

INSPECTION REPORT

BRIDGEWATER HIGH SCHOOL

Warrington

LEA area: Warrington

Unique reference number: 111447

Headteacher: Mr C Marks

Reporting inspector: Mr R F Spinks
2783

Dates of inspection: 31 January - 3 February 2000

Inspection number: 186688

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:	11 - 18
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Broomfields Road Appleton Warrington Cheshire
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Christine Davison
Date of previous inspection:	26 January 1996

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Bridgewater High School is a large, mixed comprehensive school for pupils in the 11 - 18 age range with 1483 pupils on roll. The school was formed from the amalgamation of two schools some years ago and is established on two sites. One site caters for pupils in Key Stage 3 and the other for pupils in Key Stage 4 and the Sixth Form. Pupils are taught on their respective sites and most staff teach in both buildings. An efficient minibus service operates between the sites to aid the movement of staff at key points in the school day. The school is over subscribed and only a small number of pupils leave or enter the school during the school year. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (5.7%) is well below the average nationally. There are 8% of pupils listed on the school's register of special educational needs which is well below the average, however the number of pupils with statements of special educational needs is broadly in line with other secondary schools. There is an integrated unit for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties for 14 pupils and the school is fully equipped to cater for a number of pupils with physical disabilities. The economic and social backgrounds of the pupils are more advantaged than average and the attainment of the pupils on entry to the school is generally above average. There are fewer pupils from an ethnic minority background than is found in similar schools.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Bridgewater High School provides a good quality education for its pupils. Standards of attainment are above the national average and above those of similar schools at Key Stage 3, GCSE and Advanced level. Standards have been rising from an above-average base at a similar rate to that found nationally. Teachers' good subject knowledge allied to their extensive experience of preparing pupils for external assessments effectively supports pupils in achieving high standards. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning and their very good relationships with one another and their teachers, contribute significantly to the progress they make. The managers of the school have focused appropriately upon the raising of standards through a range of strategies identified within a detailed development plan.

What the school does well

- Standards of attainment are above national averages and those of similar schools at Key Stage 3, GCSE and GCE Advanced level. Standards have been consistently rising since the last inspection.
- The school has successfully developed as a Performing Arts College over the last academic year.
- The school very successfully promotes pupils' positive attitudes and their personal development; pupils develop into caring and thoughtful young adults.
- Pupils with special educational needs (physical, educational and behavioural) are very effectively supported and are fully integrated into the school. They have access to the full range of educational programmes alongside their peers.
- The headteacher, ably supported by active and well informed governors, provides clear and effective leadership and direction to the school.
- The two separate sites are well managed and provide a well-cared for and stimulating learning environment for pupils. The school successfully operates as one institution on

two sites.

What could be improved

- The quality of teaching could be further improved.
- The monitoring of the pupils' progress in the different subjects they study.
- The quality and effectiveness of whole school curriculum planning and development.
- Procedures for ensuring that all managers are working effectively to meet the aims of the school.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has continued to improve its high standards since the last inspection in January 1996. Levels of attainment in both key stages and in the Sixth Form have remained above national averages and have continued to rise at a similar rate to that found nationally. The school diligently established an action plan after the last inspection and through this plan has responded effectively to the key issues identified. Strategies have been introduced for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning through senior managers, faculties and departments. A detailed teaching programme for the delivery of personal, health and social education in tutorial time has been introduced although the quality of teaching of the programme remains variable. A broad based curriculum has been established at Key Stage 4 but it remains possible for a few pupils to choose an unbalanced programme within the option system. Although marking policies have been established and monitored within faculties these have yet to be brought together into a whole school policy. Marking does not always identify clearly what children know and can do or identify what they need to do to improve. The action plan has been developed into the current improvement plan, which identifies six key areas for development in order to continue to raise standards. The areas identified are appropriate and will enable the school to continue to improve standards. The school demonstrates that it has the capacity to continue to improve. The school continues to provide good value for money.

The school has also embarked upon a sustained programme of refurbishment of the buildings. This along with some good displays of pupils' work has positively enhanced the learning environment for pupils.

Over the last year the school has successfully become established as a Performing Arts College. A recent first evaluation report indicates that the initiative has real strengths and is making a major contribution to the development both of pupils and community.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

Over the past three years, pupils' results at all levels have been generally above the national average. There has been a trend of rising standards at least at a similar rate to national improvements even though building upon a much higher starting point. The variations in attainment of boys and girls are similar to the national picture with boys' results, although above national averages, being lower overall than girls at 14 and 16. However, in GCE Advanced level boys out-perform the girls. The school has set fairly challenging targets over the last year and has achieved them. However, the targets for the year 2000, whilst based on known data, should be more challenging. From an examination of pupils' work and in lessons, inspectors judge that the standards of pupils current work reflect their above average levels of attainment in tests and examinations. Pupils make good progress in their lessons to achieve these high standards. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, through effectively targeted work and good support, frequently achieving standards above those expected.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are well motivated and have very positive attitudes to school and learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is consistently very good. The level of exclusions has been consistently low over a number of years.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships in the school are very good. Pupils develop into hardworking and caring young people.
Attendance	Attendance levels are very good. There is an average level of unauthorised absence.

Pupils in all year groups have very positive attitudes to the school and are very well motivated to study, learn and make progress. They are keen to be involved in their lessons and in the many extra-curricular activities available to them. Behaviour is very good both in and out of classrooms. Pupils move around the two school buildings in a very orderly way. Very occasional instances of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with effectively and those pupils identified with behaviour difficulties are very well managed. Pupils are polite and courteous to one another, teachers and visitors. Relationships between pupils and with adults in the school are very good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

In all during the three days of the inspection some 72 lessons or part lessons were observed out of a timetabled programme of over 700 lessons involving 97 teachers. The essential focus of the teaching observed was the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.

The good quality of the teaching contributes positively to pupils' learning and to the progress they make. Overall, in about one in five lessons observed, teaching was judged to be very good, with a few examples of exceptional teaching in mathematics and dance. In two lessons in five the quality of teaching was judged good. About one lesson in ten was judged to be unsatisfactory. In the teaching of the core subjects observed two thirds of lessons were judged to be good or better and less than one in ten unsatisfactory. Teachers have a secure subject knowledge and a good understanding of the requirements of the external assessment processes. As a result pupils are prepared well for National Assessments at the age of 14 and for GCSE and GCE Advanced level examinations. Most lessons are delivered at a brisk pace, are effectively planned and build upon pupils' previous learning. In the lessons judged very good and outstanding teachers motivate pupils to attain high standards through their enthusiasm. When teaching is unsatisfactory teachers do not make clear what they expect pupils to learn. Pupils still respond positively but make little progress in their learning. The most variable teaching was observed in personal, social and health education lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school generally provides a broad range of curriculum experiences for pupils. A wide range of GCE Advanced level courses are available in the Sixth Form. A wide range of extra-curricular opportunities are available and these are extremely popular with pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The integration of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, and those with physical disabilities, is very good. They are able to take part in all aspects of the curriculum and extra-curricular activity with their peers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school provides an atmosphere, which is supportive of personal development. Despite the size of the school pupils are known and treated as individuals and encouraged to develop their social and moral understanding. Cultural and spiritual development was less apparent during this inspection.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Overall there are good systems in place to ensure pupils' welfare. Effective systems for child protection are fully established.

The curriculum is broad and balanced for pupils in Key Stage 3. A few pupils in Key Stage 4 have unbalanced curricular experiences through their choice of optional subjects. There has been little monitoring of pupils' subject choices in Key Stage 4 and the impact on their curriculum experiences and the standards they attain. The curriculum meets statutory requirements although there is limited coverage of some aspects of information and communication technology. There is a wide range of short GCSE courses available at Key Stage 4. This enhances pupils' choices and in most cases provides a broad range of curricular experiences. There are instances where teaching groups are predominantly boys or girls and teachers do not always take this into account in the way they teach.

Generally pupils' welfare is well supported. There are good systems to support pupils through difficulties. However, the systems for monitoring pupils' academic progress are less effective. They lack consistency across the curriculum and the different key stages. The monitoring and support for pupils with special educational needs and for students in the Sixth Form are very good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and governors provide clear direction for the school. They have effectively established this split site school as one institution. The effectiveness of other managers is not being monitored sufficiently.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors very effectively carry out their responsibilities through a well-established committee structure. They are well informed and are fully involved in the decision-making processes.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has made an effective start to evaluating its performance. A wide range of data is used to analyse performance and this is informing senior management decisions.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes very efficient and effective use of the available resources.

Overall the management of the school is effective. The governors have established an efficient and effective committee structure through which they are fully involved in the work of the school. The headteacher and the management group set the agenda for development through an established management structure, which ensures that appropriate consultation takes place before decisions are made. Senior and middle managers have begun to monitor and evaluate the work of the school systematically to help them measure the progress being made towards meeting the targets set in the school development plan. However, to date such monitoring and evaluation are insufficiently rigorous and are not sufficiently based upon shared criteria. For example, each faculty has developed a marking policy but these have not been brought together into a coherent whole school policy. As a result those with responsibility are not sufficiently held to account for the outcomes. The governors effectively plan and monitor the school's budget against the agreed priorities for development. They are seeking to ensure best value in their spending decisions, and are beginning to evaluate these spending decisions against the standards achieved and quality of education provided.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The standards pupils achieve. • Very good support for pupils. • The attitudes and values promoted by the school. • The school responds very quickly and very effectively to parents concerns, complaints and suggestions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information regarding their child's progress. • The attainment of boys in comparison to girls. • The lunchtime arrangements in Lower School.
What pleases parents most (contd.)	What parents would like to see improved

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The high commitment of the teaching staff both in lessons and especially in the provision of a wide range of extra-curricular opportunity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The consistency with which homework is set and marked and the use of pupil 'log books'.
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Inspectors broadly agree with the views of parents. Pupils attain high standards and are very well supported in their studies at all ages. The wide range of extra-curricular activities, visits and more recently the performing arts activities in the community all contribute to the wider education and development of pupils. Pupils are caring and relate well to one another and to adults. The school is a very orderly community and behaviour is very good. The lunchtime arrangements in Lower School, although severely constrained by the physical nature of the buildings, are well managed by lunchtime supervisors and staff. There are some inconsistencies in the use of pupil 'log books' and evidence of inconsistencies in the marking of pupils' work between faculties and departments. The school has identified the difference in attainment between boys and girls as a major strand of its development plan and is beginning to address the issue.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Standards of attainment are above national averages and those of similar schools at Key Stage 3, GCSE and GCE Advanced level. Standards have been consistently rising since the last inspection.

- 1 On entry to Bridgewater High School pupils have attained standards above those normally expected. By the time they reach the ages of 14, 16 and 18 pupils achieve standards well above the national averages overall. This is due to the teaching they receive and the very good quality of their own responses to it. Pupils make generally good progress in their learning and strive hard to attain high standards.
- 2 In 1999, the results of the national assessments for 14 year olds were well above the national average in comparison with all schools in English, mathematics and science. They were also well above the averages when compared with schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 6 was very high in English and science and well above average in mathematics. Over the last three years standards have been rising at a similar rate to the improvement nationally but from a level well above the national and that of similar schools.
- 3 Pupils achieve high standards in the GCSE examinations at the age of 16. In 1999, 61.6% of pupils gained at least five A* - C GCSE grades compared with 46.3% nationally. Results were particularly good in art and design, geography, history, mathematics and physical education. Results were lower for German and design and technology. The performance of boys, although well above national averages, lags behind that of the girls by a similar amount to that found nationally. The school is aware of this and has identified the issue in its development plan.
- 4 Students' attainment in GCE Advanced level courses has been above national averages for the last three years and in 1999 was well above. This reflects the consistent and good progress being achieved by students as they move from the GCSE examinations at 16 to the Advanced level examinations at 18. In 1999, for example, 31.4% of subject entries achieved the highest grades A and B compared with a national figure of 16.6% for comprehensive schools. There are particular strengths in the attainment of boys, which is above that of the girls, although both attain higher average points scores than the national average. Strengths in subject attainment are in performing arts, theatre studies, history and English literature.
- 5 Pupils enter the school with above average attainment at the end of Key Stage 2. They make good progress throughout Key Stage 3 to achieve standards which are well above national averages. The good progress is sustained throughout Key Stage 4 so that they achieve standards in GCSE examinations which are well above the average.

The school has successfully developed as a Performing Arts College over the last

academic year.

- 6 The whole project has been effectively managed. The staff involved have enthused and motivated other teachers and the pupils so that the evaluation at the end of the first year of the project shows the successful achievement of the targets set.
- 7 The formation of the Performing Arts College has had an impact on the curriculum throughout the school. New courses have been introduced at GCSE and at Advanced level, with some good levels of attainment by pupils. There has also been an impact on the wider curriculum with the staff identified within the college supporting other teachers in developing the use of drama within subjects such as science and history. It has also linked well with other subjects such as the physical education programme for dance. There has been an extension in the number and range of extra-curricular opportunities for pupils although these are frequently over subscribed. During the inspection there were rehearsals taking place for a production which involved many pupils of all ages in all aspects of the production.
- 8 The improvements in the resources available from the Arts College have improved the use of information and communication technology across the curriculum. In particular the use of information technology applications has enhanced the work in music.
- 9 The Performing Arts College has established good and effective links with the community, which have been developed through the enthusiasm and hard work of the staff. These include working with several local primary schools involving staff and pupils. Links with community groups are developing and several joint projects have been established including ones with the Fire Service and the local Health Authority. Making links with local industry is proving more difficult to achieve.

The school very successfully promotes pupils' positive attitudes and their personal development; and pupils develop into caring and thoughtful young adults.

- 10 Pupils have very positive attitudes to their education. They concentrate well and persevere in lessons to make good progress in their learning. They become fully involved in the activities provided by the school and respond well to the help they receive from their teachers. They show respect for one another, for their teachers and for the property around them. For example, pupils are able to leave their belongings in the cloakrooms and know that they will be there when they return. The fabric of the school is graffiti free and displays of pupils' work are read with interest.
- 11 Teachers by their example encourage pupils to be considerate and caring. They sustain very good relationships with pupils in lessons and around the school. There were many examples during the inspection of teachers giving their time and energy to support pupils outside lessons, with extra work or supporting personal difficulties.
- 12 The behaviour of pupils is very good both in lessons and at other times. Even where the space is congested in Lower School, movement is orderly and pupils are polite and courteous to one another. When misbehaviour does occur, it is dealt with quickly and

supportively by teachers. There is a clear understanding of what is acceptable behaviour and what is not and sanctions are applied where it is necessary. There is very little evidence of bullying but pupils report that when it has occurred it has been dealt with very effectively.

- 13 In lessons pupils occasionally have the opportunity to show initiative and develop their own ideas but these occasions are too limited. There are also too few opportunities for pupils to take responsibility more generally in school activities. There are some within drama and sporting activities. Pupils in Key Stage 3 are involved in the school council and charity activities. In Years 10 and 11 pupils act as guides on parents' and open evenings. Opportunities are greater for Sixth Form students but are still more limited than usually found. This limits the development of pupils' independence and increases their reliance upon their teachers.

Pupils with special educational needs (physical, educational and behavioural) are very effectively supported and are fully integrated into the school. They have access to the full range of educational programmes alongside their peers.

- 14 The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The national code of practice is fully implemented and staff are aware of the needs of pupils identified on the special educational needs register. Individual education plans are known by most teachers and are used to guide the support they give to individual pupils. There are clear improvements in this area since the last inspection.
- 15 Pupils with special educational needs, behavioural and emotional needs and physical disabilities are fully integrated into all aspects of school life. They are very effectively supported by their teachers, both in lessons and more generally around the school. Such support is discreet and well considered and so is seen as a normal part of school activity.
- 16 The pastoral support for these pupils is very good. Pupils who are experiencing difficulties are aware of the support available to them through their form tutor and their head of year. Parents are regularly involved and also recognise that this support is helpful and effective.

The headteacher, ably supported by the governors, provides clear and effective leadership and direction to the school.

- 17 The headteacher and governors have established a clear programme for the future development of the school. They have embarked upon an ambitious and challenging agenda for school improvement, which is already influencing the way the school works. New roles have been developed for senior managers, which are focused upon improving the quality of education and standards. However, these roles are not fully established especially in identifying clear accountabilities for links with middle managers. Middle managers have not yet fully identified with the school's plans for development.
- 18 The managers, after a detailed and rigorous review of the school's strengths and

weaknesses, have established priorities for the school's further improvement focused on six key areas: data and plotting progress; changing the school day; attainment (gender and literacy); information and communication technology; staff development and self evaluation. The areas identified are important ones in relation to further improving attainment. Literacy has been identified as a whole school focus and an audit of the use of literacy skills across the subjects of the curriculum has raised the profile of literacy. There is an intention to develop work on speaking and listening in a range of subjects. This has the potential to improve attainment through developing more variety in the range of teaching and learning styles. The improvement of teaching has been identified by the school as an essential element of all the strands identified for development.

- 19 The school has identified the relative under performance of boys as an area for improvement. Whole school training has raised the issues, has explored relevant research and successfully challenged staff about the expectations of boys.
- 20 The progress of the improvement plan is monitored by senior managers and governors. As a result it has been refined with more focused short and long-term targets. The governors have been fully involved and they have adopted a critical yet supportive approach. Significant progress is being made in all the school's identified areas for development.
- 21 The management of the introduction of Arts College status from first bid to first review has been very good. There have been other bids, which have also been successful, particularly for sports funding. These successes indicate the clarity with which senior managers and governors view the future development of the school.

The two separate sites are well managed and provide a well-cared for and stimulating learning environment for pupils. The school successfully operates as one institution on two sites.

- 22 There are two deputy headteachers whose major roles are the management of the two sites. A senior teacher is identified as the head of Appleton College, the Sixth Form. The two sites are effectively managed and whole school policies and procedures are fully established in both. This ensures that pupils feel part of one school and that they receive consistent support as they move through the school.
- 23 The governors have established a building refurbishment programme on both sites which managers have implemented. The buildings are welcoming and provide a very good learning environment for pupils. The buildings are clean and well maintained. There are some very good displays of pupils' work, particularly in public areas, which further enhance the learning environment.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The quality of teaching could be further improved.

- 24 Overall, the quality of teaching is good and there were many strengths within the

teaching observed during the inspection. However, there were some instances of unsatisfactory teaching and too few instances of very good teaching. All teachers observed had good levels of subject knowledge and were fully conversant with the needs of external assessments at the end of Key Stage 3 and 4 and the Sixth Form. Most lessons had a clear purpose and effective classroom management, which enabled learning to build upon the good relationships and the positive responses of pupils. In the very good and outstanding lessons seen, teachers enthused their pupils through a range of teaching methods, which were challenging and well planned to meet the needs of all pupils. For example, in a mathematics lesson, Year 7 pupils worked in groups. Each group had a group leader who explained to the others the identification of the algebraic functions which described straight-line graphs. This approach enthused and challenged the pupils and enabled them to make excellent progress. Where teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory, teachers' planning was weak and the needs of all the pupils were not met. Frequently in these lessons teachers over-controlled pupils' learning and did not allow them to develop their own ideas and approaches. For example, in an English lesson pupils were set a very open-ended task, where the focus of learning was unclear and pupils were occupied in unchallenging but time-consuming tasks.

- 25 The school's development focus on the under-performance of boys and on literacy have not yet had a significant impact on the quality of teaching. Although work on the literacy strategy is relatively recent some good practice was seen in a Year 7 literacy lesson. The intention is to enhance speaking and listening, but its impact on attainment, is not yet evident in the majority of classrooms. Where teaching is only satisfactory or is unsatisfactory it is characterised by a lack of variety in teaching styles which does not encourage extended speaking and listening activities.
- 26 The programme for monitoring the quality of teaching and the standards attained by pupils has taken a long time to establish. Although now in place, it does not have sufficient focus or rigour. There is no agreement about the criteria to be used to monitor teaching. This results in monitoring of teaching by senior managers and by heads of faculty or department that is too open to individual interpretation and insufficiently focused on improvement. Senior managers are following up these issues and are reshaping plans. The responsibility for the quality of teaching within faculties and departments is not sufficiently identified with the head of faculty or department.
- 27 There has been little systematic focus on improving teaching and learning. The priorities for improving teaching are dependent on the leadership and work within faculties and are not always having an impact in classrooms. A staff development programme is established but its impact on classroom practice is not monitored rigorously.
- 28 The quality of teachers' marking is variable. Overall teachers' marking and assessment of pupils' work does not always identify what pupils know and can do or indicate what they need to do to improve. The responsibility for marking practice has been placed within faculties and departments and this has produced a variation in approach, rigour and effectiveness. A whole school marking policy is now essential to produce a consistent and effective approach which pupils and parents fully understand.

The systems for monitoring pupils' progress in the subjects of the curriculum.

- 28 Very detailed records are maintained recording pupils' personal development. Information is recorded about both rewards and sanctions, and accurate records of meetings with parents are held by staff with pastoral responsibility. This aspect of record keeping is strong. There are good and detailed records of academic progress for pupils who have special educational needs and for students in the Sixth Form.
- 29 The records of individual pupil's academic progress in Key Stages 3 and 4 are more limited. The use of data and of target setting for individual pupils is an identified priority in the school's development plan. Data on previous attainment is now being made available to teachers within their faculties to enable pupils' progress to be monitored. A structure for managing this process has been established and training has been carried out with heads of year and heads of faculty. There is evidence that this is beginning to impact upon the role of the tutor but this is still too variable to have an impact on improving standards.
- 30 Targets are not being consistently set for pupils in all subjects and few targets are identified within pupil 'log books'. In the best lessons teachers do set targets for pupils' achievement but the inconsistencies in teachers' marking make the recording of pupil progress in the subjects of the curriculum of limited value.

Curriculum development and planning to meet the school's aims.

- 31 The current curriculum provides a generally broad and balanced programme for most pupils but there are some deficiencies. The control aspect of information and communication technology receives limited attention. There is a scheme of work in place for personal, social and health education but the quality of the delivery of the programme is still too variable. Teachers require further training in order to deliver all aspects of the programme effectively. Accommodating pupils' preferences at Key Stage 4 results in some pupils having an unbalanced range of curricular experiences as a result of their subject combinations. For example, a pupil was following a combination of art and design (textiles), child care and food technology. The decision to limit subject courses in the Sixth Form to mainly GCE Advanced level programmes is appropriate taking into account the provision for non-advanced level courses in the local area.
- 32 There is insufficient monitoring and evaluation, by senior managers, of the impact of the planned curriculum and its delivery through the school timetable, especially the deployment of staff across both sites. There is a wide variety of setting and grouping practices, which are determined by faculties. These result in variations in group size and gender balance, for example, there are wide variations in boy and girl numbers in some design and technology groups in Year 9. The impact of these group variations on teaching, learning, attainment and progress is not monitored rigorously.
- 33 From September 2000 new timings to the school day are to be introduced to meet the recommended weekly teaching time. The governors decided to postpone the implementation from September 1999 to September 2000. This allowed for further detailed contribution and consideration of the increased flexibility for the teaching of

subjects as well as concerns raised by staff. This process of consultation was well-managed and has resulted in a decision that will allow more flexibility in the curriculum. Middle managers are now charged with the responsibility of exploiting this flexibility to further improve progress and raise standards.

- 34 The lack of a clear rationale for curriculum development and timetabling means that there is some confusion in the relationship between the purely practical task of organising the teaching programme and the development of new courses and approaches. Currently there is too much emphasis on the issues of timetable structure and too little on planning a curriculum to meet the aims of the school or the needs of pupils in the future.

The monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of managers at all levels in meeting the aims of the school.

- 35 A strong and appropriate management structure has been established based upon clear roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability. There are monitoring procedures for the priorities identified in the school development plan, with all faculties and departments involved in self review and providing reports for senior managers. However, the monitoring and evaluation activities have not been carried out against a range of agreed criteria with the result that the process is having very limited impact on classroom practice and the raising of standards.
- 36 The use of attainment data is developing. Analysis is focused upon whole school and faculty measures. It does not identify sufficiently the links between standards pupils attain, curriculum organisation and the quality of teaching and learning. Recent discussions about GCSE and GCE Advanced level attainment between heads of faculties and the headteacher did cover the differences between boys' and girls' attainment together with other subject specific detail which emerged from a detailed analysis of the data. However, discussions did not extend to the attainment of pupils in specific teaching groups. Governors, whilst offering a critical voice, do not yet hold managers, and in particular heads of faculties and departments, sufficiently accountable for the standards attained by pupils or the quality of teaching they receive.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 38 A culture for school improvement has been established and the school should now:
- 1 Further improve the quality of teaching by:
 - i. agreeing a set of criteria for effective teaching, to be used in planning and lesson monitoring, [26]
 - ii. carrying out a staff training programme on the criteria, [26]
 - iii. reviewing the programme for monitoring of teaching by senior and middle managers ensuring a focus on the school's development priorities, [27]
 - iv. developing a coherent whole school marking policy and ensuring that it is followed by all teachers. [28]
 - 2 Improve the monitoring of pupils' progress in the subjects of the curriculum by:
 - i. developing common systems across subjects and year groups for recording attainment, [29]
 - ii. monitoring the use of pupil 'log books' particularly the setting of targets, [30]
 - iii. developing further the role of the tutor. [29]
 - 3 Ensure that curriculum development and planning exploits the 25 period week to meet the school's aims by:
 - i. reviewing all statutory curriculum requirements, [31]
 - ii. identifying the curriculum development responsibilities of all senior managers, [33]
 - iii. maintaining an overview of curriculum developments initiated within faculties and departments, [32]
 - iv. developing a whole school policy for the grouping of pupils, [32]
 - v. monitoring more closely the subject choices of pupils in Key Stage 4. [31]
 - 4 Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of managers at all levels in meeting the aims of the school by:
 - i. introducing a programme of regular meetings between governors and managers, [36]
 - ii. evaluating pupil achievements against their teaching groups, [36]
 - iii. setting more challenging targets for subject attainment. [30]

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	72
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	46

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4%	12%	42%	29%	11%	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Y7 – Y11	Sixth Form
Number of pupils on the school's roll	1326	157
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		85

Special educational needs

	Y7 – 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	109	0

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	32
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	18

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.7
National comparative data	7.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	1.1

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	1999	127	148	275

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	107	112	104
	Girls	140	112	117
	Total	247	224	221
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	90 (88)	82 (79)	80 (74)
	National	63 (65)	62 (60)	55 (56)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	61 (52)	57 (55)	52 (45)
	National	28 (35)	38 (36)	23 (27)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	103	99	99
	Girls	141	118	115
	Total	244	217	214
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	89 (78)	79 (79)	79 (86)
	National	64 (62)	64 (64)	60 (62)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	59 (39)	57 (53)	61 (50)
	National	31 (31)	37 (37)	28 (31)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4

Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	138	143	281

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	68	133	135
	Girls	105	142	143
	Total	173	275	278
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	62 (62)	98 (99)	99 (99)
	National	46.3 (45)	90.7 (89.8)	95.7 (94)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	44 (44)
	National	37.8 (36.8)

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

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

Attainment at the end of the Sixth Form

Number of students aged 16, 17 and 18 on roll in January of the latest reporting year who were entered for GCE A-level or AS-level examinations	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	38	46	84

Average A/AS points score per candidate	For candidates entered for 2 or more A-levels or equivalent			For candidates entered for fewer than 2 A-levels or equivalent		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
School	21.3	18	19.5 (17.8)	N/A	13	13 (0.5)
National	17.7	18.1	17.9 (17.6)	2.7	2.8	2.8 (2.8)

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

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

International Baccalaureate		Number	% success rate
Number entered for the International Baccalaureate Diploma and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all they studied	School	N/A	N/A
	National		N/A

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	3
Pakistani	7
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	7
White	1476
Any other minority ethnic group	0

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	14	
Other minority ethnic groups		

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y13

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	89.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y7 – Y13

Total number of education support staff	24
Total aggregate hours worked per week	425

Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y13

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	76.5
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Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y13

Key Stage 3	24.4
Key Stage 4	21

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
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	£
Total income	3,736,447
Total expenditure	3,662,861
Expenditure per pupil	2,439
Balance brought forward from previous year	34,291
Balance carried forward to next year	107,877

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	1483
Number of questionnaires returned	341

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	35	57	6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	43	52	3	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	22	68	5	1	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	54	17	4	1
The teaching is good.	24	68	4	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	27	51	19	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	45	48	5	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	40	4	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	22	51	20	3	5
The school is well led and managed.	39	53	1	1	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	34	58	5	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	46	12	1	9