

INSPECTION REPORT

THE BISHOP WAND CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL

SUNBURY ON THAMES

LEA area: Surrey

Unique reference number: 125280

Headteacher: Mr N Dunkley

Reporting inspector: Mrs Jean Head
1604

Dates of inspection: 19-22 March 2001

Inspection number: 187012

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

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	11 to 18
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Laytons Lane Sunbury on Thames Middlesex
Postcode:	TW16 6LT
Telephone number:	01932 787537
Fax number:	01932 771022
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr G Ceaser
Date of previous inspection:	12-16 December 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
1604	J Head	Registered inspector		What sort of school is it?
				The school's results and achievements
				How well are pupils taught?
				How well is the school led and managed?
				What should the school do to improve further?
9724	B Quest-Ritson	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
				How well does the school care for its pupils?
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22590	R Castle	Team inspector	Geography	
			Physical education	
4617	R Fox	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages	
13003	M Gill	Team inspector	History	
11508	C Griffin	Team inspector	English	
			Drama	
10385	K Hopkins	Team inspector	Design and technology	
12885	J Hunt	Team inspector	Information technology	
3643	D Jones	Team inspector	Mathematics	
			Equal opportunities	
4757	D Morris	Team inspector	Art	
1606	J Murray	Team inspector	Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			English as an additional language	
8360	F Peacock	Team inspector	Music	
3735	A Webb	Team inspector	Science	

The inspection contractor was:

QAA
Herringston Barn
Herringston
Dorchester
Dorset DT2 9PU

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?	14
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	19
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	20
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	21
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	26
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	27
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	33

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The Bishop Wand Church of England School is a comprehensive school for boys and girls aged 11 to 18. With 857 pupils on roll, it is about the same size as many other comprehensive schools nationally. The sixth form, with 111 pupils, is relatively small. In most year groups, there are slightly more boys than girls. The school is situated in Sunbury on Thames. Admission is to a large extent dependent on pupils and their families being practising members of the Church of England. Hence, pupils come from a relatively large area, including many neighbouring London boroughs. Pupils are from mixed socio-economic backgrounds. About three per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals. This is well below the average for comprehensive schools nationally, reflecting the very low rates of unemployment in this particular area. Taken as a whole, pupils' attainment on entry is above average. Although pupils of all levels of prior attainment join the school, the proportion of higher attaining pupils is greater than that found in most schools nationally. The school has identified around 12 per cent of its pupils as having special educational needs, which is below average. Of these, 13 pupils have statements of special educational needs. Needs include specific learning difficulties and emotional and behavioural difficulties. Thirty four pupils speak English as an additional language, although only two are at an early stage of language acquisition.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is operating at a satisfactory level. Standards are above average at both ages 14 and 16, broadly as might be expected, given pupils' attainment on entry. Standards are average at age 18 but, again, pupils' achievements are satisfactory, given their attainment on entry to the sixth form. Pupils are taught well. The school has more strengths than weaknesses. Indeed, there are examples of good practice in all aspects of the school's work but, in many instances, practice is inconsistent. Overall, leadership and management of the school are satisfactory; good use is made of below average financial resources. Post-16 provision is cost-effective. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Teaching is good and often very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge, which they use effectively to plan and teach their lessons. As a result, pupils learn well.
- A Christian, caring ethos is reflected in all aspects of the school's work. Relationships are good, allowing effective interaction between teachers and pupils, which helps learning.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' personal development, especially through its personal and social education programme. Pupils benefit from particularly good provision for their moral development and from a clear emphasis on right and wrong.
- Effective collaborative arrangements with a nearby school enable sixth form pupils to benefit from a broad and enriching curriculum.

What could be improved

- The use of assessment data to set appropriate targets for academic improvement, and to monitor pupils' progress towards these targets, is unsatisfactory.
- The school does not monitor and evaluate its work sufficiently well in order to take co-ordinated and cohesive action to improve its performance.
- The school does not provide as effectively as it could for pupils with special educational needs.
- Leadership and management of geography and modern foreign languages are unsatisfactory, as is the teaching of French.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress since its last inspection. It has addressed all of the issues in the last report, albeit with varying degrees of success. The school has maintained the above average standards of attainment noted in the last report. Its average GCSE points score has shown an upward trend, in line with that found nationally. Taking a three-year average, the school has increased its

average A level points score significantly. It has also maintained the good quality teaching mentioned in the last report. The school has worked hard and successfully to improve its curricular provision, but still lacks a clear policy statement to guide further development. It has established a cycle of strategic planning, underpinned by annual development plans. However, this process has not been totally effective in driving improvement, partly because plans lack clear outcomes and time scales. In addition, the line management structure, set up to improve evaluation of the school's work, operates inconsistently. Health and safety issues, concerned with the cleanliness of part of the school, have been addressed.

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
	1998	1999	2000	2000
GCSE examinations	A	C	B	E
A-levels/AS-levels	C	B	D	

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

In 2000, both GCSE results, and results in the national tests for 14 year olds, were above average when compared with results in all schools nationally. Both sets of results were well below average when compared with those in so-called similar schools; that is schools where up to five per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals. However, whilst the similar schools comparison is a fair reflection of the high employment rate in the area, it is not really representative of pupils' social backgrounds. Thus, for this school, it is not a reliable indicator of pupils' achievements. Other national comparative information shows that, overall, results in public tests and examinations are as might be expected (C) at ages 14, 16 and 18, given pupils' attainment at the start of each phase. However, there is an exception. For the past two years, the percentage of pupils gaining five or more GCSE A* to C grades has been lower than it should have been, given pupils' scores in their Year 9 national tests. The school's overall results in the Key Stage 3 national tests were slightly lower in 2000 than in recent years. This was due to a drop in English results, mainly due to staffing difficulties. In the 2000 GCSE examinations, pupils did better in history and religious education than in their other subjects. Performance was relatively weak in English literature, drama, science and French. The school's targets for improvements in GCSE results for the past two years have not been particularly challenging. Its target for 2001 is more appropriate and should be met, or nearly met.

The picture painted by the school's examination results is largely confirmed by inspection evidence. Standards are above those expected nationally for pupils' age in both Years 9 and 11; they are in line with course expectations in the sixth form. Pupils achieve at least as well as they should do in most subjects, but many underachieve in geography and French in Years 7 to 11.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils have positive attitudes to the school and to their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory overall. Behaviour is good in most lessons, although a minority of pupils in Years 7 and 8 behave in an immature way and disrupt learning. Most pupils behave well around the school; a minority lacks self-discipline.
Personal development and	Good relationships are evident in classrooms. Pupils work well together

relationships	and undertake much charitable work.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance rates are similar to those found nationally. Overall, pupils are punctual to lessons.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Overall, teaching is good; often it is very good. Of the lessons observed, teaching was satisfactory or better in 95 per cent, very good or better in 26 per cent, but less than satisfactory in five per cent. Most of the unsatisfactory teaching occurred in French lessons, some of which were taught by non-permanent staff. Teaching is stronger at Key Stage 4 than at Key Stage 3. It is particularly strong in the sixth form. Two strengths underpin much of the teaching across all subjects: teachers have good subject knowledge; they manage pupils skilfully in lessons. Teaching is very good in design and technology, history and music. It is good overall in English, mathematics and science and in all other subjects except for geography, where it is satisfactory, and French, where it is unsatisfactory. Personal, social and health education is taught well, as are other subjects not reported upon. The school's strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are satisfactory. As a result of the good quality teaching, pupils learn well and show an interest in their work. Most concentrate well and build on existing knowledge effectively to acquire new knowledge and skills

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum offers pupils a range of experiences that helps them to learn well both within and beyond the school day. Sixth form provision is a strength.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Unsatisfactory overall. A small number of pupils benefit from good, specialist teaching. However, there are too few special educational needs staff to provide adequately for all pupils' learning needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good teaching helps pupils with English as an additional language to make the same progress as their peers. Two pupils receive good support from the local education authority.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good and deeply embedded within the school's curriculum. Good provision is made for pupils' spiritual and social development; that for their cultural development is satisfactory
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. There are effective procedures to promote and ensure pupils' welfare.

There is no consistent system to combine, record and track pupils' academic and personal progress. Thus, the support and guidance given is less effective than it could be. The school has made every effort to develop good links with parents. For example, parents have opportunities to discuss issues and developments with the headteacher at monthly meetings of the school's parents association.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The headteacher and other senior managers have been successful in nurturing a Christian, caring ethos and in securing a common commitment amongst staff to raising standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are well informed and very supportive of the school. They are effective in shaping the future direction of the school but less so in holding it to account for its standards.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. The school does not evaluate its work sufficiently well in order to ensure that effective action is taken to improve its performance. Not all teachers and managers know what they are doing well or what aspect of their work needs to be improved.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school makes prudent use of its financial resources. The school has successfully paid back a substantial budget deficit, inherited by the current headteacher. This has left very little room for manoeuvre in recent years and has limited development.

Governors take appropriate steps to apply the principles of best value. A few minor statutory requirements are not met fully. The school has suffered in recent times from recruitment difficulties in English and French; budgetary considerations have resulted in limited staffing for special educational needs. Given these deficiencies, the school makes sensible use of available expertise; arrangements for the professional development of staff are well structured and organised. Accommodation is appropriate for teaching the school's curriculum, although barely adequate in quantity for its needs. Learning resources are satisfactory in most subjects but are inadequate for pupils with special educational needs.

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 is approachable. Their children are expected to work hard. Their children make good progress. The teaching is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The links with parents and the information received about their children's progress. The setting of homework. The range of activities outside lessons. Behaviour.

Parents have a broadly satisfactory view of the school. Most are pleased with the school and what it provides for their children, but some expressed concerns as above. The inspection team agrees that the school is approachable, that pupils are expected to work hard and that teaching is good. However, inspectors consider that pupils make satisfactory, rather than good, progress. Inspectors also found that the school does work closely with parents and that the information provided about progress is satisfactory. They think homework is appropriate, and that the range of activities outside lessons is good. However, inspectors agree that there is room for some concern about behaviour. Most pupils behave well, but the behaviour of a minority is not good either in lessons or around the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The school's results in public tests and examinations are above the national average for all schools at both ages 14 and 16. However, they are well below average in both instances when compared to schools with similar intake; that is, schools where up to five per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals. This latter comparison suggests that pupils at Bishop Wand are perhaps not achieving as well as they could do. However, inspection evidence shows that whilst the similar schools comparison is a fair reflection of the economic circumstances of the school's pupils, it is not wholly representative of their social backgrounds. Hence, for this school, it is not a reliable indicator of pupils' achievements; it is therefore not used subsequently in this report to analyse the school's performance. Rather, other national comparative data, based on pupils' prior attainment, is used from now on to evaluate the school's results and pupils' achievements. Overall, this indicates that pupils achieve broadly as might be expected at ages 14 and 16, given their attainment on entry to the school. This is confirmed by inspection evidence. Similarly, post 16 pupils achieve satisfactory results, given their attainment on entry to the sixth form.
2. In 2000, the school's overall points score in national tests at age 14 was above the national average for all schools; it was in line with predictions based on pupils' Key Stage 2 scores in 1997. Hence, results were broadly as might be expected, given pupils' attainment on entry to the school. Results varied across the three core subjects, being above average in English and science, and well above average in mathematics. Overall results in 2000 were lower than those for the previous three years, when the school's overall score was well above that attained nationally. The drop was due to somewhat lower results in English than in previous years. Apart from a 'peak' in 1997, the schools' average National Curriculum points score has been fairly static since 1996. It has not risen in line with the national trend. If results from 1998 to 2000 are taken together, boys have achieved better results relative to their national average than have girls, in relation to their national average. For example, girls have achieved better results than boys in English, but the gap is smaller than that found nationally.
3. The school's most recent GCSE results indicate that, overall, pupils continue to achieve broadly as should be expected, given their attainment at the end of Year 9. For example, the school's average GCSE points score in 2000 was above the national average for all schools and in line with that attained by schools with similar prior attainment; that is, schools whose pupils had achieved similar results at the end of Key Stage 3. The proportions of pupils gaining five or more A* to G grades, or one or more A* to G grades, were also close to results for schools with similar prior attainment. Pupils did better in 2000 in religious education and history than in their other GCSE subjects. Performance was relatively weak in English literature, drama, combined science and French. Although since 1997, the school's average GCSE points score has fluctuated, overall it has risen in line with the national trend. Overall, girls have attained higher results than boys, but the difference in performance is similar to that found nationally.
4. Performance in terms of the percentage of pupils gaining five or more A* to C grades is not as secure. National comparative data suggests that pupils are not achieving as well as they should do, given their attainment at the end of Key Stage 3. In 1999, the proportion of pupils gaining five or more A* to C grades was in line with the national average for all schools, but was well below average when pupils' attainment at the end of Year 9 was taken into account. The situation improved somewhat in 2000. The percentage of pupils attaining five or more A* to C grades was above the national average for all schools; however, it remained below that for schools with similar prior attainment.
5. The school's average points score for pupils taking more than two A levels was below the national average in 2000. It has fluctuated since 1996 but, taking the average for the past three years, results are close to the national average. Summary data provided by the school, to demonstrate that pupils achieve as well as they should, is largely benchmarked against local standards; other

information is inconclusive. However, available data suggests that pupils achieve as might be expected, given their GCSE scores on entry to post-16 education.

6. The school uses information received from Surrey local education authority to set targets for its GCSE performance. The school target for 2000, for 57 per cent of pupils to achieve five or more A* to C grades, was not particularly challenging. Nor was it underpinned by a rigorous analysis of what pupils should achieve as a minimum, given their performance in the 1998 Key Stage 3 national tests. This target was not met. The target for 2001, for 62 per cent of pupils to attain five or more A* to C grades, is more appropriate. Mock GCSE results indicate that the school is likely to meet, or nearly meet, this goal. Targets are also set for the end of Key Stage 3 performance; these similarly are not rooted in pupils' past and current performance. Targets for A level pupils provide more appropriate goals.
7. Inspection evidence largely confirms the picture painted by the school's examination results with regards to standards; overall the level of work seen is above that expected nationally for pupils' age at the end of both key stages. The standard of work in Year 9 is above that expected nationally in English, mathematics, design and technology, history, information and communication technology (ICT), music and physical education. It is as expected nationally in science and art, but below expectations in geography and French. In Year 11, the level of work is well above that expected nationally for 16 year olds in English, design and technology, history and music. It is above expectations in mathematics, science, art, information and communication technology and physical education. Standards of work remain below those expected for pupils' age in geography and French. In Year 13, standards are judged to be at least in line with course expectations in all subjects and thus are higher than last year's examination results suggest. However, in many instances, small numbers make comparisons unreliable.
8. Pupils start school with above average standards of literacy. They make good progress as they move through school, leaving with standards that are well above average. Most pupils read with fluency and can independently understand the main points of the texts they are given to study. By Year 11, the overall standard of writing is well above average. Most pupils write extensive pieces, spell and punctuate accurately and communicate their meaning clearly. A particular strength is the pupils' organisation of their writing into coherent paragraphs, enhancing its effect and impact. Standards of speaking and listening are also well above average. Many pupils are fluent, confident speakers who respond quickly and thoughtfully in discussion. Pupils' above average standards of literacy help them to handle the demands of the curriculum.
9. Standards of numeracy are above average, both on entry to the school and at ages 14 and 16. Most pupils are confident and competent with written and oral number work, although some pupils are over reliant on 'rules of thumb' in basic work on decimals. Older pupils in particular would benefit from alternative methods in computation to boost their understanding. Calculators are used accurately, but some pupils are over reliant on them. Many do not check the reasonableness of their answers as a matter of course. Middle and high attainers cope well with algebraic techniques. Most pupils collect, analyse and interpret statistical data efficiently.
10. Inspection findings also confirm to a large extent the evidence provided by the school's results and by other assessment information. Namely that, overall, standards are as high, but no higher, than they should be. Higher, middle and lower attaining pupils achieve appropriately. There are pockets of underachievement; for example, high attainers in some Year 7 classes make slow progress in mathematics. However, inspectors found no evidence to support any general underachievement at the upper end of the attainment range, as suggested by the lower than expected percentage of pupils attaining five or more A* to C grades in GCSE examinations for the past two years. The school does not analyse results of year groups by gender, but inspection evidence shows no difference in the overall attainment of boys and girls. By age 16, achievement is at least satisfactory in all subjects except for geography and French. Here, progress over time is too slow; achievement is unsatisfactory. Achievement is good in English, art, design and technology, history, music and physical education. This good rate of progress is promoted by high expectations; pupils are expected to work hard and to do well; most respond positively.

11. Overall, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in the majority of subjects and achieve appropriately. This is largely due to the good teaching in the school and recognition of the targets on pupils' individual education plans; extra support within classrooms is very limited. There are examples where pupils have made significant gains in learning, such as an increase in reading age, and this is attributable to the targeted support of withdrawal work.
12. Since the last inspection, the school's GCSE results have shown an upward trend. For example, there has been an upward trend in the school's average GCSE points score. Although, statistically, this is judged to be in line with the national trend of improvement, the school has actually gained ground since 1996 and has closed the gap between its overall performance and that found nationally. Conversely, the percentage of pupils gaining five or more A* to C grades has been lower than might be expected. The school's A level average points score per candidate has risen from 7.8 to 14.7. On balance, improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Pupils have good attitudes to the school and to their work. They are interested in what they do, listen well and concentrate on their studies. A pleasant learning atmosphere prevails in most lessons. In a Year 7 mathematics lesson about the rounding of decimals, pupils listened well. They were patient and considerate while others answered questions. In a Year 10 design and technology (graphics) lesson, where the teacher had explained clearly what was expected of them, pupils responded with interest in a very purposeful manner. The attitudes of sixth form pupils are particularly good. They are attentive and enjoy gaining knowledge. This was apparent in an English lesson where pupils were studying the imagery and symbolism in *The Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams. All contributed to the discussion, picking up points others had made in a lesson full of enthusiasm.
14. Standards of behaviour are satisfactory overall. In lessons pupils behave well. There are differences in standards of behaviour at the various stages of the school. The behaviour of younger pupils in Years 7, 8, and 9 is satisfactory. Some - a minority - of these pupils do not behave well in lessons: they try to talk constantly and behave in an immature manner that can interfere with the work of the class. Standards of behaviour are good in Years 10 and 11. Sixth form pupils behave very well. Standards of behaviour as pupils move around the school, waiting for lessons to start, at break and at lunchtime are less consistent. Most pupils do behave well and are friendly and courteous. A minority lacks self-discipline, is boisterous, noisy, rough and sometimes rude. There are instances of oppressive behaviour, though pupils do not consider them to be of a serious nature. The level of exclusions, both fixed-term and permanent is about average for a school of this size.
15. Pupils on the special educational needs register do not, in general, like to be identified as being in need of extra attention. Some of these pupils perceive that there is a stigma attached to receiving support and they are self-conscious about their own learning needs. The attitude of pupils attending withdrawal lessons is good. They respond well to the additional attention and achieve success. In other lessons, the behaviour and attitudes of pupils with special educational needs are unpredictable and depend on the skills and reactions of teachers, some of whom manage behavioural difficulties with greater ease than others.
16. Throughout the school, pupils respond well to the provision made for their personal development. Relationships in the school are good. They are good among the pupils themselves who work well together, cooperating in groups or on projects. Pupils from Years 7 and 9 worked together on the recent anti-bullying day and benefited from the effective co-operation. Relations are also good between pupils and members of staff, with the constructive interaction that helps learning. In a Year 10 history lesson, pupils used contemporary music and poetry to help them interpret social attitudes to historic events. In response to their teacher's enthusiastic guidance, pupils were able to identify the paradoxes in the attitudes and the actions of the time. The extra-curricular activities are popular, whether sporting, cultural or academic. Pupils do much charitable work, providing help in cash and kind for a range of good causes. Some sixth form pupils help with younger pupils.

17. Attendance at the school is satisfactory. The rate of attendance for the academic year 1999/2000 was 91.9 per cent, close to the national average of 91.3 per cent. Authorised absence was 7.9 per cent similar to the national rate of 7.7 per cent. The level of unauthorised absence in the school was 0.2 per cent, well below the national average of 1.1 per cent. Lateness at the start of the day is not a problem. Although some pupils move slowly between lessons, overall, punctuality is satisfactory.
18. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

19. Pupils learn well and show an interest in their work. Most concentrate well and build on existing knowledge effectively to acquire new knowledge and skills. This good quality learning is promoted by good and often very good teaching. Of the lessons observed, one per cent was excellent, 25 per cent were very good, 44 per cent were good, 25 per cent were satisfactory, four per cent were unsatisfactory and one per cent was poor. Most of the unsatisfactory teaching occurred in French lessons, some of which were taught by non-permanent staff. Teaching is rather stronger at Key Stage 4 where it is good overall, than at Key Stage 3, where it is satisfactory overall. Teaching is particularly strong in the sixth form, where it is of very good quality.
20. The good quality teaching is due to a variety of factors; for example, many teachers plan their lessons thoroughly; many make effective use of on-going assessment to inform their teaching. However, two major strengths underpin much of the teaching across all subjects: teachers have good subject knowledge; they manage pupils skilfully in lessons. There are no aspects of teaching which are unsatisfactory overall and no generic weaknesses across all subjects. Teaching is very good in design and technology, history and music. It is good overall in all but two other subjects. In geography, teaching is satisfactory. It is unsatisfactory overall in French. Personal, social and health education is taught well, as are other subjects not reported upon.
21. Teachers are confident and competent in the subjects they teach. They use their knowledge well to engage and hold pupils' interest and to build confidence. For example, in a Year 11 design and technology lesson, pupils were given clear direction on circuit design and testing. They were comfortable in asking for clarification, knowing that the teacher would give the necessary support. Often, teachers' enthusiasm for their subject ensures pupils' interest and motivation, as seen, for example, in science. The start to most lessons is lively and informative; pupils' interest is captured from the start as, for example, in a Year 7 history lesson on the conquest of Wales by Edward the First. Teachers explain clearly what they expect pupils to learn from the lesson. As a result, pupils understand the purpose of what they are asked to do and settle to work quickly. For example, in a Year 8 personal and social education lesson, the teacher made sure that pupils understood what they would learn from this particular lesson and how this learning would be developed in subsequent sessions on the 'world of work'. Teachers also give clear explanations; they are able to explain new ideas confidently and correctly at a level that is matched well to pupils' previous learning. This helps pupils to build effectively on what they already know and to understand new ideas. Most use questions well, not only to help pupils to recall previous learning, but also to enable pupils to think ideas through for themselves. For example, in a Year 12 English lesson, the skilful use of 'how do you know' questions made pupils rationalise their responses when identifying and explaining metaphors. In a Year 13 mathematics lesson, skilful questioning helped pupils to understand a trigonometrical problem. Many teachers draw out key learning points effectively at the end of lessons, consolidating and reinforcing the learning that has taken place during the lesson.
22. Most teachers manage pupils skilfully in lessons; many establish a good working atmosphere seemingly effortlessly. Teachers have high expectations for standards of behaviour. Pupils know what is expected of them; most respond accordingly. Teachers are firm and fair; pupils can work in a purposeful atmosphere and get help when needed. As a result, relationships between teachers and pupils are good. For example, in design and technology, relationships are warm and friendly, generating a very positive work ethic. Teachers also foster good relationships at an individual level. Teachers circulate well in lessons and give good support to individuals. For example, in a Year 10 art lesson, the teacher gave effective, individual advice to pupils using collage for a self-portrait, thus

promoting very good learning. In a Year 9 information and communication technology lesson, pupils were given good individual help on the use of spreadsheets. Often, there is a sense of humour in lessons, with teachers and pupils working together with enjoyment. Negative attitudes and unproductive relationships were seen in several subjects, but only in isolated lessons.

23. In most instances, teachers use their day-to-day assessment of pupils' work effectively to help pupils make progress. Lessons are planned and prepared sensibly, to meet pupils' needs. In general, teachers know their pupils well and pitch work accordingly to ensure appropriate challenge for all pupils. Most give appropriate praise and constructive criticism during lessons, to motivate pupils and to bolster their self-esteem. The use of on-going assessment is particularly good in English and history. For example, in English, pupils are given regular, constructive feedback on end of topic assessments and clear targets for improvement. In history, systematic assessment is used effectively to inform pupils of their progress throughout Key Stage 3. Whilst some other departments keep pupils informed of their levels of attainment, pupils' own knowledge of their learning is relatively weak. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly but practice is inconsistent both within and across departments. It varies in usefulness; in some instances, marking does not help pupils to understand how to improve their work. For example, in English, marking is consistently very helpful. In science, work is marked regularly, but teachers' comments do not always help pupils know how to improve. This relatively strong use of day-to day assessment to promote learning is not reinforced by effective whole school procedures, wherein pupils' progress is monitored effectively across year groups.
24. A relative weakness in teaching is the effective use of time. Whilst this is generally satisfactory, and sometimes good, some lessons lack urgency. In some instances, pupils are not given clear time targets for the completion of tasks, or sufficient variety of experience to sustain motivation for one hour. Hence, the pace of working tails off towards the end of lessons; pupils do not complete as much work as they should. For example, in mathematics lessons, pupils are sometimes left to work on one exercise for lengthy periods of time. What started out as a good lesson becomes a satisfactory lesson, because pupils' pace of working is not sustained. Similarly in some geography lessons, not enough work is expected of pupils for the time available. Thus, although pupils learn well in lessons, progress over time is not always as secure as it might be.
25. Another relative weakness, although satisfactory overall, is the attention given to the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. Although there are pockets of good practice, the planned development of the pupils' literacy skills across all subjects is uneven. This reflects the lack of a whole school policy to guide practice and to monitor effectiveness. A recently appointed whole school literacy co-ordinator has the task of developing a policy for summer, 2001. She is clear sighted about what needs to be done and the school has provided good training opportunities to support her. Pupils benefit from good teaching in English, but opportunities are missed to enhance their specific application of literacy skills in different subjects. Only history has a literacy policy of its own and specifically addresses literacy issues in its schemes of work. Mathematics has a policy for the development of vocabulary. There is little evidence of the effective use of methods such as writing frames. There is also little evidence of teachers explicitly trying to improve pupils' research skills through efficient and effective note taking methods.
26. In history, pupils' make good progress in their written and spoken use of historical terms because teachers place great emphasis on this in their lessons. Teachers also stress accurate spelling, provide clear guidance to support essay writing, and give example answers to enhance pupils' organisation. Science teachers also give guidance on how pupils should organise their written work, but spelling is not corrected often enough. In mathematics, despite the policy for enhancing vocabulary, there is little evidence of a structured approach to developing reading and writing. In geography, key words are displayed and spelling errors are corrected, but there is very little use of methods such as writing frames to develop pupils' organisation of their writing. Technical vocabulary is promoted in physical education, but little attention is paid to developing reading and writing skills. In design and technology, there is an inconsistency in the application of literacy skills. Teachers note key words in their lesson plans, but there is little evidence of their reinforcement during lessons, or of spelling being corrected. In information and communication technology, pupils write in a wide range of contexts and teachers encourage careful use of the spell checker facility. In

music, there is clear and effective emphasis on the spoken and written use of key words. In modern foreign languages, there are good lists of vocabulary, but not enough emphasis on helping pupils be more secure with the vocabulary and structure of the language. Not enough work is done to develop reading skills, although these were enhanced effectively during a Year 13 lesson.

27. Similarly, there is no agreed whole school approach to the teaching of numeracy. Departments deal with topics as they arise in their schemes of work. Opportunities are missed in many subjects to build systematically upon pupils' knowledge and use of number. The mathematics department is beginning to use some of the techniques advocated by the National Numeracy Strategy but has yet to apply the principles to more advanced work. Pupils use their skills well to deal with the numerical demands of other subjects. Calculators are used accurately, although some pupils are over reliant on them both in mathematics and, for example, in science, where rough estimates are not used well to ensure sensible answers. Pupils handle number and measurement well, mentally, orally and in writing, in mathematics, science, design and technology and information and communication technology. Their application of spatial concepts is very good in graphics, where space is used well to create an impact on presentation, and in art, in model making. Pupils make good sense of information presented numerically and graphically in mathematics, geography, information and communication technology and physical education. This skill is used particularly well in design and technology, with very good analysis of surveys. Statistical information in everyday contexts is generally handled well.
28. Teaching is good for the small number of pupils with special educational needs who receive specialist teaching in withdrawal groups. The learning needs of these pupils are well understood by their teachers, who select work that helps pupils to improve their skills. The lessons are enjoyable and pupils are able to gain a sense of achievement. They can measure their own progress from the feedback given to them by their teachers. Very little additional support is given to those pupils who are on the special needs register, but who do not receive specialist teaching. Class teachers are aware of their individual plans and, in the best instances, adapt work to suit their needs. In many lessons, the good teaching provided for the whole class enables these pupils to learn alongside their peers, but their progress is best when learning support assistants are there to help them. Support assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning, although opportunities for teachers and support assistants to plan work together are few.
29. The good quality of teaching and learning noted in the last report has been maintained. This reflects the work undertaken by the school to improve the quality of its teaching and to provide support for departments where there were known weaknesses.

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

30. The overall curricular provision made for pupils throughout the school is good, as it offers a range of experiences that help pupils to learn both within and beyond the school day. Since the last inspection, thorough and consultative planning has taken place to increase the length of teaching time to 25 hours, in line with recommendations, and to provide a balance of time for subjects. Senior managers explain how the curriculum supports the aims of the school but this is not clear from the curriculum statement. This focuses on future plans, rather than on principles, and does not give an entirely accurate reflection of what takes place.
31. At Key Stage 3, the curriculum meets the school's intentions of offering a broad and balanced range of subjects. All National Curriculum subjects have sufficient time and, in addition, religious education, personal and social education, drama and information and communication technology are taught throughout the key stage. In Year 8, Spanish is taught as well as the first language of French and a term of dance is also introduced for all pupils. This range gives good opportunities for pupils to develop their interests in readiness for the choices to be made at the end of Year 9.
32. At Key Stage 4, the school offers satisfactory provision. All pupils are expected to study English, mathematics, science, a technology subject, ICT, French, physical education, religious education and personal, social and health education. They are able to choose additional subjects from a

structured choice that provides further breadth to their learning. For a small proportion of pupils, an alternative curriculum is available, so that they follow a reduced science course and a business studies GNVQ course. Unbiased and well-established procedures are in place to assist pupils in making decisions about their post-16 choices.

33. In the sixth form, the range of curriculum opportunities is very good. Pupils benefit greatly from the consortium partnership with St Paul's College. This provides a very broad range of courses, including 26 subjects at A and AS level. An A level law course is studied via a video distant learning link with the University of Southampton. A distant learning course in sociology is scheduled for September, 2001. In addition, there is a range of GNVQ and vocational AS courses: intermediate courses in business and leisure and recreation; advanced level in business. New vocational courses in media and science are scheduled for September 2001. A small number of pupils also take an A level general studies course.
34. In addition to the academic curriculum, there is a broad range of enrichment opportunities that contribute significantly to pupils' personal development. A thriving enrichment programme offers a menu of taught modules that includes a pre-driver course, health and drug education, the law and young people and curriculum vitae preparation. During the inspection, a counsellor from Relate presented the fifth of a series of six sessions on relationships. Some sixth formers support younger pupils in lessons. Year 12 pupils attend a residential induction programme.
35. The curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs, including those with learning and behavioural difficulties, is based on the principle of inclusion into the full curriculum. However, the range of opportunities to suit these pupils' needs is relatively narrow, as the curriculum is geared to suit the majority of pupils who are above average attainers. The school endeavours to provide as well as it can for those pupils who are on the special educational needs register, but provision is limited by the number of hours available from teaching and support staff. Pupils with specific learning needs, such as those of literacy, benefit from individual or small group withdrawal work with a specialist teacher and the majority make good progress. Unfortunately, current staffing levels only allow this for limited period of time and do not give flexibility to support pupils with behavioural difficulties in the same way. In general, the school does not provide well to ensure that all pupils are supported in their learning either in curricular or extra-curricular time. There is little provision made for pupils to practice their reading, to have help with their homework or to learn through using special computer packages. For these reasons, the overall breadth of provision for pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory. The school has recognised that this is an area for development in its improvement plans. Whilst a lot of useful development work has taken place, for example, in developing pupils' individual education plans, further work is needed.
36. Timetabling arrangements have been planned carefully to give as much flexibility as possible for subject arrangements. This has benefited the distribution of lessons across the curriculum. Practical subjects have sufficient spans of teaching time and other subjects such as personal, social and health education are taught regularly. Pupils are placed into ability groups in Year 8 for mathematics and in Year 9 for mathematics, science and French; the school intends to extend these arrangements at Key Stage 3 in 2001, so that the pupils' needs can be provided for more effectively.
37. The provision for personal and social education is good; it includes health, sex and careers education and information about the misuse and dangers of drugs. The schemes of work have recently been rewritten and they ensure that a range of topics is covered. These are intended to develop pupils' understanding of themselves and the world in which they live both systematically and reflectively. The teaching arrangements are very well planned and these, with the audit of topics taught across subjects, give pupils a breadth of opportunity to develop personally.
38. Careers education is embedded into the personal, social and health education curriculum and the links between this element, form tutors' work, and opportunities for social and moral development are very strong. The careers' programme starts from Year 7 and is carefully planned to go through the school. All pupils take part in the work experience programme in Year 10 and all have a careers' interview with an adviser. A few opportunities are provided for pupils to take part in

extended work experience, but these opportunities are very limited. The careers' library is well used. Pupils have ease of access to this facility because it is sited in the main school resource centre.

39. Sixth form provision is also enhanced by very good preparation for career development. Staff and pupils are very enthusiastic about the successful Young Enterprise scheme. Pupils are successful in regional competitions. One project produced a CD of children's stories, written by pupils from Year 10 and 11. It has been used to enhance literacy in primary schools. Some of its proceeds have supported charities. Pupils have work experience opportunities, good contact with the local careers service and opportunities for mentoring from local personnel from business and industry. The UCAS admission procedure is well organised and pupils have attended taster days at the University of Cambridge.
40. The school acknowledges that its admission policy gives priority to children from Anglican families but, once pupils are admitted, it is the school's policy to ensure that there is no discrimination on any grounds. Equal opportunity is embedded into the culture of the school. There is access to all that the school offers to pupils. Access to all parts of the building for wheelchair users is not possible, but the school responds by writing special timetables for any pupils affected that way. There are none on roll at present. The school curriculum is planned to ensure equality of entitlement, and pupils are treated equally, regardless of race, gender and ethnicity. The analysis of outcomes, particularly for pupils with special educational need, is in need of further development. Governors have an appropriate policy in place.
41. Overall, extra-curricular provision is good. Opportunities in sport and music are particularly strong; the school successfully involves large numbers of pupils in these activities. About a quarter of the school participates in recreational and competitive sport; pupils are provided with good opportunities to compete in school teams and to progress to district and regional competitions. Annual and termly productions and events include drama productions, dance performances, musical occasions and the Young Enterprise venture. Individual departments also organise additional events, but there is a lack of a consistency across the school for the study support offered to pupils.
42. The school has developed good links with local businesses and the community to enhance pupils' development. Local businesses make their facilities open for post-16 visits and the secondment of a teacher into industry supports the school's intention to use its local resources. The school recruits from around 40 primary schools. There is a good induction programme for pupils entering the school but, inevitably, links with individual school are tenuous. There are appropriate links with local secondary schools. A particularly strong link is that with a nearby secondary school for sharing the provision of post-16 courses; these arrangements work very well as they are well organised and focused on enriching curricular experiences. The school participates fully in all local events such as the Young Enterprise scheme. The local youth council is chaired jointly by a member of the school's sixth form; pupils at Key Stage 4 are encouraged to attend the collaborative school's careers convention. As a church school, the governors encourage and exploit all links with the church, so that the school's aims can be promoted further.
43. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection on developing the curriculum to give breadth and balance of experience and in increasing the time available to do this. Although the curriculum is now broad and balanced, the curriculum policy has not embraced the principles on which the curriculum has been built; this requires further work to underpin further developments.
44. One of the school's aims is to encourage pupils in their spiritual growth. In fulfilment of this aim, spiritual provision is a conscious part of subject planning. It is good overall. The provision is strong in some expected areas, such as religious education and English, and in some more unexpected ones, for example, physical education. Assemblies (on the theme of human rights during the week of the inspection), acts of worship in tutor time and the work of the chaplain all contribute to the good quality provision. Pupils are encouraged to develop a sense of spiritual awareness in lessons, through, for example expressing personal feelings when discussing poetry and in their response to music.

45. The provision for pupils' moral development is particularly strong and deeply embedded in the curriculum. The handbook for the personal, social and health education programme – which itself makes an important contribution to pupils' moral, social and cultural development – contains a very thorough audit which identifies where opportunities arise in curriculum subjects to contribute to pupils' personal development. Teachers make very good use of these. There is a consistent emphasis on what is right and what is wrong. Members of staff set a good moral tone in the way they respond to pupils when discussing such issues in lessons and texts. Sex education is handled responsibly in science and in personal, social and health education lessons.
46. The provision for pupils' social development is good. Members of staff often require pupils to work in small groups as a method of helping them to develop social skills. The extensive programme of activities outside lessons provides many opportunities for pupils to work together and mix socially: they include sporting events, clubs with a common interest, and co-operating in musical and dramatic productions. Field trips and residential visits at home and overseas provide opportunities for pupils to acquire self-confidence in a range of settings outside school. There are also opportunities within the curriculum: pupils learn to analyse social issues in English lessons. In a history class about attitudes to the Vietnam War, the teacher used contemporary music and poetry to help pupils interpret social attitudes to historical events.
47. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. There are more opportunities for pupils to experience English and European culture than to prepare them for life in a multi-cultural society. The extent of provision varies between subjects. Some contribute more opportunities than others, particularly English, though provision is also good in geography (where pupils look at Italy, Brazil and Kenya) and in music. Here, in addition to the studies of African music in the curriculum, there is a good programme of groups brought in to perform for pupils. Contacts through the church, with churches in other countries, also broaden pupils' cultural experience.
48. Opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are now more clearly identified within subjects. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

49. The school places a high priority on looking after the pupils in its care. General procedures to promote and ensure their welfare are good. Members of staff know pupils well and are concerned to look after them within the Christian ethos of the school. As far as possible, tutors move with their groups through the school. Heads of year, however, stay with the same age group and have responsibility for a different group of pupils every year. The role of the chaplain is important and makes a significant contribution to the support given to pupils and their overall welfare. The personal, social and health education programme includes a good range of health education topics. Procedures for child protection are effective. There is appropriate guidance for members of staff. One of the deputy heads is the named person, but other members of staff, including the chaplain, have been trained. Attendance is recorded correctly and monitored efficiently. Procedures to ensure pupils' health and safety, both within the school and on visits outside, are satisfactory. Action was taken on the issues regarding hygiene, health and safety noted in the last inspection report.
50. Procedures to promote good behaviour and discipline are broadly satisfactory. Pupils have a clear code of conduct to follow. Work, effort and service around the school are rewarded, both by individuals and by classes. There are similarly clear guidelines for members of staff on how to enforce discipline. These procedures are more effective in promoting good behaviour in lessons, where standards were judged to be good, than around the school. A learning mentor has recently been employed to support pupils who have difficulty in controlling their behaviour. This initiative is for a limited period; it is too early to judge results. The school records the reasons for exclusion, but has not analysed the results.
51. The school has been slow in developing its use of assessment data to monitor and evaluate pupils' progress. As a result, the school's procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic development are unsatisfactory. The school has followed local guidelines and has continued to use data supplied by the Authority. Whilst this has helped the school to analyse its performance

against local schools, it has not actively promoted an objective analysis of the school's results against national performance. This said, the school has not used the data it has at its disposal effectively to set realistic, yet challenging, test and examination targets or to track pupils' progress consistently in order to raise standards. It does not use the data as effectively as it might to analyse the attainment of year groups on entry and hence to inform its teaching for Year 7 pupils.

52. As reported in the teaching section, most teachers have good intuitive knowledge of how well pupils have learned and understood the curriculum content for different subjects. In addition, there are appropriate systems in place, at both whole school and departmental level, for assessing and recording pupils' attainment at particular points in time. For example, many subjects have regular modular tests; each year group has annual examinations. Furthermore, pupils' results in standardised tests taken on entry, and again in Year 10, are collated and distributed to staff, together with pupils' Key Stage 2 and 3 test results respectively. At Key Stage 3, while these pupil profiles summarise past performance, they do not predict likely future performance, nor are they updated annually. Whilst individual teachers and some departments try to make effective use of the data, overall it is not used effectively to track pupils' progress across Key Stage 3. It is not used effectively to identify underachievers, or to set targets for year groups, for departments or for individuals.
53. Better use has recently been made of the data collected for Key Stage 4 pupils, in that it is now used to predict likely performance at GCSE. Some departments make good use of the data to raise standards. For example, in English, short tutorials at lunch times helped some borderline C/D grade pupils to attain at least the higher grade. However, again, there is no regular tracking of progress and no regular review to analyse whether or not the school is on line to meet its targets, or to identify and support particular groups of pupils. Better use is made of pupils' GCSE scores to identify appropriate challenge for sixth form pupils but, here too, the consistent tracking of pupils' progress towards rigorous targets is underdeveloped. Hence, there are few co-ordinated intervention strategies to support learning and to ensure that most pupils achieve at least as well as they should.
54. Procedures for assessing and recording the attainment and progress of pupils with special educational needs are also unsatisfactory. The school has good procedures to identify pupils who have learning difficulties or other special educational needs. The special needs register is up to date but the records of movement on and off the register are not in an easily accessible form. The recording of the progress that individual pupils make is not held centrally and it is difficult to see the improvement that has been made or the intervention that is still required. Data and progress records are not used to ensure that the provision for learning is suitable. Individual education plans are well written, with strategies that teachers can use to support learning. The targets are specific for each pupil but, in many instances, they are repeated when the plan is reviewed. This lessens their effectiveness, both to motivate the pupils and to monitor progress over short periods of time. Teachers have not yet adapted these targets to become subject specific and neither do they use them to monitor or record progress. Comments from teachers are collated when the plans are reviewed, but without records to support the judgements made.
55. The school records a large amount of information on pupils' academic attainment; less is recorded about their personal development, except where concerns arise. The methods used vary between year groups. At target-setting days, all pupils set themselves targets in consultation with their tutors. These tend to be in general terms. There is currently no consistent system across the school to combine, record and track academic and personal progress for all pupils and to monitor the results. The advice that the school gives pupils to help them do as well as they can varies across subjects and across year groups. As a result, the support and guidance provided by the school is less effective than it could be in raising achievement. The position is different in the sixth form, where pupils receive stronger support.
56. The school continues to care for its pupils in a Christian manner. Action has been taken on the health and safety issues noted in the last inspection report.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

57. Parents have a broadly satisfactory view of the school. Most parents are pleased with the school and what it provides for their children. Most of the parents who returned the questionnaire or attended the parents' meeting think that the school is approachable and that it expects their children to work hard. They consider that teaching is good in the school and that their children make good progress there. The inspection team agrees that the school is approachable, that pupils are expected to work hard and that teaching is good. Inspectors consider that pupils make the progress that they could be expected to do. However, some parents have concerns: they consider that the school does not work closely with them, that they are not well informed about the progress their children make and that the amount of homework is inappropriate. Some parents do not think that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons or that behaviour in the school is good. The inspection team considers that the school does work closely with parents and that the information provided about progress is satisfactory. They think homework set is appropriate, and that the range of activities outside lessons is good. They consider that behaviour is satisfactory: most pupils behave well, but the behaviour of a minority is not good.
58. The school has developed good links with parents. All parents are automatically members of the school association. At the monthly meetings of its committee, the regular agenda item known as the 'headmaster's slot' provides an opportunity for him to tell parents about developments at the school, which they can discuss, as well as raising other issues. The school runs discussion evenings for parents twice a year on selected topics, the most recent being adolescence. Some subject departments, for example history and design and technology, have developed strong links with parents, telling them about progress and enlisting their support to help their children. The school provides a reasonable range of information about itself. The weekly newsletters are an effective way of keeping parents up-to-date with school events. Pupils currently receive one full annual report. These vary in how much they tell parents about what their children can do and need to do in order to improve, but are satisfactory overall. The level of parents' involvement in the school is satisfactory; the contribution they make to their children's learning is good. Not all parents sign pupils' diaries on a regular basis, but attendance at consultation evenings is good and parents have completed the home/school agreement. The school association supports school functions and fund-raises in addition to its consultative role.
59. Standards have remained very similar to those reported in the last inspection.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

60. Leadership and management of the school by the headteacher, governors, senior managers and other key staff is satisfactory overall. The headteacher has successfully nurtured a Christian, caring ethos within the school. The school's values of respect and tolerance for the individual are reflected in many aspects of its work; for example, in its personal and social education programme and in the good relationships that exist in most classrooms. With other senior managers, he has been successful in establishing a common commitment amongst staff to raising standards. Corporately, they have found ways of securing improvements in some aspects of the school's work. They have been less successful in establishing a cohesive, systematic approach to auditing performance and in securing an overall improvement in standards.
61. The leadership and management skills of middle managers vary. Most heads of year manage their year groups well. Similarly, most heads of department give a firm steer to their departments' work. Leadership of English and history is very good. This has resulted in good achievement in history and, until current staffing difficulties, in English. Leadership is satisfactory or good in almost all other subjects. However, it is unsatisfactory in geography and French. In these subjects, pupils do not achieve as well as they should; there is insufficient guidance for teaching to ensure progression in pupils' learning. The sixth form is very well managed. The energetic and dynamic leadership of the head of sixth form, and the commitment of her team, are important factors in this very effective provision.
62. The school has taken steps of expediency, given its budget deficit, to manage the provision of special educational needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator's (SENCO's) role is split

between two part time teachers. The lead SENCO is experienced and is training her colleague. They fulfil their roles well, but the expectations and the job specifications are too big for them to be effective. The work they do is of good quality, but the overall management at whole school level is unsatisfactory, as there are gaps in provision, resourcing, record keeping and liaison with departments and individual teachers.

63. Governors are very supportive of the school; they are well informed through regular reports from the headteacher and the bursar. Governors are involved effectively in shaping the strategic direction of the school but perhaps could be more challenging in holding the school to account for its results. All governors belong to at least one of the committees that have been set up to help them fulfil their statutory duties. They try hard to ensure that all statutory duties are met and are largely successful. However, about 16 pupils do not follow a design and technology course in Years 10 and 11; the school has not complied with requirements to disapply these pupils. Although all statutory requirements are met for holding annual reviews for pupils with statements of special educational need, the governing body has not ratified the school's policy for special educational needs. The school tries to meet the requirements specified on the statements of need, but a lack of support assistants means that some pupils are not receiving their full entitlement; this too is a breach of requirements.
64. Since the last inspection, a management structure has been clearly defined to improve monitoring and evaluation of the school's work, in order to ensure consistently high outcomes, practice and provision across the school. The headteacher has a good understanding of the quality of the school's examination results, of its teaching and of other aspects of the school's work. He knows the school's strengths and weaknesses and understands what needs to be improved. Similarly, most senior managers and some heads of department monitor and evaluate provision effectively, both formally and informally. However, practice is too inconsistent to be satisfactory overall. The school has not yet developed a culture of monitoring and evaluating its work rigorously. Hence, it does not yet take coherent and sustained action to improve its performance.
65. For example, the school has been slow to develop its use of assessment data to allow a constructive evaluation of its academic standards. Thus, although departments meet with senior managers to analyse and evaluate their examination results, using a common format for discussion, these meetings vary considerably in usefulness and rigour of approach. The meetings do not usually result in clear targets for departments for the following year, or in detailed action plans to demonstrate how the department intends to meet its targets. In general, departmental planning for improvement is weak.
66. In some ways, the school monitors the quality of its teaching effectively. Some senior and middle managers have good, informal knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of teaching within their areas of responsibility. Some undertake more formal observation of teaching to support and improve performance. For example, a programme of classroom observation, focused on the core subjects, has been undertaken by an assistant headteacher. The school has sought to evaluate and support the work of some departments through reviews carried out by local education authority personnel. For example, the science department has been given considerable support in order to raise standards. It has also arranged for weak and strong departments to work together to improve practice. These initiatives have been successful in maintaining the good quality of teaching reported in the last report, and in raising standards in certain subjects. However, they have not resulted in all managers being willing to take a long, hard look at teaching to identify its strengths and weaknesses. There is no coherent system to monitor, evaluate and improve the quality of teaching; practice is inconsistent across departments. Hence, there are no agreed procedures by which the considerable good practice that exists within the school is shared more widely amongst staff.
67. Similarly, inconsistent line management leads to differing approaches in monitoring the work of heads of year. Even allowing for the differences between the needs of key stages, there is too much variation in what heads of year do and how useful their work is in supporting pupils' development. Written records, detailing many aspects of the school's work, are unsatisfactory. They are too disorganised to facilitate on-going evaluation.

68. As a result of weaknesses in its monitoring and evaluation, the actions the school takes to secure improvements are not focused sufficiently well on intended outcomes. The school has improved its approach to strategic and short-term development planning in response to the last Ofsted report. A four-year strategic plan was formulated in 1997, and supplemented by annual whole-school development plans. On paper, these documents provide a reasonably useful tool to provide a common sense of purpose for the school's work. However, although plans identify appropriate areas for development, they are not underpinned by clear academic targets, nor supported by clear action plans. In general, plans are insufficiently detailed to facilitate rigorous monitoring and evaluation of their implementation and of their success in raising standards. Time scales for developments are often particularly vague, making on-going monitoring difficult. As a result, although strategic planning has developed considerably, it has not been as effective in securing improvements as it might have been. It has not ensured that sustained and effective action is taken to meet agreed academic targets and commonly understood strategic goals. A new strategic plan is being formulated; initial drafts indicate that this will be underpinned far more effectively by clear academic targets for improvement.
69. The school's overall use of its resources is good. Staff are used effectively. The headteacher has recently revamped the roles and responsibilities of senior managers to improve delegation and to make optimum use of their strengths. Teachers are deployed effectively; good use is made of their subject expertise, so that much of the teaching is good. The school functions smoothly and efficiently. The school's use of information technology to aid its administration is adequate; plans are in hand to extend its use to support the processing of assessment and reporting information.
70. The headteacher inherited a substantial budget deficit on appointment. As a result, even though governors have been proactive in raising substantial funding from parents, the school has had little room for manoeuvre in recent years. It has had no choice but to make very prudent use of its financial resources in order to clear its debt and to achieve a balanced budget. Although there are often few explicit links between development and budget planning, inspection evidence confirms that the school has been able to support some of its priorities for development through skilful financial planning. For example, it has improved its accommodation considerably, both to enhance learning and to support pupils' personal development. It has improved and expanded its sixth form provision by developing very effective collaborative arrangements with a neighbouring school. Longer-term financial planning has been undertaken so that governors can be proactive in avoiding a return to a deficit situation. Grants are used for the purposes specified. Recent funding to support inclusion is being used imaginatively to employ a non-teacher to work in the short term with pupils with behavioural difficulties; it is too early to evaluate the impact of this work but the school views it as beneficial.
71. There is very thorough monitoring of the school's budget by the bursar and by governors. The last audit report stated that, with minor exceptions, the school's financial and internal control systems were operating effectively. The school is starting to evaluate the impact of its spending decisions effectively, influenced by the principles of best value. The school compares its results and its spending patterns with those of local schools; it is starting to use national data to compare and evaluate results and expenditure against that occurring nationally. It has undertaken extensive revision of its curriculum, to try to ensure that provision best meets pupil's needs. It has analysed carefully how collaborative arrangements with a nearby school can be used to ensure appropriate and cost-effective provision for its post-16 pupils. Teachers are involved in consultation; so too are parents through monthly meetings of the Bishop Wand Association. Pupils have their say through the School Council. The expected procedures are in place to ensure that improvements to buildings and services are undertaken at the optimum financial rate.
72. Overall, the school is starting to evaluate effectively what actions make a difference to its standards but there is room for further development. For example, the school allocates a small proportion of its budget to providing small classes at Key Stage 4 even though, at present, a very small minority of pupils drop out of the GCSE courses that they started because they are unable to cope with the demands of academic study. It has not evaluated this provision in terms of cost in relation for its effectiveness in helping pupils to gain success. However, overall, good quality teaching helps pupils

to learn well and to achieve satisfactory standards across the school. Spending is below average. Thus, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

73. The match of teachers and support staff to the needs of the curriculum is satisfactory overall. There are sufficient well-qualified staff for teaching most subjects. There have been problems recently in recruitment for English; these have been resolved for September 2001. The school has also had significant problems in recruiting staff to teach French and currently provision is poor, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Weaknesses in staffing for science, as at the time of the last inspection, have been addressed successfully. Technical support for science is good, but it is inadequate for information technology. Here, only very restricted specialist technical support is available; as a consequence, the head of department provides the necessary support. This is inefficient. The school does not provide additional classroom assistants beyond those funded through money generated by pupils with statements of special educational need, even though the needs of many pupils on the school's register of special educational needs warrant extra support.
74. The school's arrangements for the support of newly appointed staff are good. The progress of newly qualified teachers is monitored carefully and they are provided with a structured programme of activities to support and inform their professional development. Their views of these experiences are largely positive. Support within departments for newly qualified and other newly appointed teachers varies somewhat, but it too is usually good or very good.
75. The school's strategy for the professional development of all teaching and non-teaching staff is well structured and well organised. All training provided is related to needs identified in the school's development plan and learning experiences are systematically evaluated for their potential for further dissemination. Arrangements now in place are more focused and better organised than at the time of the last inspection. The school's performance management strategy is at too early a stage to inform staff training needs. The learning support assistants provide a valuable resource to the school. However, at present they have insufficient programmed meeting time with a special educational needs co-ordinator. Meetings are held each half term, but these are too infrequent to monitor the support that they are providing or to help train them in their work.
76. The school's accommodation is satisfactory to teach the school's curriculum, but barely adequate in quantity for its needs. There is a shortage of space, leading to considerable timetabling difficulties, and preventing development as the school would wish. Since the last inspection, the school has added a new drama and music block, but a shortage of teaching rooms still prevails. The condition of the physical education changing accommodation is unsatisfactory and the food technology room is too small and poorly equipped. Both the art and design and technology departments are short of storage facilities and, in the science block and technology areas, the waiting areas are extremely crowded when pupils are waiting to enter the laboratories and workshops. Boys' and girls' toilets are in poor condition throughout the school and this is a priority for future work. The condition of the accommodation in all other departments is satisfactory and good in science.
77. The room allocated for the teaching of withdrawal work is viewed negatively by many pupils. It is a basic room and lacks the warmth and ambience that encourage pupils to seek support. At lunchtime, only a few pupils use it as a social base. The main foyer and classrooms and corridors throughout the school benefit from bright, cheerful displays of pupils' work, photographs and artwork. The school's recently adopted rolling programme of refurbishment is planned to bring the sub-standard areas to a more satisfactory condition. The exteriors of the buildings have been well maintained, and there are no signs of vandalism or graffiti. Sports fields and hard play areas are adequate and in good condition, despite the heavy rain in the weeks before the inspection.
78. Resources are adequate to support the work of most departments. Overall the schools' expenditure on learning resources is low when compared with that of other schools nationally. However, areas of need in specific departments have been identified and, where possible, met. As a consequence, equipment for design and technology has recently been upgraded. Textbooks have been replaced in science, geography and modern foreign languages. Improving the book stock in the library has been identified as a future priority. Overall, the allocation of revenue to departments is equitable,

being related to pupil numbers. There is a good range of resources in science and history, with particularly good resources in the latter for supporting individual study. However, resources to support pupils with special educational needs are unsatisfactory. Although computers and software packages have just been purchased, these are not yet being used. There are very few books or games to attract pupils. Whilst resources are sufficient for the targeted withdrawal work taking place, they are insufficient to support larger numbers of pupils or individual study.

79. There are restricted resources for work in food; in particular, there are insufficient cookers. The ratio of pupils to modern computers in the school is currently 11:1. This is higher than that found in similar schools nationally and results in poor access to resources for many departments. The school has detailed plans to increase the level of computer resources available to pupils.
80. Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress since its last inspection. It has addressed all of the issues in the last report, albeit with varying degrees of success. The school has maintained the above average standards of attainment and the good quality teaching noted in the last report. It has worked hard and successfully to improve its curricular provision, but still lacks a clear policy statement to guide further development. The school has established a cycle of strategic planning, underpinned by annual development plans. However, this process has not been totally effective in driving improvement, partly because plans lack clear outcomes and time scales. In addition, the line management structure, set up to improve monitoring and evaluation of the school's work, operates inconsistently. Health and safety issues, concerned with the cleanliness of part of the school, have been addressed. Most subject departments have addressed the issues identified in subject reports and have made at least satisfactory improvement.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

81. In order to raise standards further, governors, senior and middle managers and other staff should:

1. Make much better use of assessment information to:
 - set realistic but challenging targets for year groups, for departments and for individual pupils;
 - monitor progress towards these targets at regular intervals;
 - identify pupils who are underachieving and provide appropriate support.(See paragraphs 6, 23, 51, 52, 53, 65.)

2. Establish more coherent and consistent procedures to monitor and evaluate the school's work and take co-ordinated action to improve performance. In particular the school should:
 - use targets, as specified above, to underpin school and departmental planning, thus giving a clear sense of intended academic outcomes, against which the school's work can be evaluated;
 - ensure that all improvement plans contain sufficient detail to allow monitoring of their implementation and evaluation of their success in raising standards;
 - establish a coherent system to monitor the quality of teaching, so that the good practice that exists can be shared amongst staff;
 - ensure greater rigour and consistency in the way in which the line management system operates, so that all staff know what they are doing well and what needs to be improved.(See paragraphs 6, 10, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68.)

3. Improve the provision for pupils with special educational needs by:
 - agreeing and writing a policy that encompasses the range of provision that the school makes;
 - finding ways to provide more support for pupils, both within lesson time and through study and extra-curricular sessions;
 - enhancing the special needs room and learning resources, so that the room is an attractive environment and computers, books, materials and staff are available to support the widest range of learning needs.(See paragraphs 15, 28, 36, 54, 62, 77, 78.)

4. Improve achievement in geography and French by:
 - improving the management of both subjects;
 - improving the teaching of French;
 - addressing the other issues highlighted in these subjects reports.(See paragraphs 10, 20, 61. Also, paragraphs 132 – 139 and 152 – 161.)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	153
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	62

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	25	44	25	4	1	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils on the school's roll	746	111
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	22	

Special educational needs	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	13	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	104	0

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	34

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	20
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	30

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.9
National comparative data	7.7

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
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	2000	79	70	149

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	52	71	59
	Girls	55	58	51
	Total	107	129	110
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	72 (84)	87 (82)	74 (66)
	National	63 (63)	65 (62)	59 (55)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	29 (44)	54 (50)	35 (23)
	National	28 (28)	42 (38)	30 (23)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	63	72	57
	Girls	67	62	50
	Total	130	134	107
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	87 (92)	90 (85)	72 (65)
	National	64 (64)	66 (64)	62 (60)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	43 (52)	56 (53)	36 (24)
	National	31 (31)	39 (37)	29 (28)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4

Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	84	65	149

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	43	78	80
	Girls	39	62	65
	Total	82	140	145
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	55 (47)	94 (91)	97 (95)
	National	47.4 (46.6)	90.6 (90.9)	95.6 (95.8)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	43
	National	38.4

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	13	100
	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
	2000	23	24	47

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	12.4	16.6	14.7	4.5	2.0	4.0
National	17.7	18.6	18.2	2.6	2.9	2.7

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	12	83.3
	National		73.2

International Bacculaureate		Number	% success rate
Number entered for the International Bacculaureate Diploma and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all they studied	School	N/A	N/A
	National		76.5

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	4
Indian	5
Pakistani	3
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	1
White	819
Any other minority ethnic group	28

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	47.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.1:1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y7 – Y13

Total number of education support staff	18.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	347

Deployment of teachers: Y7– Y13

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	74.0
---	------

Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y11

Key Stage 3	27.9
Key Stage 4	21.8

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	2	1
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	25	1
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	2038136
Total expenditure	1933679
Expenditure per pupil	2246
Balance brought forward from previous year	-39515
Balance carried forward to next year	64942

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	861
Number of questionnaires returned	193

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	34	49	12	2	2
My child is making good progress in school.	31	58	8	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	20	60	12	2	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	18	58	17	3	4
The teaching is good.	20	68	7	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	20	56	21	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	40	51	7	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	39	56	5	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	16	59	20	2	3
The school is well led and managed.	26	61	5	3	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	32	56	5	2	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	50	17	1	8

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

ENGLISH

82. Pupils enter the school with above average standards in English. Good teaching and learning helps them to reach well above average standards by the end of Year 11 and to achieve well. The progress of some groups of pupils in Years 7 to 9 has been restricted because of staff recruitment difficulties. These pupils have not been taught continuously by specialist English teachers.
83. In the 2000 national tests for 14 year-olds, results were above the national average for all schools and represented satisfactory achievement. Results were similar to those in science, but below those in mathematics. Girls achieved higher standards than boys. Results were rather lower than those in 1996 to 1999, when standards in English were consistently well above the national average.
84. In the 2000 GCSE English examination, the proportion passing at grade C or higher was well above the national average. More pupils reached C or higher than suggested by their previous results at the end of Year 9. This was good achievement. The proportion passing at G or higher was broadly average. Pupils outperformed pupils nationally by almost half a grade. There was no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. Pupils did broadly as well in English as in many of their other subjects; results maintained the standards of the previous two years. In English literature the proportion reaching both C or higher, and G or higher, was broadly average, although the school enters fewer pupils than most schools. There is now a clear intention to increase the rate of entry. Pupils did less well in literature than in their other GCSE subjects.
85. In the sixth form, results in the A level English literature examination were above average. The proportion achieving the higher grades of A and B was above average. All passed at grade E or better, as has been the case for the last three years. Standards have been consistently above average over this period.
86. In work seen during the inspection, standards in Year 9 are above those expected nationally for 14 year olds. Overall, achievement is satisfactory. In some classes, where pupils have been taught continuously by a specialist teacher, standards are well above average; pupils are making good progress. However, in classes where there has been less continuity of teaching, progress is satisfactory at best, and not at the good level achieved in other classes.
87. Standards of speaking and listening are above average. Most pupils make articulate contributions. Higher attaining pupils showed a very good command of persuasive language when directing performances from a scene in *Macbeth*. Standards of reading are above average. The work of higher attaining pupils reveals very high standards. Comparisons of the characters of Kay and Briggs from *Our Day Out* revealed real insight, backed up by detailed analysis of the text. Middle attaining pupils are able to apply their knowledge of literary terms effectively to show the impact of imagery in *Macbeth*. Their standards are above average. Lower attaining pupils have a secure literal understanding of what they read but need guidance from the teacher to respond at a deeper level. Writing skills reveal a wider range of attainment but are still above average overall. The highest attaining pupils write consistently accurate English, with a broad range of vocabulary and sentence structure. Their overall organisation is a notable strength. Middle attaining pupils also organise their work well into paragraphs. Their vocabulary lacks the range of higher attaining pupils. A magazine article on capital punishment successfully caught the style of popular journalism. Lower attaining pupils are below, and occasionally, well below average because of punctuation and spelling errors and a lack of clear expression.
88. Standards of work seen in Year 11 are well above those expected nationally for 16 year olds. This represents good achievement. Pupils make especially good progress in the writing of lengthy, well-argued and highly coherent assignments. Standards of speaking and listening are consistently well above average. Pupils of all levels of attainment tackled group work with relish. Course work on literature texts reveals well above average standards of reading overall. Pupils understand the need

to apply their knowledge and understanding of a text to analyse a title. They make their own judgements and support them with quotations. Lower attaining pupils are far less analytical and detailed but still supported their personal responses when writing about the role of fate in *Romeo and Juliet*. Writing standards are well above average. Higher attainers are producing very high quality writing. Highly accurate, they use vocabulary effectively to engage the reader's interest whatever the context. Middle attaining pupils write with a dependable accuracy, although a few are not reaching C grade level because of flaws in punctuation and expression. Running through many pieces, however, is a sense of direction, purpose and coherence. This reflects the strong emphasis teachers place on these qualities. A small number of lower attaining pupils are able to convey their meaning with clarity, albeit their work contains inaccuracies.

89. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well overall. Progress is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9 and good in Years 10 to 11. Teachers are well informed about the nature of these pupils' needs. Some keep additional records to check progress, but this good practice is not established fully. In lessons, there were some good examples of tasks being adapted to suit pupils' needs. However, the behaviour of some of these pupils is not satisfactory; this impedes their progress. Teachers have not yet developed a sufficiently broad range of methods to manage these pupils effectively.
90. In the sixth form, standards of work seen are broadly average in Year 13. This is not as high as in previous years, but represents good achievement given this group of pupils' standards in their GCSE examinations. In Year 12, pupils on a new AS English language course have made a good start and are on track to achieve above average standards. The standards of the English literature Year 12 group are above average, with some capable of achieving the highest grades.
91. Teaching is good overall. It is satisfactory from Years 7 to 9 and good in Years 10 to 11 and in the sixth form. A major strength is the subject expertise of the specialist teachers. This effectively develops pupils' writing skills and ensures that they are well-informed about course work requirements. Teachers also have high expectations. A rigorous programme of end of topic assessments during Years 7 to 9 provides some very challenging assignments. For example, discussing the extent to which Macbeth is culpable for his own destiny made a strong demand on pupils' intellectual efforts. Good planning also makes sure that pupils are kept busy and that the content of the lessons engages and maintains the pupils' interests. A Year 11 set responded positively and with great candour when discussing and writing about the theme of loss, as a precursor to studying Hardy's poetry. They drew openly on their own experiences, following the good example set by the teacher. Well-judged use of group work motivated Year 11 and 12 groups to research literature in preparation for their presentations to other pupils. Marking is consistently very good. During Years 7 to 9, pupils receive feed back on how well they are doing on assessment tasks and are given clear targets for improvement. This results in higher standards.
92. There are areas to develop. Recruitment problems mean that all pupils do not consistently receive the best the department has to offer. Despite the challenge in assessment tasks, there is not enough planned attention to the needs of higher attaining pupils in both day-to-day lessons and the schemes of work, especially in Years 7 to 9. Throughout the department, although work is thoroughly marked, some pupils do not know their potential in terms of National Curriculum levels or GCSE grades. Their working knowledge of the criteria for their short and long term target levels and grades is not firm enough. The department has started to include some effective methods from the National Literacy Strategy – for example, an effective emphasis on spelling in Years 7 to 9. However, this process has not been completed, albeit it is hindered by a lack of suitable equipment. In addition, the planned development of pupils' literacy skills across all subjects is uneven. This reflects the lack of a whole school policy to guide practice and to monitor effectiveness. Only history has a literacy policy of its own and specifically addresses literacy issues in its schemes of work. Opportunities for pupils to use and develop their literacy skills in other subjects are often missed. There is little evidence of the effective use of methods such as writing frames. There is also little evidence of teachers explicitly trying to improve pupils' research skills through efficient and effective note taking methods.
93. The head of department provides very good leadership. She is well supported by all her team. There is a good determination to succeed and to drive up standards. The school and the department have

worked hard to diminish the problems caused by staffing shortage; teachers have been flexible in their response to this issue, to try to ensure that all pupils have access to specialist staff as far as possible. Additional sessions are provided to support pupils at the C/D borderline in Year 11 and for those aspiring to the highest levels in Year 9. The head of department has monitored teaching and learning, observing lessons and sampling exercise books and course work. A Reading Club and a regular library lesson effectively promote reading in Years 7 to 9.

94. The department has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. It has increased its provision of multi cultural texts. Schemes of work set out the intention to ensure all pupils have their entitlement to working with computers. However, this is not achieved. Better access to hardware needs to be available and scheduled. Nevertheless a large amount of work in Years 10 and 11 is word-processed. The use of the pupils' previous achievements to set challenging examination targets lacks rigour. Not enough use made of national data to set targets and expectations. There is no system for tracking progress or for reviewing targets in light of subsequent achievement.

DRAMA

95. Results in the 2000 GCSE drama examinations were below the national average for all schools. This was a fall from the average and above average standards of previous years. This prompted a rigorous analysis of results and has resulted in greater emphasis on performance skills, which has paid dividends. Standards in Year 11 are broadly as expected for pupils' age and in line with those usually attained by the school. The best pupils are working at grade A*/A levels. One group presented a compelling scripted piece, using intonation, projection, movement and gesture most effectively. Evaluation work is good. Pupils listen carefully and respond positively, not only to their teachers but also to their peers. In Year 9, standards are above those found nationally. In one very lively lesson, pupils worked with great application and applied their knowledge well to direct others in a short performance of a scene from *Macbeth*. No work could be seen from Year 13 during the inspection. Teaching is good. Teachers are specialists, with very good subject expertise. A notable strength is the well-planned curriculum. It is progressively challenging, develops a wide range of performance skills in different styles, while at the same time enhancing pupils' personal development. Consequently, pupils work well together and present their work with confidence, even when improvising. Drama takes place in a well-appointed drama studio and in the school hall, where the ambience is less appropriate. Nevertheless, pupils respond well. It is a popular option in Years 10 to 11; about one third of each year group study drama. The subject also contributes well to the extra curricular life of the school.

MATHEMATICS

96. In the 2000 national tests for 14 year-olds, results were well above the national average for all schools. Results were better than those in English and science. Overall results have been well above average for the past three years. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. Achievement is satisfactory, given pupils' attainment on entry to the school.
97. The proportion of pupils gaining a GCSE A* to C grade in 2000 was above the national average for all schools. Boys' results were well above the national average for boys, whereas girls' results were in line with the national average for girls. The proportion of pupils with grades A* to G was also above the national average. These results were as expected, given pupils' average National Curriculum point score in national tests in 1998. Pupils achieved broadly as well in mathematics as in their other GCSE subjects. Results were a slight improvement on those of 1999 but still below the levels of 1998.
98. In the sixth form, A level results in 2000 were in line with the national average and similar to those of the previous year. Achievement is satisfactory, given pupils' attainment on entry to the sixth form. The number of pupils on the course varies year on year, as does the standard of entry. Some pupils begin this course with an intermediate GCSE level qualification.

99. Standards seen in the inspection are well above those expected nationally for pupils' age at the end of Key Stage 3. There is some underachievement in Year 7, particularly for the higher attainers. Often, these pupils are given work that is too easy for them; they repeat topics that they have grasped in their primary schools. Some pupils with special educational needs, who do not have individual support, also underachieve. By contrast, very good planning in one lesson saw pupils given the initiative to choose which level of work they would do. The response was sensible and mature, with learning gains for all. In Years 8 and 9, setting arrangements result in work being more closely matched to pupils' needs. There is still an element of underachievement when the work lacks challenge as, for example, in a Year 8 lesson on the 24 hour clock. However, overall, the outcomes at the end of the Key Stage are as expected and achievement is satisfactory for all pupils, including those with special educational need. In Year 9, low attainers are able to generate polygons by computer and use their results to explore relationships. Average attainers cope well with solving equations through graphical methods. High attainers have a good understanding of cumulative frequency.
100. Standards seen in the inspection are also above those expected for pupils' age at the end of Key Stage 4. Low attainers have some difficulty in completing their coursework, although their numeracy levels are in line with expectations. Average attainers have confidence in basic algebraic techniques, but their understanding of them is less secure. Higher attainers are still consolidating algebraic skills with indices and brackets. Overall achievement through the Key Stage is satisfactory, including pupils with special educational need. Numeracy levels are above average.
101. Standards seen in the inspection at the end of the sixth form are broadly average, being in line with course expectations. In statistics, few pupils started the course with GCSE grade A. Pupils know how to calculate the mean of a discrete distribution and cope well with expectation theory. For some of these pupils, attainment levels in pure mathematics are not yet at grade E. In mechanics, pupils' attainment is high. Algebraic skills are well developed and private study skills are excellent. Pupils studying trigonometry have some difficulty with problems in three dimensions, as simple models are not used in the teaching. Achievement in the sixth form overall is satisfactory.
102. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good overall. Generally pupils are willing learners and keen to answer questions. They listen well and are patient and considerate when others are answering questions. Some pupils ask appropriate questions; others contribute with alternative ways of working. For example, pupils explain alternative, efficient strategies for calculating. Concentration lapses in lessons when pupils are left for too long on one task. Low attaining pupils in particular lose concentration when the teaching does not take their needs into account effectively. There is a small minority of pupils whose attitudes are not helpful to their learning. For example, a small minority of Year 11 pupils' attitudes are not good enough for them to reach their expected attainment levels.
103. Teaching is good, both at Key Stages 3 and 4 and in the sixth form. There is no unsatisfactory teaching and some very good teaching. A strength lies in teachers' subject knowledge and understanding. This impacts well on pupils' acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding. Very good subject knowledge is evident in some sixth form lessons. Teaching, at times, is narrowly focused on the textbook, with little enrichment, through discussion for example. The planning of lessons is generally good and is at its best when it includes time-limited goals for pupils to work. Contact with parents over homework is effective in individual cases and the use of homework overall is good, complementing classwork well. In some lessons, there is a lack of oral consolidation of previous work. In the good teaching, this is done well. Some time is wasted in lessons copying questions or note taking. Although pupils use their skills well to deal with the numerical demands of other subjects, there is no agreed whole school approach to the teaching of numeracy. Opportunities are missed in many subjects to build systematically upon pupils' knowledge and use of number.
104. Leadership and management overall are satisfactory. The monitoring and evaluation of the subject's performance currently lacks rigour. The day to day assessment of pupils' work is good. Work is marked regularly; written comments, when made, are helpful to pupils' learning. Teachers' records in their mark books are good. However, the overview of pupils' past achievements, and their likely

future performance, is not as readily available. This limits the department's ability to identify and remedy any underachievement. It also limits the accurate setting of challenging targets for individuals, and for groups of pupils, for the years ahead. Although the evaluation of teaching by a senior manager has been helpful in guiding development, the monitoring and evaluation of teaching by the head of department is inconsistent, limiting the department's ability to improve standards further. The department's development plan is weak; the action taken to meet the school's targets is unsatisfactory. The aims of the department and its scheme of work are somewhat narrowly focused on subject matters and do not sit comfortably with the school's aims of challenging and encouraging pupils to reach their highest levels.

105. Since the last inspection the department has made satisfactory progress. It has maintained standards above the national average. Teaching has improved, as has the display of pupils' work. In 1998, A level numbers were low; this remains the case in some of the teaching groups in Year 13 - in mechanics, for example, but not in all.

SCIENCE

106. In the 2000 national tests for 14 year-olds, results were above the national average for all schools. Results overall were not as good as those in mathematics, but were similar to those in English. Results in science have improved over the past three years; in 2000, for the first time, several pupils reached level 7. Pupils enter the school with a wide range of different experiences in science but, overall, standards are above average. Progress is therefore satisfactory between Years 7 and 9; pupils' achievements at age 14 are as expected, given their attainment on entry.
107. Most pupils take the double award GCSE examination. Those pupils for whom this is not appropriate are entered for the single award. Both examinations produced a 100 per cent success rate in the A* to G range in 2000, maintaining the standard of the last three years. In the double award examination, results in the A* to C range were above the national average for all schools, with boys out-performing girls. The proportion of pupils gaining an A* to C grade varies from year to year, but the overall trend of the last three years is one of improving results. Nevertheless, results in 2000 were not as high as might be expected when pupils' National Curriculum points score in 1998 is taken into account. Pupils did less well in science than in most of their other GCSE subjects. In the sixth form, pupils enter for separate A level examinations in the three sciences. Results matched expectations based on their GCSE results in chemistry and physics, with physics showing an improvement over the previous year. Biology candidates fared less well, with some candidates failing to realise their predicted grades.
108. Standards seen in Year 9 lessons are above those expected for pupils' age. For example, in an investigation testing commercial fruit juices and drinks for vitamin C content, the care and accuracy with which the investigation was carried out and recorded were above normal expectations. Progress through the various science modules is appropriate, representing satisfactory achievement. In Year 11, standards of work seen were also above those expected for pupils' age. There was no evidence to support the underachievement suggested by recent GCSE results. Pupils are setted throughout Key Stage 4, according to their attainment at age 14. Achievement is satisfactory, matching the expectation for the set, with occasional exceptions. For example, a Year 11 group of low-attaining pupils showed an unusually quick grasp of the technique of titration at the first attempt, demonstrating competent and accurate handling of unfamiliar apparatus in preparing samples of fertiliser. Progress in lessons only faltered on the rare occasions when poor behaviour intervened, and, unusually, this was attributable to small groups of poorly motivated girls. In the sixth form, small numbers make comparisons with national standards unreliable. Given this, standards of work seen are broadly as expected. Pupils usually achieve well in lessons, although progress varies from pupil to pupil and with the individual's familiarity with the subject being studied.
109. At both key stages, pupils with special educational needs achieve appropriate standards in oral and practical work. They achieve well in their written work when they are supported by additional adult help but, without this support, their written records lack detail and are sometimes unfinished. The level of additional support is insufficient to help some of these pupils realise their full potential.

Classes of high-attaining pupils have their needs met sometimes by extension material, but more usually by study at a greater depth. They too achieve satisfactory results.

110. Reading skills are generally good and all pupils, including recent arrivals who do not have English as their first language, are able to read the textbooks and work-sheets and understand their contents. Written work becomes increasingly descriptive and uses correct scientific vocabulary as pupils move up the school. Most pupils are competent in the basic mathematical processes needed in science, although many are very reliant on calculators. Very few pupils, even in the sixth form, can correctly estimate the size of the expected answer and therefore identify a spurious solution.
111. The overall quality of teaching is good. The best teaching occurs at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form, where specialist knowledge and expertise come to the fore. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and are committed and enthusiastic; these characteristics raise interest and motivate pupils. Relationships between staff and pupils are of a high quality and, as a result, pupils try to meet their teachers' expectations. There is a positive and encouraging learning environment. Marking is regular, but pupils would benefit from more helpful comment to guide improvement, especially at Key Stage 4. Good resources and laboratories mean that a variety of activities can be planned, and lessons contain a high level of experimental work and demonstration. Pupils look forward to this kind of work, and most enjoy their lessons. Practical work and good teaching are underpinned by first class technician support. The joint chemistry and physics teaching shared between Bishop Wand and St Paul's College pupils works well, and sixth formers benefit from the facilities of both schools and contact with other sixth formers and science teachers.
112. Pupils are generally well mannered, well motivated and welcoming to a visitor. They discuss their written work frankly and with interest. Laboratory discipline is good and pupils understand and observe the safety requirements, which are clearly set out for each lesson. They co-operate well in small groups and willingly help each other over minor difficulties.
113. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Day to day assessment is good. Because the science courses are designed in a series of modules, pupils are used to regular tests and are aware of their National Curriculum levels and anticipated GCSE grades. Detailed records are maintained centrally and staff can monitor levels of attainment and progress, but the process needs to be more structured and formalised to make the best use of available data and to provide pupils with achievable targets.
114. Senior managers have provided much support, and with considerable success, to improve standards in science. All the issues raised in the last inspection report have been addressed. Most have been remedied and standards have risen. For example, various aspects of investigational work were seen, in preparation for entire investigations at Key Stage 4. Pupils now have more opportunities to practise the skills needed and this is an improvement since the last inspection. They are challenged to plan, carry out and evaluate their own investigations, and most, by Year 11, can recognise anomalous results and suggest reasons why these have arisen and what could be done to overcome them. Better computer facilities since the last inspection have increased opportunities for the use of information and communication technology techniques in lessons, and automated data capture is being extended as more sensors become available. Simulations, spreadsheets and database work are used increasingly to aid learning. Overall the department has made very good progress since the last inspection in ensuring that achievement is mostly satisfactory.

ART AND DESIGN

115. Teacher assessments for 2000 show all pupils attaining in line with national standards. Reflecting the national picture, the performance of boys is significantly below that of girls.
116. The proportion of pupils gaining grades A* to C in GCSE examinations in 2000 was well above the national average for all schools; that gaining grades A* to G was above the national average.

Subject performance indicators show that pupils performed better in art in 2000 than in many of their other subjects. Over the past three years, GCSE results have shown a steady improvement.

117. At A level in 2000, two pupils attained grade B, two grade C and one grade D, too small a number in total for meaningful comparisons to be made with national figures but, nevertheless, good results.
118. In work seen during the inspection, standards by age 14 are as expected nationally for pupils' age. Pupils have satisfactory drawing skills evident, for example, in work copied from Dali and in drawings of the human figure. There are sound and often good standards attained in three dimensions; for example, stirrup pots based on Aztec designs, or card models inspired by the work of Naum Gabo. Pupils acquire a sound understanding of the process of developing artwork from initial ideas to research and trials, and on to finished pieces of work. With a limited number of computers, a good start has been made in introducing ICT in art using the PhotoShop programme to manipulate images. Pupils know and understand colour theory and a range of art vocabulary. They have encountered and derived ideas from the work of artists such Salvador Dali, Henry Moore and from Greek sculptures.
119. In work seen during the inspection, standards by age 16 are above those expected for pupils' age. For GCSE examinations, pupils sit painting and drawing, or three dimensions or in some cases both. They know and understand a good range of styles and techniques. For example, in developing collage self portraits, pupils draw upon the work of artists such as Jim Dine, Hannah Hoch and Picasso; several used coloured paper to build up portraits, three pupils used computer imagery, another pupil used digital camera images scanned into the computer. The standards attained in this work are above average. In three dimensions, imaginative responses to a controlled test result in some very good work such as 'waves' realised in clay, and an original relief postage stamp made of modroc. A good range of artists' work is explored; for example, that of Franz Marc, Lichtenstein, Stubbs and Landseer. Understanding of art vocabulary is good. Above average standards of painting, drawing and modelling are evident in pupils' coursework.
120. In work seen during the inspection attainment by the age of 18 is above average. A level coursework is of a high standard, and research for personal studies - for example, into the work of the Italian Futurists - is thorough and well presented. Pupils working towards AS level art in the lower sixth show good painting skills working in oil colours. Sketch books provide evidence of good drawing skills. Good research in sketch books includes work on artists such as Giacometti and Susan Rothenburg.
121. The quality of teaching at all stages is good. Good organisation and methodology, against a background of sound class management, lead to good learning and attainment by the great majority of pupils, and to very good learning and attainment in the sixth form. Challenging behaviour and lack of productivity by a few pupils in lower school is dealt with patiently and effectively on the rare occasions when it occurs.
122. As a result of good teaching, pupils acquire their art skills, knowledge and understanding at a better rate than expected. Those with special educational needs make good progress; for example, in Year 8, in developing their ability to make judgements about the artistic qualities of shape, composition and line in a lesson on 'tight shapes'. Specially talented pupils are not identified as such, but some very able pupils observed during the inspection make good progress. On the evidence of work seen pupils achieve well in art, going from average attainment at the age of 14 to above average attainment at age 16 and in the sixth form. Attitudes to the subject are positive, and while behaviour at Key Stage 3 is not always perfect, pupils' personal development and their ability to work independently undoubtedly improves markedly through Key Stage 4. There is a good take up for the subject for GCSE.
123. The head of department gives a good lead to the subject. There is good documentation and planning and sound information for pupils about their progress. The acquisition of three excellent I Mac computers for the department has led to the writing of a good user booklet for pupils and to the start of a development of a website featuring pupils' work.

124. The department has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. This highlighted a number of shortcomings, all of which have been addressed effectively, except for the vexed question of the limited accommodation. This still poses problems given the size of the classes that make use of it. Teaching and standards have nevertheless improved despite such difficulties and the school has good reason to feel proud of the artistic achievements of its' pupils.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

125. Teachers' own assessments of standards for Key Stage 3 show attainment to be above average overall, with more girls attaining at level 6 than boys. This is reflected in the work seen during the inspection. Over the past three years, the overall proportion of pupils achieving an A* to C grade in design and technology has been well above the national average for all schools. Last year, in resistant materials and food technology, the proportion of A* to C grades was broadly average; results were significantly above average in graphics, systems and control and textiles. The proportion of pupils achieving an A* is twice the national average for this grade. Girls outperform boys, but both boys and girls achieve significantly above the national gender averages. The proportion of pupils achieving a grade in the range A* to G is well above average. Pupils tend to attain better grades overall in design and technology than they do in their other subjects. A level results in the subject have been in line with the national average for A and B grades during this period.

126. Standards of work seen in Year 9 are above those expected nationally. Since attainment on entry in design and technology is broadly average, this represents good achievement over time for the great majority of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs show good interest in the subject and make satisfactory progress. By the end of the key stage, most pupils have a good understanding of the design process and principles and present their design ideas well using good graphical communication skills. Girls tend to take greater care, and take more pride in their work, than boys and are more conscientious in their research and design work. Literacy skills are satisfactory, although lower attaining pupils are unsure of the correct terminology when explaining and describing their ideas. Pupils show good practical skills in using tools and equipment; for example, in the production of a 'fuse tester' in Year 7 resistant materials. In textiles, in the Year 7 'wall tidy' project and the Year 8 'cushion' project, pupils show much creative flair and imagination and produce well-crafted aesthetically pleasing outcomes. Year 9 pupils show a good grasp of cam and lever movement in their 'mechanical toy' project. Similarly, pupils in the 'clock project' produce innovative designs, where they combine a very wide range of resistant materials to good effect. Pupils' knowledge and understanding and their skills in the use of computer-aided design software are generally good across all attainment levels, as shown in the 'design a logo' project in Year 8. The use of computer aided manufacturing equipment is underdeveloped and is, in reality, limited by a lack of sufficient resources.

127. By the end of Year 11, overall standards of work seen are well above average. In most design and technology subjects, pupils make very good progress and achieve very well in relation to their starting points at the beginning of the GCSE courses. However, standards, achievement and progress are adversely affected in food technology by the lack of equipment and cramped working space, especially when Year 11 is present. Pupils achieve very well in graphics products, where the work in design folios is significantly above average. In resistant materials, finished products show high levels of creativity with well-crafted outcomes. Across all material areas, the work of the higher attainers is significantly above average and reflects the very high levels of A* grades achieved at GCSE. The design process is well understood and firmly embedded in all projects. In all design areas, graphical communication skills are very good, and especially so in the work of the higher attaining girls. Girls show more pride in their work than boys and are more conscientious in their research and design work. Literacy skills are better than in Year 9, although weaknesses remain in the work of lower attaining pupils, with a minority not readily using the correct subject terminology. In Year 11 systems and control, pupils show very good problem solving skills and a very good knowledge and understanding of computer software to design their electronic projects. In other design areas, limited use is made of computers in GCSE coursework, especially at the design stage and particularly in some aspects of manufacture. Lower attaining pupils and, those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, especially when teachers can call upon the

support of technical or specialist support staff. The technicians provide an invaluable contribution to pupils' learning through preparing materials and supporting pupils with their work.

128. There is insufficient evidence to make judgements on the standard of work in Year 13. In Year 12, standards of work seen are above those expected; pupils are achieving well. Pupils show very good research skills when outlining their design solutions for a 'corporate clothing project'. Pupils presented their design ideas to their peer group confidently. They answered questions, posed by both their teacher and their peers, competently, exhibiting a very clear understanding of the design process and principles. Product outcomes are executed to a very high standard, with much innovative flair and imagination evident in the designs created. Graphical communication skills are very good, with ideas very well researched and presented.
129. Teaching overall is very good, with some outstanding features in several lessons. All specialist teachers have a very secure knowledge and understanding of their subject. Teachers plan the work for each lesson very thoroughly. They set design tasks that fully reflect the requirements of the National Curriculum and examination syllabus at Key Stage 4, with projects that are well matched to pupils' intellectual and creative abilities. The objectives for each lesson are very effectively shared with pupils and reinforced either on the whiteboard or in the task sheets provided. As a result, all pupils are clearly aware of what they need to do in each lesson, and in the time available for the project. Expectations are very high, with pupils expected to produce their best efforts in each lesson. The teaching is successful in ensuring that pupils improve and develop their design and realisation skills consistently throughout each key stage. Most of the task sheets produced by teachers provide pupils with clear guidelines for the expected design work. Some, particularly in food, are not adapted to cater for the full range of attainment, making it more difficult for pupils with special educational needs to understand what is required of them. The teaching almost always ensures that pupils are very well motivated. As a result, they make very good progress in the great majority of lessons, especially at Key Stage 4.
130. Most pupils respond well to the teaching and behave very well in lessons. There is a satisfactory assessment system in place, but it is not consistently applied across all areas with sufficient rigour in the formal monitoring of pupils' progress towards targets. Pupils are not always sure of the standards they have reached in Years 7 to 9 and are unsure about what they need to do to improve. Homework is set regularly; it effectively extends pupils' knowledge and understanding by requiring pupils' to research topics in greater depth than would be possible in the timetabled lessons. In textiles, the range and quality of display work effectively supports and guides pupils in developing their understanding of many aspects of the subject, notably so in relation to 'fabric decoration'.
131. The head of department provides good leadership and a very clear educational direction for the subject. The effective management and very good teaching has facilitated a rise in standards and good improvement since the last inspection. Resources for learning in the subject have improved slightly, although the range and quality of specialist equipment for computer-aided manufacturing is insufficient. Whilst there has been some improvement to the accommodation for food technology, with the hygiene issues resolved, the accommodation remains too cramped and with an inadequate supply of cooking facilities. This affects standards adversely.

GEOGRAPHY

132. Teachers' own assessments judge standards to be average at the end of Key Stage 3. This was not confirmed by inspection evidence, which showed standards in Year 9 to be below average.
133. The proportion of pupils achieving grades A* to C in the 2000 GCSE examinations was well below the national average. There was no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. Pupils performed less well in geography than in their other subjects. Taken as a whole, the attainment of pupils taking GCSE geography courses in Years 10 and 11 is lower than that in many other subjects. Given this, results were broadly as expected, given pupils' relatively low attainment at the start of Year 10, representing satisfactory achievement.
134. Pupils follow a GCE A level course at the collaborative school; there is no teaching undertaken by school staff on this A level course. Results indicate that pupils achieve satisfactory standards.
135. Inspection evidence largely reflects the picture given by examination results. In Year 9, standards are below those expected for pupils' age. Not enough is expected of pupils in many lessons; consequently, progress is slow and achievement is unsatisfactory. Pupils learn the basic skills of geography satisfactorily. For example, by Year 9, most pupils draw good diagrams and sketch maps, labeled appropriately. They use spider diagrams effectively for brainstorming ideas, in order to enhance their notes. However, most pupils' understanding develops too slowly. Although pupils understand what they are learning from teachers' explanations and from discussion, there is too much copying from textbooks, with little real understanding. For example, although Year 8 pupils investigate the benefits of reinstating rail transport in the United Kingdom, they do not evaluate or understand the advantages and disadvantages of the railway revival sufficiently well. At the end of Year 9, most pupils show appropriate knowledge of deforestation but only an initial understanding of the different ways in which areas under threat could be conserved. Higher attaining pupils have a good understanding of pollution caused by non-renewable sources of power, contrasting these successfully with renewable sources. The moral issues of conservation and sustainability are developed well.
136. Standards in Year 11 lessons are similarly below average. Again, pupils have appropriate geographical knowledge for their course of study. For example, Year 11 pupils know some of the factors associated with industrial change; for example, new sources of energy, the labour market and different life styles. Pupils show an understanding about migration of people, the rural push and the urban pull, in both developing countries like Kenya and in developed countries like the United States. Pupils make successful use of their numerical skills in geography, for example, when using column graphs to plot the percentages of renewable and non-renewal fuels used by industry in the United States. However, scrutiny of work and discussion with pupils shows many have an insecure understanding about the analysis of data and the use of hypotheses. Some pupils are beginning to make links between the human, economic and physical aspects of geography but, overall, analysis and the linking of different aspects of geography are under developed. Recent coursework for GCSE is often enhanced through good use of ICT.
137. Teaching and learning are satisfactory at both key stages; however, there are occasions where teaching has shortcomings. Overall, teachers show a good knowledge of geography and apply their knowledge well to develop pupils' learning; for instance, as seen in lessons on the use of energy sources and related environmental concerns. Teachers circulate well in lessons and give effective one-to-one support, particularly to lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. This helps them to achieve appropriately. Where there are probing questions, pupils respond well and give good responses. However, there are occasions where challenge and rigour are insufficient and as a consequence pupils are not fully extended. This was seen in a Year 8 lesson about the revival of the UK railway system. Teaching methods often inhibit pupils' involvement in their learning. Pupils are often too reliant upon the teacher. They spend too much time copying directly from the board or from textbooks as, for example, in Year 11 lessons, when pupils compared old and new American industries. Partner work, group work, oral presentations, practical work and

problem solving are used infrequently. The range of tasks is often narrow, and hence does not meet the learning needs of all pupils in a class.

138. Literacy and number work support geographical learning. The use of information and communication technology is planned in the curriculum, but limited access restricts investigational work. The development plan for geography lacks success criteria related to pupil outcomes, funding and time dead lines. The department makes satisfactory use of its own assessment procedures. Pupils' work is marked regularly; more evaluative comments would assist pupils' progress. However, insufficient use is made of assessment data to check that results are as high as they should be, by tracking pupils' progress. Data is not used well to inform future curriculum planning. Other commitments and responsibilities of staff who teach geography inhibit the development of the subject. The head of department monitors teaching, but this is not done in a systematic and effective manner. Thus, the good practice within the department is not shared. The overall impact of these features means that leadership and management are unsatisfactory.
139. The department has made insufficient progress since the last inspection; many issues have still to be addressed thoroughly. Standards and examination results show regression and several other issues show limited improvement; for example, a range of different tasks, that takes account of pupils' differing learning needs, has yet to be developed.

HISTORY

140. In 2000, teacher assessments judged standards at age 14 to be significantly above average. GCSE results in 2000 were well above average. Attainment was particularly good in the highest grades with a half of pupils gaining an A or A*. Pupils performed better in history than in most of their other subjects. Results have fluctuated in recent years, with an improving trend overall. A level results in 2000 were well above average and well above the average of other subjects, with five of the seven pupils gaining grades A or B. In recent years, A level results have fluctuated, reflecting pupils' attainment on entry to the course.
141. Inspection evidence confirms that standards at age 14 are above average. Pupils achieve well. From Year 7, pupils are required to undertake research tasks; thus, the independent learning skills of a high proportion of pupils are well developed in these early years. High attaining Year 7 pupils write fluently and communicate a sound grasp of cause and effect. By Year 9, the great majority of pupils communicate their understanding effectively in their writing. Nearly every Year 7 pupil has a secure grasp of chronology and, by Year 9, a significant number use some historical terminology correctly in discussion. Younger pupils can identify important features from a range of different sources and, by Year 9, higher attainers are starting to analyse sources critically. These skills were demonstrated successfully in a Year 9 lesson, where pupils correctly located and interpreted evidence of changing attitudes to World War 1 over time.
142. Standards at age 16 are well above average. Pupils' achievements are very good. Pupils consolidate and build on their history study skills at an increasing pace through Years 10 and 11. The great majority has well-developed skills in the critical analysis of sources and a good understanding of the topics and events studied. This is reflected in well-structured, detailed and fluently written course work. Mapping and graphic techniques, though adequate, are not as well developed. Attainment of pupils currently studying at A level in Year 13 is in line with standards nationally and reflects good progress on prior attainment. Pupils are building up very comprehensive and mostly very well organised course work units, which make extensive use of information technologies to research and present information. Their level of understanding is reflected well in their judicious selection and highlighting of information within study materials.
143. Both the standard of teaching and the pace of learning are very good overall. Lessons are well planned and learning objectives are explicit. Particular strengths in teaching are very good subject knowledge, excellent pupil management and motivation and effective use of a good range learning styles and resources. These qualities were reflected in a Year 10 lesson, where music and poetry sources from the early nineteen seventies were very effective in communicating to the pupils, the views and feelings of different groups of Americans about their countries' involvement in the Vietnam

War. Subsequent discussion demonstrated pupils' very good understanding and empathy. This lesson reflected the very important contribution history is making to the development of pupils' moral and cultural understanding. Lower attaining pupils and those with special needs make satisfactory progress. They receive good individual attention in some lessons but the resources to support their learning are not always well matched to their needs. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and often excellent. They are largely enthusiastic, sustain very good concentration, are keen to answer questions and collaborate very well in group learning activities. Pupils take pride in their written work, which is mostly very well presented.

144. The head of department provides very good leadership. Schemes of work are detailed and systematically cross-referenced to other subjects and aspects of the curriculum. Many pupils benefit from support provided by a lunch time 'drop in' facility. Assessment has a number of strong features. It is systematic and builds up a clear profile of progress from Year 7 using National Curriculum levels, with which pupils have a growing familiarity. Target grades are set for GCSE and A level candidates and all entrants are provided with regular explicit information on their strengths and weaknesses. Professional relationships are strong and development planning is well focused on further raising the standards of teaching and learning. One only of the two main teaching rooms provides a stimulating learning environment. Both classroom study and individual research are aided by the substantial range of well organised learning resources available. Links with the families of pupils are systematic and well established and encourage the support and enrichment of pupils' learning.

145. Good progress has been made since the last inspection. All strengths identified in the last report are still present. Standards in the GCSE are higher, as is the proportion of very good teaching. Some progress has been made in improving resources to support the learning of lower attaining pupils, but staffing arrangements continue to limit opportunities for organised fieldwork for younger pupils.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

146. Standards in information and communication technology are above average at ages 14 and 16. Since pupils enter the school with above average levels of attainment, achievement for most pupils is satisfactory. The school only commenced reporting levels of attainment of its 14-year-old pupils in 2000. These teacher assessments indicated that 66 per cent of pupils in Year 9 achieved level 5 or above, compared with a national average of 62 per cent. Although overall GCSE results in ICT and related subjects have been variable, they were well above average in 2000. All 19 entries obtained a grade in the range A* to C in the GCSE in information technology. However no pupil achieved the highest grade. In 2000, there were also 34 entries for the GCSE in Office Applications. Results were again well above average, with 82 per cent achieving grades in the range A* to C. Although results at age 14 are better for girls than for boys, by the age of 16, there is no significant difference.

147. Standards of ICT work being undertaken by the majority of pupils in classes are above expected levels. By the ages of 14 and 16, most pupils are able to undertake a range of appropriate tasks using the computer, confidently and, largely, independently. For example, pupils in a Year 9 class used the advanced features of a spreadsheet to investigate the costs involved in undertaking various journeys with a range of taxi companies. Most pupils were able to complete the task and to draw appropriate conclusions. Although several pupils required support with some aspects of their work, many were able to complete the task independently. A Year 11 class had recently completed a major course work project, which formed 60 per cent of the overall assessment for the GCSE course. The quality of the work already completed indicated that many pupils would eventually achieve very high grades final grades.

148. Teaching overall is good; only a limited amount is either better or worse than this. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan their lessons well. Most lessons involve an appropriate range of activities, with pupils working as a group or individually at computers. Many activities are well supported by detailed and high quality handouts. Teachers use good quality questioning techniques during group work, to check levels of understanding. Good

support is normally provided for pupils whilst they are working on an individual basis at computers. However, with larger groups, it is not always possible to adequately meet the varying needs of all pupils in the class. Although learning support assistants sometimes provide additional support for pupils with special educational needs, this is not always the case. Pupils' work is marked accurately, together with constructive comments where appropriate. Teachers keep good records of individual pupil's progress. The pace of learning in most lessons is well matched to pupils' needs. In a few classes, it is adversely affected by the need for sharing of computers. Overall pupils have a positive attitude to their ICT work. They are particularly well motivated when undertaking practical work. Although there are isolated incidences of challenging behaviour, which impede learning, overall behaviour is good.

149. ICT is managed effectively in the school. The specialist teachers work well as a team, so that good practice is shared. Schemes of work have been agreed, covering all aspects of the National Curriculum programmes of study, and learning materials are shared across the teaching team. Although individual teachers keep good records of pupils' progress, there is a lack of a systematic approach to the monitoring of pupils' progress. Targets are not set for individual pupils.
150. There is now good use of ICT in a number of subjects, including science and design and technology. Use is much more restricted in many other subjects, although schemes of work for most subjects contain references to the appropriate use of ICT. The main factor impeding a greater use of ICT in many subjects is a lack of access to computer resources. The ratio of pupils to modern computers is higher than found in similar schools elsewhere and this leads to restricted access for both pupils and departments. The school has recognised this and has detailed plans to increase the number of computers available.
151. The school has made very good progress since the last inspection. The discrete provision for ICT has been significantly increased, allowing the progressive development of pupils' skills. Courses leading to GCSE in information technology and office applications have been introduced. Pupils not opting for either of these qualifications undertake study towards the CLAIT qualification. Standards were below average at the time of the last inspection whereas, now, they are above average.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French

152. Standards in French are slightly lower than national standards. In relation to their prior attainment, pupils in the sixth form achieve appropriately but many pupils at Key Stages 3 and 4, including those with special educational needs, underachieve. This is partly because they are not receiving consistent teaching from experienced teachers and partly because detailed schemes of work have yet to be developed for all year groups, apart from Year 7.
153. The results of the teachers' assessments at the end of Year 9 were slightly below the national average. Inspection evidence shows that the standard of pupils' work in the current Year 9 is also just below that expected nationally for this stage of the course. Higher attaining pupils attain very high standards, as seen in an information communication and technology lesson, where they used their knowledge of computer programmes and applications to produce comic strips on the subject of ill health in French. Lower attaining pupils attain standards that are well below national expectations. In a lesson on the topic of the cinema, they recognised the names for different sorts of films and said whether or not they liked them, using basic vocabulary such as 'j'aime'.
154. GCSE results have improved over the past three years and were in line with national averages in 1999. They declined in 2000 to just below the proportion of A* to C grades awarded nationally. This was the same as those reported for the last inspection. Girls did better than boys, in line with national trends. A bigger proportion of the cohort was entered for the examination than before, but pupils did worse in French than in most of their other subjects and there were no A* grades.
155. Standards in the current Year 11 are also just below national expectations for this stage of the course. Higher attainers write high quality coursework on a range of subjects and include a variety

of unusual vocabulary and complex structures. Oral work is not as good. Pupils give basic answers and are not encouraged to extend their answers or vary their structures enough. Lower attainers complete writing frames on subjects such as the school uniform and use past tenses with considerable support. The group following the certificate of achievement course in Year 10 has completed all the work required to a satisfactory standard.

156. A level results have been below national averages in recent years, although numbers entering have been too small to render comparisons with national data valid. Standards in the current Year 13 is in line with national expectations; pupils are achieving appropriately. Pupils have well-developed skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing. They identify key issues from tapes about people coping with old age and use reading material on subjects such as the life of Rumanian president, Ion Iliescu, as a basis for extended written work.

157. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. Almost half of the lessons observed were judged to be unsatisfactory or poor. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make unsatisfactory progress. They underachieve. The best teaching was seen in the sixth form and in the higher attaining Year 11 group. In these lessons, there were high expectations both of behaviour and performance, supported by detailed, logical planning which resulted in satisfactory learning. Pupils have covered more work than is required to pass the examinations and, as a result, are secure and confident. They use helpful support sheets provided by the teacher to analyse the quality of their coursework and to understand the structure of the language. The weaknesses observed were mainly because classes are being taught by temporary, or inexperienced, teachers, or because teachers have not planned carefully enough to ensure that work is presented in a logical manner. In a Year 10 lesson, for example, lower attaining pupils completed a bank of activities that had been provided in the previous lesson, with no reminder from the teacher as to what they were doing or why they were doing it. The planning was sketchy; there was no sense of urgency or purpose and many wasted time chatting and off task. In a Year 9 lesson, a newly appointed teacher taught a lesson about the town and home area and was not aware that the set was a mixed ability group rather than a middle ability group. No departmental documentation had been provided in terms of schemes of work. Planning for this lesson was unsatisfactory, with only three activities listed for the hour-long session. As a result, pupils did not learn as much as they should have and did not make satisfactory progress.

158. Pupils are generally well behaved and motivated. Many bring established learning skills with them to lessons and use them effectively to support their learning. Problems occur when they do not have enough work to do and see no purpose to the activity. Then they respond with noise and disruption. The unsatisfactory behaviour in these lessons affects not only those pupils within the group who want to learn but also the pupils in rooms round about them, whose progress is affected by the neighbouring commotion.

Spanish

159. Spanish is currently taught in Year 8 to all pupils and to lower attaining pupils in Year 11. Only two lessons were observed, one at each key stage, and on the basis of this very small sample, teaching and learning are judged to be satisfactory overall. Key Stage 4 teaching was better than Key Stage 3, but there were significant strengths in both lessons. Planning is good and teachers have a clear idea of where they are going and how best to get there. Work is regularly tracked and monitored and all aspects of the courses are covered. At Key Stage 3, progress is restricted by the time allowance of one hour a week, which means that pupils do not have enough time to become familiar with the new language. At Key Stage 4, despite the challenging behaviour of some boys, the teacher manages to meet their needs and interests; most make good progress acquiring new vocabulary and developing the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Modern foreign languages

160. Since the last inspection there has been a significant turnover in staff. Standards have remained the same. Teaching has deteriorated, with a much higher proportion of the lessons seen judged to be unsatisfactory. There is still too much inconsistency between teachers, as a result of inadequate planning and documentation and a lack of rigorous monitoring of teaching and assessment. German was provided in the past for a small group of pupils; it was removed from the timetable so that more pupils could eventually study a second foreign language. Consequently, pupils have been unable to study a second foreign language, although Spanish has just been introduced for one hour a week in Year 8 and is available for the lowest attainers in Year 11. Assessment procedures are satisfactory, but teachers are not following them as carefully as they were at the time of the last inspection. Although display is adequate, it does not support pupils' learning enough or celebrate their achievements sufficiently.
161. With the arrival of the new head of department, several initiatives were put in place, including a work experience week, introduced for Year 13, which has had a very positive effect upon their oral standards. All pupils now study Spanish as a second language in Year 8. The SEG modular course has been introduced for Year 10 pupils, with a view to raising standards, and there is more access to information and communication technology. Assessment folders have been introduced for all pupils to enable teachers to track progress and to encourage pupils to comment on their own performance. Not every teacher is doing this yet however, and there are sets where there are no assessment folders and few recorded marks for pupils. There has been some monitoring of exercise books, but it did not identify these discrepancies, since there was no tracking back to mark books or to planning. The head of department has not been sufficiently supported in identifying and prioritising the main issues arising from the last inspection and in ensuring that major weaknesses such as the lack of schemes of work, were addressed during her first year. As a result of these weaknesses, and because of the staffing difficulties encountered in recent months, many pupils are not receiving their full entitlement to a foreign language during their five years of secondary schooling. As a result, both management, and improvement since the last inspection, are unsatisfactory.

MUSIC

162. The 2000 teacher assessments of pupils' attainment show standards to be broadly average. Evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that standards at age 14 are above the level expected for pupils of the same age nationally. The 2000 GCSE examination results were well above average, with 81 per cent of pupils gaining A* to C grades. These results were an improvement on the previous year. All candidates gained A* to G grades, which follows the pattern of earlier years. Inspection evidence confirms that pupils at the end of Key Stage 4 are attaining well above average standards. A level music was recently introduced and, in 2000, one candidate was awarded a grade C pass. Many more pupils are now showing an interest in examination music and this has coincided with the appointment of a new head of department, who has raised the profile of music within the school. There are currently 25 pupils in Years 10 and 11 studying music and a further 9 in Years 12 and 13.
163. Most pupils enter the school with average musical skills; all groups, including those with special educational needs, make good progress over time and achieve well at Key Stage 3. Pupils enjoy their music and have good rapport with their teachers. Year 7 pupils study song patterns and do vocal exercises as a preparation for their singing. They listen to extracts of African music and broaden their geographical knowledge by locating the countries concerned on a map of the world. Good listening and speaking skills were obvious in a Year 8 lesson, where mood and weather effects were discussed prior to hearing short extracts from Vivaldi's Four Seasons. Year 9 pupils improvise and compose, using harmonic and non-harmonic devices to make their work on advertisements sound more realistic. Some pupils set words to music to capture the mood and feelings of a special occasion.
164. For the small number of pupils taking music at Key Stage 4, standards are high and, overall, achievement is very good. Some pupils are recognised as being gifted and talented. Almost all have

good performing skills and many have passed associated board examinations. Progress has been so good that all pupils in Year 11 are on target to get A* to C grades at GCSE this year. A few pupils have annotated their work on computers at school and some use music packages at home. The standard of musicianship is very high in Years 12 and 13; pupils achieve well. Music plays a large part in pupils' lives, through their active participation in school musical activities and by being members of bands and orchestras run by the county music service. A few pupils play more than one instrument to a very high standard and some are planning to take up music as a career.

165. Pupils work well together and attitudes to music are very positive, creating the right conditions for their learning. Instruments and equipment are handled carefully and there is little sign of damage. Older pupils have good dialogue with teachers and talk intelligently about their work. There is no significant difference observed in the attainment of boys and girls.
166. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall at Key Stage 3 and very good at Key Stage 4 and post-16. This is due mainly to the head of department's enthusiasm and high expectations, which lead to sustained learning amongst most pupils. Both music teachers have good subject knowledge that enables pupils to enjoy a wide breadth of study across the musical skills of performing, composing, appraisal and listening. Much thought has gone into the preparation of the scheme of work, to give pupils a stimulating musical experience. As a result of good classroom management and careful planning of lessons, pupils generally behave well and make progress in their learning. The exception was one lesson where a continuous undercurrent of chatter, from both boys and girls, inhibited effective learning. Teaching at Key Stage 4 prepares pupils well for examinations in music, with coursework carefully monitored and appraisal done by both pupil and teacher together. As a result, pupils' understanding improves and they are able to focus their learning where it is needed most. Pupils in Years 12 and 13 are taught to take responsibility for their work and this enables them to work independently, with the teacher acting as a facilitator.
167. The music department is well led and managed and the head of department works hard to promote high standards for all. The scheme of work addresses all statutory requirements and very careful records and tape recordings of work are kept in accessible files. Work is marked regularly but teacher comments do not always give a focus for future development. An assessment policy is in place and is used; the new levels for music are on display in the department. As yet, no monitoring of teaching has taken place. The quality of accommodation is adequate but there are no additional practice areas attached to the music room, for group work to take place. The music department cannot accommodate two classes doing music at the same time and three lessons are taught in a non-specialist room. Music resources are adequate, but relatively few classroom instruments limit the development of pupils' creative abilities. ICT is available and used by pupils in examination classes. A further computer has recently been acquired for the use of pupils at Key Stage 3.
168. Since the last inspection standards have risen. By encouraging professional performers to visit the school regularly to give concerts and workshops, more pupils show an interest in music and are prepared to choose it as one of their options. More boys now play instruments and there is a better gender balance in the examination classes. The time allocation for music has been increased to that which is normally found in other schools and world music is included in the curriculum. Extra-curricular activities include singing groups, an orchestra and a few ad-hoc music ensembles, like the string quartet. Overall, there has been good improvement. The regular use of ICT, to enhance composition work at Key Stage 3, remains under developed as does the level of experimentation and discovery through group work.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

169. Standards in physical education are above average. Teachers' assessments in 2000 show that standards at age 14 are above those expected nationally. Evidence gathered during the inspection supports this judgement. The proportion of pupils attaining A* to C grades in the GCSE examinations in 2000 was significantly above national figures; results compared very favourably with results in other subjects in the school. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. A small group of pupils in 2000 took GCE A-level examination but the size of the group means that comparisons with national statistics are unreliable.

170. The above average standards at age 14 represent good achievement, given pupils' attainment on entry. By the end of Year 9, most pupils, including those with special educational needs, are competent in performing in a range of activities, such as swimming, gymnastics, athletics, rugby and netball. Their understanding of some of the physiological changes that occur when they warm up, and the reasons for increasing heart rate and stretching prior to exercise, is better than to be expected. Many pupils know the names of different muscle groups that are used for various activities, such as shot putting and javelin throwing, and are able to analyse a range of sporting skills successfully. Pupils have a good understanding of games tactics. For example, in a Year 9 basketball lesson, they knew the dribbling violations of both the double dribble and moving illegally with the ball.
171. In Year 11, standards are also above those expected for pupils' age. Pupils' skills and games concepts are well developed and they invariably show good levels of achievement in their work. For example, in both netball and rugby, pupils successfully transfer their previously learned skills into a full competitive game. Pupils studying for examination courses have a good knowledge of muscles, joints and the cardio-vascular system and they link this to movements. For example, when discussing the tennis serve and the rugby spin pass, pupils used the correct anatomical terms. All pupils enjoy dance; higher attaining pupils add gesture and feeling to their movements.
172. In the A-level and AS courses, standards seen are above average; pupils achieve well and demonstrate good analytical and evaluative skills. Year 12 pupils have a good understanding about exercise and its effect on heart rate. When comparing the impact of low and high rates of activity on the heart; their good knowledge helps them to work out quickly how the heart returns to normal. Pupils in Year 13 are able to apply the principles of training by progressive overload and to devise a training schedule for a range of different sports and scenarios.
173. Overall the quality of teaching is good; for post-16 students it is very good. Teachers have a good knowledge of physical education and understand the demands of examination courses very well. This has a positive impact upon pupils' learning, as teachers are able to set a good pace in lessons and select tasks and activities to promote pupils' understanding. For example, in a Year 11 lesson, the teacher's very good knowledge of related physiology was used to challenge pupils to observe, think and analyse what they had seen. This strategy enabled pupils to evaluate the tennis service and a football volley shot on goal successfully. Teachers use questions very well to reinforce pupils' knowledge and understanding. For instance, during a Year 13 theory lesson, very good questioning extended pupils' understanding of overload training. Teachers manage pupils very well. They make high demands for pupils to work with sustained effort and to behave well. As a consequence, the majority of pupils work hard and produce good results. Pupils have positive attitudes to the subject; most behave well and often very well. There are good relationships between pupils and staff, resulting in a good learning environment. In a few lessons, teaching is satisfactory rather than good or very good because a narrower range of strategies is used. For example, in a Year 7 gymnastics lesson, the teacher did not involve all pupils sufficiently well in learning. Teachers make sound use of information from individual educational plans in order to adapt their teaching strategies to meet individual pupil's needs.
174. A good and varied range of seasonal extra-curricular activities is offered for pupils at all levels; about a quarter of pupils are involved in the extra curricular programme. Recreation activities are provided, in addition to school teams. There are chances for able pupils to participate at district and regional levels. The school achieves well against other schools. These opportunities enhance standards and allow for both consolidation and development of a range of skills.
175. Leadership and management of the department are good; the head of department provides a clear educational direction. There is a good broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, which embraces the changes made by the recent curriculum 2000 update. However, a small amount of additional work is needed in order to bring assessment in line with this change. The departmental development plan is good, with clear success criteria, although these are not strongly aligned to pupil outcomes. The head of department undertakes evaluation of teaching, but this is not yet done in a regular and systematic manner. Although changing accommodation is unsatisfactory, overall, the availability of

accommodation is just adequate for teaching purposes. Further development, for example, of indoor games and dance, is constrained by the lack of a sports hall and dance studio.

176. Good improvements have been made since the last inspection as the majority of issues have been addressed successfully. However, the changing rooms are still inadequate. Standards of teaching and learning have improved. Examination results are significantly above average. Improvements have been made in both the curriculum and assessment arrangements, although use of assessment data to track pupils' progress is not in place.

VOCATIONAL COURSES AND OTHER POST-16 PROVISION

177. The effective collaborative arrangements with St Paul's College allow pupils to study subjects at A and AS level other than those reported upon in the preceding subject reports. In 2000, Year 13 pupils sat a broad range of A level examinations; these included business studies, Christian theology, economics, general studies, media studies and psychology. However, the collaborative arrangements mean that, often, the number of Bishop Wand pupils taking particular subjects is small; numbers are too few for comparisons with national examination data to be reliable or valid. The school also offers vocational programmes to post-16 pupils; these include intermediate courses in business and in leisure and recreation and advanced courses in business. Again, in 2000, the number of Year 13 pupils taking such courses was relatively low. However, around 83 per cent of pupils achieved success in their courses, compared with a success rate of 73 per cent nationally.
178. There is insufficient inspection evidence to make an overall judgement as to whether standards are as high as they should be at age 18, either for A and AS courses not already reported upon, or for vocational programmes. The collaborative arrangements mean that some subjects are taught only in the link school and thus were not observed during the inspection. However, three business studies lessons were observed, involving pupils studying the A level course and those taking vocational A levels. In all of these lessons, teaching was good, allowing pupils to achieve well. Standards of work seen were above the expected levels. This reflects the above average A level examination results in 2000, where ten of the eleven candidates taking business studies obtained an A or B grade.
179. In addition to the academic curriculum, a broad range of enrichment opportunities contributes significantly to pupils' personal development. For example, in a general studies session on health, pupils demonstrated that they were well informed and that they held strong views concerning the National Health Service. In another session, a counsellor from Relate helped pupils to explore and reflect upon situations involving conflict between adults.