson per fortnight so pupils are still not receiving their full entitlement. Consequently standards of learning are still below expectations. Teaching has improved. The shortcomings in teaching referred to in the previous report have all been eradicated. Unfortunately the programme of educational visits has ceased and no longer enriches the curriculum.