

# INSPECTION REPORT

**KENDRICK SCHOOL**

READING

LEA area: Reading Borough

Unique reference number: 110042

Headteacher: Mrs M M Elms

Reporting inspector: Dr A R Beaver  
20224

Dates of inspection: 8–11 May 2000

Inspection number: 187455

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Selective
School category:	Maintained
Age range of pupils:	11 to 18
Gender of pupils:	Girls
School address:	London Road Reading Berkshire
Postcode:	RG1 5BN
Telephone number:	0118 9015859
Fax number:	0118 9015858
Appropriate authority:	Reading Borough Council
Name of chair of governors:	Mr A Currall
Date of previous inspection:	16–22 March 1995

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	
Anthony Beaver	Registered inspector
Jane O'Keefe	Lay inspector
Caroline Orr	Team inspector
William Robson	Team inspector
Brian Smith	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

Chapel House Inspection Unit

The ICAA Education Centre  
Brighton  
Alresford  
Hampshire  
SO24 9RE

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Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

Kendrick School is a selective grammar school for girls. There are 701 pupils on roll, including 219 students in the sixth form. The school is smaller than most secondary schools. Pupils come from many primary schools in a very wide geographical area in and around Reading. Few join or leave the school, other than at ages 11, 16 or 18 years. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and with statements of special need is well below the national average. Thirteen per cent of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds, and the percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language is higher than in most schools. Most pupils are from advantaged backgrounds, and the percentage known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The school is very popular and entry is highly competitive. Pupils' attainment on entry at age 11 is well above average, by national standards.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a school of outstandingly high quality. Leadership is highly effective in helping pupils to aspire to excellence as scholars and as individuals. Pupils and students attain the highest standards. The quality of teaching is very good. The school provides very good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Leadership is of high quality and helps teachers and pupils to achieve their best.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are excellent, as are their personal development and relationships.
- Pupils consistently attain the highest standards in lessons, in national tests and in examinations.
- Very good teaching enables pupils to attain the highest standards and to extend their experience very well.
- Very good provision is made for the care of pupils and for their personal development.
- The school provides very effective support and encouragement for high attainers.
- The school has improved further since its last inspection, when standards were already high.

#### **What could be improved**

- Accommodation, despite improvement since 1995.
- Further co-ordination and provision of information technology at Key Stage 4.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has much improved since its last inspection in March 1995, when it was then considered to be outstanding. Standards of attainment have further improved. They are very high in comparison with those of selective schools nationally. At GCSE since 1995, pupils' attainment has risen at a rate above the national trend. At A level, students' attainment has been sustained at a level well above the national average. In both examinations, the proportion of pupils achieving the highest grades is well above the average of selective schools. Good progress has been made in resolving the key issues of the last inspection. High standards of attainment, very good quality of teaching and learning, and excellence of pupils' personal development and behaviour have been more than maintained. Significant improvements have been achieved in the quality of accommodation, particularly through the opportunities provided by grant maintained status, and the vigour of governors, but some important deficiencies remain. Health and safety issues have been resolved. Requirements for religious education, recording attendance, and reporting have been met. There are assemblies of good quality each day and opportunities for reflection. All pupils do not have the opportunity for a daily act of collective worship.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar† schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
GCSE examinations	A*	A*	A*	A
A-levels/AS-levels	A	A*	A	

**Key**

very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

† The grade for similar schools compares the school with all selective schools. It is normal practice not to make graded national comparisons with similar schools at A or AS levels in the table above.

At the end of Key Stage 3, pupils have consistently attained the highest standards in national tests. Results are regularly within the highest 5 per cent of all schools nationally, and of similar schools. Standards in the three subjects tested, English, mathematics and science, are equally high. The trend in pupils' attainment since 1995 has been in line with the rising national trend. Pupils achieve as well as could possibly be expected in relation to their attainment on entry to the school.

GCSE results, including those in English, mathematics and science, have regularly been within the highest 5 per cent of all schools nationally. Every pupil consistently gains five or more GCSE grades A\* to C. Pupils' attainment is well above the average of similar schools. The trend in pupils' results has risen more sharply than the national rate of improvement since the last inspection. Targets set by the school for GCSE are suitably high, but recognise differences in potential between year groups. Standards of work seen during the inspection were equally high. Pupils' and students' analytical skills were very well developed, as in chemistry, history and sociology. Their depth of knowledge was impressive, as in their understanding of plot and characterisation in English literature, and knowledge of Judaism in religious education in Year 11. In modern foreign languages by Year 11, pupils' exceptional fluency and control of language enabled them to express ideas and opinions very well. Overall, pupils achieve very well in relation to their attainment at the end of Key Stage 3.

At A level, students have regularly attained highly, and results have been well above the national average since the last inspection. The proportion of A and B grades has consistently been very high in comparison with results in selective schools. Students regularly achieve standards at A level at least in line with those anticipated by their attainment at GCSE. Almost all students proceed to higher education, with many gaining places on courses and in institutions to which entry is often highly competitive.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. Pupils are enthusiastic and diligent learners.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Excellent. Pupils behave very well in class, and act most responsibly around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Outstanding. Relationships among pupils and between pupils and teachers are excellent.
Attendance	Well above the national average. Unauthorised absence well below average.

Pupils and sixth form students show outstanding maturity, responsibility and a sense of what is fair and right in their relationships and in the respect with which they treat others.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 11-14 years	aged 14-16 years	aged over 16 years
Lessons seen overall	very good	very 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 was good or better in 94% of lessons, and never less than satisfactory. In 71 per cent of lessons, it was very good or excellent. Overall, teaching is highly effective in releasing the potential of pupils and sixth form students to learn successfully so that they attain the highest standards.

The teaching of the core subjects, English, mathematics and science, was very good at both key stages and in the sixth form. In no subject was teaching below satisfactory. Some excellent teaching was seen in mathematics, science, design and technology and sociology. All lessons seen in modern foreign languages were very good.

The teaching of literacy enables all pupils to use language in speech and writing very well, and to read very widely with understanding and insight. Numerical skills are very well taught, helping pupils to progress very well in mathematics and in number work across the curriculum.

Pupils of differing levels of ability learn very successfully and achieve the highest standards of which they are capable. Teachers enable them to inspire each other with a thirst for knowledge and a strong desire to achieve their best.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is broad and balanced in its range of worthwhile learning opportunities for all pupils and students, with the exception of a requirement within information technology at Key Stage 4. Extra-curricular activities give very many opportunities to extend pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils' identified needs are well provided for. The school is very well aware of the needs of high attainers.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. Pupils are well provided for through the curriculum.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Pupils' personal development is very well provided for through teaching and the curriculum, where spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a priority.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. Great care is shown for pupils' well-being, health and safety. Child protection procedures are clear. Assessment data is used very well to determine whether pupils and students are achieving as they should, and that individual support is provided as needed.



The curriculum is notably broad so that pupils' choice of education and career at age 16 remains wide. Pupils' and students' progress is made a priority by staff who give their time freely to provide invaluable support for individuals.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. An enthusiastic, strongly committed and hard-working team who make the quality of teaching and learning their highest priority. Very effective in enabling pupils and students to achieve their highest standards as scholars and as individuals. Development planning is very good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well. Governors give vigorous and considered support to the school and to the headteacher. A daily act of collective worship is not provided for all pupils.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Carefully managed. Effective monitoring of standards of work, attainment and teaching.
The strategic use of resources	Funds are used well. Priorities are clearly identified in school development planning.

Leadership enables pupils, students and staff to achieve high standards in their work, and in their personal and professional development. The principles of best value are applied in securing and using resources. Examination results compare highly with those of selective schools. The school challenges itself well, for example in providing a broad curriculum and a very good range of extra-curricular opportunities. Internal consultation is a priority, and very well managed by the headteacher and senior staff; there is some consultation with parents. Competition is managed well and services are chosen to ensure good value.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their daughters are expected to work hard and achieve highly.</li> <li>• Their daughters make good progress.</li> <li>• Pupils behave well.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• Their daughters are helped to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• Their daughters like attending the school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some parents would like the school to work more closely with them.</li> <li>• Some would like more information about how their daughters are getting on.</li> <li>• Some think that the range of extra-curricular activities is inadequate.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with the positive views of parents. The school has the highest expectations of the personal development and achievements of pupils who make excellent progress, and behave exceptionally well. The school is very successful in ensuring that pupils develop into mature and responsible persons, with a high capacity to exercise moral judgement. Teaching is predominantly very good and some is excellent. Most pupils enjoy the challenges which the school provides. Overall, inspectors do not endorse the concerns of some parents. Regular newsletters keep parents well informed, and the school provides suitably detailed information through comprehensive reports and consultation evenings about pupils' progress. It has sought parents' views on many issues, although on some curricular changes it could consult more. Some opportunities provided for parents, for example to see the working school in session, are not always taken. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities, but the short lunch-break and the long journeys, which many pupils make between home and school, reduce participation for some.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

#### **Leadership is of high quality and helps teachers and pupils to achieve their best.**

1. Leadership by the headteacher and senior management team is very good. They are an enthusiastic team who work very well together. There is good rapport between the members of senior management, who have clear overall aims that centre on pupils having opportunity and support to achieve excellence as scholars and as individuals. The headteacher involves other staff with subject and year group responsibilities in rotation within the senior management group, enhancing opportunities for their professional development and responsibility. Commitment, confidence and a determination that pupils achieve their highest standards, tenets of the senior team itself, are mirrored in the attitudes and outcomes of the work of staff and pupils. There is no complacency among senior or middle managers, with the result that standards of attainment and the attitudes and behaviour of pupils have remained excellent since the previous inspection.

2. The headteacher and senior management have made the quality of teaching and learning a priority. An active working group of staff, led by the headteacher and other members of the senior team, have researched teaching and learning styles and, in some situations, have involved pupils as partners in observation and analysis of teaching methods and their impact on the quality of learning. This process has enabled teachers to understand what methods of teaching and learning are used across the school, and to learn from each other's experience what works well. Senior and departmental managers monitor the quality of teaching and the work of pupils regularly, and staff receive support to enhance their professional skills. The school's success in identifying and meeting the professional developmental needs of staff is recognised in the renewal of its status as an Investor in People. Outstanding teaching and valuable contributions to the life and work of the school are personally recognised by the headteacher and greatly appreciated by individual staff, who are much encouraged by the sense of partnership in the pursuit of excellence thus engendered.

3. Governors give the headteacher and staff vigorous support. They monitor and evaluate the outcomes of the school closely. Their committees enable them to specialise in aspects of the work and needs of the school. Governors led the school into grant maintained status and, as a result, school accommodation has been greatly improved. They set, monitor and rigorously evaluate the achievement of targets by the school and by the headteacher.

4. Development planning is very good. Longer-term planning clearly recognises priorities. Clear criteria enable the school to evaluate its success. The school is active and energetic in raising additional funds for key projects to benefit pupils' learning, such as a current project for a new independent learning centre.

#### **Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are excellent, as are their personal development and relationships.**

5. Pupils' and sixth form students' attitudes to school and to learning are excellent. They achieve their potential as learners because of their enthusiasm, diligence and thirst for knowledge. Their commitment to gaining new knowledge and understanding is outstandingly high, and they respond strongly to the expectations of school and home. The

pace at which new work is covered is usually rapid because pupils want to learn. They inspire each other and enjoy the challenge of the work they undertake. This inspiration is a driving force in the swift progress which they achieve. For example, in a Year 11 GCSE lesson on the revision of prior work in chemistry, pupils' positive attitudes were the driving force of the lesson, well supported by the teacher's response to their needs and difficulties. In a Year 11 English lesson, pupils supported each other very well, asking questions of the teacher, ensuring that they understood all requirements for their examination; they were attentive and enthusiastic to the end. Pupils work very hard, producing great quantities of written work, including homework. The considerable time that they unstintingly give to homework has become a concern of some parents. The quality of the presentation of pupils' work is outstanding.

6. Pupils are very willing to support each other in learning. They work very well together, helping each other in practical work in pairs and in small-group work. They appreciate others' knowledge, achievements and work of high quality. Pupils have great enthusiasm for learning, and encourage their classmates to achieve highly. They are much encouraged by each other, and listen with attention and interest to their peers in class; they respect and applaud the knowledge and understanding shown in class by other pupils. This context of encouragement and peer support gives pupils confidence to speak freely in class, to contribute to lessons and to clarify understanding for themselves and for others.

7. The behaviour of pupils and students is exemplary. They behave very well in class and act most responsibly around the school. They are courteous and polite and behave in a most mature manner. They are unfailingly helpful and, although most are confident in dealing with adults, they show much respect for teachers, visitors and each other.

8. Pupils make outstanding progress in their personal development. They are active contributors to the life of the school and have many opportunities to become involved, so that they experience a sense of responsibility for what goes on. For example, pupils who are representatives serving on the school council are invited to express considered views on aspects of the life of the school and on what money should be spent, and do so responsibly. Pupils take responsibility for themselves very well, and show much initiative, for example in extra-curricular and fund-raising activities, including for charities. Sixth form students have very good rapport with younger pupils, and accept and exercise responsibility for them when appropriate. Relationships among pupils of all ages and between pupils and teachers are excellent. Such relationships ensure that pupils' personal development is very well supported in lessons and outside them, and that learning of the highest quality is successfully achieved.

**Pupils consistently attain the highest standards in lessons, in national tests and in examinations.**

9. Pupils are outstandingly successful in attaining the highest standards of attainment at both key stages and in the sixth form. However, these very high standards have not been gained at the expense of the school's intention to provide also for pupils' personal development.

10. Since the previous inspection, pupils have maintained very high standards in Key Stage 3 national tests in English, mathematics and science, the three subjects tested, not only in comparison with all schools nationally, but also with all selective schools. Most pupils gain National Curriculum levels 7 or 8, and some exceed these, showing exceptional performance. Results are regularly within the highest 5 per cent of all schools nationally. Despite the very high levels achieved, the average points score per pupil has continued to

rise at the national rate of improvement. Pupils achieve as well as could possibly be expected from their attainment when they entered the school.

11. GCSE results have regularly been within the highest 5 per cent of all schools nationally. The proportion of pupils attaining five or more GCSE grades A\* to C has been consistently at the highest level, including attainment of grade A\*. The trend in the average points score per pupil has risen faster than the national rate of improvement since the previous inspection in 1995. The very high GCSE targets which the school sets are regularly attained. Pupils' results are regularly well above the average of all selective schools.

12. At A level, students' points score is well above the national average. The points achieved per student have risen consistently year-on-year since the previous inspection. The proportion of A and B grades attained has consistently been exceptionally high in comparison with those of other selective schools. Almost all students continue to higher education, with many gaining places on courses and in institutions to which entry is highly competitive.

13. In lessons seen and work analysed during the inspection, pupils and sixth form students attained very high standards overall. Year 11 pupils studying English literature showed a very mature understanding of plot and characterisation. They spoke clearly, confidently and fluently. The breadth of their personal reading was impressive. Pupils and students used numerical skills very effectively at both key stages and in the sixth form, both in mathematics and across other subjects. For example, graphical work in science was of a high order. In all subjects, pupils showed a mature understanding of how to explain and analyse information. In chemistry, for example, Key Stage 4 pupils and sixth form students employed high-level analytical skills. In history lessons for Years 11 and 13, pupils and students were able to analyse evidence showing impressive knowledge and understanding of the importance of evidence and its limitations. The depth of pupils' knowledge was considerable. For example, Year 11 pupils showed impressive knowledge of the practices of Judaism in revision for their GCSE examination in religious education. Pupils attained high standards in all lessons seen in modern foreign languages; their exceptional fluency and control of language enabled them to express ideas and opinions very well. They attained high standards in most work seen across the curriculum, even though accommodation and facilities sometimes limited what could be undertaken in some lessons. For example, Year 9 pupils achieved very good personal standards in practical skills and theoretical knowledge of athletics, despite the lack of adequate track and field facilities.

**Very good teaching enables pupils to attain the highest standards and to extend their experience very well.**

14. Teaching is of very good quality overall. Almost over 70 per cent of lessons are of very good or excellent quality. No lessons are unsatisfactory. Teaching is highly effective in enabling pupils and sixth form students to learn successfully, helping them to achieve their highest standards. Teaching is effective in this way for all ages and abilities of learners. For example, gifted and talented pupils, pupils for whom English is an additional language, and pupils on the school's register of special educational needs achieve the standards that they should.

15. Pupils achieve their potential for learning and attain high standards because teachers enable them to inspire each other with a thirst for knowledge and a strong desire to achieve their best personal standards. In the best lessons, learning is a shared

experience and becomes a partnership between teacher and pupils. For example, in a Year 10 French lesson in which pupils discussed the school and the situation in Reading, the teacher used French constantly, drawing very well on phrases that linked sentences, so that pupils were encouraged to use these for themselves. The support and encouragement provided by the teacher made the pupils want to express their ideas and opinions. They worked very well together, encouraging each other in independent work and self-assessment.

16. Teachers' subject knowledge and understanding are impressive and are used to stimulate and enhance pupils' own experience very well. In an excellent Year 12 lesson on random variables in statistics, the teacher's confident subject knowledge, to which the students responded very well, created a true meeting of minds, so that students progressed at an exceptional rate. Teachers use a good range of methods, and some excellent work on revision for imminent examinations was supported by the use of penetrating questions which enabled pupils to consolidate their prior learning very well. Work to prepare pupils and students for examinations was never a mechanical or sterile experience; well-managed discussion regularly opened up new possibilities in learning for students. For example, in an excellent Year 13 lesson on the sociology of religion, the teacher questioned students' detailed presentations on the topic very effectively, encouraging them to analyse and to synthesise their interpretations further.

17. Teachers have the highest expectations of pupils who are helped to achieve their best personal standard. Teachers are very skilled in judging the right pace for lessons so as to ensure that all pupils progress very well. High attainers benefit from teachers' good judgement of the right pace to ensure that learning is most effectively accomplished. Teachers adapt work very successfully for pupils of different levels of attainment so that all progress well.

18. Resources are used very effectively in some lessons to extend pupils' learning. For example, in an excellent Year 10 physics lesson on the electromagnetic spectrum, pupils made their own colour presentations, prepared initially at home, on computer. The teacher summarised principles of the work very well at the end. This was a lesson in which resources, pupils' enthusiasm and commitment and the teacher's high skills combined to create a superlative experience.

19. Teachers manage pupils extremely well. They inspire confidence in pupils to achieve their highest standards, because, overall, relationships are excellent between teachers and pupils of all ages.

20. Homework is used well by teachers and is effective in extending pupils' learning. Pupils, who usually give very considerable time and effort to their homework, benefit to the full from the work which teachers set.

21. Most teachers give their time unstintingly to provide extra-curricular opportunities for pupils. They provide a very good residential experience, including foreign exchanges and visits abroad, from which many pupils benefit. Despite the short school day, there is a good range of clubs and societies. Music and sports staff provide a very good range of different extra-curricular opportunities.

**Very good provision is made for the care of pupils and for their personal development.**

22. The school is very sensitive to the needs of pupils and the care it provides is of a high order. Tutors take great interest in pupils as individuals to ensure that their personal and intellectual development is excellent. Wherever possible, tutors and pupils remain together for two years, enabling tutors to gain expertise with particular age groups. Target setting for individual pupils covers personal and social issues as well as academic matters, and tutors monitor progress towards targets closely.

23. The school's aims make explicit the importance of prizing and fostering spiritual and moral values. It achieves these aims very well, developing effectively the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of pupils' personal development.

24. Courses in personal and social education run from Year 7 to the sixth form, and are of very good quality. Pupils' responses to a questionnaire used by the school to evaluate the quality of the courses rightfully indicate their satisfaction with the provision. The courses show a very thoughtful and careful approach to a broad range of personal and social issues, including personal health, sex education, alcohol and drugs prevention. A very good Year 12 lesson on drugs and the law effectively tested the knowledge which students thought they had, and discussion opened up new issues for them, in what was an enjoyable and interesting session. Careers guidance provided by the careers service, for example in a lesson for Year 9 on subject choices and in a personal interview with a Year 12 student, was thought-provoking and helpful.

25. Pupils perceive the school to be a friendly place. There is no evidence of bullying. Pupils of all ages are convinced that it does not occur and have complete confidence in staff to manage the situation if it did. Relationships are excellent among pupils of all ages.

26. Teachers responsible for year groups and tutors are very helpful to pupils and students in monitoring their progress and keeping them informed of their standard of work. This enables all pupils, including those on the school's register of special educational needs, to improve in light of the assessment information which they are given. They are encouraged to evaluate the quality of their work and rate of progress, making successful learning a common purpose of teachers and pupils.

27. A valuable initiative for the mentoring of Year 10 pupils by Year 12 students is very effective in supporting the personal development of mentors, as well as being helpful to mentees. Sixth formers are well prepared for their role by training, and clear boundaries are set concerning the support provided. Student mentors and tutors consult regularly.

28. Pupils' and students' personal development is well supported by links with the local and wider communities. Primary school liaison is good, although pupils come from a very wide range of schools. The letters which Year 7 pupils write to those in Year 6 prior to their entry to the school provide encouragement and support for those joining the school at age 11. Work experience, community service and initiatives to support national charities undertaken by pupils and students provide very good opportunities for them to gain confidence and personal skills.

### **The school provides very effective support and encouragement for high attainers.**

29. The school is very successful in providing for pupils of high ability. The close attention given to teaching and learning methods and to independent learning has had particular benefit for more able pupils. Assessment information enables the school and subject departments to identify potentially high attainers. Although there is grouping by ability in some classes at Key Stage 4, this is not extensive, and teachers manage to provide effectively for pupils of high ability in classes often spanning the ability range of the school. Individual high achievers are not openly identified by subject teachers, but varied teaching methods, for example types of group work and open-ended tasks, are used to meet the needs of these pupils. A good range of enrichment activities is provided for pupils to undertake at home, and a role for parents is also identified so that they can support their daughters in this work.

### **The school has improved further since its last inspection, when standards were already high.**

30. The school has much improved since its previous inspection in March 1995, although it was considered to be outstanding at that time. Pupils' standards of attainment have improved further, and have remained very high in comparison with those of selective schools, nationally. Results in end of Key Stage 3 national tests have been consistently within the top 5 per cent of all schools. The situation at GCSE has been the same, with pupils' results regularly in the top 5 per cent in comparison with those of all schools. Students' attainment has risen above the national trend since the previous inspection. At A level, students' attainment has remained well above the national average. The proportion of students achieving the highest grades, A and B, has been very high, and well above the average for selective schools.

31. Good progress has been made in resolving the key issues of the last inspection. The high standards of attainment, very good quality of teaching and learning, and excellence in pupils' personal development and behaviour have been very successfully maintained. Accommodation has been improved significantly, particularly through the opportunities provided by grant maintained status. Issues of health and safety have been resolved. Statutory requirements with regard to provision for religious education, recording pupils' afternoon attendance and reporting to parents have been met. Assemblies of good quality take place and there are regular opportunities for reflection, but all pupils do not have the opportunity for a daily act of collective worship.

### **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

#### **Accommodation, despite improvement since 1995.**

32. The school has made substantial improvements to its accommodation since the last inspection, but some important deficiencies remain. Governors obtained considerable benefit from grant maintained status in securing advantages for the school. Improvements with regard to pupils' health and safety have been secured in the main school. New fire doors have been provided in all classrooms throughout this building, with electronic closure of new doors on corridors. Internal windows on corridors have been closed as part of this large-scale improvement project. Laboratories have been improved considerably, and there are new sixth form study rooms available. Improvement to accommodation remains an item in the school's development plan.

33. Some classrooms remain small for the size of classes which must use them, as in some rooms used for mathematics, art and design and technology, making it difficult for teachers to reach pupils to give advice and support when they are working individually. Space for storage and locations for computers and other equipment in some classrooms are insufficient, for example in the mathematics department. The need to accommodate classes in rooms of adequate size removes the opportunity to group classrooms in suites designated for the use of particular subjects, restricting opportunities for departmental co-ordination. Accommodation for physical education is inadequate. In order to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum, pupils need outdoor facilities unavailable on the school site. Transport has to be hired for this purpose, incurring costs in money and time. The plaster on the ceilings of some rooms is insecure and staff and pupils have to be protected from its collapse by wire mesh. The re-roofing of some buildings is a continuing priority.

34. Despite deficiencies in accommodation unhelpful to the management of learning, the school has maintained outstandingly high standards of attainment. Governors, headteacher and staff work very hard to overcome deficiencies. For example, the physical education department has recently gained a prestigious Sportsmark award for the quality of its provision, despite the lack of a sports-field on site.

#### **Further co-ordination and provision of information technology at Key Stage 4.**

35. At Key Stage 4, statutory requirements for information technology are not met because pupils have insufficient opportunity to study the control strand of the subject. The school lacks the necessary technical equipment to teach computer-aided design or computer-aided manufacturing adequately. The school's development planning rightly identifies the need to develop pupils' use of information technology further, especially by teaching information technology through other subjects. It has taken the decision to withdraw the GCSE information technology course, which would otherwise have been available to Year 10 from September 2000, in favour of providing a necessary and more extensive curriculum for information technology for all Key Stage 4 pupils. School planning properly recognises the need for the further training of all staff in how to use information technology in teaching and learning within their subjects. Further improvement to the range and quality of equipment available is needed and is also planned; in many cases pupils use computers in school inferior to those that they use at home.

36. Co-ordination of the curriculum for information technology is lacking, particularly at Key Stage 4. Some pupils gain knowledge and understanding of the application of information technology in their other subjects, and some lessons of high quality using information technology take place. However, opportunities to apply information technology in their work are not equally provided for all pupils. Departmental schemes of work make reference to information technology in some cases, but most do not make explicit what is to be done and how it is to be used at either key stage or in the sixth form. The school has recently completed an audit of the use of the current use of information technology and intends to improve provision.



## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

37. In order for the school to improve its very high standards even further, governors and management should:

- (1) further improve accommodation to ensure that pupils' learning experience is enhanced by the use of all appropriate means;
- (2) ensure that provision for information technology at Key Stage 4 is better co-ordinated and fully meets statutory requirements, by making specific each subject's contribution in schemes of work and by monitoring and evaluating departmental practice. Fully implement the plans now in place to improve the number and quality of computers and other equipment, and the training of staff in use of information technology.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

50

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

16

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
14	57	22	6	0	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons. Figures may not total 100% because of rounding.

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils on the school's roll	482	219
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	4	0

#### Special educational needs

	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	8	5

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	41

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	7.9

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	1.1

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	0	96	96

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	0	0	0
	Girls	96	95	95
	Total	96	95	95
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	100 (99)	99 (99)	99 (99)
	National	63 (65)	62 (60)	55 (56)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	98 (99)	99 (99)	99 (98)
	National	28 (35)	38 (36)	23 (27)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	0	0	0
	Girls	96	96	96
	Total	96	96	96
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	64 (62)	64 (64)	60 (61)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	100 (100)	100 (97)	100 (90)
	National	31 (31)	37 (37)	28 (30)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4

Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	95	0	95	95

GCSE results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A*-G	1 or more grades A*-G
Numbers of pupils achieving the standard specified	Boys	0	0	0
	Girls	95	95	95
	Total	95	95	95
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	46 (45)	91 (90)	96 (95)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	70 (70)
	National	38 (37)

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

### Attainment at the end of the sixth form

Number of students aged 16, 17 and 18 on roll in January of the latest reporting year who were entered for GCE A-level or AS-level examinations	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	0	97	97

Average A/AS points score per candidate	For candidates entered for 2 or more A-levels or equivalent			For candidates entered for fewer than 2 A-levels or equivalent		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
School	0	23.6	23.6 (24)	0	7.3	7.3 (n/a)
National	17.7	18.1	17.9 (17.6)	2.7	2.8	2.8 (2.8)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	5
Black – African heritage	3
Black – other	0
Indian	37
Pakistani	16
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	9
White	610
Any other minority ethnic group	21

### ***Teachers and classes***

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	43.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16.04

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Education support staff: Y7– Y13**

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	209.5

#### **Deployment of teachers: Y7– Y13**

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	74.1
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#### **Average teaching group size: Y7– Y11**

Key Stage 3	27.1
Key Stage 4	20.1

### ***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	2	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1998-9
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	£
Total income	2006427
Total expenditure	1962684
Expenditure per pupil	2857
Balance brought forward from previous year	2081
Balance carried forward to next year	45824

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	701
Number of questionnaires returned	276

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	54	40	6	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	69	30	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	66	33	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	41	48	7	2	2
The teaching is good.	51	43	4	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	41	47	11	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	55	35	6	3	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	90	11	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	32	50	11	3	5
The school is well led and managed.	63	33	1	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	64	31	3	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	38	44	9	3	6

### Other issues raised by parents

The issues raised by parents were very largely within the topics identified above. The inspection team is very grateful to all parents who expressed views in the questionnaire, in extensive written comment and orally in the parents' meeting. These views were very helpful to the inspection process.