

INSPECTION REPORT

ST ANNE'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

PALMERS GREEN

LEA area: Enfield

Unique reference number: 102053

Headteacher: Mrs Cheryl Byamukama

Reporting inspector: Anthony Shield
3569

Dates of inspection: 22 – 25 May 2000

Inspection number: 186734

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: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 11 - 18

Gender of pupils: Girls

School address: Oakthorpe Road
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London

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Margaret Palmer

Date of previous inspection: January 1996

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Anne's Catholic High School is a comprehensive school for girls aged 11 – 18. The school is on two sites. The lower school site is in the middle of Enfield town, while the upper school site is 3 and a half miles away in Palmers Green. The school draws its pupils from a wide catchment area, many out of borough and from over 50 primary schools. There are currently 962 pupils on roll, including 67 in the sixth form.

Pupils come from a wide variety of social and economic backgrounds, although on balance the socio-economic profile of the school's pupils is average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with, though just above the national average, at 18.2 per cent. There is a wide ethnic mix of pupils, with significant numbers of pupils from Black African and Caribbean heritages. Although 188 pupils speak English as an additional language, only one is at an early stage of language acquisition.

Attainment on entry in Year 7 is fully comprehensive, but there are fewer pupils of above average ability, and more of middle and lower ability. One hundred and forty pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, and nine of these pupils have statements of special educational need, mostly related to learning and behavioural difficulties. These figures are both broadly in line with the national averages

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school. Standards overall in work seen are above average and improving. Standards are improving because the quality of teaching is getting better and there is an increased focus on high achievement. In comparison with schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, pupils' achievements are well above average. Pupils' attitudes to learning, their values and personal development are strengths, encouraged by the strong Catholic ethos of the school. Teaching is good, although not consistently so throughout the school. The headteacher and governors are providing a clear sense of purpose in maintaining and improving standards, but there is more to be done in ensuring consistently high expectations in all areas of the school's work. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Improving standards overall at GCSE and A-level
- Provides good teaching in English, art, drama and history which promotes high achievement and good progress
- Encourages positive attitudes to learning by most pupils through the care, commitment and high expectations of the teachers
- Develops pupils' personal development and maturity as they move through the school

What could be improved

- The progress of pupils in mathematics and science
- Management systems for ensuring consistently high expectations of achievement and behaviour
- The pastoral organisation and systems for support and guidance of pupils
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs
- The behaviour of a small minority of pupils, particularly amongst the pupils in Years 7 and 8.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1996. Since then the school has made satisfactory progress in improving standards and the quality of teaching. Overall performance at GCSE has improved particularly in the last three years, and predicted grades for 2000 suggest this improvement will be sustained. However, overall comparisons mask some variations in individual subject performance. While standards in English have improved, those in mathematics and science have not, at least to

the same extent. The average points score of A-level pupils has improved.

Some key issues from the previous inspection remain to be fully resolved. In particular, provision for pupils with special educational needs, unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection, remains an issue. Although some progress has been made in developing the personal, social and health education programme, the overall co-ordination of pupils' pastoral support remains patchy. Good progress has been made in implementing a programme of monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning, and issues around the curriculum and health and safety have been satisfactorily resolved.

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	B	B	A	A
A-levels/AS-levels	D	D	C	

Key	
Well above average	A
Above average	B
Below average	C
Well below average	D
	E

Results overall in tests taken at the end of Key Stage 3 in 1999 were above average; in English results were well above average and in mathematics and science they were close to the national average. Results have been improving in line with the national trend. In comparison with similar schools in 1999, pupils' performance in English was very high and in the top five per cent of schools nationally; in mathematics, pupils' performance was above average, and in science it was average.

The percentage of pupils achieving five or more A*-C grades at GCSE in 1999 improved significantly from the previous year, and was well above the national average. Results have been consistently above average over the last three years. The overall average points score has also improved over the last three years. Results have been consistently above the national average for girls. In comparison with similar schools, results overall in 1999 were well above average. Seventy-nine per cent of pupils achieved a grade at A*-C in English, well above average, but only thirty-three per cent achieved a similar standard in science; this is below average. Other subjects in which pupils achieved well were art, business studies, technology and religious education. Pupils achieved less well in French, geography and information technology.

The average points score of candidates entered for two or more A-levels was close to the national average in 1999, and improved from 14.3 in 1998 to 16.3. However, numbers are small; there were only thirty-four candidates in 1999, and national comparisons are not reliable. Subjects in which pupils did well were art, English, geography and general studies.

The GCSE targets set for 2000 and 2001 are both lower than achievements in 1999, and the school confidently expects to exceed them.

In work seen during the inspection, standards were high in English, art, drama and history at both key stages. Good literacy skills are enabling high standards to be achieved in a number of different subjects. In science and mathematics, standards are less high and some pupils underachieve, particularly in Key Stage 4. Many pupils are insecure in basic mathematical skills.

Overall, pupils achieve well, particularly during Key Stage 4 given their prior attainment on entry in Year 7. However this overall judgement masks pockets of underachievement in maths and science in particular.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning, show sustained concentration, and are committed to learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Most pupils behave well and show a careful consideration for others. However, the behaviour of a small minority of pupils shows insensitivity and a lack of respect for others which can disrupt learning.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils develop into mature young people as they move through the school, with a good sense of responsibility and service. Relationships amongst pupils themselves and between pupils and teachers are secure, warm and friendly
Attendance	Satisfactory overall. Rates of both authorised and unauthorised absences are broadly in line with the national average. Punctuality to lessons is often unsatisfactory.

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and values on the whole have a beneficial impact on standards. Pupils' developing maturity during Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form, remarked on by parents, is a strength of the school and contributes considerably to the pupils' achievements. However, the good attitudes to learning shown by pupils once lessons have started is not always evident in the often casual manner in which they arrive to lessons. Teachers do not consistently insist on good punctuality, particularly in the lower school. Behaviour, while satisfactory overall, is not always good. A few pupils, particularly in Years 7 – 9 show a lack of respect and their behaviour adversely affects progress in lessons.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Teaching was judged to be satisfactory or better in a little over ninety per cent of lessons observed during the inspection. In around eleven per cent it was very good. Teaching was unsatisfactory in around ten per cent of lessons, mainly in Key Stage 3. Over half of the teaching in Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form was judged to be good or very good, although the sample of lessons observed in the sixth form was very small. Good teaching in English throughout the school leads to good progress. The teaching of science and mathematics is satisfactory, but lacks the consistent focus on high achievement characteristic of teaching in English and some other subjects. Literacy skills are well taught across most subjects, but the same attention is not given to the development of numeracy. Teaching in other subjects is particularly effective in art, drama, history and design technology. Strengths of the teaching include good planning, secure relationships and effective use of questions which encourage pupils to probe further and deepen their understanding. Weaknesses include a lack of challenge and rigour, marking which is not of a consistently good standard, and unsatisfactory class management skills which enable some pupils to disrupt learning through poor behaviour. Pupils' learning is good overall, but only satisfactory during Key Stage 3. Progress is particularly good during Key Stage 4, where pupils' skills of concentration and independent learning are more finely developed. Learning is adversely affected by the use of temporary or supply teachers. In the main teaching is well planned to meet the needs of all pupils and all make at least satisfactory progress. However, the progress of pupils with special educational needs is inhibited by unsatisfactory provision and insufficient support assistants in lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum overall has reasonable breadth and balance at both key stages. The sixth form offers a reasonable range of A-level subjects, but no vocational options were taken this year.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Unsatisfactory. Provision fails adequately to meet needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. Support where needed is effective.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Pupils' personal development is well supported throughout the school. Provision overall for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school arrangements for ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety are satisfactory but there are weaknesses in the arrangements for tutorial support.

The curriculum has weaknesses at Key Stage 4 in relation to the number of pupils studying double science. Currently the school fails to meet statutory requirements in providing an opportunity for all girls to study a design and technology subject, although this issue is being addressed. Procedures to identify the learning needs of pupils with special educational needs are inadequate, the quality and use of individual education plans are not consistent, and there are insufficient learning support assistants in lessons. Many pupils do not build a satisfactory relationship with their form tutors because of the fragmentary arrangements for registering and supporting pupils and for teaching personal, social and health education. This is largely the consequence of the split site.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The leadership and management of the school have proved effective in raising standards overall, but not consistently across all subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are loyal, committed and hard-working. They have sometimes lacked confidence in challenging senior management.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school's monitoring policy works well in ensuring its own evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses is accurate.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The budget is set within the framework of agreed educational targets.

The headteacher is giving the school a firm steer in ensuring continuing improvement of standards. She has introduced a number of policies to address identified weaknesses, but these are not as yet having a consistent impact across all areas of the school, and not all middle managers are effective in raising standards. The school's management structure is complex because of the split site, but does not guarantee that school policies are consistently implemented. Governors have not ensured

that statutory requirements in relation to special educational needs, design and technology in Key Stage 4 and appraisal are met.

The school's deficit budget is being well managed, and best value principles are applied wherever possible. Not all funds allocated to special educational needs are being used for this purpose, with the consequence that provision is inadequate.

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 school's ethos, values and caring nature • That their children enjoy coming to school • The confidence and personal development of the girls • The progress their children make and that the school expects them to work hard and achieve their best • That their children wear school uniform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of fewer supply teachers and the lack of stability amongst the staff • The behaviour of some pupils, particularly on the lower site • The amount and frequency of homework • The split site accommodation • Inadequate sports facilities and fields • The quality of marking which in some subjects is little more than ticks

Inspectors agree with parents' views. The school's ethos and values are strengths of the school, and the maturity of the girls as they approach GCSE and A-level examinations has a marked impact on their approach to their learning. There are severe difficulties imposed by the split site nature of the accommodation, and the inadequate sports facilities. The school is trying to resolve these issues. The school has done much to reduce staff absence and instability, but the problem remains, particularly in recruiting appropriately qualified staff in mathematics, and in covering long term sicknesses. During the inspection, homework was appropriate and regularly set. The school has worked hard to improve the quality of marking, but it remains patchy, particularly when classes are covered by supply teachers.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Improving standards overall at the end of Key Stage 3, in GCSE and A-level examinations

1. Attainment on entry in Year 7 is fully comprehensive, but there are fewer pupils of above average ability, and more of middle and lower ability. One hundred and forty pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, and nine of these pupils have statements of special educational need, mostly related to learning and behavioural difficulties. These figures are both broadly in line with the national averages. Overall, pupils achieve well given their prior attainment on entry, particularly during Key Stage 4
2. Results overall in tests taken at the end of Key Stage 3 in 1999 were above average; in English results were well above average and in mathematics and science they were close to the national average. Results have been improving in line with the national trend. In comparison with similar schools in 1999, pupils' performance in English was very high and in the top five per cent of schools nationally; in mathematics, pupils' performance was above average, and in science it was close to the average.
3. The percentage of pupils achieving five or more A*-C grades at GCSE in 1999 improved significantly from the previous year, and was well above the national average. Results have been consistently above average over the last three years. The overall average points score has also improved over the last three years. Results have been consistently above the national average for girls. In comparison with similar schools, results overall in 1999 were well above average. Seventy-nine per cent of pupils achieved a grade at A*-C in English, well above average, although only thirty-three per cent achieved a similar standard in science; this is below average. Other subjects in which pupils achieved well were art, business studies, technology and religious education. Good literacy skills are enabling high standards to be achieved across most subjects.
4. The average points score of candidates entered for two or more A-levels was close to the national average in 1999, and improved from 14.3 in 1998 to 16.3. Subjects in which pupils did well were art, English, geography and general studies.
5. Standards are improving in the school because the quality of teaching is getting better and there is an increased focus on high achievement. The school's procedures for analysing previous examination performance subject by subject and setting departmental targets are thorough and effective. Departmental action plans are drawn up in response both to the whole school improvement plan, and to targets set at the annual review meeting between the headteacher and individual heads of department. These focus departmental action on improving examination performance.
6. The school's monitoring and evaluation policy is well considered and helps to ensure that departmental targets are being met. Lesson observation is at the heart of the process, and all teachers are observed teaching twice each year, once by the head of department and once by a member of the senior management team. Lessons are observed against agreed criteria and individual feedback is professionally managed. A careful analysis of all identified points for improvement leads to more general issues being adopted for inclusion in the school improvement plan. During the past year, the quality of both marking and homework has improved as a consequence of the rigorous monitoring of practice by both senior managers and heads of department, although improvement in both areas has been patchy, particularly when classes are covered by supply teachers.
7. Effective and improved teaching in many subjects, particularly in examination classes in Key Stage 4, is leading to higher standards. Planning is carefully geared to examination requirements, and pupils are made well aware of what they need to do to improve their performance through target setting. In a Year 10 English lesson observed, the criteria for

assessment of coursework were distributed and discussed. This led to very focused learning in which the pupils had a clear understanding of what was required to achieve high grades. Revision classes in a number of subjects during the holidays help to prepare the pupils more thoroughly and pupils approach public examinations with confidence.

Provides good teaching in English, art, drama and history which promotes high achievement and good progress

8. Standards in English, art, drama and history are particularly high and the school builds successfully on the attainment of pupils on entry to the school.
9. In English, good standards of written work, the confidence with which most pupils read and deepen their understanding, and above average handwriting, spelling and grammatical skills are also encouraging high achievement in a number of other subjects. Pupils are confident and articulate speakers, able to discuss and analyse ideas with each other, and to build on each others' ideas successfully.
10. In one Year 12 English lesson observed, the teacher was confident in her knowledge of the text and her ability to bring out learning points, ensuring that the pupils were secure in their learning and confident in expressing their ideas. The discussion was skilfully managed by the teacher, leading the pupils to a deeper understanding of the characters and of the themes in the text. As a consequence of assured teaching, pupils made good progress in deepening their knowledge and understanding.
11. In another very good English lesson observed with Year 7, sharply focused learning objectives and effective class management ensured pupils worked purposefully and made good progress. Class routines were well established, and pupils responded well to the firm structure provided. The behaviour and commitment to learning were exemplary. Expectations were high and the teacher's very good knowledge of individual pupil's ability and attainment ensured that the activities were well matched to learning needs. Intervention in individual work was supportive and encouraging while prompting further challenge to improve. The atmosphere throughout the lesson was of purposeful and serious study, and all pupils made good progress in learning the skills of redrafting and proof reading.
12. Marking of pupils' books is regular, detailed, sets high but realistic standards and is clear about what the pupils need to do to improve. Some very good marking of this quality was seen in a number of English classes, indicating that the department's clear guidelines are being implemented, and that monitoring by the head of department is effective in ensuring consistency. Good marking of this quality was also seen in art, where pupils are encouraged by constructive and positive comments to research ideas in sketchbooks and to develop their work.
13. Speaking and listening skills are effectively used and developed in drama, where pupils' attainment is well above average. Their ability to develop and sustain characters and to project emotions and arguments with conviction is well above expectations. In addition, pupils develop good audience skills, listening carefully and making perceptive appraisals of each other's performance. Pupils in a Year 10 drama lesson observed demonstrated a good range of dramatic skills and techniques to express ideas and feelings about slavery and freedom. Pupils of all abilities made good progress as a result of very good teaching, characterised by positive and trusting relationships, excellent class management, and challenging activities which gave the pupils different opportunities to role-play and experience the feelings of slaves. The lesson was also making a strong contribution to pupils' social and moral understanding.
14. Similarly effective teaching was seen in art. In one Year 9 lesson observed, the teacher acted as facilitator rather than teacher, effectively supporting and encouraging the pupils to think constructively about their work, solve problems independently and develop imaginative ideas within the framework laid out by the teacher. Expectations were high and pupils responded with serious intent on producing quality work, in this case papier-mâché hats to their own design. There was a high level of challenge throughout. The lesson also made an excellent contribution to pupils' social development. Pupils behaved responsibly and the process of clearing away at the end of the lesson was well managed. One sixth form pupil was present throughout, working

alongside the younger pupils and making a helpful contribution. The mature manner in which she engaged with the younger pupils was indicative of the personal development of pupils in the sixth form.

15. Teaching is informed by clear planning and detailed, sharply focused objectives for learning which are made clear to the pupils. Questions are used to check and reinforce pupils' understanding before moving on. Teachers use homework well to reinforce learning and develop research and independent learning skills. In an English lesson observed with Year 7, the homework set appropriately matched the lesson task, and the teacher insisted that all pupils recorded the details in their journal. The date for handing it in was made clear. During the inspection, homework was appropriate and regularly set and parents' concerns about the frequency and amount of homework set are unfounded. Pupils' expectations that homework will be set and marked are realised.
16. Pupils learn quickly and make good progress particularly when interesting and challenging work is set in lessons. In one lesson with a top English set in Year 10, pupils made rapid gains in their understanding of a short story, as a consequence of the teacher's sensitive and perceptive questions. The teacher showed great interest in what the pupils said, and all pupils felt that their views were respected and valued by both the teacher and the rest of the class. Pupils' ability to infer meaning beyond the surface level of the text was considerably developed during the lesson.

Encourages positive attitudes to learning by most pupils through the care, commitment and high expectations of teachers

17. Most pupils' good attitudes and respectful and polite behaviour have a beneficial impact on standards. They are positive about school and most enjoy coming to school. Pupils respond well to opportunities to participate in lessons and most are enthusiastic learners. Many work conscientiously and take considerable care with the presentation and accuracy of their work. These attitudes are the consequence of high expectations and a strong ethos for learning in the school. Many teachers encourage positive attitudes by example. The occasional examples of poor behaviour and unsatisfactory attitudes witnessed by inspectors only served to highlight how effectively most teachers are providing a secure framework for learning.
18. When given the opportunity to get involved in their own learning, pupils respond very positively. In a Year 7 design and technology lesson, the pupils' quietly receptive but unenthusiastic response improved markedly as they began work on the set tasks. Challenging, but achievable objectives were set and pupils engaged actively and purposefully with the learning. Other examples of enthusiastic involvement were witnessed in art and drama. Pupils appreciate the opportunities for practical work in these subjects.
19. In the sixth form, pupils' attitudes are consistently good. A developing maturity and confidence enable them to ask probing questions as well as answer them. In a Year 12 geography lesson, pupils made very good gains in understanding the Mississippi delta as much through their own contributions as the teachers. Pupils were able to articulate ideas using technical concepts and language, demonstrated high levels of co-operation and concentration, and worked in an excellent atmosphere of mutual respect and purposeful learning.
20. Most pupils' capacity to work hard and concentrate helps them to succeed and reach high standards. Sustained and high levels of concentration throughout a Year 7 art lesson enabled good learning to take place. In a Year 9 history lesson, pupils made good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the Black people of America, partly because of their excellent response to the teacher. All pupils were very focused, self disciplined and made purposeful use of the time.
21. Relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and teachers are secure, warm and friendly. The pupils work together in groups well and listen to each other with respect in nearly all lessons. They work constructively and supportively in pairs in IT, French and German lessons.

22. Behaviour overall is satisfactory and good for the most part, particularly when pupils feel secure and relationships with the teachers are well established. Most pupils are courteous, show considerable respect and co-operate willingly. Inspectors witnessed many examples of kindness and sensitivity to others. However the behaviour of a minority of pupils shows insensitivity and a lack of respect for others which sometimes disrupts learning.
23. Levels of attendance and the rate of unauthorised absence are broadly in line with the national average. Punctuality to lessons is less good, particularly in the lower school, where lessons frequently start late. Sometimes this is unavoidable, and the split site nature of the school does present problems of this kind. However, in some classes there is a culture of unnecessary late arrival which goes unchallenged.

Develops pupils' personal development and maturity as they move through the school

24. Parents commented how much they appreciated the personal growth of pupils as they move through the school. There was strong evidence during the inspection to support this judgement. Sixth form pupils are articulate and responsible young people who have a good awareness of others, and are assured and confident in their relationships with adults.
25. Many pupils, particularly in the upper school, are able to plan and organise their own work without supervision. The school plays a considerable part in encouraging this ability and teaching pupils the skills of organisation and problem solving. Teachers in practical subjects, design technology, art and drama in particular, give pupils good opportunities for taking responsibility for their own learning and working both independently and co-operatively to solve problems.
26. The school arranges for sixth formers to work alongside younger pupils as part of their general studies programme. This provides excellent opportunities for pupils to learn how to relate to younger pupils and take responsibility for helping and guiding their work in the classroom. Pupils use this experience effectively and responsibly.
27. Sixth form pupils appreciate the school council which gives them opportunities to get involved within a democratic structure and argue the case for school improvements. They trust it to deliver. Sixth formers were consulted about the appointment of the Head of Sixth form and felt their views mattered. They are strong in their support of the school as a community, and clearly identify with the school and its values. They very much regret that the school is split on two sites and that the senior pupils have infrequent opportunities to mix with their younger colleagues.
28. Lower down the school, there are good opportunities to take responsibility. Pupil monitors help others with their reading and prefects help staff at parents' evenings and assemblies. Pupils are required to apply by letter for these posts of responsibility. All show an admirable appreciation of the concept of service and, as a Year 9 pupil put it, "of giving back to the school".
29. The personal, social and health education programme (PSHE), the formal curricular element for developing pupils' personal growth, is less effective in promoting personal development than these other aspects of the school's provision. While much has been done to co-ordinate the overall programme since the last inspection, weaknesses in the organisation of the teaching do not ensure a consistently good experience for the pupils.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The progress of pupils in mathematics and science

30. Attainment in mathematics and science is not as good as in English. In tests at the end of Key Stage 3 in 1999, while English results were above average, results in mathematics and science

were both close to the national average. When compared to girls' results nationally, the school's results in mathematics and science were just below average. At GCSE in 1999, while seventy nine per cent of pupils achieved A*-C grades in English, only fifty per cent in mathematics and just 33% in science reached this standard. The average points score in English was 5.3, in mathematics it was 4.5 and in science just 3.9. Clearly a number of pupils are achieving well in English, but not achieving the same standard in either mathematics or science.

31. This relative underachievement has been recognised by the school, but as yet action to improve performance has not proved effective. There are a number of causes, some related to the way in which the curriculum is planned and some because the teaching does not always do enough to encourage high achievement.
32. In mathematics, much of the teaching has strengths which match those in other subjects. However, teaching, while never less than satisfactory, has features which might be improved. The department relies too heavily on the text book as the source of teaching material, and teachers fail to ask "what do pupils need to learn?", and adapt their planning accordingly. Teaching sometimes lacks energy and drive and only a limited range of teaching strategies is employed to engage and motivate the pupils. Teachers fail to plan successfully for the more able pupils and to provide challenging work matched to their ability. Marking of pupils' books is not consistent and not always of the quality seen elsewhere in the school. The department has suffered from the use of supply teachers, which have had a major impact on the continuity of learning in some classes.
33. In science, underachievement is most pronounced in Key Stage 4. This is partly the result of the organisation of the curriculum at Key Stage 4 and partly the consequence of some unsatisfactory teaching. The proportion of pupils studying single science for GCSE is high. In 1999, ninety-seven pupils took single science, while only fifty-five took double science. Some able pupils are only taking single science. This has a major impact on the ability of many pupils to achieve high grades, while imposing a severe constraint on their future educational and career options. Although many science lessons are double lessons, some are single lessons which provide too little time for adequate practical work to take place. Teaching and learning in single lessons often lack pace and focus. However, even the double lessons are often poorly organised, and time is wasted as a result of weaknesses in planning.
34. There is too much unsatisfactory teaching in science across all key stages, and as in mathematics there are features of satisfactory teaching which could be improved. Contrary to departmental policy, pupils are not consistently made aware of the lesson's learning objectives at the start of the lesson. In addition, at the end, teachers rarely find time to summarise and reinforce learning with a review of what has been achieved. The pace of many lessons is too slow, and pupils, particularly the more able, are insufficiently challenged. Opportunities to consolidate and develop scientific thinking are not taken, and the use of key scientific vocabulary is inconsistent. Class demonstrations lack rigour and an appropriate discussion of the scientific principle behind the phenomenon being observed.
35. Schemes of work are now in place, but inadequate attention in lesson planning is given to the needs of the more able pupils. Pupils' investigative skills are underdeveloped and there is little use of information technology to support learning. Insufficient consideration is given to the everyday application of science.
36. Both departments need to improve the quality of teaching to match that found in other subjects.

Management systems for ensuring consistently high expectations of achievement and behaviour

37. The headteacher is giving the school a firm steer in ensuring the continuing improvement of standards. She has introduced a number of policies to address the weaknesses, but these have not yet had a consistent impact across all areas of the school, and not all middle managers are effective in raising standards.

38. The role of heads of year, for example, in monitoring the overall academic progress as well as the personal development of pupils in their year is not consistently being carried out. Heads of year are responsible for their work to the pastoral deputy headteacher through the senior teacher responsible for site management. Weekly meetings between heads of year and the senior teacher enable discussion of individual pupils and day to day pastoral issues. Half-termly meetings with the deputy headteacher consider broader policy issues related to pastoral care. In practice, behavioural issues are dealt with by whoever happens to be on call at the time, sometimes leading to a different response. Expectations are high, but not consistently so across all the staff. The split site means that senior staff do not have sufficient presence on both sites.
39. Heads of subject departments are responsible to the headteacher and the deputy headteacher (curriculum). In addition, all members of the senior management team have line management responsibilities for heads of department, and monitor the quality of teaching through the school's monitoring and evaluation policy. The headteacher meets all heads of department to discuss examination performance and to set departmental targets. Involvement in the monitoring and evaluation procedure ensures that these targets are being monitored. However, inconsistencies of practice remain within departments. Overall, not all heads of department and heads of year see their role as focused on raising achievement and in some cases the responsibilities for line management overlap and lack clarity. The management structure does not guarantee a consistent implementation of policies.
40. The school understands its strengths and weaknesses through an effective monitoring and evaluation policy. Lesson observation is carried out by senior staff and heads of department on a regular basis with individual feedback on performance to teachers. Departmental reports are prepared from a thorough analysis of the performance of individual teachers within the department. This in turn feeds into the school development plan. First implemented in September 1998, the impact of this policy on raising standards and improving progress in all subjects has been variable.
41. Governors have a sound knowledge of the school, its strengths and weaknesses. They are committed and hardworking, and several are parents or parents of ex-pupils. They are actively managing the budget and pursuing strategies for reducing the deficit through a review of all spending decisions. Their role in monitoring the school's work is satisfactory, although governors have sometimes lacked confidence in challenging the senior management. For example, governors should have been more active in ensuring immediate progress on some of the key issues from the previous inspection.

The pastoral organisation and systems for support and guidance of pupils

42. The form tutors' relationship with their pupils is not always secure. Their knowledge of individual pupils is often limited because of the unsatisfactory and fragmentary arrangements for registration, tutorial support and the teaching of personal, social and health education (PSHE).
43. Although relationships overall in the school are good between teachers and pupils, the important relationship between form tutor and pupils in her or his form is not always as good as it should be. This is because tutors do not register their pupils every day as they may be teaching on the other site. Tutorial time following registration is often used effectively. In one Year 9 session observed, the tutor used the time well to ensure a calm, orderly and focused start to the day. Routines were well established and expectations of conduct and the use of time high. The teacher checked journals while other pupils read quietly. Pupils demonstrated a high level of self-discipline. In another Year 9 form group, pupils spoke of the trust and warm relationship they had with their tutor, whom they had had for two years. However this good practice is not always followed. Pupils indicated that some tutors see them infrequently during the week, and their tutor is not the teacher to whom they will always turn for help and support. The tutor's crucial role in monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress is not consistently effective.

44. The problem is made worse by the arrangements for the teaching of PSHE. Although some progress has been made in developing the programme since the last inspection, the overall co-ordination of the teaching remains patchy. The school has worked hard to improve the co-ordination and continuity of the programme. Schemes of work have been revised and there is now a coherence between and across years. However, the subject is not generally taught by the form's tutor, or a specialist PSHE teacher. Some of the teaching observed was unsatisfactory, and none was good. Much of it is unremarkable and does not use a well-informed knowledge of the pupils as a secure basis for teaching. In one instance, Year 9 pupils took advantage of the situation; they demonstrated poor attitudes, and behaviour and learning were unsatisfactory.

The provision for pupils with special educational needs

45. Provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) was unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection. It remains an issue for the school. In particular, procedures to identify the learning needs of pupils with special educational needs are inadequate, the quality and use of individual education plans are not consistent, and there are too few learning support assistants in lessons. As a consequence, although pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, their progress is not as good as it should be.
46. The school has been aware of these issues for some time, and has now taken steps to deal with them, through the appointment of a senior teacher for raising achievement. Her role includes the responsibility for the co-ordination of special educational needs provision.
47. There is no withdrawal of pupils in special classes, although in Key Stage 4 about nine pupils study one fewer GCSE option, freeing time for work on their other subjects. However, this does not provide satisfactory support for their needs. The room allocated for special needs support is rarely used, and has inadequate resources to support learning needs.
48. Individual education plans (IEPs) have been written for pupils at stage 5 on the register, but not for all pupils at stage 2 and above, although the school aims to complete these shortly. The quality of existing plans is unsatisfactory and there is little input from subject staff. Many are currently being re-written. The use of IEPs by teachers is not consistent. Few examples were seen of work being specifically planned for pupils with special needs.
49. The deployment of the learning support assistants has no clear rationale. At present, classteachers request support, and the support is mostly targeted at the five statemented pupils. Support assistants do not keep records of their work or plan their work in relation to the pupil's IEP. The number of support staff is inadequate to cater adequately for the needs of pupils.
50. The governors' annual report to parents does not meet the requirements to report the funding allocated, nor to indicate the arrangements for admitting disabled pupils. Nor does it state how successfully the SEN policy is being implemented. The strategic oversight of special educational needs provision is lacking and the requirement to monitor the progress of pupils with SEN is not fully in place. Annual reviews for statemented pupils are carried out appropriately.
51. Designated funds for SEN are not all being used to support SEN pupils. Last year, income of £92,497 exceeded expenditure of £39,952. A similar pattern is forecast this year.

The behaviour of a small minority of pupils, particularly in Years 7 and 8

52. Most pupils behave well and with a careful consideration for others, and on the whole, pupils' attitudes, behaviour and values have a positive and beneficial impact on standards. However, at times the behaviour of a minority of pupils shows insensitivity and a lack of respect for others which can disrupt learning. This is particularly the case, though not exclusively, amongst pupils in Years 7 and 8.
53. In one Year 8 English lesson, a small number of pupils in the class were unco-operative and deliberately challenging to the teacher. This was not a response to the content or presentation of

the lesson, as the lesson was well planned and tasks set appropriate. Many pupils responded positively. However, several pupils undermined the teaching through inappropriate comments and behaviour. The teacher intervened firmly and politely and good order was maintained overall, but learning was adversely affected by the behaviour. This was the first lesson taught by this particular teacher with the class, replacing a teacher who had recently gone on maternity leave.

54. Pupils reported to inspectors that their learning is disrupted at times by the poor behaviour of other pupils. Parents also indicated a concern at the parent's meeting and through the questionnaire, in which over one in four parents felt that behaviour in the school is not good.
55. Most teachers have good relationships with the pupils and good behaviour management skills. Difficult pupils respond well to the firm, non-confrontational approach adopted both in class and around the school sites. Good relationships and a secure framework for managing behaviour ensure that potentially confrontational situations are quickly diffused. However, several factors serve to undermine this overall satisfactory picture. The use of supply teachers and the subsequently variable expectations of acceptable behaviour are perhaps the most significant. The school has done much recently to reduce staff absence and instability. However, the problem remains in mathematics. The school has quite rightly insisted on only making permanent appointments of good candidates to teaching positions. This has sometimes led to long periods of temporary staff and frequent changes of teachers for some classes.
56. In addition, the unsatisfactory arrangements for pastoral support mean that some pupils do not feel they have one tutor who is responsible for their overall behaviour. A small number of pupils take advantage of this situation.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order further to improve standards and the quality of provision, governors, headteacher and staff should:

1. Improve the progress of pupils in mathematics and science by:
 - improving the quality of teaching in both subjects, in particular the quality of marking and the range of teaching strategies used in mathematics; ensuring that learning objectives are made clear, that the pace of lessons is more brisk, that able pupils are challenged, and that opportunities for more investigative work are provided in science (paragraphs 31-37).
2. Review the management structure to ensure consistently high expectations of achievement and behaviour by:
 - clarifying the line management procedures (paragraph 40)
 - ensuring all heads of department and heads of year understand their responsibilities for monitoring the academic progress of pupils (paragraphs 38-41).
3. Improve the pastoral organisation and systems for support and guidance of pupils by:
 - confirming the role of tutors in monitoring and supporting pupils' academic performance (paragraphs 43-44)
 - reviewing the arrangements for tutorial support and ensuring more continuity in the tutorial arrangements (paragraphs 43-44)
 - improving the teaching of PSHE (paragraph 45)
4. Improve the provision for pupils with special educational needs by:
 - reviewing the systems for initial assessment of pupils (paragraph 46)
 - ensuring relevant individual education plans are in place for all pupils and are used effectively by all teachers (paragraphs 46 & 49)
 - ensuring there are adequate numbers of support assistants in class and that their deployment has a clear rationale (paragraphs 46 & 50)
 - reviewing the balance of in-class support and withdrawal to ensure provision meets the needs of pupils more precisely (paragraph 48).
5. Improve the behaviour of a small minority of pupils by:
 - reducing the amount of supply teaching as much as possible (paragraphs 54 & 56)
 - ensuring consistently high expectations of behaviour by all teachers including supply staff (paragraph 56)
 - reviewing the arrangements for the responsibility for behaviour (paragraph 57).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	62
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	18

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	11.3	38.7	40.3	9.7	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	895	67
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	165	10

Special educational needs	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	9	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	140	0

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	27
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	31

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.0
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
		1999	0	184

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Girls	157	123	97
	Total	157	123	97
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	85 (79)	67 (71)	53 (60)
	National	63 (65)	62 (60)	55 (56)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	48 (34)	35 (38)	20 (21)
	National	28 (35)	38 (36)	23 (27)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Girls	135	128	167
	Total	135	128	167
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	75 (78)	71 (75)	92 (81)
	National	64 (61)	64 (64)	60 (61)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	22 (33)	32 (36)	46 (48)
	National	31 (31)	37 (37)	28 (30)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4

Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	0	158	158

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	0	0	0
	Girls	95	152	156
	Total	95	152	156
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	60 (44.3)	96 (98.5)	99 (99.2)
	National	46.6 (44)	90.9 (90)	95.8 (95)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	44 (40.3)
	National	38.0 (36.8)

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

Attainment at the end of the sixth form

Number of students aged 16, 17 and 18 on roll in January of the latest reporting year who were entered for GCE A-level or AS-level examinations	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	0	52	52

Average A/AS points score per candidate	For candidates entered for 2 or more A-levels or equivalent			For candidates entered for fewer than 2 A-levels or equivalent		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
School	n/a	16.3	16.3 (14.3)	n/a	1.3	1.3 (1.6)
National	17.7	18.1	17.9 (16.5)	2.7	2.8	2.8 (2.8)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	49
Black – African heritage	147
Black – other	53
Indian	17
Pakistani	3
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	4
White	527
Any other minority ethnic group	0

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	5	0
Black – African heritage	6	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	11	0
Other minority ethnic groups	6	0

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	54.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y7 – Y13

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	267

Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y13

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	72.2%
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Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y13

Key Stage 3	22.9
Key Stage 4	20.7

Financial information

Financial year	1998/9
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	£
Total income	2007538
Total expenditure	2227098
Expenditure per pupil	2304
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	-219560

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	962
Number of questionnaires returned	171

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	34.3	47.3	10.6	5.3	2.4
My child is making good progress in school.	32.9	52.3	9.4	1.7	3.5
Behaviour in the school is good.	21.6	45.0	18.1	8.8	6.4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25.9	46.5	17.6	8.8	1.2
The teaching is good.	20.3	51.7	16.3	5.2	6.4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38.6	34.5	18.7	5.8	2.3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	39.6	39.6	10.0	7.1	3.5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50.0	37.2	7.5	2.3	2.9
The school works closely with parents.	24.7	41.2	24.1	4.7	5.3
The school is well led and managed.	25.9	35.9	14.1	6.5	17.6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	34.3	42.0	10.6	5.3	8.3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	23.8	31.4	20.9	11.6	12.2