

INSPECTION REPORT

PERINS COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Alresford, Hampshire

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116417

Headteacher: Mrs J Bernard

Reporting inspector: Mr R Holmes
2632

Dates of inspection: 26th – 29th March 2001

Inspection number: 187252

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Comprehensive

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 11 - 16

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Pound Hill
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Hampshire

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Appropriate authority: Hampshire

Name of chair of governors: Mr J Turnbull

Date of previous inspection: 4th March 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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14404	Alan Rolfe	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values Links and partnership Attendance and behaviour strategies Partnership with parents Administration systems
19528	Roland Portsmouth	Team inspector	Mathematics	
3758	Tony Barringer	Team inspector	English English as an additional language	
3937	John Seed	Team inspector	Science	
10060	David Gutmann	Team inspector	Information and communication technology	Learning resources
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2971	Kath Hooper	Team inspector	Design and technology	
20247	Roger Parry	Team inspector	Geography Special educational needs	
5832	Mike Morton-Thorpe	Team inspector	History	Assessment
1288	Dorothy Barraclough	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages	
18846	Philip Priest	Team inspector	Music	Staffing, induction and training
2628	Jim Edwards	Team inspector	Physical education	Careers Welfare, health and Safety
19599	Carmen Markham	Team inspector	Religious education	Extra-curricular activities Spiritual, social and moral care

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Perins Community School is a mixed comprehensive, taking boys and girls between the ages of 11 and 16. There are currently 761 pupils on roll, making it smaller than most secondary schools. It serves the prosperous small town of Alresford and its surrounding rural area. Numbers have risen in recent years as the school's reputation has grown. Almost all pupils are white and have English as their first language. Only two per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well below the national average.

When they come into the school at 11 years of age, pupils' attainment is higher than is usually found in comprehensive schools. It was above average in 1996 and has risen to well above average in 2000. Just over 16 per cent of pupils are on the school's register for special educational needs, which is similar to the proportion found in most schools, but the proportion with statements for their special educational needs is well below average. The inspection of this school included a detailed inspection of its provision for pupils with special educational needs.

The current headteacher took up her post in September 2000, following the previous headteacher who had been in post since 1994 and had presided over a significant improvement in the school's performance.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Perins is a very good school. Pupils achieve particularly high standards as a result of very good teaching and their own very positive attitudes to learning. They develop lively self-confidence and flourish in the school's caring and stimulating atmosphere. The headteacher and management team are continuing to take the school forwards and are broadening its achievements. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils make very good progress and reach high standards.
- Teaching is very good and pupils have very positive attitudes to learning.
- Behaviour is very good.
- Pupils develop well in maturity and self-confidence.
- The school takes good care of the pupils and uses assessment very effectively to help them progress.
- Management is very effective.
- Links with the community are strong.
- There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities.

What could be improved

- Arrangements for religious education at Key Stage 4.
- The way personal and social education is taught.
- The support for pupils with special educational needs in some lessons.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The last inspection was in March 1996. Since then, the school has made very good progress. The report identified five main areas for development. Four have been addressed successfully but the school does not have a daily act of collective worship. The quality of teaching is much better than it was and standards of attainment have risen greatly, particularly for the boys.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 16 year olds based on average point scores in GCSE.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
Key Stage 3	A	A	A	A
GCSE examinations	A	A	A	A

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

Standards are high, even considering the good start that pupils have when they come into the school.

At Key Stage 3, results in the tests for English, mathematics and science have been well above average for the last few years. Results in English were unusually low for Perins in 2000, above the national average but well below results achieved in similar schools. In science, results were well above the national average and results in similar schools. Mathematics results were even higher, in the top five per cent of similar schools.

In the work seen in school at Key Stage 3, pupils are reaching the high standards indicated by the test results in mathematics and science. Their work in English is at a similarly high level, much better than the test results would indicate. In other subjects, standards are well above average in art and history, above average in design and technology, information and communication technology (ICT), music and religious education. They are in line with expectations in physical education and in modern foreign languages. Considering their starting points in these subjects, pupils are making good progress and achieving well.

Results at GCSE are very high and rising faster than the national trend. Overall, girls perform slightly better than boys, but the difference is far less than usually found. In 2000, the proportion of pupils achieving 5 or more passes at grade C or better was well above the national average and the average for similar schools. Almost all pupils achieved 5 or more passes at grade G or above and this puts Perins in the top 5 per cent of schools in the country for this category. These results represent very good progress during the key stage, building on the high results achieved at Key Stage 3. GCSE results are above and often well above their national average in all subjects, apart from modern foreign languages, where they are in line.

Pupils make very good progress throughout the school as a result of very effective teaching, closely focused on what they need to learn next. Pupils with special educational needs make equally good progress in most lessons, but, in a few cases where they do not get specialist support, their progress is slower.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very positive attitudes to the school. Their enthusiasm and willingness to learn play a big part in the success they achieve.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good in class and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Strong area. Pupils develop very well in self-assurance and maturity. Relationships are very good.
Attendance	Good overall. Almost all pupils attend very regularly, but a few have poor attendance records.

The school aim of "striving for excellence" is a reality. Pupil and staff work very well together. Their mutual trust and respect are important features in the school's success.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Teaching is very good overall. Over 40 per cent of lessons were very good or excellent and a further 35 per cent were good. Almost all the rest were satisfactory, with only two per cent less than satisfactory. This is a very strong picture and a significant improvement since the last inspection.

Teaching is very good throughout the school in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and also in history, drama and physical education. Teaching is also very good at Key Stage 4 in art and geography. Elsewhere, teaching is good, apart from religious education at Key Stage 4 where the involvement of non-specialists makes it unsatisfactory and personal and social education (PSE) at Key Stage 4 where it is just satisfactory.

Teachers know their subjects well and plan carefully, often making very good use of assessment information so that the work matches pupils' needs very accurately. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress generally, but a few teachers do not adjust their materials and methods enough. Lessons are often lively and stimulating; others achieve similar success through an accumulation of solidly good features and well-established routines. Pupils respond particularly well in almost all lessons. They have come to expect to be taught well and have become confident learners. They share their teacher's high expectations of what they can do.

Pupils are encouraged to think about their work and discuss what they are doing. This deepens their understanding as well as developing their ability to express themselves.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Broad and balanced at Key Stage 3. There is a wide range of GCSE courses at Key Stage 4 but few alternatives. All pupils do not follow a design and technology course as they should and the time for religious education is not sufficient to cover the requirements of the agreed syllabus. Lessons in PSE do not contribute well enough to the pupils' good personal development.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good, well-organised provision through specialist teaching. It is developing well but teachers do not focus their support well enough in a few lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Provision for spiritual development is sound, with particular strengths in English, art and religious education. Moral development is very good, cultural development is good and social development is excellent. Pupils take on responsibility willingly and grow in maturity.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes good care of its pupils and systems have been improved considerably since the last inspection. Assessment is used very effectively to help pupils make progress.

The school has good links with parents; their support often plays a big part in their children's success at the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Management has been strongly focused on raising standards in which it has been very successful. The new headteacher is continuing to take the school forwards, providing very good leadership and broadening its achievements. She is supported well by senior managers and staff morale is high. Changes to the pastoral management structures have been completed successfully; the way subjects are managed is still undergoing change.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors have a very clear understanding of the school, use their knowledge and skills very effectively and carry out their duties successfully.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school monitors its overall performance very effectively, setting realistic targets and addressing weaknesses appropriately.
The strategic use of resources	Spending is planned carefully and closely linked to priorities.

The school has sufficient, well-qualified staff and arrangements for staff development are good. Resources for learning are good. The number and quality of computers, in particular, are much better than at the time of the last inspection. Some aspects of the school's accommodation, such as the sports hall, are good, but its increasing number of pupils is leading to shortages of space. There are plans for new buildings which will address this. Spending decisions are taken wisely after careful consideration of cost and quality and appropriately wide consultation.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • Pupils make good progress. • Teaching is good. • School is approachable. • Pupils are expected to work hard. • School is well led and managed. • Children are helped to grow in maturity. • There is a good range of extra activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More information about pupils' progress. • More chance to be involved in school. • The amount of homework; some think there is too much and other think there is too little.

The inspection team agrees with the parents' overwhelmingly positive views of the school. Homework was set appropriately during the inspection and plays an important part in the progress pupils make. The information that parents receive through reports is generally good, but there is too much variation between different subjects. The school is addressing this issue and also providing earlier opportunities for parents to see how pupils have settled down in Year 7.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Pupils' levels of attainment when they join Perins at the age of 11 is higher than in most schools and is rising. In 1997, when the current Year 11 joined the school, the scores they achieved in the National Curriculum test at the end of primary school and in standardised cognitive ability tests (CAT) were above average. The equivalent results for the current Year 7 pupils, who joined in 2000, are well above average, with many more pupils of high ability and many fewer low-ability pupils than in most comprehensive schools.
2. In the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 3, when most pupils are 14 years old, results in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science have been well above average for the last three years. In 2000, results in English were unusually low and the school has had a sample of papers re-marked and their scores have been improved. This facility is only made available by the examining authority for a limited number of papers and it is likely that others would also have improved scores if they were able to be re-marked. As they stand, English results for 2000 are above the national average but well below the results of schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. Results in science are well above those in similar schools and those for mathematics are very high, in the top 5 per cent of school in the country. Overall, the results in 2000 for all three subjects are well above those achieved in similar schools and represents good progress for the pupils from the good results they achieved in the tests they took at the end of primary school. The trend in results at Key Stage 3 has been upwards for mathematics and science but with a dip in English as explained above. As a result, the overall trend has remained well above the national figure but has not risen quite as quickly. Boys and girls have performed well above their national averages by about the same amount, apart from in science where boys have done a little better than girls.
3. The standard of work seen in the school at Key Stage 3 match these results, being very high in mathematics and high in science. They are also high in English, further indicating that the test results for 2000 were an aberration. In other subjects by the end of the key stage, standards are well above average in art and history, above average in design and technology, geography, ICT, music and religious education. They are in line with expectations in modern foreign languages and physical education. Considering their starting points at the beginning of the key stage in these subjects, pupils are making good progress and achieving well.
4. Results at GCSE are very high and rising faster than the national trend. Over 80 per cent of pupils achieved five or more passes at grade C and above, or the equivalent level in GNVQ examinations, in 2000. This is well above the national average of 47 per cent. It is also well above the results achieved by schools with a similarly small proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. Even considering that the pupils' standards were above average when they joined the school, these results represent very good progress. Almost all pupils achieved five or more A* - G grades which put Perins in the top five percent of schools in the country for this category. The average point score for pupils, which takes into account all grades awarded, is also well above the national average and the results achieved by pupils in similar schools. This represents very good progress during the key stage.
5. The GCSE results for all subjects are above and often well above their national average, apart from modern foreign languages where they are in line. The highest results for 2000 were in history, design and technology, science and mathematics. Results in art, business studies and geography, although above national averages, were not as good as other subjects in the school. Considering pupils' starting point, the subjects which achieve most progress during the key stage are history, ICT and English literature. Pupils do not do as well in GCSE in art, French and geography as the high grades they achieved at the end of Key Stage 3 would predict.
6. The standards of work seen in the key stage match these results in almost all subjects. Pupils make very good progress in the key stage, particularly in English, mathematics, science, history and

physical education and achieve well as a result of highly effective teaching. Religious education is the only subject where pupils do not do well enough and standards are lower than usual for their age. This is partly because there is not enough time to teach it properly in the key stage, a number of non-specialist teachers are involved, it is not an examination subject and pupils do not see it as important.

7. Pupils whose special educational need relates to reading are withdrawn from their reading sessions in English. They join small groups to work with a teacher on aspects of their reading skills, for example to increase the speed of reading where the pupil already understands the information. They return to their classes after a short time. Most pupils improve their reading significantly by the end of their first two years in the school, or before. Some pupils use a computer program independently to improve reading, spelling and number work. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in improving their basic skills so that they achieve well in accredited courses by the end of Key Stage 4. Pupils who have emotional or behavioural difficulties follow a plan arranged by the school's special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), sometimes with input from an agency outside the school, such as an educational psychologist. These pupils usually make good progress in establishing improved relationships over a period of time.
8. Pupils make very good progress throughout the school as a result of very effective teaching, which is closely focussed on what they need to learn next. Pupils with special educational needs make equally good progress in most lessons, but in a few cases where they do not get specialist support, their progress is slower.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils' attitudes to learning and standards of behaviour are very good throughout the school. These very positive attitudes and very good behaviour have a significant impact on pupils' learning.
10. Almost all pupils are keen and eager to come to school, they listen carefully to their teachers' instructions and sustain their concentration for appropriate periods of time. They are interested in their work and are confident in expressing their views, which they know will be listened to and valued. Even the youngest pupils show a mature and responsible approach to their lessons. For example, in a Year 7 personal and social education lesson when involved in a classroom discussion relating to bullying, pupils were prepared to challenge the suggested methods to combat bullying they had seen on a video and to give constructive alternative strategies to combat bullying. The majority of pupils take a pride in their work and are willing to show and discuss their work.
11. Overall, pupil behaviour is very good. In virtually all lessons seen, behaviour was good and in many cases very good. In only a very small number of lessons was there any evidence of unsatisfactory behaviour or poor attitudes to learning.
12. Outside lessons, the majority of pupils are well behaved when they are moving about the site between lessons, at break and lunchtime. They move about the school in an orderly manner, particularly on stairs and in corridors. Pupils are respectful towards adults in the school and were often observed holding doors open for adults. Pupils treat school equipment with care and respect, there is no evidence of any graffiti and the school grounds are generally litter free. Bullying is a very occasional problem. The school has an anti-bullying policy which enables it to react quickly and positively. Pupils indicated that they were aware of the anti-bullying policy and where to go if they needed assistance. Whilst inspectors observed very little inappropriate behaviour, scrutiny of the school's exclusion records indicate that a small number of pupils have been subject to fixed term exclusions and one pupil permanently excluded from the school as a result of serious violation of the school code of conduct. Reasons for exclusions are carefully considered and correct procedures followed. The school's use of exclusion has been appropriate in the circumstances.
13. Pupils make very good progress in their personal development. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and so too are relationships between pupils. Almost all pupils are courteous to each other and staff. They work very well together and support each other well when working in pairs and small groups. They are willing to listen to and consider the views of others. These very good

relationships have a positive impact on pupils' learning. Pupils in all year groups show good levels of confidence and maturity and show respect for the feeling, values and beliefs of others. Pupils in all year groups show a willingness to take additional responsibilities, undertaking a range of duties as classroom monitors, and older pupils have many opportunities for taking responsibilities through house councils and particularly the prefect system. They help to prevent bullying, assist younger pupils, for example through paired reading, and support form tutors. Most pupils show responsible attitudes in their learning and are developing their skills of studying independently. Many pupils take an active part in the day-to-day life of the school, for example in supporting the house councils, prefect system and the wide range of extra-curricular activities which are organised by teaching staff.

14. Overall attendance is good. The attendance rate is above national averages and unauthorised absence is below national averages. However, a significant minority, almost nine percent of pupils, have poor attendance records, partly as a result of local flooding in the spring term. Registration is undertaken morning and afternoon and meets statutory requirements. Use of the afternoon registration period is variable; some pupils are involved in good quality learning activities whilst, in others, there are few if any learning opportunities.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching is very good. Over 40 per cent of lessons were very good or excellent and a further 35 per cent were good. Almost all of the remainder were satisfactory, with less than two per cent unsatisfactory. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, even though teaching was good at that time. The school has taken the quality of teaching very seriously, identifying the features of successful teaching which have most impact on pupils' performance and supporting teachers in analysing their own methods to see where they could be improved. As a result, lessons are very purposeful and consistently successful. Pupils have learnt to expect this quality and have developed very good attitudes and habits of learning. Their motivation and positive approach reinforce the teachers' commitment and further strengthens the learning process, leading to the high standards and good progress achieved.
16. Teaching is very good throughout the school in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and also in history, drama and physical education. Teaching is also very good at Key Stage 4 in art and geography. Elsewhere, teaching is good, apart from in religious education at Key Stage 4 where the involvement of non-specialists makes it unsatisfactory, and personal and social education (PSE) at Key Stage 4, where it is just satisfactory.
17. Lessons are carefully planned. Teachers make good use of the extensive setting arrangements to match work to the general level of the group. In many subjects they also use the extensive and detailed assessment information to identify how individuals can be helped to make better progress and provide the appropriate support. This is successful throughout the school and particularly effective in GCSE courses. Pupils who might well have achieved a pass at grade D or E are being helped to reach a grade C or even B, those who are already doing well are prepared for the higher grades and those struggling with a subject are encouraged to achieve at least a grade E pass.
18. Teachers know their subjects well and often make lessons lively and interesting, for example in history using a visit to Germany very effectively to bring alive a lesson on the Weimar Republic. Pupils are expected to work hard, to think about what they are doing and to discuss things. This is a feature of lessons in many subjects and is having a very positive effect on deepening pupils' knowledge, as well as developing their self-confidence and ability to express themselves clearly.
19. Whilst some teachers achieve their success through the flair and excitement they introduce, others rely more on a carefully crafted accumulation of features during a lesson, none of which are spectacular, but, taken together, result in pupils making solid and consistent progress. Many mathematics lessons, for example, have these characteristics. They include clear explanations, skilful questioning and well-established routines that lead pupils to grow in confidence and make rapid progress.

20. Pupils behave well in almost all lessons. There is a high level of trust and respect between teachers and pupils and this co-operative ethos is an important factor in the school's success. Significantly, poorly managed behaviour was a feature of the three lessons where teaching was less than satisfactory. In two of these, groups of pupils responded uncharacteristically badly to lessons in PSE. Teachers did not manage the situations well enough but pupils' attitudes to what they saw as not being proper lessons were also a factor.
21. All teachers receive details of pupils with special educational needs and their targets for improvement. In many lessons, teachers plan well to provide suitably matched materials and tasks. They take account of pupils' language development in the questions they pose. Teachers work very closely with special needs assistants. The assistants give very valuable support to pupils with special educational needs so that they learn independently and make good progress. However, good practice is not consistent across the curriculum, or within all subjects. For example, in modern foreign languages and geography, teachers need to take more account of the learning targets specified in pupils' individual education plans.

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

22. The curriculum in Key Stage 3 is good. At Key Stage 4 it has many strong features but is unsatisfactory as it fails to meet all the statutory requirements. Design and technology is not taught to all pupils in Key Stage 4. There is also insufficient time for religious education and the requirements for information and communication technology across the curriculum are not in place.
23. The Key Stage 3 curriculum is broad and balanced, with an appropriate time allocation to the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. However, in Key Stage 4, the pattern of option choices does not ensure that all pupils receive a balanced curriculum. This was an issue in the last inspection. There are also insufficient vocational courses to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met, now that numbers have grown. The school improvement plan indicates that the school is aware of all these issues and a member of the senior management team has been appointed to start a curriculum review later this year.
24. The school has made good progress in the development of numeracy and literacy across the curriculum. However, there are currently no whole school policies that support provision for the needs of gifted and talented pupils. The system of setting pupils from Year 8 and a flexible choice of options which enables pupils to follow courses in three sciences, statistics or two humanities is currently seen as a means of providing for gifted pupils. The school improvement plan also seeks to address this issue this year. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and teachers generally make good use of individual education plans.
25. The school has tried to address the issues of organisation relating to personal and social education (PSE) in both key stages identified in the last inspection report. However, this provision continues to be unsatisfactory overall, although there are some good features in the provision of whole days for PSE and some of the work on study skills in Year 7. In Key Stage 3, PSE is delivered through form tutors and, in Key Stage 4, teachers deliver units in a carousel arrangement with religious education. External speakers are involved in delivering PSE days that address issues including sex, health and drugs education. Overall, the quality of the PSE delivered to pupils is unsatisfactory. It depends very much on the skills and commitment of the tutor at both key stages and there is too little monitoring of plans, provision and pupils' work. These vary considerably and, therefore, pupils are not all receiving the quality of provision they are entitled to. The lack of challenge in some of these lessons leads to poor behaviour. However, pupils in the school are usually mature and responsible in terms of behaviour and a PSE programme that recognises the needs and the abilities of the pupils would be more appropriate.
26. The school's provision for social inclusion is satisfactory. The needs of pupils with special educational needs are met effectively by the school and no pupils are excluded from school activities on the

grounds of cost. The gap between boys and girls in terms of learning is smaller in most subjects in the school than nationally and the school is continuing to work to close the gap further.

27. Careers education is taught in the tutor period for a 20 minute session in the week by form tutors. They are supported very well by the careers co-ordinator. The provision of both careers education and guidance for pupils is good. It begins in Year 9 when pupils are supported in their option choices for Key Stage 4. Pupils and parents report that they are pleased with this support. In the lessons observed, pupils in Year 10 were preparing for their work experience, which takes place for two weeks in the summer term. The school has been successful in finding placements for all pupils with support from Trident. The local careers adviser from Southern Careers offers very good support to the school and ensures that all pupils in Year 11 are interviewed before they leave school. The school is appreciative of support from the local Rotary Club, which arranges mock interviews for pupils. Links with the local further education colleges are good and this ensures a smooth transfer for pupils who intend to move into the next stage of education. Those in the community with local businesses and industry are also positive. Pupils have access to a well-organised careers library with a range of supportive materials. Computer software is available to support and enhance pupils' opportunities.
28. The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good overall. The school's pastoral policy supports this area and departments have addressed it in their development plans, but most departments do not refer to it in their policies. A teacher in school has the responsibility for co-ordinating this provision.
29. The provision for the social development of pupils is excellent. Systems are in place to encourage pupils to support each other and to be responsible in their attitudes to work, to others and to their environment. The house system, the School Council and the paired reading scheme are examples of this provision. Relationships within the school are very good and pupils work well in teams. Provision for the moral development of pupils is very good and pupils know the difference between right and wrong. They are also aware that many moral issues are complex and that personal belief is an important factor in terms of making decisions. Many subjects in the curriculum make a significant contribution in this area, including mathematics, religious education, drama and physical education. Collective worship also makes a very important contribution. For example, the assemblies on the Taliban destruction of Buddhist statues and on icons demonstrating beliefs and values were very powerful and invited pupils to think about moral issues. However, arrangements for collective worship do not meet statutory requirements.
30. Provision for cultural development is good, although some pupils have difficulty in appreciating the huge diversity of religious belief in Britain. The school has special days devoted to developing cross-cultural experience, for example the Africa Day. History and modern foreign languages organise visits to Europe, while religious education develops an understanding of faith traditions and English, art and music explore local, national and global traditions. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Relationships in the school are very good, every individual is valued and subjects like religious education, art, history, geography and music make a significant contribution to this area. However, only one of the three acts of collective worship observed had a strong spiritual content and some subjects are unclear about how to include the spiritual dimension in their work. The school is aware that more work is required in this area.
31. The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good and most pupils take advantage of the opportunities that are on offer. There is a range of activities to meet the needs and interests of all pupils. The school is very involved with a range of sporting activities and competitions with other schools. Twenty-five per cent of pupils have additional tuition in music and after-school study and computer clubs are very popular. The school has regular drama productions and visits to theatres and art galleries are an important part of the life of the school. There is good support for planned visits to Europe. Parents and students value the time given by teachers.
32. The school's partnership with the community is very good. The school is committed to providing facilities for all members of the local community and the school's sports facilities, including the health and fitness centre, are used extensively by local residents. Indeed, the school's involvement in the local community includes links with Hampshire County Council, Winchester City Council. The Sports

Council and the Football Trust has helped to provide very good sporting facilities for both the school and community, including an all weather pitch and floodlighting system. The school has strong links with both amateur and professional sports club and has, for example, received football coaching from Southampton Football Club. The school has developed good links with the local business and industrial community. All pupils in Year 10 benefit from these links in terms of work experience and in Year 11 from guest speakers who advise pupils on apprenticeships and career opportunities. Pupils greatly appreciate the mock job interviews undertaken by the local Rotary Club.

33. Links with partner institutions are very good. The school has appointed a liaison teacher to oversee the transition from junior school to secondary school. There are good procedures in place to ensure a smooth transition. The liaison teacher meets with Year 6 staff to ensure all relevant information relating to pupils' academic and personal development is taken into consideration when forming class lists. Parents receive good quality information about the transition arrangements and visit the school with their children towards the end of the summer term. Year 6 pupils have a taster day at the school during which they attend lessons, meet with their form tutor and familiarise themselves with their new environment.
34. All pupils at the end of Key Stage 4 receive good quality information on their academic achievements and personal development through their records of achievement. There are good links with local colleges and representatives from here come into school to talk to Year 11 pupils.
35. The school provides a number of vocational and life skills courses that give alternative accreditation to some pupils with special educational needs. For some time, a life skills course (ASDAN) has provided an alternative to modern foreign languages from Year 9 onwards. In 1996 GNVQ manufacturing was successfully introduced and places more appropriate demands on pupils. For this reason, it is planned to introduce GNVQ Leisure and Tourism in the new school year and discontinue the ASDAN course. Pupils with special educational needs also benefit from the school's work-related learning scheme which reduces the number of academic subjects they study and includes work placements for a period of time. In mathematics, pupils with special educational needs are very well prepared for GCSE through a carefully stepped scheme starting in Year 9. Each task is very well matched to the pupils' previous level and their progress is accurately monitored. As they move into Key Stage 4, steps in the scheme relate to GCSE grades so that pupils are entered with confidence for the most relevant level.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The quality of pastoral care for pupils throughout the school is good. The school has made considerable improvements since the last inspection report. There is a successful house system in which heads of house and tutors play a major role. The head of pupil support has overall responsibility for the care of pupils. The role of the tutor has now been clarified and tutors know their pupils well. The tutor period is well organised and used effectively by most staff. Tutors meet pupils for 20 minutes on three occasions in most weeks. Pupil planners are regularly checked to ensure coverage of homework and progress in subjects. Parents have the opportunity to comment in the planners if they wish. Both tutors and subject teachers monitor pupils' academic progress and targets for improvement are set. Reviews take place twice a year between tutors and pupils and pupils have a clear knowledge of what is expected of them. Pupils on the GCSE courses also know their expected grades for the examination and are given targets to help them improve.
37. Overall, the school's procedures for monitoring attendance are satisfactory. Form tutors monitor pupils' attendance and follow up reasons for any unexplained absences, writing to parents should this be necessary. Pupils receive certificates for good attendance. However, the monitoring of the attendance of pupils with poor attendance is not as effective as it could be. The school does not refer pupils to the education welfare officer (EWO) until their attendance falls below 75 per cent. There are approximately 9 per cent of pupils with attendance records below 85 per cent, of whom only a small number have been referred to the EWO, even though some have breached the 75 per cent attendance criteria.

38. The school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. The school has high expectations of good behaviour, which feature in the school's behaviour policy. The school system of rewards and sanctions is well known to pupils who are supportive of these procedures and accept the principle of sanctions as an appropriate response to poor behaviour. In the event of repeated poor behaviour, the school has a comprehensive behaviour management policy, which includes a behavioural analysis procedure. This is used to draw up an individual behaviour management plan after discussions with the pupil and parents.
39. Pupils behaved very well and inspectors did not observe any bullying or any other type of oppressive behaviour. Informal discussions with pupils indicated that bullying is an occasional problem. However, the school has in place an anti-bullying policy and all pupils have a copy of these procedures in their homework diary. Pupils are aware of how to seek assistance should this be necessary and are confident that appropriate assistance would be forthcoming should they need it.
40. The arrangements for child protection are good and support from the social services is satisfactory. The health and safety policy is in need of updating to ensure that risk assessments and publications in the school are revised. Footpaths are uneven in some parts of the school and some steps have been identified as a hazard. These should be put out of bounds to pupils.
41. Procedures for the assessment of students' attainment and progress throughout the school are very good. Assessment data is gathered from tests and examinations and is used effectively to compare students' achievements across subjects and with local and national standards. For example, in Year 7, Key Stage 2 data on National Curriculum levels are combined with the school's standardised test results and LEA target grades. These are given to departments for use in setting students. This information is added to during Key Stage 3 by regular subject testing and annual end of year examinations. Senior managers provide departments with data at the end of Key Stage 3. Students are given opportunities to be involved through consultations with pastoral and teaching staff to discuss grades and set targets. This is a very extensive and thorough system which has played a major part in raising standards.
42. Senior managers are training staff in methods of interpreting and using statistical evidence, such as residual scores in Key Stage 4, and providing them with data collected from a variety of sources. As a result, staff are provided with the tools to analyse trends in student performance and predict potential outcomes for both individual students and departments.
43. There is a strong emphasis on day-to-day assessment by departments and all departments test pupils regularly. Within departments, assessment data is being used to guide curriculum planning. An example of good practice can be found in history where each year group in Key Stage 3 has four assessments per year targeted on National Curriculum learning objectives, together with end of year examinations. Skills Progress Charts record levels of attainment and are the basis for reporting to parents. End of Key Stage 3 levels provide a basis for predictions of GCSE grades. Assessment at Key Stage 4 follows GCSE criteria. Outcomes form the basis for discussion and target-setting in Year 11.
44. As part of its continuing work in this area, the school has begun to analyse variations in attainment of boys and girls between subjects and sets to determine whether examples of good practice in teaching can be identified and shared across the curriculum. It is seeking to develop marking by levels and to analyse value-added between entry in Year 7 and leaving school in Year 11. It is also arranging for senior managers to meet with heads of departments to discuss GCSE results in greater depth and detail.
45. Pupils with special educational needs are identified through assessments when they enter the school. Many are already known from primary school liaison. English and mathematics teachers identify targets for improvement for each pupil in consultation with special needs assistants. The SENCO and special needs assistants write the targets and all teachers receive copies to assist with lesson planning. The SENCO and heads of houses agree targets for pupils with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The SENCO reviews targets termly to assess what progress is made. The school meets

statutory arrangements for annual review of pupils with statements of special needs. The SENCO arranges for examination concessions where these are needed.

46. Special needs assistants also give support as lunchtime supervisors. Pupils with special educational needs and other pupils, therefore, gain from their reassuring presence when needed outside lessons.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. Overall, parents have very positive views of the school. Parents at the parents' meeting were very supportive of the school. However, they had some concerns about homework and some lack of communications with parents. Information from parents' questionnaires indicate that parents are pleased with standards of behaviour, the quality of teaching, the expectation that their children will work hard and the way the school is led and managed. The majority of parents also indicated that their children enjoyed coming to school, that the school is helping their children to become more mature and the school provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Evidence from the inspection confirms these positive views of the school. A significant minority of parents expressed concerns about the amount of homework that their children received. Evidence from the inspection indicated that there had been some problems with the pattern of homework and this has now been addressed. Inspectors consider that homework makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning.
48. Overall, the quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory. The school prospectus and Annual Governors' Report provide a wide range of information about the school and its activities. Termly newsletters, which include a calendar of events for the academic year and extensive information about school sports, ensures parents are aware of current school issues. However, over a quarter of parents who returned the questionnaire stated that they did not get enough information about their children's progress and that the school does not work closely with parents. Parents are invited to parents' consultation evenings once a year at which time they can discuss with teachers their children's progress. In addition, parents receive an interim report in the autumn term and a profile report in the summer term. The quality of pupils' annual reports are variable and, on occasions, do not give sufficient information about pupils' strengths and weaknesses and what they need to do to improve. In the current academic year, the arrangements for Year 7 tutor group meetings with parents have not been effective as they could have been. The inspection team agrees that more could be done in these areas.
49. Overall, parents' contribution to their children's learning is good. Whilst few parents help directly in school, they provide valuable support to enable their children to be involved in a range of extra-curricular activities, particularly sport related activities and music, where some 25 per cent of pupils receive extra instrumental tuition. Most parents support their children's learning at home; they view and sign the homework diary and many use it as an effective means of communication between home and school. The involvement of parents whose children have special educational needs is very good. The governor responsible for special educational needs speaks to new parents about the school's special educational needs arrangements and parents are provided with a simplified code of practice. Most parents attend the review meetings and their opinions are valued and used in the development of pupils' individual education plans. There is an active Parent Teacher Association which organises social and fund raising events that help to provide money to buy additional equipment and resources for the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. The current headteacher took up her post in September 2000 following a headteacher who had led the school for the previous six years. During this time, management under his leadership maintained an intense focus on raising academic standards, holding pupils and teachers closely accountable for their performances. This has been remarkably successful, with standards at GCSE rising from a little above the national average in 1994 to well above in 2000. When the head moved to another post, governors analysed the situation of the school very carefully and decided that its continued development needed a different approach from management, one which built morale by involving more staff in making decisions and valued a wider range of pupils' achievements. The present headteacher

is providing very good leadership and has already made a significant difference. Whilst continuing to set high expectations for the quality of work done by staff and pupils, she has emphasised the importance given to responding to pupils' individual needs and has established an effective leadership group with responsibilities covering the major aspects of progress in the school.

51. A review of the school's aims has been used successfully to involve all staff in agreeing the school's direction and re-affirming and extending the commitment to excellence. The leadership group, made up of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and three assistant headteachers, all have clear roles and significant targets which are central to the school's continued development. They work very effectively together, making good use of their range of different and complementary skills. The system for pastoral management has recently been re established, continuing the three house system, but making it separate from the previous faculty structure. This is working well, giving clear lines of responsibility and maintaining the expectation that head of house will have an overview of pupils' progress in all aspects of school life. Leadership in subjects is almost all very effective and there are plans to replace the current grouping with a clearer and more logical structure, but this is not as well advanced as the pastoral re-structuring.
52. The SENCO has a clear vision of how the school should provide for pupils with special educational needs. She is gradually improving the awareness of all staff to their shared roles in this provision through professional development and meetings. She is monitoring lessons that include pupils with special educational needs. The governor with responsibility for special needs provision strongly supports the SENCO and represents pupils' and parents' interests vigorously. The SENCO is line managed by the headteacher who gives good support. The school provides additional funding from the budget to meet the costs of further special needs support and major resources, such as computers and software programs.
53. The governing body has a very good understanding of the school. Individual governors are linked to departments or take a particular interest in aspects of the school, such as special educational needs; they play an active role, attending departmental meetings and contributing sensitively to discussions. As a result, they have an accurate picture of how the school is working, which they are able to share with other governors at their meetings. They are well-informed about standards in subjects by receiving careful analysis of performance data. Financial information is also presented well by the bursar so that governors can make well informed decisions about spending. Governors carry out these duties conscientiously and very effectively. Statutory requirements are met, apart from the provision of design and technology for all at Key Stage 4 and the requirements for a daily act of collective worship.
54. A new school improvement plan has recently been produced. The process has involved wide consultation with staff and has been effective in establishing the new approach to staff involvement, as well as producing a well-focused document for school development. The plan identifies significant areas for development and assigns responsibility for their completion.
55. The finances of the school are very well managed. The governing body has a good knowledge of the school's strategic financial planning and the principles of "best value". The school benefits from its relationship with Perins Community Trust which has provided substantial additional funding. For example, the trust donated a considerable sum towards the purchase of the school's minibus. The responsibilities of the governing body, its committee, including the finance committee, the headteacher and staff are clearly defined and limits of delegate authority have been established.
56. The headteacher and school bursar work well together to ensure effective financial procedures are in place. There is a clearly defined budgetary cycle which provides a continuous process of financial monitoring and control. The bursar ensures that the school applies the principles of best value when negotiating contracts with suppliers. The school has acted upon all recommendations contained in the latest audit report. Good use is made of specific grants, such as those for pupils with special educational needs and staff development training.
57. The school has effective administrative systems. All administration staff have recently been provided with revised job descriptions, training needs have been identified and the necessary training provided.

The administrative systems work smoothly and staff are committed to providing a good level of support to teaching staff that enables teachers to concentrate on their teaching and management roles.

58. The number, qualifications and training of staff to teach the curriculum are good in most subjects. They are very good in history and physical education and satisfactory in geography and modern foreign languages. Many departments work together as very effective teams. This is especially so in science, mathematics, English and physical education, but also in design and technology, drama (where teachers are drawn from various departments) and history. Science, art and design and technology benefit from well-organised technical support and French from the work of an assistant. Staffing has been unsettled in modern foreign languages and in provision for teaching GCSE religious education, but management is moving to remedy this. There is a good balance of experience, about half the staff having been teaching for 15 years or more and a quarter for less than five years. The contact ratio is adequate and there is little absence. There are a few instances of teachers teaching beyond their own specialist subjects and this is having a detrimental effect in religious education. The only unqualified teacher, in music, is being supported by the school to seek training for qualified status. The four newly qualified teachers are supported in their own departments and by the well-developed system for induction. This includes time spent in the feeder primary schools, regular observation, structured input and discussion. Perins has been involved in the initial training of teachers (ITT) for some time. The school is investigating partnerships with new training institutions, with the intention of raising the profile of this activity, further recognising the benefit it can give to pupils, staff and the profession.
59. Support staff numbers are relatively high, since they cover the administration and servicing of the considerable community activities. All five support assistants for pupils with special educational needs are trained. The staff handbook is clear and comprehensive. Policy and procedures for staff development are in place and now incorporate those for performance management. These are of good quality, are agreed by staff and operate smoothly, with sound accounting systems, in the hands of the deputy headteacher. Opportunities for professional development include all support staff and both applications and decisions are made within the school's overall priorities. Funding for staff development is being increased as the school seeks 'Investors in People' endorsement.
60. Generally, resources are good, sufficient in quantity and quality and fitted to the work planned for lessons. Decisions on spending on resources are fully informed by the school's development needs. The school's income is used for the purposes intended. The school has a fair formula for the allocation of funds to departments which is clear to staff and contains a contingency for unforeseen circumstances. Most subject co-ordinators receive appropriate funds and the overall provision of learning resources is good. There is, however, a weakness in design and technology, where there is a shortage of some basic equipment for the resistant materials lessons. The resources available in several subjects, such as art, physical education, geography and history, considerably enhance the nature and range of pupils' learning experiences. Resources in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are satisfactory, although they do not yet make sufficient use of information and communication technology (ICT) in lessons. The school library is well-resourced and very well used. It offers pupils a good range of books and audio-visual materials to support learning, and computers are available for pupils' use when searching for books. The ratio of books to pupils is well in line with national recommendations.
61. Resources are improving and the number of computers for pupils' use has greatly increased since the last inspection. Two main computer rooms are now operational, although one still required further upgrading, and broadband internet access is being installed shortly. There are additional suites of computers for use by mathematics, English, music and science teachers and, in addition to the library computers, most classrooms have at least one machine. Music teachers make good use of computers for pupils' composing skills. However, access to computers during lesson time is still difficult for some subjects such as history and geography because the main computer rooms are fully booked for specific ICT lessons.
62. The school consists of a series of separate buildings and there is considerable movement of pupils between buildings at the end of each lesson during the day. Pupil movement between lessons is generally good but there were occasions when the smooth movement of large numbers of pupils was

hampered by the narrowness of some of the corridors. It is a reflection on the excellent attitudes displayed by most of these pupils that this has not led to behavioural problems.

63. At present, there is sufficient space to accommodate the existing number of pupils, but this could change considerably if the predicted increase in pupil numbers occurs next year. The facilities provided in the library are good. It is a well-lit, welcoming environment and all books and periodicals have been classified and clearly labelled. There is a substantial section on other cultures. The library also possesses a growing collection of audio cassettes and videos. A selection of newspapers and magazines is available for reference only. There are five computer workstations and at least one scanner and two printers have been made available for pupils' use.
64. The outdoor facilities for physical education are very good but drainage can be a problem in some of the playing fields. Resources in the gymnasium are below average and the indoor physical education facilities are used for examinations for long periods of time throughout the year. In science, there is a shortage of space which results in a significant number of lessons being taught in rooms lacking laboratory facilities.
65. In design and technology, the resistant materials rooms are dated and dull. Students have limited immediate access to ICT facilities and there were few examples of everyday applications of design and technology on display. The accommodation and facilities are barely satisfactory. The food rooms are attractive and well equipped. ICT accommodation is satisfactory, consisting of two base rooms plus other satellite rooms.
66. The music room is satisfactory in size but there is only one specialist room, which means that some of the lessons are taken in one of the art rooms which is unsatisfactory. Equipment has to be moved around in all weathers and the teacher maintains that all this movement serves to inhibit learning.
67. The art and design area has two large, well-lit studios. In addition, a small darkroom has been created and students have access to two computers and one printer. Although the studios can readily accommodate group sizes of 20, the art curriculum is severely restricted when this number is increased to 25 or 27. There are also problems concerning storage of pupils' work at the moment.
68. Many of the difficulties outlined above will be overcome as a result of the proposed building programme for the new music, drama and science block which should be completed in the autumn term. In addition, there is to be one large performing arts space and an Exhibition Centre for displays of art and design work.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

69. In order to raise the quality of education even further, staff and governors should address the following point alongside the issues that they have already identified in the school development plan:

- i. Improve the arrangements for religious education at Key Stage 4. This may involve:
 - making sure there is enough time to teach the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus;
 - ensuring that the teachers involved have sufficient expertise to cover the work; and
 - enhancing the subject's status in pupils' eyes, perhaps by offering it as an examination option.

(see paragraphs 6, 22, 148 – 154)

- ii. Improve the impact of the PSE programme in Key Stage 4 on pupils' personal development. This should include:
 - clarifying the objectives of the PSE programme so that it is distinct from the work done in religious education; and
 - making sure that the teachers involved in the programme are effective in presenting this type of work.

(see paragraphs 20, 25, 150)

In addition to these points the school should also consider:

- continue strengthening the support for pupils with special educational needs in ordinary lessons (see paragraphs 8, 21, 115);
- making design and technology available to all pupils at Key Stage 4 and extending the range of alternatives to GCSE courses at Key Stage 4 (see paragraphs 22, 23, 53, 109); and
- meeting requirements for the daily act of collective worship (see paragraphs 29, 53).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	176
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	44

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
10	30	35	23	1	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	761	n/a
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	16	n/a

Special educational needs	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4	n/a
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	118	n/a

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	26
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.0
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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	73	50	123

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	52	69	62
	Girls	43	46	41
	Total	95	115	103
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	77 (86)	93 (89)	84 (87)
	National	63 (63)	65 (62)	59 (55)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	29 (42)	80 (69)	59 (53)
	National	28 (28)	42 (38)	30 (23)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	62	69	60
	Girls	44	47	42
	Total	106	116	102
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	86 (86)	94 (89)	83 (87)
	National	64 (64)	66 (64)	62 (60)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	51 (60)	78 (67)	56 (46)
	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	54	62	116

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	41	54	54
	Girls	53	61	61
	Total	94	115	115
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	81 (82)	99 (98)	99 (99)
	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/GNVQ results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	51.9 (49.0)
	National	38.4 (38.0)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	759
Any other minority ethnic group	0

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	7	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y11

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	44
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y7 – Y11

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	169.5

Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y11

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	75.1
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Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y11

Key Stage 2	n/a
Key Stage 3	23.3
Key Stage 4	22.1

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	1,659,144
Total expenditure	1,643,149
Expenditure per pupil	2,419
Balance brought forward from previous year	55,486
Balance carried forward to next year	71,481

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	761
Number of questionnaires returned	417

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	32	58	8	2	1
My child is making good progress in school.	31	60	5	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	24	62	5	2	8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	18	52	22	6	2
The teaching is good.	25	64	5	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	18	52	23	5	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	36	52	7	2	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	45	1	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	13	49	24	6	8
The school is well led and managed.	24	59	4	1	12
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	29	60	5	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	38	49	6	1	6

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

ENGLISH

70. Pupils' overall standard of attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 is above that found nationally. In national tests in 2000, the percentage of pupils reaching at least level 5 and level 6 was above the national average. Boys and girls did equally well in comparison with their respective national averages. Results were well below average when compared with those of pupils with a similar percentage of free school meals which is lower than the school usually achieves. All scripts in 2000 were returned to the examination board for review and, of the small number re-marked, almost all were up-graded.
71. The general standard of attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 is well above that found nationally. In GCSE for English language in 2000, the percentage of pupils achieving grades A*-C was well above the national average. Boys and girls did equally well and these results showed a marked improvement in boys' performance since the last inspection. In English literature, results were significantly above the national average. These very good results at the end of Key Stage 4 demonstrate that good progress has been maintained throughout the key stages, bearing in mind the above average levels of literacy on entry.
72. The quality of speaking and listening throughout the school is higher than that commonly found. Pupils listen attentively and answer questions fluently and clearly. They work productively in pairs and small groups, showing patience and tolerance. High-attaining pupils in Year 9 talked confidently and knowledgeably about Shakespeare's *Henry V* and showed keen awareness and understanding of key characters and the sequence of events. By the end of Key Stage 3, most pupils provide relevant and accurate commentary on works of literature, supported by close reference to the text. The great majority of pupils in Year 9 use the spoken form of standard English. Regardless of their overall level of attainment, pupils generally answer questions eagerly and accurately. High attaining pupils in Year 11 talked enthusiastically and maturely during a media studies lesson about the language of persuasion as seen in newspapers. Pupils themselves asked searching questions. Most pupils can make extended statements, sometimes of considerable length, as pupils in Year 7 did when telling anecdotes of personal adventures. Their stories had structure, pace and tension. When talking informally to adults, pupils are courteous and articulate.
73. The overall standard of reading throughout both key stages is higher than that found nationally. The good level of pupils' reading comprehension enables them to study with understanding and enjoy a wide range of literature. The reading age of the majority of pupils in Year 7 is above average and they read aloud with clarity and a variety of pitch, pace and expression. The few pupils who experience difficulty with reading receive specialist support and also benefit from paired reading with older pupils. All pupils in Year 7 are introduced to the very attractive library and many borrow books regularly. All pupils in their first three years keep a record of books read and a brief review of them. In Year 10 and Year 11, all pupils read a wide range of literature. They use the language of criticism confidently and identify accurately aspects of structure and style in poetry, novels and drama. Low attaining pupils in Year 11 recalled accurately details of the story and characters when reviewing Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*. All English lessons in Years 7, 8 and 9 begin with a period of silent reading which helps to develop good reading habits.
74. The general standard of writing at the end of Key Stage 3 is above that found nationally and, by the end of Key Stage 4, is well above. Throughout the key stages most pupils present completed assignments carefully and draft their writing effectively, often using word processing to assist them. High attaining pupils in Year 9 produce lively, imaginative and, in the main, accurate writing. They write for a range of purposes and audiences and understand the features and techniques of persuasive writing. By the end of Key Stage 4, the best written work springs from the study of literature. High-attaining pupils show a sensitive and mature response in writing which is carefully structured, imaginative in content, fluently expressed and accurate in detail.

75. Pupils' behaviour is, on the whole, good and their attitude to learning is positive. They are well motivated and work with energy, enthusiasm and evident enjoyment. Relationships in the classroom are almost always positive and purposeful. Pupils sustain concentration well. When working together, they are sensitive to the opinions and ideas of others.
76. The quality of teaching is very good and results in very effective learning. At Key Stage 3 it is good in all lessons and very good or better in two-thirds. At Key Stage 4, teaching is at least good in almost all lessons and very good in over half. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is very good and they are highly skilled and successful in preparing pupils for public examinations. Teachers question pupils rigorously, challenging them to think clearly and positively and to justify their opinions. Relationships are relaxed, yet purposeful, because pupils respect the care and expertise of teachers. Teachers use a wide range of teaching approaches and pupils with special educational needs are taught with great sensitivity. The content of lessons is matched closely to pupils' level of attainment. A stimulating range of language activities is used. Teachers manage pupils very effectively. Pupils' work is marked conscientiously and consistently, with positive comments and clear targets for improvement. There has been a marked improvement in the standard of teaching since the last inspection.
77. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. Departmental documentation is thorough and helpful. The quality of assessment and recording of pupils' attainment is outstanding. Exhaustive data of previous achievement and likely future performance is constantly reviewed and up-dated. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own progress and to agree targets for improvement. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory. All members of the department are committed to high standards and expectation. Management and leadership are excellent.
78. Almost all of the other subjects of the curriculum contribute well to the development of pupils' literacy skills. They listen attentively and the general quality of speech is well above that commonly found. Open discussion is used in most subjects as a significant way of learning. Pupils are encouraged to speak at length in science, geography and history at Key Stage 4 and in food technology at Key Stage 3, but not in modern foreign languages. In all curriculum areas, pupils speak fluently and confidently.
79. All subjects include a policy statement on literacy in their handbooks. In many departments, there are good examples of the display and use of technical words and phrases. The great majority of pupils read well enough to understand textbooks and other materials. In science, art, design and technology, geography, history, physical education and religious education, pupils are encouraged to broaden their reading and to extend their knowledge through research.
80. The standard of presentation of written work is, on the whole, good but in information and communication technology and physical education handwriting is untidy, especially that of boys. There is good, extended writing in art, geography and history. Pupils are often expected to evaluate their own work. As yet, in most departments, insufficient use is made of drafting of writing to improve quality.

Drama

81. The overall standard of pupils' work is higher than that found nationally. In Year 7, pupils develop effectively a wide range of basic skills, including movement, spatial awareness and control of body language and gesture. One class, for example, worked with great commitment and enjoyment, concentrating well throughout and achieving high standards of co-ordination and timing in paired work. The quality of speaking and listening throughout both key stages is well above average and most pupils improvise fluent and articulate dialogue. Pupils in Year 11, preparing the final stages of their examination course, presented well-rehearsed speech and imaginative use of space. In their group presentations, pupils in Year 10 sustained roles effectively and communicated clearly through variety in voice and facial expression. Pupils are very thoroughly prepared for public examination. Results in GCSE in 2000 were well above the national average, with all pupils achieving high grades. Teaching is always very good and some is excellent. Relationships in the studio are, in the main, positive and all pupils enjoy the subject. Drama makes a major contribution to activities outside the curriculum, with

regular large-scale productions and frequent theatre visits. The subject is very skilfully and efficiently organised despite the cramped, temporary accommodation. Leadership is energetic and imaginative and management very successful.

MATHEMATICS

82. In the national tests for 14-year-olds in 2000, the mathematics results were well above the national average for all schools and very high when compared to similar schools. Girls achieved slightly better results than boys. This is contrary to national figures but not a significant difference. The rising trend over time is slightly higher than the national trend. These results are partly a reflection of the high standards of entry of the pupils concerned but analysis of results shows that the school also adds considerable value to the previous results of these pupils.
83. The GCSE results for 2000 are also well above those of all schools nationally, with all candidates who were entered gaining a grade in the A*-G range. Boys achieved slightly better than girls; this too is contrary to the national picture. The overall trend for these results is also rising. These results build upon the good foundations laid in Key Stage 3. All pupils do at least as well as predicted; many do much better. A small group of pupils were also entered for GCSE Statistics. All of these gained grades A*-C in addition to their GCSE mathematics grade. This course was in conjunction with their mathematics studies and is a tribute to the hard work of the pupils and their teacher.
84. Standards of work seen in lessons, books and from discussions with pupils are excellent. At the end of Key Stage 3, higher-attaining pupils can confidently use algebraic skills to draw graphs and interpret results. They can use graphical calculators effectively to compare a range of different graphs. From the work seen in their books, these higher attaining pupils were working at level 7 of the National Curriculum and some topics seen were from level 8, which is much higher than usual for 14-year-olds. Lower-attaining pupils have well-developed shape and space skills that enable them to construct nets of solids, making the appropriate shape and using this to solve problems involving costs and area. Average-attaining pupils know and can use Pythagoras' Theorem to solve right-angled triangles. At the end of Key Stage 4, higher-attaining pupils are confidently solving higher-order equations with algebraic methods and confirming their answers by using graphical calculators. Average-attaining pupils confidently draw conclusions after analysing data presented in different ways. Lower-attaining pupils, a majority of whom study GCSE at intermediate level, can also form and solve equations presented in a variety of different ways.
85. These high standards are a reflection of the good progress made by all pupils. The overall ability on entry is higher than the national average but pupils are encouraged to work hard and build upon their previous knowledge, consolidating where necessary and gaining in understanding and knowledge. After Year 7, pupils are set according to prior attainment and this enables pupils with special educational needs to be taught in small groups work that is closely matched to their ability. As a result, they make good progress and are confident in their use of mathematics. The higher-attaining and gifted and talented pupils are grouped together and this too enables them to be challenged at an appropriate level and to make very good progress. Average-attaining pupils also make good progress. Many follow the higher-level course at GCSE and transfer to the intermediate level for a few pupils is made at a late stage to provide suitable challenge and motivation. There is different work available for pupils in classes so that variations in ability can be accommodated in each lesson.
86. Teaching at both key stages is very good and brings about a very good quality of learning. Lessons are well prepared and contain challenging and stimulating questions for all pupils. All lessons had some good or very good features. These included a good, well-focused start, often concentrating on numerical skills appropriate for the ability of pupils and challenging material presented in a stimulating manner. Teachers use a range of strategies within lessons and provide opportunities for pupils to engage in practical, group and paired work. This encourages discussion and mutual support and pupils were seen to support their friends by explaining their errors and suggesting alternative methods of working. Answers are readily available and pupils use these to confirm their understanding, never simply copying answers. This is a reflection of the very good relationships that exist between the teachers and the pupils. Teachers keep good discipline and manage pupils well. Pupils work at a good pace and keep their exercise books well. Teachers mark books regularly and give constructive feedback on work verbally to pupils. In the very best lessons, pupils are active participants. This principle could be profitably extended to involve pupils even more in the learning process by encouraging them to present solutions to questions to the whole class on a regular basis. Pupils' response to their teachers is very good and lessons are conducted in an atmosphere of mutual

respect and trust. All pupils have very positive attitudes and are prepared to work hard, knowing that they have the full support of their teachers should difficulties arise. Homework is used to good effect. It is used after the regular assessments of progress that are made to follow up on areas of weakness for individual pupils.

87. The head of department manages this subject very effectively and has built a cohesive and mutually supportive department which is working very successfully. All teachers are well qualified, have good subject knowledge and bring a range of experience and expertise to contribute to the sustained improvement in results. There is a very good scheme of work that is referenced to the National Curriculum, with timings of topics and help for teachers. Assessment and investigational work are well integrated into this scheme. The department uses a range of textbooks throughout both key stages to enable suitable work to be planned. The head of department monitors teaching, learning and pupils' exercise books on a regular basis and gives feedback to all teachers. There are departmental discussions after all assessments to analyse the results and to consider how future teaching can be improved. The department is accommodated in a suite of adjacent rooms; these are of generous size and well decorated with examples of pupils' work and some informative posters on display. There are adequate resources to support the range of activities used to teach pupils but the sharing of some of these, especially graphical calculators, restricts spontaneity in their use.
88. The issues from the last inspection have been addressed. The accommodation has improved greatly, investigations to use and apply mathematics have been integrated into the curriculum and there has been an increase in the amount of practical work and in the use of computers to extend learning. Teaching styles have improved and the department is considering ways of extending these even further. This is a very good, high quality department with much strength. Mathematics is taught in an atmosphere that reflects the school's ethos of striving for excellence.

Numeracy

89. There is a high level of numerical skill evident across the whole curriculum. Numerical skills are regularly reinforced in mathematics lessons and pupils are taught the efficient use of normal electronic calculators and graphical calculators. There is a whole-school policy in place for numeracy and there has been an audit of skills across the curriculum. It has been recognised that a new audit is needed and the policy needs reviewing to match the National Numeracy Strategy. Data handling and graphical skills are used well in science, design and technology, geography, history and information and communication technology. There are examples of good levels of calculation in ratio in use in preparing chemicals and mounting photographs in the photography part of the art course.

SCIENCE

90. Pupils make very good progress and attain standards that are well above average by the end of each of Years 9 and 11. The results of the national tests in 2000 for 14 year olds were well above the national averages of all maintained secondary schools and well above those of schools having similar proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals. The average points scores have been well above the national ones over the past four years, with boys performing slightly better than girls over the last two years. The GCSE results in 2000 were also well above the national average. The proportion of pupils gaining at least a grade C in a science subject was well above average and well above schools having similar proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals. It was also well above those schools having pupils who performed similarly in the national tests two years previously. All pupils taking three separate science subjects gained at least a grade C in each and the proportion gaining A* or A grades was twice the national average. Pupils performed significantly better in science in comparison with national norms than they did in their other subjects. There was no significant difference overall in the performance of boys and girls. The results were significantly better than those of the previous two years.
91. Pupils enter the school with attainment levels that are significantly above average and make very good progress throughout. By the end of each key stage, they have gained a very good knowledge and a secure understanding of the subject matter, mainly as a result of the very high quality teaching and their own extremely positive attitudes. A comprehensive revision programme effectively promotes

success in public examinations. Skills required in practical work also develop well above expected standards. Year 7 pupils soon learn how to work safely in a laboratory. They observe and measure accurately and record appropriately. Most Year 9 pupils competently plan, predict and produce detailed analyses and evaluations of their investigations. In one lesson, Year 9 higher attainers very quickly found out about types of chemical change and many were competently writing balanced equations for the reactions. Lower attainers know how particles are arranged in substances and interpret distance-time graphs. The very good progress continues in Years 10 and 11. Higher attainers have a clear understanding of kidney function and control systems in the human body. They competently apply inheritance rules. Most Year 11 pupils confidently calculate electrical quantities from formulae. In one lesson, a group of lower attainers quickly found out the factors affecting the strength of an electromagnet. Pupils have the numeracy skills to enable them to process their experimental results. They often display their results using graphs which are of a high standard throughout. They use correct terminology and units accurately. Standards of presentation are usually high. They have well-developed skills in information and communication technology. In one lesson Year 7 pupils used the Internet to find out about famous scientists. They worked in teams to prepare presentations and were articulate and expressive when delivering them.

92. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. In most lessons they could not be better. They arrive promptly, well prepared for lessons and quickly settle. They respond very well to the teachers' high expectations of behaviour and effort, listen carefully and respond confidently, willingly putting forward ideas. When in groups they discuss sensibly and work safely and productively without constant close supervision. Their attitudes to homework are good, with many spending more than the expected time completing tasks.
93. Since the last inspection, standards have improved significantly at all levels, particularly for boys. Many more opportunities are now provided for pupils to develop their information and communication technology skills. The quality of teaching has increased markedly. Criticisms of aspects of teaching in the last report have been successfully addressed. Teachers make better use of assessment data to evaluate performance and set targets. There is now a better balance of gender and experience among teachers.
94. The quality of teaching is a particular strength. It is very good overall. It is always at least good and very good or excellent in two-thirds of lessons. Teachers know their subject very well and make it comprehensible to pupils of all levels of attainment. They also have a very good knowledge of the requirements of the examination board. Year 11 pupils derived much benefit from this knowledge in one lesson where they improved revision and examination techniques. Teachers successfully promote the development of literacy skills and the use of correct terminology, emphasising key words and displaying them prominently. Lessons are very well planned. Teachers often give pupils a quick test on the previous lesson to immediately focus them at the start. Objectives are made clear, often also displayed and pupils are questioned at the end to find out what they have learned. Teachers question pupils skilfully. This challenges pupils, checks understanding and encourages pupils to put forward ideas. Very occasionally, however, it is not sufficiently targeted on individuals to ensure that their interest is maintained. The excellent teacher-pupil relationships promote confidence and pupils politely seek extra help when required. Teachers adopt a lively and enthusiastic approach and use a wide range of strategies. Within a lesson there is almost always a good variety of activities and many of them observed included demonstrations, group practical work and excerpts from videos. Information and communication technology facilities are being very effectively used. Pupils in a Year 10 lesson competently used sensors to capture data and display it on a computer screen. Teachers carefully prepare task sheets to ensure pupils can understand them. A very effective technique was used by one teacher with a group of lower attainers. Pupils worked in pairs on a series of short practical tasks. After each one, the group gathered round the teacher and support teacher and discussed their findings. There was much pupil-teacher interaction and lively informative exposition by the teacher. Pupils readily put forward their ideas equally enthusiastically. In another excellent lesson, there was a quick recall session with skilful questioning. An excerpt from a video and a competent demonstration followed, with the teacher teasing out information and developing pupils' ideas. Pupils were then fully engaged in a practical investigation. They handled the equipment carefully and worked safely and productively without constant close supervision. In a final summary, the teacher checked their understanding. Class management is very good and pupils are kept busy

throughout. Teachers ensure that pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. They are taught very well, usually in smaller groups, and given suitable tasks. Teachers are well aware of their difficulties and give them extra help whenever possible. In some lessons there is very effective support. Grouping arrangements and high quality teaching enable gifted and talented pupils to make very good progress. Teachers mark work thoroughly and most frequently write comments which praise and encourage and also indicate how pupils can improve. Homework tasks are purposeful, with much use of questions from recent public examinations. Other tasks promote development of pupils' research skills and encourage initiative.

95. The curriculum has been enhanced recently for younger pupils, with lessons designed to accelerate development of pupils thinking skills. Early indications are that they are meeting with success. There are GCSE courses in double science and biology, physics and chemistry. Pupils taking the three separate sciences do not have extra lessons. The success that pupils achieve is testimony to the commitment of both pupils and teachers. Assessment procedures are detailed and comprehensive. Teachers use the information extremely well in ensuring pupils know how they are progressing and in setting targets for each one of them.
96. The teachers are well qualified and there is a good balance of gender and experience. An enthusiastic and most competent head of department provides excellent leadership and clear direction. The quality of her teaching is outstanding and she manages the department most effectively. There is careful monitoring of performance and teachers are observed teaching regularly. The newly qualified teacher is being supported very well. A good team spirit exists. Teachers are committed to high standards and continuous improvement. The technicians are well organised and provide high quality support. There is not enough accommodation resulting in a significant number of lessons being taught in rooms lacking laboratory facilities. It is planned to build extra accommodation in the near future.

ART AND DESIGN

97. By the end of Key Stage 3 in 2000, pupils attained very well in teacher assessments, with girls performing particularly well. More than half the pupils achieved higher grades. These results are high when compared with national figures. At Key Stage 4, 90 per cent of pupils achieved grades between A* and C in the GCSE art and design examination in 2000. This result was very much higher than the national average for all pupils at this level, but the average points score per pupil was slightly lower than for all other subjects within the school. There has been steady progress in attainment since the last inspection.
98. Attainment is good at Key Stage 3 and most pupils are working at levels that are above those expected for their ages. They are articulate and can express their opinions and views about their work clearly and confidently. Throughout lessons, behaviour was very good and, when moving about the room to get paints, brushes or palettes, the pupils showed good organisation and discipline. Most pupils demonstrated the capacity to think and learn for themselves. Attitudes were positive and they seemed to enjoy the work that had been set. Pupil behaviour was very good.
99. Year 7 pupils worked purposefully and most are able to sustain their concentration throughout whole lessons because of their interest in their work. They demonstrate good control over a range of media such as chalk, ink, pencil and paint. Most apply good understanding of visual language and formal elements in their drawn and painted work, which is appropriate to the demands of the National Curriculum at this level. The 2D observational studies of their own faces show that they are serious about exploring and developing their ideas through art. Year 8 pupils have made good progress. They respond positively to the set tasks and most work with concentration to produce interesting 2D pieces of work in one lesson. In one lesson, they work from a small jar of personal objects to produce a set of first-hand observational drawn and painted studies. This resulted in highly individual pieces of art work that reflected their own view of themselves and their world.
100. Year 9 pupils found certain aspects of the work demanding and some had difficulty in producing 2D prints that demonstrated sound technical control. There was a tendency for some pupils to work in a mechanistic fashion which led to predictable outcomes. In part this could be attributed to the fact that

they had been recently introduced to a new printing process. On the other hand, several pupils did manage to produce prints that displayed sound technique and very good use of colour. During one of the Year 9 art lessons, there was a music lesson taking place in the adjoining art room. This was noisy, intrusive and had a detrimental effect on both teaching and learning throughout the lesson.

101. Pupils at Key Stage 4 are working at levels that are much higher than those expected from pupils at this level nationally. Most of these pupils demonstrate determination and conviction as they apply themselves to the important task of carrying out purposeful research into their chosen subject matter. They have obviously been encouraged to resolve technical and other problems for themselves and to work with a high degree of independence. This effort is directed towards improving the quality of their research and producing interesting and exciting final pieces. At all times they demonstrate their keenness to improve their level of technical skills with the ultimate aim of producing art and design work of a high standard. Much of this work had a multi-cultural dimension. Several pupils have made some effort to incorporate photography and ICT skills into their art work. Pupils were articulate in both their oral and written communication. They discussed and evaluated their work confidently within the group.
102. Teaching is good overall and often very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection and is due mainly to the appointment of a teacher with responsibility for art who is now supported by a second full-time art teacher. Teachers know their subject well and this has enabled them to raise pupils' expectations and to achieve their potential through art and design. The pupils are actively encouraged to be creative in their thinking and to take responsibility for their own learning. Many pupils have succeeded in producing interesting and highly personal responses to the briefs set by their teachers. At all times, they are encouraged to experiment with a wide range of different media and materials and to explore ideas in a range of different contexts in both 2 and 3 dimensions. Teachers assess progress regularly and pupils are involved in the assessment of their own work. This process demands some degree of maturity from pupils and has made a significant contribution to the improvement what has taken place in the overall quality and standard of pupils' art and design work.
103. Organisation and planning of the art curriculum are good. The curriculum has been designed to provide pupils with a good range of learning opportunities. At the time of the inspection, the art curriculum focused mainly on fine art activities. Other activities, including design work incorporating the use of photography and manipulation of images using computers are covered in departmental documentation. The skills and experience of the teachers are such that they are able to help pupils achieve their full potential within the National Curriculum for art and design.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

104. Standards throughout the key stages are above average when compared with national norms. Pupils make good progress throughout both key stages, although progress in lessons using food and textiles is better than it is in those using resistant materials. In resistant materials lessons, the progress of pupils, whilst still satisfactory, is limited by the way the work is planned. By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils know why it is necessary to modify recipes and they are aware of production systems in the food industry. They relate the quality control systems to their own cook-chill product, for example, a Cumberland Pie and burgers. Pupils analyse issues to draw conclusions, for example, the nutritional content of foods, using a computer program. They learn to work methodically, for example, they design and use flow charts to plan their work. In resistant materials, they understand about materials, structures and mechanisms and apply their understanding of number, for example, to work out ratios when learning about gears. They design and make products, such as a holder for a notepad. However, their knowledge of design and the impact of technology on everyday life is limited because of the lack of focus in teachers' planning. Pupils in all lessons have a good understanding of the materials with which they work and use large and small equipment safely and competently. They collaborate well and are supportive of each other's efforts. They persevere well to achieve good results and they are proud of what they make. There is no difference in the progress of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by individual attention from the teacher and the support from their peers and make satisfactory progress.

105. By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils have a good understanding of how to evaluate and modify their work as it progresses. They work with good levels of accuracy to achieve desired end products. In lessons using food, pupils work well in teams to develop recipes, for example, for a fast food dispenser. In lessons using textiles, they develop an understanding of the distinctive nature of decoration in other cultures, for example, by embellishing fabric using traditional Indian methods. They know how computers are used in manufacturing clothing. In child development, food and textiles lessons, pupils use fair tests to investigate products, for example, the relative merits of baby products. They understand how young children develop through first hand observations. Pupils taking the General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQ) in Manufacturing course produce imaginative products such as a portable barbeque or bicycle repair stand. In resistant materials lessons, pupils design and make a wide range of containers. Although pupils are introduced to the effects of technology on the design of products in lessons using resistant materials, their understanding is not sufficiently well developed because teachers do not emphasise this aspect enough through their teaching. Throughout the key stages, pupils have very good levels of literacy and numeracy skills and they are very articulate. They are very well motivated to succeed academically. Some pupils are very independent learners and use their initiative well to find and analyse information to inform their work. Information and communication technology is particularly well used in food, textiles, child development and manufacturing lessons. In external examinations, results are above the school's average and well above the national average, particularly in GNVQ.
106. Teaching overall is good and sometimes it is very good. The quality of teaching is high in many lessons using food and textiles and, whilst lower in lessons using resistant materials, it is never less than satisfactory. In the best lessons, the learning is well structured and teachers use a good range of activities to ensure there is a brisk pace to the learning. New learning is regularly reinforced throughout lessons. Pupils are aware of the teachers' high expectations and the clear routines help to make them confident learners. In good lessons, teachers make good use of information and communication technology to encourage pupils to present their work well and to help them solve problems, for example, those related to recipe adaptation or textiles investigations. The very best lessons are characterised by the quality of teachers' focus on the progress and needs of individual pupils. Very effective challenging, but supportive, relationships between the teacher and the pupils, coupled with on-going individual feedback and support, ensure that all pupils make very good progress.
107. Overall, teachers have good knowledge of their subjects and this is effectively transmitted to pupils. Homework contributes markedly to pupils' learning. Key words are well reinforced in many lessons. Classes are competently managed and pupils are attentive, co-operative and eager to learn. Pupils make best progress in the lessons where activities are practical and challenging and they have opportunities to discuss their ideas with others.
108. In the few lessons where the teaching is less good, but still satisfactory, all pupils make similar products and the teaching is too rigid to allow individual interpretation. There is insufficient on-going marking and assessment to ensure that all pupils make good progress. Teachers do not, therefore, have a wide enough understanding of pupils' individual needs to provide appropriately challenging tasks for the more able pupils or alternative ways for pupils with particular learning needs to understand.
109. The curriculum is broad and balanced, but only about half of the pupils take the subject at Key Stage 4. Statutory requirements are, therefore, not met. The subject is very well managed and good systems are emerging for monitoring standards of teaching and learning. The high standards have been maintained and there have been clear improvements since the last inspection. However, whilst some improvements have been made to the accommodation for resistant materials, it remains dated, drab and unattractive. Furthermore, the accommodation in all areas is inadequate to provide a full course in design and technology at Key Stage 4. There are some significant gaps, too, in resources for resistant materials, particularly for teaching control and for helping pupils to understand the impact of design and technology on everyday life.

GEOGRAPHY

110. Pupils have high standards when they enter the school. They read aloud fluently and listen attentively. They obtain numerical information, for example from a flow chart showing immigration to Britain. They use this to construct bar graphs to illustrate the comparative movement of people from several countries.
111. By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils attain very well in teachers' assessments. These show good improvement over recent years. Girls are better than boys in reaching the higher levels. Achievement overall is above that of pupils nationally. Higher attaining pupils rapidly assimilate complex information, such as the reasons for earth movements. They initiate ideas on the effects that earthquakes may have on different types of terrain. Lower attaining pupils work at a slower rate but make sound progress. For example, they use a technique called *choropleth mapping* to show rainfall patterns in India using different intensities of shading.
112. By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils achieve well above national expectations. In 2000, 72 per cent attained grades A*-C in the GCSE examination, compared with a national average of 54 per cent. Their performance for grades A*-G was almost in line with the national average. However, pupils performed less successfully in geography than in most other subjects in the school by a third of a grade. Boys accounted for 23 out of an entry of 29. The six girls performed very well. Not as many pupils obtained the higher grades A* - B, as their performance at Key Stage 3 would predict. Over the three years 1998-2000, pass rates at A*-C fell. In 2000 the reason was relatively weak coursework and this accounts for half the assessment.
113. Evidence from lessons and work seen confirms pupils' very high standards in Key Stage 4. Higher attaining pupils have very good understanding of world issues, such as *global warming*. They co-operate very well as groups to analyse and organise information succinctly for a class presentation. They demonstrate considerable skill in using a camcorder and a data-projector for computer-generated material. Pupils make effective use of the Internet to find the most recent information, for example, the effects of a rise in sea level on the North Sea coastline. Lower attaining pupils show less curiosity about the topics they study. For example, in one lesson one pupil failed to question with sufficient rigour why people live on islands subject to volcanic eruptions.
114. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in lessons where teachers take account of their learning targets. However, in a few lessons where these are overlooked, they struggle to find their way and guess answers so that space is filled in their exercise books.
115. The quality of teaching is good overall, with a few examples of very good teaching mainly at Key Stage 4. There was one lesson with satisfactory teaching and one with unsatisfactory teaching. Teachers have assured subject knowledge that is used well in assembling and producing resources rich in detail and interest, particularly for high attaining pupils. These pupils absorb facts quickly and perceive patterns from them. They seize opportunities to pursue their own lines of enquiry with great enthusiasm. They know how to use information effectively in presenting ideas in writing and orally to their class. Teachers set high standards for presentation and the use of evidence to support arguments. For example pupils use their geographical skills independently to investigate local issues, such as a proposal for a supermarket. This teaches them to consider factors like population distribution, travelling distances, people's shopping habits and the pros and cons of various sites for the location of a large building. Teaching of lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs is mostly very good. For example, pupils in Year 8 gained a very clear understanding of the location of India in relation to other countries. The teacher created a large floor space to represent the world and pupils placed 'country name cards' correctly with reference to compass points. Through this active learning they constructed 'mental maps' that will help their future use of atlases. Teaching is weak when it fails to match methods and resources to pupils with special educational needs. For example, in a Year 7 lesson, the teacher did not plan enough for pupils with special educational needs. Consequently, a pupil with poor reading did not recognise a key word and remained ignorant of the difficulty of water supply in rural India. In lessons where there is special needs assistance, it is used effectively. Pupils have very good attitudes and behave well overall. However, they can respond unsatisfactorily. For example, in a Year 9 lesson where the teacher's organisation was weak and control was lax, pupils lost interest, chattered over the teacher, and misused resources. Such examples are, however, very rare.

116. Leadership and management is sound. Since the previous inspection accommodation is much improved. Good resources for learning include ICT equipment in both main rooms. Pupils' use of ICT widens their geographical understanding. They would benefit by extending their skills of working with databases and spreadsheets. Geography teaching is spread amongst a relatively large number of teachers. In some classes, teaching is split between two teachers. There are arrangements for them to meet as a group to share good ideas and practices but the inconsistencies of teaching pupils with special educational needs across the subject would benefit from wider discussion so that the geographical experience of these pupils is improved.

HISTORY

117. Standards of attainment are well above national expectations at the end of Year 9. End of Key Stage 3 teacher assessments show that the percentage of pupils reaching level 5 and above is well above the national percentage. Standards are excellent at the end of Year 11. In 2000, all pupils entered for GCSE history gained grades A*-G and almost all obtaining grade C or better. This is well above the national average. The trend overall at GCSE is one of improvement.
118. Students' progress and achievement are good in Years 7-9 and very good in Years 10 and 11. Students with special educational needs (SEN) make good progress. By the end of Year 7, students have acquired a good knowledge of the periods studied and understand that study of the past is rooted in interpreting different kinds of evidence obtained from study of historical sources. They are competent in analysis of sources to identify causes and consequences of events and why change occurs, for example why the Normans won at Hastings. In Years 8 and 9, there is continued development of these skills, for example detailed analysis of the different kinds of causes of the English Civil War. By the end of Key Stage 3, most students are able to write essays, make notes and produce a variety of other kinds of writing. They have regular opportunities for personal research, using books, visits and the Internet. Year 7 students have produced newspaper accounts of events such as the assassination of Julius Caesar and guides to the Bayeux Tapestry. Year 8 students have investigated the Gunpowder Plot, writing summaries as poetry. Year 9 students have included posters calling for an end to exploitation of child workers as part of in-depth study of the Industrial Revolution. Lower attaining students are helped by the use of writing frames and more structured exercises, as well as by the quality of support they receive from teachers and classroom assistants which increases their self-confidence as well as their skills and understanding. Higher attaining students are given extension tasks to further develop their skills and understanding.
119. At Key Stage 4, standards in GCSE are high. The students work confidently and enthusiastically towards examination targets. They build on, and extend, the foundations put down in Key Stage 3. In Year 10, they analysed sources to identify Hitler's ideas and comment on their effect on Nazi Party policies. Others were investigating the effects of the economic crisis of 1929 on the politics of the Weimar Republic in Germany. Year 11 students are able to make very good use of the well-organised revision programme, including after-school sessions to revise knowledge and sharpen awareness of examination techniques. Student files are very detailed, including notes, essays, source exercises and assessments. They are very well organised and show the very high standard and quality of work being achieved. The visit to Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic in Year 10 makes an important contribution to students' understanding and learning.
120. Standards of literacy are very high because every opportunity is taken to develop the learning of key words and terms and to encourage pupils to read a variety of texts and to write summaries and responses in their own words. Pupils speak with confidence and are very articulate. Listening skills are also very good. The department, as yet, has no numeracy policy although one has been discussed and use of number is not yet developed as systematically as literacy.
121. The quality of teaching is very good in both key stages. Nearly all the lessons seen were at least good and many were very good. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. One of the best features is teachers' planning, with its emphasis on balancing teaching with opportunities for discussion and activities so that students' attention remains focused and is sustained. Very good use is made of time in lessons. Activities, questions and tasks are always challenging. The pace of lessons is excellent, sustaining interest, enthusiasm and very good behaviour. Pupils respond well to the high expectations of their teachers and to their enthusiasm for knowledge of the subject. This enthusiasm is communicated to pupils, who respond accordingly. For example, in Year 8 lessons on the English Civil War, there was a most skilful combination of explanation and questioning combined with highly demanding activities and opportunities for regular feedback. This pattern was observed in all the lessons seen. In GCSE classes the level of discussion and student contributions was very exciting and stimulating.
122. Management of the department is excellent. Key features which impact on and contribute to high standards of teaching and learning include monitoring of teaching and marking, identification of targets

for teachers' professional development, good access to in-service training, liaison with other schools within the pyramid and the LEA, regular review of the scheme of work and regular meetings to share information and moderate marking of students' assignments, tests and examinations. Very good procedures are in place to assess the work and attainment of pupils. This enables progress to be regularly checked, targets for improvement set and parents to be kept informed through reports and at meetings. The quality of information given in reports is very helpful and includes suggestions for ways to improve. There are plans to produce a portfolio of samples of assessed work for all levels of ability. The programme of educational visits in each year group makes a valuable contribution to enjoyment of the subject. All classrooms and nearby corridors have displays of work so that pupils can see how others are tackling tasks and projects. Good use is made of money to provide a good variety of resources, including CD-ROMs, and to meet the needs of different ability groups. The head of department is aware of the need to extend use of information and communication technology and to develop a numeracy policy.

123. The very good standards described at the last inspection have been maintained and, in key areas, improved. For example, it is departmental policy that all students be challenged, show initiative and be expected to think for themselves. There is consistency of approach across the department and all staff have high expectations of students. Students respond positively. The departmental marking policy requires staff to indicate ways in which students can make progress in knowledge and understanding and this is implemented, together with clear oral feedback to classes and individuals at the start of lessons. Individual student targets are set and discussed with them. Resources are good and varied and address the needs of students of all levels of ability. Accommodation remains cramped, given the increasing numbers opting for history in Key Stage 4. However, it is not allowed to inhibit the quality and variety of teaching strategies.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

124. Pupils' attainment at the end of Years 9 and 11 in 2000 was above national expectations for all comprehensive schools. Teachers' assessments showed that the percentage of Year 9 pupils reaching level 5 or higher was above the national average for girls and boys. Results in the optional GCSE information studies examination are also above average for girls and boys. Results show a small but steady rise since the last inspection.
125. In 2000, pupils' standards in information and communication technology (ICT) by the end of Year 9 are above national expectations, with the majority of pupils assessed by teachers as having reached level 5 or 6 of the National Curriculum. Assessments are generally accurate, although pupils' limited achievement in control technology and data logging restricts their reaching higher-level of attainment. The majority of pupils improve their competence by using their home computers for work in other subjects. Lessons using computers were seen in English, science and music. All pupils, including those with special needs, use ICT safely. Basic skills in databases and desktop publishing have improved since the last inspection and planned opportunities to use ICT in most subjects are better. Timetabled ICT lessons in Years 7, 8 and 9 provide a sound basis for applying skills in other subjects, where most pupils use word processing well but have limited opportunities to design and test models or to interpret and critically analyse data. In a good Year 7 French lesson, pupils word processed sentences from a jumbled list and matched them well with cartoon pictures. In a good Year 10 science lesson, pupils used light sensors attached to computers and logging equipment to record data and draw graphs, which helped improve evaluation skills. Few pupils use the Internet for research in lessons due to lack of access to computers in subjects such as history and geography. Current problems with the network, needing more technical help, limits skills development.
126. In the optional GCSE examination in 2000, over 90 percent of pupils obtained grades A*-C and a half of these achieved the highest grades of A and B, above the national average and that for similar schools. Current GCSE pupils in Year 11 attain equally well. In information studies, all pupils increase their knowledge and understanding of business by using ICT effectively to explore business concepts such as break-even and cash flow. A few pupils have extra lessons after school in order to study for an extra GCSE in business studies. There has been good improvement from standards noted in the last inspection. By the end of Year 11, the majority of pupils attain basic competence in various computer applications in other subjects. GCSE pupils use a variety of software packages

fluently and independently and other pupils achieve well in the limited opportunities available. Although ICT National Curriculum requirements are yet not fully met in other subjects by the end of Year 11, the school is taking steps to improve this further.

127. Pupils' behaviour is good. They concentrate well on tasks, co-operate very well with each other and teachers and most demonstrate a mature attitude to work. Good relationships between teachers and pupils are based on attitudes to learning that are generally very good for the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs. The positive attitudes shown in Year 7 are maintained by most pupils through to Year 11 but a minority of boys in Year 11 lose concentration and disrupt lessons from time to time, partly because work is not sufficiently challenging. Overall, pupils make good progress over time and are aware of the progress they make. However, they take insufficient responsibility for tracking their information and technology communication progress in different subjects in Years 10 and 11.
128. Teaching is good overall. All lessons are well planned and structured. Over a half of lessons seen in Years 7, 8, and 9, and three-quarters of Year 10 and 11 lessons, were good. Teachers support individuals well, although the restricted nature of the GCSE syllabus limits challenge for higher attaining pupils. In a good GCSE lesson seen, Year 10 pupils consolidated their database skills by producing a user guide and the teacher ensured that pupils knew how this could be used in industry to help new trainees. In a few lessons, however, teachers spend too much time instructing the whole class, rather than providing the main steps on a worksheet. If teachers used such a strategy, the majority of pupils could continue working on computers whilst the teacher explains topics to a particular group. The good pace of learning is sometimes slowed by the cramped room, which is difficult to get around. Some pupils in large Year 7 classes have to share computers. Homework is usually set when required and marking in all classes is thorough, so that pupils are usually given constructive targets for improvement. Homework is well supported by parents and many pupils extend their good independent skills through the computer club. Teachers assess and monitor pupils' attainment and progress well in lessons and GCSE assessment meets external requirements. Teachers of other subjects are beginning to develop pupils' ICT capability and further training is planned to improve teachers' confidence.
129. The department is well managed. It has good accommodation and working environment, although one recently-converted room is cramped for larger classes. Maintenance of equipment is satisfactory, but recent changes to the network cause technical problems that sometimes affect achievement. The number of computers available to pupils is now well in line with the national average, but access in some other subject lessons is still difficult. A good selection of software is available, including limited Internet links.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

130. Standards are above average at the end of Key Stage 3. Attainment in GCSE French in the last three years has always been above the national average and well above national figures in 1998 and 1999. All pupils gained A*-G grades. In 2000, the results for boys were below the national average. In German, results at A*-C have consistently been well above the national average in the last three years.
131. Standards in lessons and work seen in both key stages were broadly average but slightly higher at the end of Key Stage 3. Attainment in listening is above average because of the teachers' consistent use of the foreign language throughout lessons and frequent use of the audiocassette. Standards in speaking, reading and writing are average, but, in the few instances pupils are given the opportunity to speak at length, attainment is above average. There were also examples of above-average reading in a Year 10 class where pupils persevered in their understanding of a challenging authentic text for French teenagers, because they were well supported by the teacher. The approach to extended speaking and writing throughout both key stages is not consistent enough. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, but could be improved further if teachers developed strategies, which focused on the pupils' personal targets. Attainment of the most able pupils is well above average, although they would be higher if they had more opportunities for independent and creative activities.

132. The department has made sound improvements since the last report. Teaching is at least satisfactory in all lessons and good overall. Teachers' objectives are appropriate and their learning targets are clear. They provide challenging work in the main. Teachers have good language skills. They provide well-developed writing tasks at Key Stage 4 and good feedback to pupils on their written work informs them of their strengths and weaknesses.
133. Teaching is good, with a small number of excellent lessons at both key stages. Teaching generally meets the needs of all pupils but, in groups with a wide range of ability, work is sometimes not matched closely enough to pupils' needs. There is skilful use of French, German and Spanish in lessons. Work is planned thoroughly and objectives are clearly explained. In one very successful lesson, pupils were listening to a demanding passage in French, which was both complex and spoken at speed and where there were gaps in the text which pupils had to fill in; for the less confident pupils, the teacher had produced a glossary, which pupils only referred to, after they had struggled with the meaning of the passage. All pupils were able to complete the task successfully and to persevere in their learning. Lessons move at a brisk pace because of the quick sequence of activities. Occasionally, pace slows down where activities are allowed to go on for too long. Usually, time is used well and pupils work briskly to complete the task. Teachers manage the pupils well and discipline is very good, often excellent. Teaching materials are clear and well produced. Pupils are constantly encouraged to succeed and are corrected sensitively when errors occur.
134. Learning is good, with a small number of excellent examples seen at both key stages. Pupils learn well when they have a firm foundation of accurate knowledge that they can recall easily. Pupils mostly respond in short sentences, but, in one excellent Spanish lesson, pupils spoke accurately at length in their first year of Spanish, describing both the physical appearance and character traits of a friend. Pupils use dictionaries well and often have good confidence in speaking but rarely use the foreign language spontaneously. They work well together in pair and oral work, particularly when the activity is thoroughly prepared. Attitudes to language learning are usually positive and behaviour is very good. Pupils listen well to each other during speaking activities and concentrate well on reading and writing.
135. There are both strengths and weaknesses in the leadership of the department. Policies are in place, schemes of work are being reviewed systematically and the departmental meeting observed was constructive. However, there are too few planned opportunities for pupils to speak and write at length; there is an insufficient range of teaching strategies in wide ability groups and there is no planned use for the computer room in the languages suite.

MUSIC

136. Standards in music are high, above average for fourteen-year-olds and for sixteen-year-olds. Teacher assessment of pupils at the end of Year 9 in recent years shows an increasing majority reaching the standards expected, with a significant minority going beyond this, and above the national average for both girls and boys. Girls do a little better than boys, as they do nationally in music. It is clear from lessons observed and from the sample of written and recorded work seen and heard that these high standards are being maintained among current pupils.
137. In Years 7, 8 and 9 all pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs. They make good progress through the years, building their knowledge and understanding of how music works, the part it plays in societies and developing their practical skills in creating, performing and listening. Most pupils can read music successfully to play keyboards, tunes and fingered chords. Most can sustain a complex rhythm on a percussion instrument and some, more than is usual, can also play guitar or drums. While the quality of singing is not high, all pupils sing, and they frequently sing in three parts. Pupils work hard in lessons and show evident enjoyment when they succeed. The level of attention is usually high, both to the teacher when required and to each other when listening to group performances. They expect to learn and their good standard of behaviour enables this to happen. The best of written work is presented with pride. No poor work was seen. The number of pupils choosing to study music at GCSE is usually in double figures. The proportions awarded grades A* to C in the last three years have been at or above the national average for

maintained schools. In the year 2000, all twelve achieved this. Boys and girls are represented, including among those awarded A* grades. In recent years, all candidates have achieved A* - G grades. The seven pupils currently in Year 10 and eleven in Year 11 are working at a level to sustain this high standard. Pupils approach listening exercises methodically. Some are better at identifying instruments and styles, others at sensing and describing in words the emotional effect of music new to them. Many have instrumental tuition, in school or privately. They are generally confident performers and learners, recognising their individual strengths and weaknesses. Completed compositions are presented well, mostly with a computer program. Those submitted in 2000 showed a variety of styles and genres. For example, these include a Mexican duet for guitars and a complex instrumental piece for eleven players. However, class work files are used by some like rough books and do not provide a good record for revision.

138. Teaching in music overall is good. There are some very good features and a few areas for development. In Years 7, 8 and 9, teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good and is mainly good. At its best, teaching provides stimulating and enjoyable activities which motivate pupils because they enable them to behave as musicians. Teachers develop a working relationship with pupils which maximises the time for learning. When teaching is very good, there are high expectations of pupils. The time is packed with challenging activities, resulting in a shared sense of achievement. For example, in one Year 9 class, pupils recalled and performed a previously learned gospel song, learned another in three parts and, through staged rhythmic exercises, were able to sing and accompany this with a variety of instruments, showing increasing confidence and evident delight in their progress. Lessons typically begin with warm up 'games' based on pitch or rhythm. For example, pupils practise tempo and metre by marching round the room, clapping, patting and stamping. Sometimes they used standard notation or devised signs. Throughout they listen carefully to stay in rhythm. When teaching does not reach this high standard and is in need of development, teachers do not discern the reasons why pupils are not achieving well. One example of this was another Year 9 group trying to keep the beat and tempo while taking turns in playing a complex tune with chords on keyboards. The consequent frustration and occasional unnecessary shouting by the teacher meant that the calm atmosphere for learning, that usually prevails, was not maintained. Teaching of GCSE classes, also satisfactory to good as in Key Stage 3, has many strengths, including good coverage of the syllabus and good subject knowledge. Listening is taught in a methodical way, using a pro forma which helps pupils to consolidate and draw on previous learning. Teachers' knowledge of individuals is used to target questions so as to support weaker areas of understanding. Where teaching is no more than satisfactory, teachers rarely write the names and technical terms new to pupils on the board and pupils' notebooks are not checked often enough for accuracy and understanding. The admirably relaxed atmosphere of lessons, in conversational mode, should not mean that important learning is not emphasised for all. Improvement since the previous inspection is good.
139. Standards in both key stages have improved. There has been an increase in staff through the deployment of a part-time instrumental teacher for class work. Singing is no longer marginalized; it is developing through regular practice in Years 7, 8 and 9. No poor attitudes to learning were seen in music lessons. Concepts and skills in music now lie at the heart of schemes and plans. Lessons are usually well structured, with teachers intervening appropriately to reinforce learning points. Instrumental tuition, from which a quarter of the school's pupils benefit, now includes voice, sequencer, and disco mixing, alongside orchestral instruments. A wide range of extra-curricula groups, while not yet reaching the highest musical quality, provide valuable learning experiences for pupils, especially through improvisation, expected of young players in the swing band and in smaller rock bands. Other valuable additions to the curriculum include the occasional samba workshops on Saturdays and the annual 'playing day' for musicians when children from primary schools join with those at Perins.
140. Accommodation is no longer adequate and a number of lessons in both key stages are taught in non-specialist rooms. While staff are creative and forbearing, this situation is detrimental to learning. Instruments also suffer as they have to be taken through the rain. Storage and instrumental teaching mean that the smaller spaces are often not available for group work during lessons. A sound-insulated space for drum lessons is badly needed, so that other classes are not seriously disturbed. The work of performing groups boosts the department's budget by raising money. Resources have improved, including the recent arrival of a Pro Audio computer system but there is an urgent need for

sturdy headphones and leads and for more keyboards with memory. The good behaviour of pupils masks the fact that learning, particularly sensitivity to sound, is restricted by the intrusion of the work of their peers. The quality and potential of music will be a good basis for the school's bid for Arts specialist status if the necessary accommodation and resources are assured.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

141. Teachers' assessments at the end of Key Stage 3 in 2000 indicated that pupils' attainments were well above the national average. This matches the work observed in most activities during the inspection. The results in the GCSE examinations in 2000 were significantly above the national average and are much better than those for similar schools, with all pupils achieving a pass. There has been a continual improvement in results at GCSE over the past three years.
142. Pupils arrive at the school with a low level of skill and experience, particularly in gymnastics. By the end of Key Stage 3, standards are in line with those expected in most aspects of the subject and pupils achieve well. All pupils have a good understanding of the effect of exercise on the body and know which large muscle groups are used in different activities. They take responsibility for their own warm up and sometimes that of the class. Standards in basketball are above average. Pupils in Year 9, for example, play the game to a high level with very good understanding of the tactics and strategies of the game. Pupils in Year 8 make good progress in hockey, although their standard is below that expected. In dance, pupils in Year 8 achieve standards higher than would be expected for their ability. The standards in gymnastics are below those expected and there has been little improvement since the last inspection. Pupils in Year 7 are unable to link movements together into a sequence and most are unable to perform a range of rolling, balancing and travelling movements.
143. By the end of Key Stage 4, standards are above those expected, particularly in the GCSE course. They have improved since the last inspection. The standards indicated in pupils' written work is average and, although presentation skills are below average, the quality of pupils' Individual Training Programmes is above average. The use of word processing skills and the retrieval of information from the Internet enhanced their presentation. In the theoretical aspects of the course, pupils have a very good knowledge and understanding that performance in sport is affected by motivation and determination. They know that skill in sport is dependant of strength, speed and stamina. It is anticipated that most pupils will achieve above average grades in the forthcoming examinations. In Year 10, pupils have been recently introduced to trampolining and, although standards are below those expected, they are making good progress. All pupils can control their bounce routines, some able to link three movements together. More able pupils work at a higher level, as they are members of the trampoline club.
144. Pupils respond very well in all lessons and they have excellent attitudes to their work. Their behaviour is at least very good and often excellent. They listen intently to instructions and work hard and with enthusiasm. They support each other in groups and with a partner. The response of pupils on the GCSE course is well above average. They demonstrate a very mature attitude to their work and aim for high standards. There is a high participation of pupils in the wide range of extra-curricular activities on offer and the numbers of pupils taking part in the inter-house basketball competition was impressive. Pupils with special educational needs are not always identified in lessons but they make satisfactory progress. There are opportunities for gifted and talented pupils to progress. Additional accreditation is available and these pupils referee games, play in school teams and are awarded team colours for commitment and participation. A high proportion of pupils have achieved representation at regional, county and national level in a range of sports.
145. The quality of teaching at both key stages is very good overall and has improved considerably since the last inspection. At Key Stage 3, four-fifths of the lessons seen were good, with over a half being very good or excellent. At Key Stage 4, all teaching was very good. In the best lessons, pupils are challenged to produce work of a high standard. Teachers have a very good grasp of the subject. Their lesson planning indicates learning objectives, which are shared with the pupils. Planning does not include specific activities for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers' expectations are always high and the brisk pace to lessons ensures pupils work on tasks set. Learning is very good at all stages and pupils are keen to do well. Relationships between teachers and pupils are a strength

of the department and pupils respect and appreciate the commitment and enthusiasm of their teachers.

146. The curriculum is broad and balanced at both key stages, although there is insufficient time available at Key Stage 4. The programmes of study in the National Curriculum require additional time, which is diminished by the lack of indoor spaces during examination time. At present, some units of work are taught in six-week blocks and this is often insufficient to allow progression and continuity in these areas. The school is in the process of applying for the specialist school status in sport.
147. The quality of leadership in the department is excellent. The head of department is enthusiastic a good role model for pupils and an excellent teacher. She maintains high standards and is well supported by committed specialist teachers. Assessment procedures are good. The quality of reports to parents is good, although they are not consistent in identifying what pupils have covered or ways in which pupils can improve. Teaching is monitored and the process is helpful in improving teachers' performance. Accommodation indoors is good, although the hall is unsuitable for gymnastics and existing facilities give limited opportunity for pupils to extend their work on apparatus. Gymnastics equipment is limited. Outdoor facilities are very good but areas of the playing field are badly drained.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

148. On entry to the school, pupils attain below the level expected for their age. Their knowledge of faiths other than Christianity is poor. Year 7 pupils show significant progress. They have a growing understanding of Islam and Sikhism. They are beginning to understand the power of vision and belief in directing the lives of faith followers, for example the lives of Mother Teresa and Martin Luther King. They are also able to reflect on the meaning of life and recognise some diversity in religious traditions. All pupils in the key stages are achieving at the appropriate level and some are achieving above. Good progress is maintained by all pupils within this key stage so that, by the end of the key stage in Year 9, pupils are performing well, measured against the levels of attainment set out in the Hampshire agreed syllabus for religious education. Eighty-five per cent of the pupils achieved the expected level in 2000 and many went beyond. This is better than is usually found. Unfortunately, provision for religious education is not so good at Key Stage 4, pupils do not make enough progress and standards are unsatisfactory.
149. In Key Stage 3 good standards are achieved in both the attainment targets of the Hampshire Agreed Syllabus. These attainment targets are covered well by the department. Pupils develop the ability to explore and respond to human experience and they relate their experiences to the lives of others. For example, Year 7 pupils can explain Islamic prayer and compared it to their own experience of prayer. Year 9 pupils are able to debate whether the Buddha should be shown with the same facial features as the people who follow his teachings in a geographic area. Some Year 8 pupils recognise that different Christian denominations have different needs in a church building and they give reasons for this. A very able pupil in Year 9 demonstrated high levels of knowledge and understanding of the nature of God in Christianity and Hinduism. Pupils also have a deepening understanding of diversity in and across religions. All pupils use a range of religious language very effectively.
150. Overall pupils work well in this subject in Key Stage 3. Work is well presented and pupils listen attentively in class. They are keen to answer questions and share their ideas with others as a result of the good teaching. Key Stage 3 pupils take some responsibility for their own learning. They organise themselves well in class and do additional research on topics which interest them. The additional work Year 8 have done on church design is impressive. These pupils are good listeners and confident learners. They respect the views of others and show a mature and thoughtful attitude to their work. Pupils do not respond as well to religious education in Key Stage 4. It is taught in a rotation system with personal and social education (PSE) and it is not always clear if the lessons has religious education or personal and social education as its main focus. A number of non-specialist teachers are involved and lessons are not as successful; there is not sufficient time to cover the requirements of the agreed syllabus and no opportunity to follow an examination course. As a result, pupils perceive religious education as less important subject than other subjects in the key stage. It does not retain the high profile and success that is has in Key Stage 3.

151. The teaching of religious education in Key Stage 3 is good. In Key Stage 4 specialist teaching remains good, but non-specialist teachers have difficulty presenting the subject effectively and overall teaching is unsatisfactory for the older pupils.
152. In Key Stage 3 and in good lessons in Key Stage 4, effective use is made of appropriate resources and a variety of teaching and learning styles are used. In the majority of lessons there is good pace and challenge. Tasks are well prepared by the teacher and matched to the needs of different pupils. The teachers know the ability of the pupils and plan for this effectively. Marking is very good and includes useful points for development. Assessment is being used effectively to monitor pupil progress in Key Stage 3. Good subject knowledge enables the teachers to be confident in their approach and to use religious language well. Thorough planning ensures the equal development of both attainment targets of the agreed syllabus. Lesson content is relevant to the lives of the pupils and the good teachers are able to enthuse pupils, who spend time on their own researching topics. In most lessons, there are good relationships between teachers and pupils. There was some poor behaviour in Key Stage 4, where the teacher was not on top of the work, did not gain the class's interest and then failed to manage the way the pupils responded. The use of ICT is limited in lessons due to the lack of resources but reference to web pages for research is commonplace. Teachers take appropriate opportunities to contribute to the development of numeracy and literacy.
153. The subject is well led and managed. The subject makes a very positive contribution to the development of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural. Good systems are in place to monitor pupil progress. There is a good subject development plan and planning and schemes of work are good. Regular department meetings are held and the budget is spent effectively on good quality resources. Religious education accommodation is attractive and welcoming. Good use made of the agreed syllabus and other support from the LEA. However, non-specialist teachers are not monitored and supported sufficiently. Work is moderated and planning scrutinised but the head of department needs to be more aware of what is happening in religious education lessons in Key Stage 4.
154. There has not been enough improvement in the subject since the last inspection where there were issues around Key Stage 4 provision. This has not been addressed and the situation has been made worse by the reduction of time for religious education to enable personal and social education to be taught.