

INSPECTION REPORT

TRING SCHOOL

Tring, Hertfordshire

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117573

Headteacher: Miss R J Trueman

Reporting inspector: Dr Kenneth C Thomas
3990

Dates of inspection: 9 - 12 January 2001

Inspection number: 187560

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Comprehensive
School category: Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils: 11 to 18 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Mortimer Hill
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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Karin Jameson

Date of previous inspection: 25 March 1996

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Tring School is a mixed comprehensive school for pupils aged 11-18. The school is very popular and oversubscribed. The number of pupils in the school has risen since the last inspection and with 1409 pupils on the roll is bigger than similar schools with a sixth form. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. There are very few pupils with English as an additional language; all of them speak English fluently. The overall standards of attainment of pupils coming into the school, although wide-ranging, are above the national average. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs, at 2.6 per cent, is about the same as the national average, as is the overall proportion of pupils with special educational needs, at 20.4 per cent. The school has close links with other schools, colleges, the youth service and the local community.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Tring School is good and improving. Overall standards are rising because good teaching with high expectations is bringing the best out of pupils. The sense of community is strong and relationships are very good. The headteacher and senior management team provide effective leadership, which is well supported by the governors. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards of attainment at the end of Years 9 and 11 are well above average. Standards in the sixth form are above average.
- Pupils' attitudes are very good: they contribute well to their own learning and the sense of community in the school.
- Good teaching makes challenging demands on pupils and leads to good learning.
- Very good leadership is promoting enthusiastic teamwork and very good standards in most areas of the work of the school.
- Pupils are provided with very good care and support and respond well to the very good opportunities for personal development.
- Pupils' learning and interest in school are enhanced by a very good range of extra-curricular opportunities, from which many pupils benefit.

What could be improved

- Standards of attainment in art and modern foreign languages are not as high as they should be.
- The use of assessment information by heads of department in planning teaching and learning and the information provided to parents about their children's progress.
- The curriculum does not meet statutory requirements for the provision of information and communications technology at Key Stage 4.
- There are too few science laboratories. Also, the library is too small to be used for library lessons and as a study area for older pupils.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in March 1996 and has made good progress since that time. Standards of attainment in the National Curriculum tests, taken at the end of Year 9, have risen at the same rate as results nationally, while results in the GCSE examination, taken at the end of Year 11, have risen above the national trends. Parents recognise that the school is improving and pupil numbers have increased since the last inspection. The roles and responsibilities of senior managers have been revised and the senior management team restructured so that the changing needs of the school can be met more effectively. Attention is now being paid to the development of heads of department. Assessment data are being shared more widely and middle managers are becoming aware of the need to use it in planning teaching and learning and raising standards. A new school marking policy has been introduced and the quality of marking has improved in some subjects. There are still inconsistencies in the information reported to parents. An excellent new 'life skills' programme has been developed, which considerably strengthens curriculum provision for personal, social and health education. Statutory requirements for the provision of religious education are now being met but not

the requirement for a daily act of collective worship. Challenging targets are set for individual subjects and for the school overall.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
GCSE examinations	A	A	A	C
A-levels/AS-levels	D	A	B	

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

Over the last four years, results in National Curriculum tests taken at the end of Year 9 have been rising at the same rate as results nationally. In 2000, the test results in English and mathematics were well above average in comparison both with all and with similar schools. The results in science were well above average in comparison with all schools and average in comparison with similar schools. These results represent good levels of achievement from entry to the school at the age of 11. Although, consistent with national trends, girls achieve higher standards than boys in English and science, there are no significant differences in performance in mathematics.

The rate of improvement in GCSE/GNVQ average points scores since 1996 is above the national rate of improvement. The 2000 average points score was well above average in national terms and average in comparison with similar schools, as was the percentage of pupils achieving the higher GCSE A*-C grades. These results represent satisfactory progress and achievement from the end of Year 9. Pupils did well in English, English literature, mathematics, science, drama, design and technology, geography, history, music, physical education and business studies, where results were well above average. Results in French were above average while in German they were average. Results in art and religious studies were below average. Girls did better than boys in all subjects other than geography, music and physical education, where boys outperformed girls and in science where results were about the same. Overall results in art were below average mainly because of the well below average performance of boys.

Overall results in GCE A-level examinations in 2000 were above the national average and represent good achievement and progress from GCSE, particularly in biology, business studies, physical education, economics and geography. Students also achieved good standards on GNVQ courses at both Intermediate and Advanced level, with a higher proportion of students completing the courses and gaining accreditation than in previous years. The school monitors results of all national tests and examinations carefully.

From findings of the inspection, standards at the end of Years 9 and 11 are above national expectations. Very little work of below average standard was seen. In the sixth form, overall standards are above course expectations. Individual pupils achieve highly in sports, some at national level in, for example athletics, swimming, badminton and cross-country.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are very committed to their learning and keen to succeed.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Almost all pupils are considerate, respectful and friendly.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils respond very well to the many opportunities to show initiative and to take responsibility. Participation rates in extra-curricular activities are high.
Attendance	Consistently good. The school makes strenuous efforts to monitor and maintain good levels of attendance.

The ethos for learning is very good and based upon the very good relationships throughout the school and the very good role models provided by sixth form students. The school's behaviour code is clearly understood. Incidents of bullying are few and they are dealt with firmly. Very good attitudes in most lessons help pupils to learn well and pupils are supportive of one another.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is good overall. Teaching was at least satisfactory in 96 per cent of lessons observed and good or better in 74 per cent. In 27 per cent of lessons teaching was very good or excellent. It was unsatisfactory or poor in only 4 per cent.

Teaching is good in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Particular strengths of teaching are high expectations, good class management and the enthusiasm that teachers have for their subjects. They make very good use of their subject knowledge to structure lesson activities in ways that help pupils to learn systematically. Clear learning objectives, which pupils understand, are set at the start of lessons and these are reviewed at the end to consolidate pupils' learning. Good use is made of opportunities to improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in many subjects. The teaching of information and communications technology in all subjects is satisfactory in Years 7 - 9 and this helps pupils to progress well. However, the school's plan for the teaching of information and communications technology in Years 10 and 11 has yet to be fully implemented in all subjects and this causes a lack of continuity in the development of some pupils' learning in the subject. Unsatisfactory teaching in art and unsatisfactory and poor teaching in modern foreign languages is associated with low expectations, poor planning and insufficient use of assessment information to take account of the differing attainment levels of pupils in lesson planning. Pupils' work is checked regularly but inconsistencies in marking lead to a lack of clarity about the standard of the work and what they must do in order to improve. Satisfactory use is made of homework to consolidate and extend learning. Planning for pupils with special educational needs is good; they learn well across the full curriculum.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Broad and balanced with well-planned schemes of work. Extra-curricular activities are very good and a strength of the school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Attention is given to individual needs and pupils participate fully in all areas of the curriculum. Emphasis on reading in Year 7 is effective and helps pupils to cope with work in all their subjects.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The very few pupils with English as an additional language have no language difficulties that require additional support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good, overall. Opportunities for moral and social development are very good. Provision for cultural development is good and for spiritual development satisfactory. The requirement for collective worship is not met.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is caring; individual pupils are known well. Increasing use of monitoring and target setting to help pupils improve. Health and safety procedures are satisfactory. The school provides a supportive environment in which to learn.

The curriculum is broad and balanced from Years 7 to 11 and builds upon very good links with the primary schools. All pupils have the opportunity to study a second language. The school provides a very good range of AS and A-level subjects as well as courses leading to vocational qualifications. Sixth form students are well supported. However, they are finding the demands of new AS level courses particularly heavy as teachers become familiar with new course requirements. The requirements of the National Curriculum are met, except for the provision of information and communications technology for some pupils in Years 10 and 11. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular activities. A very good programme of support and guidance, related to pupils' personal development, careers and academic development, helps them to make very good progress in most aspects of school life.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. Energetic leadership with a clear sense of purpose and commitment to raising achievement is helping pupils make the most of their opportunities.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	They provide very good support and fulfil most of their statutory responsibilities. Governors are effective in questioning and supporting the development of school policy.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Rigorous monitoring and evaluation of performance by senior management. Increasing monitoring and evaluation of performance in order raise standards by some, but not all, middle managers.
The strategic use of resources	The development plan provides a clear framework for spending priorities. Efficient use is made of the school's resources. Valuable support is given by non-teaching staff.

Leadership of the school is very effective and there is a developing commitment to continuous improvement in staff at all levels. Rigorous monitoring of the school's work by the senior management team has provided a clear picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses and has contributed to

sustained improvement since the last inspection. The school is developing into a self-evaluating organisation. Financial planning is very good and the principles of best value are applied in all spending. External grants and other resources are used efficiently.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The school expects pupils to work hard and achieve their best. • The progress their children are making. • The good teaching. • The approachability of the school. • The school is helping their children become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The closeness with which the school works with parents. • The information the school provides. • The amount of homework pupils are given. • Behaviour. • Extra-curricular activities.

Parents are very supportive of the school and inspectors endorse their positive views. Some parents had mixed feelings about the closeness with which the school works with them and the information the school provides. Inspectors found that the school strives hard to involve parents and much information is provided through school newsletters and other reports on school activities. However, there is inconsistency in the clarity with which the detail in reports on pupils' attainment and progress is summarised in order that parents can clearly grasp what their children know, understand and can do, and what they must do in order to improve. Homework is set regularly in most subjects and homework tasks are generally used to consolidate and extend pupils' learning. Overall standards of behaviour are very good and the school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Standards of attainment at the end of Years 9 and 11 are well above average. Standards in the sixth form are above average.

1. Pupils achieve well at Tring School and results in national tests and examinations, taken at the end of Year 9, are improving at the same rate as the national trend; results in the GCSE examination, taken at the end of Year 11, are improving at a rate that is above the national trend. National Curriculum tests taken at the end of Year 6, in the last year of primary education, show that pupils enter Tring School with standards of attainment that, although wide-ranging, are above average in mathematics and science and slightly higher in English.
2. By the end of Year 9, standards of attainment in English and mathematics are well above average in comparison both with all and with similar schools. Standards in science are well above average in comparison with all schools and above average in comparison with similar schools. The 2000 results in English, science and mathematics represent good progress and achievement from the time pupils entered the school. Consistent with national trends girls achieve higher standards than boys in English in most years. There are no consistent differences in the performance of boys and girls in mathematics while the performance of boys and girls in science is generally similar. The 2000 teacher assessments in other subjects show well above average attainment by the end of Year 9 in design and technology, history and physical education, above average standards in geography and music and average standards in information and communications technology and modern foreign languages.
3. Pupils make satisfactory progress across Years 10 and 11 and achieve standards in the GCSE examination that are consistent with their previous levels of attainment at the end of Year 9. In the 2000 examinations, 65 per cent of pupils achieved five or more A* - C grades compared with the national average of 49 per cent, and 96 per cent of pupils achieved five or more A* - G grades compared with 90 per cent nationally. When account is taken of performance across all GCSE subjects, results are well above the national average and average in relation to similar schools. Almost all of the Year 11 pupils are entered for GCSE and in most years virtually all pupils entered are successful in achieving five or more A* - G grades. This reflects very well on the progress of pupils with special educational needs, 43 per cent of whom achieved 10 A*-G grades in 2000. Girls consistently achieve better results than boys do in the GCSE examination.
4. Results in the 2000 GCSE English and English literature examinations were well above the national average and although a higher percentage of girls achieved A* - C grades than boys, both groups' results were above their respective national averages by similar amounts. The standards reached by pupils in mathematics and science were significantly above the national averages. Girls achieved better results than boys in mathematics while the performances of boys and girls were broadly similar in science. The percentages of pupils achieving A*-C grades were well above the national averages in design and technology, geography, history and physical education and above average in drama, French, music, and business studies. The percentages gaining A* - C grades were below the national averages in art, German and religious studies. Girls outperformed boys in art, drama, French, history, and business studies, while boys outperformed girls in geography, music and physical education. The overall below average performance in art and German was mainly due to the well below average performance of boys.
5. Since the school has only recently introduced religious studies as a GCSE option with only a small number of candidates, it is not possible to make meaningful comparisons with national figures.
6. Students make good progress in the sixth form and results at Advanced level in the General Certificate of Education in 2000 were above average. These results represent good levels of achievement relative to students' attainment on entry to the sixth form. Particularly good standards were achieved in the sciences, mathematics, business studies, economics,

geography, music and physical education. The standards of attainment and levels of achievement of students following General National Vocational Qualification courses are good.

7. The findings of the inspection are that standards at the end of Years 9 and 11 are well above national expectations in most subjects and by the end of Year 13 they are above expectations.
8. Standards of literacy are well above average. As a result of the National Literacy Strategy introduced in primary schools, pupils enter the school in Year 7 with a good basic knowledge of language. The English department is in close contact with the primary schools and this ensures that there is good continuity in the development of pupils' literacy skills when they enter Tring School. The school's action plan for literacy incorporates good practice drawn from the National Literacy Strategy and staff development initiatives have helped teachers to gain a good understanding of issues related to raising attainment in literacy. These initiatives include silent reading in English, a literacy summer school and subject-specific vocabulary lists which are presented in the pupils' key skills books, on writing mats and on wall displays in all classrooms.
9. Oral skills are good from the start of Year 7. Pupils are good listeners, speak with confidence and are able to express their viewpoints fluently. This was seen, for example, in a Year 8 science lesson where pupils' rapid and accurate responses to skilful questioning by the teacher made a significant contribution to the high quality of learning taking place in the lesson. Pupils understand and use specialist vocabulary in, for example, mathematics, science and design and technology. In Years 10 and 11, pupils articulate their responses to questions clearly and use language precisely when speaking. For example, in a Year 10 English lesson, pupils showed increasing familiarity with the technical terms used by poets to convey feeling and meaning. Sixth form students draw on a variety of sources of evidence and use sophisticated vocabulary when discussing their work. This was seen, for example, in a Year 13 history lesson on Elizabethan foreign policy.
10. Reading standards are well above average and pupils, throughout the school, show above average comprehension skills. These enable pupils, including those with special educational needs, to meet all curricular demands. Pupils offer good analyses and responses when studying literature and make good use of their referencing skills to obtain information from textbooks. Pupils use the library regularly and through activities such as poetry days, book weeks, and silent reading in English, the school provides a good deal of support for personal reading. Many pupils write fluently and attain well above average standards, producing some good creative pieces of writing in all years. The use of a wide range of writing styles demonstrates the pupils' awareness of audience and purpose for their writing. Well constructed writing guides in, for example, English, science, history and geography help all pupils, and in particular lower attaining pupils, to ensure that their written work is accurate and well structured. The few pupils with English as an additional language are at an advanced stage of language development and able to study the full curriculum.
11. Work in the mathematics department lays the foundation for the development of pupils' numeracy skills, which are above average, and the school is in the process of developing a policy to ensure the consistent development of these skills in all subjects. Pupils have good number skills and their mental recall is quick and accurate. They are able to calculate values to the required degree of accuracy and have a good grasp of estimation and error. Pupils discuss their ideas and solutions to problems in an articulate way and use the appropriate mathematical terms in their oral answers. The mathematics department has adopted the National Numeracy Strategy in Year 7 and lesson planning includes a mental arithmetic challenge at the start of lessons. This reinforces the importance of regularly practising this basic skill. In investigative work pupils make good use of their mathematical knowledge of algebra, shape and space to explain patterns formed. Through participation in the Transforming Key Stage 3 pilot project, the mathematics department is committed to the further development of pupils' problem solving skills through investigations.
12. Pupils' attitudes to developing their numeracy skills are good and these skills are used effectively in other subjects such as science, business studies, geography and design and technology. In science, for example, pupils calculate accurately values of density and make use of graphs and tables to present results from experiments. They use similar skills in geography to calculate population densities, indices of social and economic development and to present

and interpret information in graphical form. Calculators are used appropriately and higher attaining pupils are able to engage in complex calculations such as determining the unknown angle of a scalene triangle. In art and design and technology, pupils are able to measure accurately and make good judgements about the size and proportion of objects.

13. Sixth form students make gains in their mathematical knowledge and understanding through the use of their mathematical skills in different contexts, particularly in mathematics, science, economics, and the key skills course. Pupils and students in all years are keen to discuss methods and answers to problems in order to improve their work.
14. Well above average standards were observed in most subjects throughout the school. In geography, pupils soon begin to develop a good grasp of geographical concepts, as illustrated in a Year 7 discussion of the human and physical features of the Tring area. Pupils demonstrate a good historical knowledge and can interpret events together with their causes and effects seen, for example, in a Year 10 analysis of cartoons depicting the failure of the League of Nations in the 1930s. In music pupils develop a very good understanding of the subject and by Year 9 are able to define a concerto and its structure and match musical descriptions to different pieces of music. Pupils do well in project work and coursework and this is exemplified in their project folders in design and technology. High standards are achieved in the wide range of extra-curricular activities the school offers. These include a variety of musical ensembles, dance and drama productions and individual and team sports. Individual pupils achieve highly in sports, some at national level for example, in athletics, swimming, badminton and cross-country. About 65 per cent of pupils progress from Year 11 into the sixth form, with about 75 per cent going on from the sixth form into further and higher education.

Pupils' attitudes are very good: they contribute well to their own learning and the sense of community in the school.

15. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and make a significant contribution to their learning. The school provides a supportive and mutually respectful working environment in which pupils are well motivated and enjoy being challenged. This was seen in mathematics, for example, where pupils enjoyed the challenge of solving rapid mental arithmetic problems at the start of lessons. Both pupils and parents are proud of Tring School, and the very good attitudes of pupils make a significant contribution to the general life of the school. Pupils are keen to do well and concentrate on the tasks set. They listen attentively and assimilate new information and ideas quickly. Pupils are keen to help one another in lessons and are considerate towards those with disabilities. They respond well to the enthusiasm of their teachers and are willing to check and improve their work, as observed in a Year 9 mathematics lesson on trigonometry. Only in a very few lessons does the attention of pupils tend to drift, and this is always when the pace of teaching slips or the lesson activities are not matched to the levels of attainment of the pupils, as in some art and modern foreign languages lessons. Pupils work well in pairs and groups, collaborating effectively and responding well when given the opportunity to show initiative. They make considerable efforts to succeed and by the time they are in Year 11 they are developing well as mature learners. This was seen in an excellent Year 11 drama lesson, for example, where pupils demonstrated their ability to work effectively without close supervision by the teacher. Sixth formers are keen and enthusiastic about their work, as observed in an economics lesson where students engaged with the teacher in a high quality seminar discussion of measures of economic growth. Similarly, in physical education, students worked effectively in small groups to design skill practices as part of their project work.
16. The very good climate for learning is due to several factors, and especially to teachers' high expectations and the very good relationships they establish. The very good relationships seen in most lessons provide pupils with the confidence to ask questions and enable teachers to concentrate on teaching. This was seen, for example, in a Year 8 science lesson on chemical reactions where the pupils' enthusiastic response to vibrant and challenging teaching led to very good progress in learning. Pupils have many opportunities, individually and in groups, to review evidence and identify key facts, for example in geography and history. Their discussions strengthen both their understanding of the subject, and also their language skills. Pupils are willing to help each other to solve problems. This was seen, for example, in a Year 10

geography lesson where the sharing of ideas helped pupils to increase their knowledge and understanding of the reasons for the growth and decline of Sheffield as an industrial city. Very good relationships also formed the basis of an effective sixth form religious education lesson, taught as part of the key skills programme, where students were prepared to share experiences in a thoughtful and confident way.

17. The very good attitudes of pupils can also be seen in the way in which they respond to the school's high expectations of behaviour. These are clearly understood and behaviour is very good. Pupils are courteous, very helpful to visitors and show respect to one another and to their teachers. The school is an orderly community and conduct around the school is very good at lesson changeover times. This is particularly important when large numbers of pupils enter and leave the different teaching blocks at changeover times, when movement in some entrances can come to a virtual standstill. The sensible behaviour of pupils, together with the watchfulness of teachers and older pupils, helps to ensure safety at these times. There is little evidence of any graffiti in the buildings and the main corridors remain litter free all day. There is, however, an unacceptable amount of litter in some classrooms immediately after the morning break, which detracts from the generally high level of consideration shown by pupils. Pupils queue patiently when waiting to enter the dining hall and make their way to and from assemblies in a composed manner. Pupils respond well to the efforts made to support those with behaviour difficulties. Incidents of unacceptable behaviour, although rare, are dealt with effectively by staff. In the last year there were very few fixed-period exclusions and no permanent exclusions. Pupils interviewed during the week of the inspection reported that there were very few incidents of bullying and that the school had dealt with any incidents effectively. They were confident that any future incidents would also be dealt with effectively. Attendance is above average and because pupils are punctual at the start of morning and afternoon school, the majority of lessons start on time.

Good teaching makes challenging demands on pupils and leads to good learning.

18. Teachers make a substantial contribution to the success of pupils. Their efforts since the last inspection to further improve the quality of teaching and learning have been successful. The quality of teaching and learning is good both overall and in each of the key stages. This finding endorses the view of 92 per cent of respondents to the parents' pre-inspection questionnaire, who agreed with the statement that teaching is good. Teaching is much improved since the time of the last inspection. In comparison with the previous inspection, the amount of satisfactory or better teaching has risen from 85 per cent to 96 per cent. The amount of good or better teaching has increased from 50 per cent to 74 per cent and the amount of very good or excellent teaching has increased from 10 per cent to 27 per cent. At the same time the amount of unsatisfactory or poor teaching has decreased from 15 per cent to just 4 per cent. The overall improvement in teaching is having a good effect on pupils' learning. There are examples of excellence in teaching in science, music, history, drama and economics. Teaching of this quality has a significant effect on pupils' progress and achievement. During the inspection, teaching was unsatisfactory in three lessons, two in modern foreign languages and one in art. It was poor in one lesson, in modern foreign languages.
19. Teachers have very good knowledge of their subjects, which underpins confident teaching. The very good use of display in specialist classrooms also reflects the expertise of teachers and helps to create stimulating learning environments for pupils. Teachers' high expectations and good control and management skills help to create purposeful learning atmospheres in lessons. The sharing of good practice and willingness to use different teaching methods are also leading to more varied and challenging teaching and having a positive effect on pupils' learning. Pupils respond well to these environments and the very good relationships provide pupils with the confidence to contribute with enthusiasm to lesson activities. This can be seen in the best lessons in the consistency with which teachers challenge pupils to think. These lessons generally begin with rapid questioning to review previous learning, which captures pupils' interest and stimulates thoughtful responses. This was, for example, one of the features of the excellent teaching observed in a Year 8 science and a Year 9 music lesson. Pupils are also challenged to think at the start of mathematics lessons by the use of mental arithmetic

exercises. The use of a brief period of silent reading at the start of English lessons in Years 7 to 9 help to develop both pupils' reading skills and their abilities to concentrate on tasks. Teachers also provide clear explanations of learning objectives at the start of lessons and, in order to consolidate learning, review the progress made at the end. This practice helps pupils both to structure their learning in lessons and to place this learning within their developing knowledge and understanding of the subject as a whole. These are consistent features in the excellent teaching observed in science, music, history, drama and economics and are found in good teaching in these and other subjects. Such teaching was exemplified in a Year 7 art lesson on the use of visual images and symbols to convey ideas and as a means of decoration, in a Year 11 design and technology graphics lesson on product planning and realisation and in a Year 13 English literature lesson on E.M. Forster's 'A Room with a View'.

20. Skilful questioning to probe and develop students' understanding is a feature of much of the teaching in the sixth form. This often leads to mature and well-informed discussion and makes a significant contribution to the good progress that students are making. This was seen, for example, in a Year 12 art lesson where students' knowledge and understanding were extended by the active and thoughtful responses that were required to the challenging questions of the teacher in a discussion of the themes used by different artists. In a Year 13 chemistry lesson the teacher's skilful use of challenging questions helped the teacher to identify the gaps in students' knowledge so that targeted support could be provided. Similarly, in business studies, the skilful use of questioning by the teacher increased students' understanding of the problems associated with traditional assembly line methods of production.
21. Pupils' work is regularly checked and marks given in accordance with the school's marking system. Pupils understand the system, but little reference is made to National Curriculum levels, except at the end of Year 9. GCSE grades are used on longer pieces of coursework in Key Stage 4, but otherwise pupils do not know how they are doing relative to national standards. Homework is usually used effectively to consolidate and extend learning. In English, mathematics, science, history and geography, homework tasks are set which require the use of research skills. Homework is usually relevant and constructive in preparing pupils for the following lessons.

Very good leadership is promoting enthusiastic teamwork and very good standards in most areas of the work of the school.

22. The headteacher and the senior management team provide very good leadership. The aims of the school are well reflected in its work. The school has a strong positive atmosphere and provides a well-ordered learning environment in which pupils' attitudes, attainment, behaviour and personal development are very good. Planning is very well organised, systematic and well focused on maintaining and improving standards. Governors have high expectations and are conscientious in carrying out their responsibilities. There is a high level of involvement by the members of the governors' resources committee in budget planning and they have a good sense of best value in spending, which is illustrated in their approach to service contracts. Except for providing a daily act of collective worship and the provision of information and communications technology for some pupils in Years 10 and 11, statutory requirements are met. Governors are vigilant about health and safety and satisfactory arrangements for child protection are in place. They work closely with the headteacher and senior staff and are committed to helping the school to do its best for the local community.
23. The school made a vigorous response to the previous inspection report and has made good progress in overcoming weaknesses identified at that time. The restructuring and redefinition of roles and responsibilities of the senior management team have considerably strengthened senior management. The two deputy headteachers now have clear line management responsibilities for subject departments and regularly meet heads of department to review progress towards targets. These reviews are part of the strategies for self-evaluation that are now well established at a senior management level and form the basis of very good school development planning. The school's commitment to improvement is underpinned by the increasing rigour with which the school monitors and evaluates pupils' progress and attainment. Substantial progress has been made over the past four years in the collection and use of

assessment information. The deputy head with responsibility for assessment has established a comprehensive database and detailed analyses of assessment information are carried out. Increasing use is being made of this information to monitor pupils' progress. The information is presented to heads of department who are expected to use it in planning teaching and learning and in providing support for pupils. However, there is variation in the effectiveness with which this information is being used for these purposes in departments. Good use is made of the information in geography and history and this enables teachers to better match lesson activities to the attainment levels of pupils, but less use is being of the information in other subjects. Little use is being made of the information in art, for example, and this is contributing to unsatisfactory progress and below average standards of achievement in the subject.

24. The commitment to improvement is also seen in the school's participation in the national Key Stage 3 pilot project through which the school commits itself to implementing strategies to further raise standards in science, information and communications technology, literacy and numeracy. The project also supports innovation in teaching and learning. Developments in this area are being led effectively by an assistant headteacher and a three-year plan to improve teaching and learning is in the first year of implementation. The work being done is already having a good effect on teaching. The school is rapidly developing a culture within which good practice is identified and shared. This is being done both through the evaluation of test and examination performance and through classroom observations, carried out by members of the senior management team and heads of department, which are becoming part of the school's self-evaluation procedures. The information gained from these observations is leading to changes in teaching methods and having a direct effect on the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom and the progress pupils are making.
25. The overall quality of leadership and management provided by heads of department is satisfactory, with examples of good management in geography, mathematics, history, music, economics, physical education and design and technology. Management in these subjects is characterised by the effective use of the information provided by senior management to help in the process of improvement. However, unsatisfactory leadership in art is having an adverse effect on pupils' achievement in the subject. The sixth form is well managed and cost effective. It provides students with a very good range of opportunities. A strong sense of teamwork is evident in most departments and this is having a positive effect on achievement and the raising of standards; in particular on the achievement of pupils with special educational needs. The strong sense of teamwork extends to non-teaching staff, who are themselves very committed to the pupils, school and community. Their make a valuable contribution to the ethos of the school.

Pupils are provided with very good care and support and respond well to the very good opportunities for personal development.

26. Continuity in care is a feature of the school's pastoral system, which is based on a house system. At the time of the previous inspection there were seven houses and it was noted in the report that there were inconsistencies in the ways in which school policies were being implemented between the different houses. In order to overcome this problem, the seven houses were reorganised into four larger houses in September 1999. At the same time additional support was provided to the house system by upgrading the post of head of house, appointing deputies and linking each house with a member of the senior management team. A small number of parents expressed concern, at the pre-inspection meeting and through the questionnaire, that pupils would be less well known and so less well supported in the larger houses. However, the reorganised houses are working well. Pupils are well known by their tutors and receive very good care and support.
27. Care and support for pupils begin at the time of transfer from the primary schools. Both parents and pupils say that the transfer arrangements are effective and that the school's induction procedures, for both pupils and parents, are very good. From Years 7 to 11, pupils are in contact with their tutors every morning and afternoon for registration, and for their fortnightly 'life skills' lessons, which cover the personal, social and health education programme. This extended contact enables tutors to develop a very good knowledge of individual pupils and their particular social and educational needs. This knowledge underpins the school's provision for pupils' personal development, which is a strength of the school. Heads of houses and their deputies play important roles in ensuring continuity in care and provide good support for tutors. All tutors are provided with carefully constructed tutor files, which give guidance on pastoral policies and procedures, and help to ensure consistency in support between tutors and houses. Heads of houses meet regularly with their tutors to discuss and monitor individual pupils academic and social progress. The four heads of houses are in continuous contact and meet regularly with members of the of the senior management team. As consequence, all pupils are provided with very good support as they move through the school. The quality of this provision makes a significant contribution to pupils' progress and achievement. The school's very good links with the careers service, local employers, further and higher education ensure continuity at the time pupils leave school.
28. Very good care and support are also provided for pupils with special educational needs. Through very good liaison with the primary schools, the school has a good knowledge of pupils' needs before they enter the school in Year 7. Pupils' individual education plans show that the support pupils receive matches need and makes an important contribution to pupils' achievement, which is consistently very good in relation to the targets contained in pupils' individual educational plans. All staff are aware of these pupils and the targets in their individual education plans and this is an important factor in the very good progress that these pupils are making towards their specific targets. Most pupils with special educational needs make very good progress both in their lessons and over time.
29. The school also provides very good support for pupils with behaviour difficulties. The support has been strengthened since the last inspection by establishing closer links between the academic and pastoral systems in the management of pupil behaviour. Pupils respond well to the school behaviour strategy, which places emphasis on the recognition and reward of good behaviour while making clear the results of unacceptable behaviour. As a consequence, behaviour and conduct improve as pupils get older and older pupils provide very good role models for younger pupils. The school makes strenuous efforts to support and avoid the need to exclude pupils. These efforts include the use of internal suspension for pupils whose classroom behaviour is disrupting teaching and learning. This sanction, which involves pupils working in isolation for no more than two days and is reserved for the most serious offences, is proving an effective way of managing these pupils, and as a consequence the number of fixed-period exclusions are very low for a school of this size and there were no permanent exclusions in the last school year.
30. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to show initiative and to take responsibility for themselves and others. The school's head boy and head girl are elected by staff and other members of the sixth form, and in addition to acting as representatives of the school they chair

the school council. The school council is made up of elected year group representatives from each of the houses; they represent the views of their peers at school council meetings and make reports on the proceedings. Pupils also act as monitors in their tutor groups, assist with school productions and welcome visitors to the school. Year 11 pupils are given additional privileges, such as a relaxation of the school uniform code, and their positive response can be seen in their increasingly mature behaviour. The high level of participation of the sixth form in the life of the school also has a significant influence on the increasing maturity of pupils in Years 10 and 11. Sixth form students are highly active in the house system and are given a great deal of responsibility. House captains represent their houses at school functions and present merit awards in school assemblies. Sports captains organise house sports teams and arrange team practices. House secretaries assist with house administration and act as links with other house captains. Music captains produce a database of musical pupils and organise competitions and music assemblies. Competition captains organise teams for activities such as public speaking competitions, while charity captains oversee fundraising for the house charity for the year. Photography captains ensure that a record is kept of all house events. Art and notice board captains ensure that the display on house notice boards is attractive and up-to-date. The high level of participation of the sixth form in the house system contributes significantly not only to their own personal development, through the exercise of responsibility, but also to the development of younger pupils, through the very good role models they provide.

Pupils' learning and interest in school are enhanced by a very good range of extra-curricular opportunities, from which many pupils benefit.

31. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities in which a large number of pupils participate. This is a strength of the school and recognised as such by parents at the pre-inspection meeting, although a small number of parents who responded to the questionnaire disagreed. The range of extra-curricular activities offered by the school not only enrich the curriculum but also extend the breadth of pupils' cultural experiences and increase opportunities to achieve. Pupils respond well to these opportunities and standards are high. Musical activities include a string orchestra, junior and senior wind bands, junior and senior choirs, jazz ensembles, chamber choir and a barbershop group. Pupils have participated in musical visits to Prague, Florence and Texas.
32. The school strives to develop in pupils an appreciation of their own cultural traditions in many subjects of the curriculum, most obviously through English literature, dance, drama, music, art, history and geography. This work is well supported by theatre and cinema visits, school musical, dance and drama productions, field trips in geography, history and science and numerous educational visits to places of cultural and historical interest. Pupils' learning about other European cultures is well supported by work in modern foreign languages and exchange visits with schools in France and Germany. Sixth form students have also participated in international conferences. Outdoor and residential activities make a very good contribution to pupils' social development, as does participation in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.
33. Sport is a particular strength of the school. A high proportion of pupils take part in some form of extra-curricular sporting activity and standards are high. Individual pupils have achieved international recognition in rhythmic gymnastics, swimming, badminton, athletics, cross-country, cricket, soccer and golf. There is a very good range of inter-house competitions and school teams compete against other schools with a good level of success at regional and national levels. Soccer, rugby, netball and hockey teams have visited countries such as Holland, Italy, Malta and Austria. There are also many subject-based clubs such as the computer club and Christian Union that support pupils' learning and personal development.
34. Extra-curricular activities also provide pupils with many opportunities to develop self-confidence and to show initiative. These opportunities include a variety of charitable activities organised through houses, such as supporting the 'Free Spirit Trust', a charity founded by a former pupil of the school, which supports teenagers with life-threatening illnesses. Careers and work-related education is very good and benefits from the school's well-established links with the local community, careers advisers, local colleges, training providers and employers. With support from careers teachers and tutors, pupils are expected to play a major role in finding their own

work placements. This helps to improve pupils' communication skills and makes a good contribution to their social development.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Standards of attainment in art and modern foreign languages are not as high as they should be.

35. The school has made strenuous efforts to raise standards in art and modern foreign languages. These efforts have included systematic reviews of the departments by the senior management team and reviews by external consultants. Nevertheless, standards in both subjects remain below the standards being achieved in other subjects in the school. Teacher assessments show that the proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 5 in art at the end of Year 9 in 2000, at 71 per cent, was six per cent below both the national average of 77 per cent and the percentage of pupils in the school achieving that level in 1999. The percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 in modern foreign languages in 2000, at 66 per cent, was close to the national average but 9 per cent below the percentage of pupils in the school who achieved the expected level in 1999.
36. Overall, the proportion of pupils achieving A*-C GCSE grades in art in 2000 was significantly below the national average and well below the school's averages in other subjects. Although girls' results were below the national average the overall well below average level of performance was due mostly to the significantly below average results of boys. Both boys' and girls' results were below those achieved in 1999. Although the percentage of pupils obtaining A*-C grades in French in 2000 was above the national average and close to the national average in German, they were not as good as they should be. In French, while both boys' and girls' results were above their national averages, girls achieved significantly better results than boys. In German girls' results in 2000 were just below the national average and both boys' and girls' results were below the results obtained in 1999. Satisfactory standards are achieved at A-level in all three subjects.
37. There is much good teaching both in art and modern foreign languages that matches the good teaching found in other subjects. However, some of the teaching in these subjects is unsatisfactory or poor and some satisfactory teaching has features that could be improved. In some lessons teachers do not do enough to ensure that pupils know what they have to do. Lessons lack challenge because planning does not take account of the different attainment levels of pupils. In modern foreign languages standards of speaking, listening and responding are low because too few opportunities are provided for pupils to practise using the foreign language in relevant everyday situations. Teachers' expectations are too low and pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to develop independence in using the language themselves. There is a lack of understanding of how pupils can be stretched at all levels of attainment. Standards of attainment in art are being adversely affected by weaknesses in leadership in the subject. There is no systematic approach to the assessment and monitoring of pupils' attainment and progress and little use is made of National Curriculum assessments and examination results to evaluate the impact of teaching and learning.

The use of assessment information by heads of department in planning teaching and learning and the information provided to parents about their children's progress.

38. The school has made good progress in the use of assessment since the last inspection. A comprehensive assessment database has been established and test and examination results are carefully analysed. The information obtained is being used effectively in some subjects to monitor pupils' progress and to identify pupils who are underachieving as well as potential high-fliers. More consistent use is being made of the information to monitor the progress of students coming up to GCSE and in particular those who are borderline candidates, for example at grade C/D borderline, and support systems have been established to help them do their best. The information is also being provided to heads of department, who are expected to make use of

this information in planning and teaching so that learning targets can be set and learning activities matched to pupils' attainment levels. Senior management are aware that while there are developing strengths in the use of assessment information there is inconsistency among departments in the use that is being made of it. For example, the mathematics department is making effective use of the results of National Curriculum tests taken in Year 6, in the last year of primary education, and at the end of Year 9, to set challenging targets for pupils. Effective use is also being made of assessment information in planning teaching and learning in music, physical education, geography and history. However, although the use of assessment information is developing in English and science, not enough use is made of the information in other subjects generally, while in art, little or no use is being made of assessment information.

39. The quality of marking in Years 7 - 11 and reporting to parents in Years 7 - 9 was a key issue in the last report. In response to this issue a new school marking policy was introduced in 1998 and pupils' work is now regularly checked and marked according to this policy. Pupils are now being given clearer guidance on what they must do to improve their work. In history, National Curriculum levels are being used to indicate the standard of pupils' work. In other subjects National Curriculum levels are used towards the end of Year 9, and GCSE grades on longer pieces of coursework in Years 10 and 11, but otherwise not enough use is made of levels and grades in the marking of pupils' work.
40. A small but significant minority of parents indicated through the pre-inspection questionnaire that they would like more information on the work their children are doing. The school provides a good amount of information through the prospectus, the Key Stage 4 and sixth form handbooks, through regular newsletters and reports from governors. More specific information is provided in the annual reports on pupils. These include a brief description of the subject studied, together with an assessment of pupils' achievements. Although there are examples of good practice in some subjects, such as physical education and music, the information given on pupils in most subjects tends to be about application and effort, rather than on what they know, understand and can do. There is also a lack of clarity in the reporting of the standards pupils are achieving. Although information on National Curriculum levels and GCSE grades is correctly given at the end of key stages, in other years there is a confusing mixture of grading systems, with some subjects using National Curriculum levels and others using numerical or literal grades. These grades are mostly benchmarked against class averages and do not give parents sufficiently clear information on pupils' achievements relative to national expectations.

The curriculum does not meet statutory requirements for the provision of information and communications technology at Key Stage 4.

41. Provision for information and communications technology has been much improved since the last inspection. The school has made a major investment in information and communications technology resources since the last inspection and this has increased access to computers for teaching and learning. Under the leadership of the information and communications technology co-ordinator a cross-curriculum working party is striving to ensure that information and communications technology is fully integrated and pupils' skills developed in all subjects. Satisfactory progress has been made in provision in Years 7 - 9 and there are examples of the use of information and communications technology in some subjects, such as English, science, mathematics, geography, business studies and design and technology, in Years 10 and 11. However, ways of ensuring that all pupils have a coherent programme of information and communications technology in Years 10 and 11 are in an early stage of development and the school cannot at present state with confidence that all pupils in these years receive their full National Curriculum entitlement.

There are too few science laboratories. Also, the library is too small to be used for library lessons and as a study area for older pupils.

42. The popularity of the school is reflected in the rising numbers of pupils on the school roll and increasing numbers of students in the sixth form. However, because of these increasing numbers the accommodation in some areas is barely adequate for the number of pupils and in

some instances beginning to have a detrimental effect on teaching and learning. The shortage of science laboratories means that the existing laboratories are in continuous use and this makes preparation for lessons difficult. There is also a shortage of science preparation rooms adjacent to laboratories and this causes a health and safety hazard, as chemicals have to be carried along corridors and stairs. These shortages have been recognised by the local education authority and the provision of additional laboratories is established as a building priority.

43. The school library provides an excellent resource for learning. The library is well staffed by a full-time librarian and library assistant who provide an excellent service to staff and pupils. The library is in continuous use from 7.45 in the morning until 4.30 in the evening, including the school lunch-break. The library is well stocked and the librarian works closely with departments to ensure that stock is regularly updated to match subject needs. Use of the library is firmly established in the work of departments and much use is made of the library by classes engaged in research and project work and by sixth form students for personal study. However, because the space the library occupies is too small for a school of this size it is not possible to accommodate all of the demands made on it. Priority has to be given to class groups and so sixth form students cannot use the library when it is in use by classes. Although there are study areas in the sixth form base, sixth formers who are using the reference materials in the library have their studies disrupted when classes arrive and they have to move out and find other empty spaces in the school. Also, because of a lack of space, the computers in the library have to be arranged in a way that allows no desk-top space between the computers and this makes note-taking very difficult.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

44. The school is aware of the issues raised in this report and action to tackle them appears as part of the school's plans for improvement. To further raise the standards of work and attainment of pupils, the governors, headteacher, senior management team and staff should now
- Raise standards in art by ensuring that leadership in the subject is able to
 - raise expectations about the high standards pupils can achieve in art
 - support teachers in the use of assessment information in lesson planning so that all pupils are provided with appropriate challenges
 - closely monitor and support pupils' progress to ensure that they reach the targets set for them and that progress is closely monitored
 - analyse end of key stage National Curriculum assessments and examination results to evaluate the impact of teaching and learning.
(Paragraphs: 4,15,18,23,25,35-37)
 - Raise standards in modern foreign languages by
 - making better use of assessment information to set appropriate challenges for pupils in lessons
 - improving planning for progression by groups of differing attainment levels within lessons
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to use the foreign language in relevant everyday situations and to develop independence in the use of the language
 - sharing good practice to ensure that there is greater consistency in teaching and learning.
(Paragraphs: 2,4,15,18,35-37)
 - Make more consistent use of the assessment information provided to heads of department by
 - making expectations clear about how heads of department should use assessment information with their subject teams
 - ensuring that assessment information is used by teachers to set attainment targets at the beginning of each year and that these are shared with and clearly understood by pupils

- establishing procedures and timetables for monitoring pupils' progress and attainment in all subjects, and for making judgements about whether pupils are doing well enough.
(Paragraphs: 23,38-39)
- Ensure that there is consistency in reporting to parents so that they have a clear picture of:
 - what their children know, understand and can do
 - the standards they are achieving
 - what they must do in order to improve.
(Paragraphs: 39-40)
- Ensure that all pupils receive their full curricular entitlement to information and communications technology in Years 10 and 11 by
 - making teachers aware of their responsibilities for teaching the planned curriculum for information and communications technology
 - monitoring to ensure that the planned information and communications technology curriculum is being taught in all relevant subjects.
(Paragraphs: 22,41)
- Continue to press the case for improved accommodation for the library in addition to the planned improvements in accommodation for science.
(Paragraphs: 42-43)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	90
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
8	19	47	22	3	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	1133	287
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	36	2

Special educational needs	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	16	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	263	25

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	14

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	25

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.5
National comparative data	7.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.6
National comparative data	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	111	108	219

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	89	95	94
	Girls	103	96	89
	Total	192	191	183
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	88 (73)	87 (82)	84 (78)
	National	63 (63)	62 (62)	55 (55)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	56 (43)	69 (60)	52 (42)
	National	28 (28)	42 (38)	30 (23)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	86	100	94
	Girls	98	101	92
	Total	184	201	186
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	84 (76)	92 (86)	85 (82)
	National	63 (64)	65 (64)	59 (60)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	47 (45)	71 (71)	54 (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	117	103	220

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	70	115	117
	Girls	73	98	101
	Total	143	212	218
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	65 (66)	96 (96)	99 (98)
	National	49 (47)	90 (91)	94 (96)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	47 (46)
	National	38 (38)

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
	2000	56	63	119

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	17.9	18.0	17.9 (18.9)	5	3	4 (3.2)
National	16.9	17.7	17.4 (17.9)	2.5	2.8	2.6 (2.8)

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

Vocational qualifications		Number	% success rate
Number in their final year of studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all those they studied	School	16	88
	National		82.5

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	5
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	2
Indian	6
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	3
White	1387
Any other minority ethnic group	5

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	10	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 – Y13

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	86
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15.4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y7 – Y13

Total number of education support staff	16
Total aggregate hours worked per week	423

Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y13

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	75
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Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y13

Key Stage 3	23.1
Key Stage 4	18.8

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	3848226
Total expenditure	3878822
Expenditure per pupil	2742
Balance brought forward from previous year	210082
Balance carried forward to next year	179486

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	1409
Number of questionnaires returned	348

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	42	52	3	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	37	55	6	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	21	63	10	2	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	17	60	14	6	3
The teaching is good.	22	70	4	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	19	54	18	7	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	46	45	6	3	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	43	3	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	20	49	22	5	3
The school is well led and managed.	29	56	7	1	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	33	58	7	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	47	9	3	9

Other issues raised by parents

Written comments were included with 74 (21%) of the questionnaires returned. Parents expressed strong support for the school and expressed satisfaction with the school's high standards and their children's academic and social progress. A small number of parents' comments related to instances of bullying, information on pupils' progress, setting arrangements, opportunities to see teachers on parents' evenings and the reduction in the number of houses from seven to four.