

INSPECTION REPORT

WILLOWFIELD SCHOOL

Walthamstow

LEA area: Waltham Forest

Unique reference number: 103100

Headteacher: Eve Wilson

Reporting inspector: Ian Wilson
4357

Dates of inspection: 30th April – 3rd May 2001

Inspection number: 193354

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Community
School category:	Comprehensive
Age range of pupils:	11 - 16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	Waltham Forest
Name of chair of governors:	Maureen Chadwick
Date of previous inspection:	9 th – 13 th December 1996

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17622	Gillian Burke	Team inspector	Physical education	How well are pupils or students taught? How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils or students?
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18734	Chris Salt	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Design and technology	
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17985	Hugh Magee	Team inspector	Music	
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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	5 - 8
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	9 - 11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?	11 - 13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?	13 - 15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	15 - 17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	17 - 18
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	18 - 20
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	20
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	21 - 25
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	26 - 41

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Willowfield school is a mixed 11 – 16 comprehensive serving an area with an above average level of educational disadvantage. The attainment of pupils joining the school covers the whole ability range but overall is below national average. The school has 596 pupils and is well below average in size. Most of the pupils live close to the school. There are 15 per cent more boys than girls. The percentages of pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language are both above national averages. The cultural background of pupils is diverse, with Pakistani pupils being the largest group, followed by white, black Caribbean and black African. The school is popular in the area and is significantly oversubscribed each year.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Willowfield is an effective school that does well for its pupils and is continuing to improve. Very good support, welfare and guidance, coupled with some committed teaching, especially at Key Stage 4, help students of all abilities to achieve very well in comparison with similar schools. Relationships in the school are very good. The school is very well lead and managed and provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils attain above average GCSE results in information and communication technology, religious education and Urdu. They also achieve well in mathematics, art and science.
- Relationships in the school are very good and pupils feel happy and secure.
- The school's arrangements for social inclusion and equality of opportunities are very good.
- Very good use has been made of specific grants, such as 'Excellence in Cities' funding.
- The school plans very well and knows how to secure continued improvement.

What could be improved

- The quality of teaching, though satisfactory overall, needs improving, especially at Key Stage 3.
- Some teachers new to the school need more support in managing pupils' behaviour.
- Pupils need more opportunities for planned oral work and more opportunities to develop independence and to take responsibility.
- There needs to be a wider range of strategies used in some lessons, to match tasks to the ability of pupils.
- Standards in some subject areas, especially music, need improving.

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 December 1996. It has addressed all the key issues raised in the last inspection and has improved considerably. At the time of the last inspection, 20 per cent of teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory; this has now reduced to below 10 per cent. Standards have improved substantially in information and communication technology and religious education. The curriculum has been reorganised and roles and responsibilities effectively refocused. Provision for improving pupils' literacy skills is better. The arrangements for providing information to parents about their children's attainment and progress are much better and further refinement is planned. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is good.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
GCSE examinations	D	C	C	A

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

GCSE results are improving and the rate of improvement is above the national average. The GCSE results for 2000 exceeded the school's targets. The percentages of pupils attaining five or more A* - C and five or more A* - G grades are below the national averages; however overall attainment, as measured by the average point score, is similar to that for all schools. The percentage of pupils attaining at least one GCSE pass is above the national average. When GCSE results are compared with pupils' attainment on entry to the school and at Key Stage 3, they achieve very well. GCSE results were above the national average last year in information and communication technology, religious education and Urdu, similar to national averages in mathematics and art and just below in science and physical education. Results in other areas of the curriculum were significantly below national averages. Boys' attainment, in comparison with boys nationally, is higher than the attainment of girls in comparison with girls nationally. These differences of attainment between boys and girls are much less marked in lessons. Attainment at age 14 is not as good. Results obtained by pupils last year matched national averages in English, but were well below in mathematics and science. Pupils' achievements, in comparison with those of pupils in similar schools, were well above average in English and below average in science and mathematics. The trend in improvement is below the national trend. Gifted and talented pupils and pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is good.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to school. They are lively and enthusiastic and enjoy school life and learning. Their interest and enthusiasm for school has improved since the last inspection.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The behaviour of pupils is satisfactory. The number of permanent exclusions has fallen dramatically since the previous inspection and is below average. The number of fixed term exclusions is average. Many pupils are very well behaved and are an example to the rest. However there are groups of boys in Key Stage 3 who are noisy and sometimes rude in lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships in the school are very good. Pupils come from a wide variety of different ethnic and religious backgrounds and work and relax well together. The absence of bullying, racism or sexism engenders a strong feeling of harmony throughout the school. There is scope for pupils to take on more responsibility for their own learning.
Attendance	The attendance of pupils is satisfactory. The levels of attendance have improved over the last 4 years and are now in line with the national average. However, when compared with schools with a similar intake of pupils, the attendance figures are good, as they also are when compared with all secondary schools in the local education authority. The school is aware that the absence of pupils in Year 9 is high.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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.

The majority of teachers plan their lessons well and use effective teaching methods to help pupils to learn. They have enthusiasm for their subject and good knowledge which motivates pupils. The quality of teaching is good or better in nearly half of lessons and it is very good or better in 16 per cent of lessons. At Key Stage 4, 28 per cent of lessons were very good or better. Teaching is less than satisfactory in 8 per cent of lessons. A majority of this unsatisfactory teaching is in Key Stage 3, often where teachers who are new to the school have not yet established their class control. Teaching is good at both key stages in mathematics, art and information and communication technology, good in modern foreign languages at Key Stage 3, good in history, science, physical education and religious education at Key Stage 4, and sound elsewhere except drama which is unsatisfactory. The quality of pupils' learning generally matches the quality of teaching. Learning in drama and music is unsatisfactory. Good support is provided for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language. There is some good practice in matching work to the abilities of pupils but there is a lack of challenge in some lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	This is satisfactory overall. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant although the time allocations for music and physical education are below average.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	This is good. The school is successful in enabling pupils with special educational needs to integrate well. Pupils are well supported and make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good. Pupils are well supported in lessons and withdrawn only if there is a need to develop basic English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for personal, social, health and careers education is good. Provision for pupils' moral and social education is also good. Some good work is done in different areas of the curriculum to support pupils' cultural development but as a whole this could be developed further. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The support and care of pupils is very good and there are good arrangements to ensure the welfare and safety of pupils. There are good arrangements for assessing pupils' academic attainment and progress but there needs to be better tracking of groups of pupils over the longer term.

The school is a secure and safe place to learn. Pupils are known well and the school is very successful in helping all students access the different areas of the curriculum. Although arrangements for pupils' spiritual development have improved, the provision for collective worship does not meet statutory requirements. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is good. The information for parents, including details about pupils' attainment and progress has improved but there is scope for further development. The range of outside visits, to enhance the curriculum, is limited.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is very well led and managed by the head and senior staff. Subject and year group leaders in most cases manage their responsibilities very well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body has a very good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and manages its statutory responsibilities well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This is done well and the information is used well to plan for the further development of the school.
The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of the resources available and specific grants are used well. Financial administration is secure.

The match of numbers, qualifications and experience of teaching staff to the needs of the school is satisfactory. The overall provision of support staffing is good. The school has found it difficult to fill some subject vacancies and although much has been done to minimise the impact of this, there has been significant disruption to pupils' education in some areas, in particular drama and music. The accommodation is satisfactory but there is no spare space. Learning resources are sufficient and the library is good. The number of computers available is satisfactory but many are now old and need replacing.

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. • Pupils make good progress. • Teaching is good. • Behaviour is good and the school promotes good values and attitudes. • The school is approachable. • Expectations are high. • Pupils are helped to be mature and responsible. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework is inconsistent. • The school does not work closely enough with parents. • There is not enough information about their children's attainment and progress or about activities taking place at the school. • The range of activities outside of lessons is limited.

Inspectors support the positive views of parents although the quality of teaching needs improving in some areas. The inspectors judge that the number and variety of clubs and activities are satisfactory, as is the setting and marking of homework in general. However some departments are not consistent in checking that all their teachers keep up to date with homework monitoring. Inspectors also judge that the opportunities for parents to find out about their children's progress are good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The school does well for its pupils. Although many pupils come to the school with below average attainment in the core subjects, they achieve very well in comparison with pupils in similar schools. When their GCSE results are compared with what they attained at age 14, they also achieve highly.
2. GCSE examination results have improved since the time of the last inspection in 1996. The percentages of pupils attaining five or more A* - C and five or more A* - G grades are below the national averages; however, the trend in improvement is above the national average. Although there was a drop last year in the number of five or more A* - C passes, the results were significantly above the school's target. The GCSE targets for 2001 are reasonably challenging and reflect a similar continued rate of improvement. The school has a policy of entering students whenever they have a possibility of a GCSE pass and as a result the percentage of pupils attaining at least one GCSE pass (99 per cent) is above the national average and few pupils achieve no passes.
3. GCSE results were above the national average last year in information and communication technology, religious education and Urdu, similar to national averages in mathematics and art and just below in science and physical education. Results in other areas of the curriculum were significantly below national averages.
4. Results obtained by pupils at age 14 last year in national tests, matched national averages in English, but were well below average in mathematics and science. Pupils' achievements, in comparison with the achievements of pupils in similar schools, were well above average in English and below average in science and mathematics. The trend in improvement is below the national trend.
5. In lessons, pupils' attainment was above national expectations in information and communication technology at both key stages and above in science, Urdu, physical education and religious education at the end of Key Stage 4. Attainment matched national expectations in most other subjects but was below in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 3, French at the end of Key Stage 4, history and geography at the end of both key stages and significantly below in music at the end of both key stages. In the limited amount of drama seen, attainment was at or below national expectations and achievement unsatisfactory.
6. Boys generally attain better than girls. For the last two years, their average point score has been above the national average for boys. The girls' average GCSE point score was well below the average for girls last year, although it was much closer in 1999. In GCSE subjects, boys attained above average results in art, science, information and communication technology, mathematics and Urdu in comparison with boys nationally. Girls attained higher results in art in comparison with girls nationally. At Key Stage 3, there is a similar pattern, with boys attaining more highly than girls. The school has evidence to suggest that in part these differences may reflect lower attainment of girls on entry to the school. In lessons, however, differences of attainment between boys and girls were not significant. There are some quite large differences between the attainment of different ethnic groups in GCSE examinations, however the numbers of pupils in some of these groupings is often very small and the school has not found any significant trends. There were only marginal differences in attainment between the two largest ethnic groups which were Asian Pakistani and European UK.
7. In most areas of the curriculum, pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Progress is most noticeable in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and art. It is satisfactory in all other areas except music. The quality of work in their books and participation in lessons suggests that many pupils with special educational needs are attaining within the broad average range, albeit at a lower end in some cases. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in mathematics, science, information and communication technology and art and satisfactory progress in all other areas except music. The progress of both SEN and EAL pupils was

aided by the good, well-planned support from specialist support staff and well-planned lessons which met the range of abilities in the class. The attainment of gifted and talented pupils is good, with 7 per cent of pupils attaining GCSE A* and A grades and 22 per cent attaining A* to B grades. Gifted and talented pupils make good progress in art, mathematics, science and information and communication technology and satisfactory progress in other subjects except design technology and music.

8. Pupils' literacy skills are improving because of action taken by the school. Many pupils have satisfactory skills in reading and writing but there are a significant minority of pupils in Key Stage 4 whose attainment in writing is around national curriculum Level 4, which is well below the standard expected for their age. This has a significant impact on their attainment and progress, examples being in French where some pupils made many errors in their language and geography where written work was sometimes weak.
9. Pupils' numeracy skills are below average on entry to the school, however; by the end of Key Stage 3, a majority of pupils are working at the standard expected. Pupils use numeracy skills satisfactorily to support work in subjects across the curriculum. In science pupils make accurate calculations, draw and interpret graphs and substitute into formulae. In design and technology they produce scale drawings and understand and use angle properties in work on orthographic projection. In information and communication technology pupils use spreadsheets appropriately to analyse data and show geometrical understanding in interpreting and making LOGO commands. In geography pupils' sound grasp of ratio helps their understanding of stream characteristics. They can construct bar charts and use protractors successfully to draw pie charts illustrating geographical data. Pupils recite numbers in French. They measure long-jump distances, use stop-watches to time races and calculate averages for group scores in athletics.
10. The overall picture is one where pupils join the school with below average attainment and make steady progress during their first three years in the school. In Years 10 and 11, they make more rapid progress and do well to achieve what they do. Factors contributing to the better progress and attainment in Key Stage 4 include better teaching, a more mature attitude on behalf of the pupils and specific interventions by the school, for example the provision of revision classes in several areas of the curriculum. Standards have been significantly adversely affected in some subjects by vacant posts which the school has been unable to fill and by the loss, often part way through the year, of experienced staff. The school is taking effective action to address staffing difficulties. In several subjects where standards are below national expectations, action taken by the school, for example recruiting an experienced teacher or covering of a vacancy internally, is resulting in noticeable improvement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils have very good attitudes to school. They are lively and enthusiastic and enjoy school life and learning. Their interest and enthusiasm for school has improved since the last inspection. The new pupils in Year 7 settle in well and are soon able to cope with the different routines of secondary education. In interviews during the inspection they were able to describe in great detail the complexities of the different grouping systems within their year and how the various coloured cards and slips fit into the reward and sanctions system. Pupils are proud of their school and are very willing to give examples of what they like about it. A good number of pupils participate in the clubs at lunchtime and after school. The computer club held in the learning centre at lunchtimes is aimed at pupils with behaviour problems, but is open to all and has a very enthusiastic clientele. Pupils feel safe, happy and able to achieve successfully because the school values every pupil and there are clear expectations on behaviour and discipline.
12. The behaviour of pupils overall is satisfactory. There were 37 pupils excluded for fixed periods last year which is about average. The number of permanent exclusions has fallen dramatically from 14 just before the previous inspection to one in the last school year. The school's strategy to "teach the children who are in front of us" and to provide alternatives to exclusion, based on use of the Learning Centre and the school's determination to give each pupil a fair chance, is proving most successful. Many pupils are very well behaved and are an example to the rest. They speak politely to visitors, hold open doors and are willing to give a hand when necessary. In an excellent Year 11 religious

education GCSE revision lesson, the outstanding concentration and maturity of the pupils bodes very well for well-earned success in their exams. However there are groups of boys in Key Stage 3 who are noisy, unruly and impertinent in lessons, particularly when teachers are inexperienced or are not given enough support to manage the behaviour effectively. In such lessons the learning is severely disrupted, not only for them, but also for the quieter and well-behaved pupils. Much of the boisterous behaviour is due to a lack of self-discipline and awareness of the impact of their actions on their peers, rather than oppressive and unkind behaviour.

13. Relationships in the school are very good. Pupils come from a wide variety of different ethnic and religious backgrounds and work and relax well together. The absence of bullying, racism or sexism engenders a strong feeling of harmony throughout the school. In a Key Stage 3 geography lesson a white boy explained very carefully to a new Pakistani boy with little English the vocabulary needed for their work on volcanoes. In some lessons the boys dominate the discussions and do not allow the quieter and more unforthcoming girls, who often hold back because of cultural expectations, a sufficient chance to contribute. Pupils are good at appreciating each other's good work and successes. In a Key Stage 3 science lesson the whole class broke into spontaneous applause when one boy correctly illustrated an electrical circuit in series and then in parallel on the board. In assemblies and in the tutor time when pupils are encouraged to concentrate on the "thought for the week" most pupils pay due respect to the time for quiet prayer or reflection. They listen carefully and maturely to adults and other pupils with different values and beliefs.
14. The personal responsibility and initiative of the pupils is satisfactory. Selected pupils take on their roles as school councillors sensibly and some Year 10 pupils have become reading mentors for the younger pupils. However the opportunities within the school for developing responsibility for their community and environment are limited. Within the classroom, many pupils do not take on sufficient responsibility for their own learning. They tend to wait to be told what to do, are often incapable of sorting themselves into sensible groups and fail to note down the set homework task without regular reminders. Although there are a good number of pupils, particularly in Key Stage 4, who are self motivated and clear about what they need to do to improve their learning, there are too many who are unable to plan and organise their own work and study without supervision.
15. Attendance is satisfactory. The levels of attendance have improved over the last four years and are now in line with the national average for secondary schools. However, when compared with schools with a similar intake of pupils, the attendance figures look good, as they do also when compared with all secondary schools in the local education authority. The school is aware that the absence of pupils in Year 9 is high. It is working consistently to support pupils who often miss lessons, keeping up clear lines of communication with home and providing very effective mentoring opportunities in the school. Many absences are related to religious festivals. The school is sensitive to the faiths and cultural backgrounds of its pupils, but equally makes it clear that regular education is vitally important. Registration is prompt and effective in all classes at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions. However a significant number of pupils are late arriving for the beginning of school, despite staff chivvying them to make haste. The satisfactory levels of attendance are a positive benefit to improved achievement.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is good or better in nearly half of lessons. It is less than satisfactory in a small proportion (8 per cent), usually where teachers, who were new to the school, had not yet established their class control. This is a significant improvement on the last inspection where one in five lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. The teaching is better at Key Stage 4 than at Key Stage 3. In Key Stage 4, the teaching in 28 per cent of the lessons was very good or excellent compared with 8 per cent in Key Stage 3. In only 2 per cent of the lessons at Key Stage 4 was the teaching judged to be unsatisfactory, whilst thirteen per cent fell into this category in Key Stage 3. Teaching is good at both key stages in mathematics, art and information and communication technology, good in modern foreign languages at Key Stage 3, good in history, science, physical education and religious education at Key Stage 4 and sound elsewhere except drama which is unsatisfactory.

17. The quality of teaching makes a positive contribution to learning and standards of achievement. The great majority of teachers plan their lessons well and use effective teaching methods which help pupils to learn. They have enthusiasm for their subject and good knowledge which motivates pupils. In general, teachers have high expectations of pupils of all abilities and encourage them to do well.
18. In most lessons, teachers manage pupils sensitively and well and relationships are good. Quite often pupils are lively and in the afternoons, boisterous on coming to lessons but teachers' calmness, good humour and insistence on getting on with the lesson generally results in pupils settling down to work well. Some teachers are less successful in managing pupils' behaviour. Sometimes the result is distraction for some pupils caused by background chatter of others, but in some cases the level of disruption is such that little learning takes place. The pace of lessons is usually maintained well, although it is difficult to sustain pupils' concentration in some of the double lessons, for example in games in the playground and design and technology. Classroom routines are good and practical work is conducted safely.
19. Effective lessons seen, started with a good introduction so that pupils knew what was expected of them. This involved lesson objectives being clearly explained and sometimes questioning which drew on previous work. Clear and concise instructions were given. In mathematics, good use was made of 'mental starters' in some lessons. Sometimes, in different subject areas, lesson objectives were too general to provide a clear basis for planning or assessment and as a consequence there was insufficient clarity about what pupils were expected to learn. In turn, the pupils themselves were unclear about where the work was leading and they achieved less well as a result.
20. Teachers' presentations and explanations are usually very clear; teachers sometimes draw on everyday experience, for example in mathematics the teacher talked to pupils about the use of negative numbers in everyday life and in geography comparisons helped pupils appreciate the effect of different amounts of rainfall. Occasionally teacher input was overlong and pupils lost concentration. In most lessons there was a good balance of whole class teaching and individual work. Individual work was usually supported by resources, for example text books or worksheets. Teachers circulated, checking on pupil progress and giving support where needed.
21. A main target for improvement in the school at present is to ensure that the teaching is suitably varied and adapted to meet the needs of all the pupils in a class. Careful consideration has been given to this difficult area and there was evidence of good practice, for example in religious education, history, design and technology and physical education where different tasks had been prepared for pupils of different abilities. In other lessons, the emphasis was on whole class teaching and this was effective when teachers had strategies to include pupils of all abilities through, for example, the judicious use of questioning, visual reinforcement, structured activities, the careful use of support teaching and good plenaries which reinforced the lesson objectives. In too many lessons, however, the teacher expected the more able pupils simply to complete the common tasks more quickly. On occasion, some pupils had to wait repeatedly for other pupils to finish copying work down from the board before all could move on. Unsatisfactory teaching also occurred when the set tasks were too low level. Setting is used in several areas of the curriculum including science, mathematics, geography and French. This does help to improve the match of tasks to the ability of students but there is still a need within some setted groups to plan for the range of ability in the group.
22. Good use is beginning to be made of information and communication technology in different areas of the curriculum including, English, science, geography and art and there are good plans to develop the use of ICT in all subjects.
23. In most lessons, pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into the groups. These pupils are well known as individuals, are well supported in their learning and, in most classes, are encouraged successfully to make progress. Special needs assistants provide very good support for pupils with both learning or behavioural needs and there is good planning between assistants and teachers. Support staff also provide intensive support for pupils with literacy difficulties; some inspirational work was seen by a temporary member of staff working with a pupil whose English was very limited and whose personal circumstances were very difficult. Some teachers are timetabled to provide classroom support. This can be extremely effective, one example being in physical education

where the work of the assistant headteacher enabled a group of low attaining Year 10 students to develop their skills. On occasion, the work of non-specialist support staff is insufficiently clearly focused, however.

24. Pupils with English as an additional language are supported very well. In some lessons, for example geography, the support teacher in conjunction with the class teacher had provided translations of the activities to be undertaken. In other lessons, specialist staff provided good support to individuals and groups. They also encourage students to help each other, for example pairing new pupils with those who are confident in English and who speak the new pupil's language.
25. In a few subjects, pupils are given opportunities to take responsibility for their own work, making decisions about how to organise it and when to move on. When given the opportunity to do so, the pupils rise to the occasion and the extent to which they can work independently is impressive. Particularly good examples were seen in the life skills group, the pupils following the Junior Sports Leadership Award and investigational work seen in mathematics and science. This is not characteristic of most of the teaching, though. Too few opportunities for oral work are planned and the pupils are not encouraged to develop their ideas by discussion, argument and justification. Nor do they have many opportunities to present to the rest of the class the results of their reading or research into a topic.
26. The assessment of pupils' work is often used effectively to improve standards. Common practice included checking on progress during lessons, diagnostic questioning and written feedback on work. In several subjects the pupils engage in self-assessment, though this is not established practice across the school. The marking of pupils work is often careful and accurate and good practice was seen in English where some very good examples of diagnostic and supportive marking helped the pupils to make good progress. Inconsistent and haphazard marking was seen also in some curriculum areas.
27. Homework is set and monitored regularly by most teachers.
28. Teaching of personal and social education both in designated in full PSHE lessons and in tutor periods is mainly satisfactory, sometimes good and occasionally unsatisfactory.

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

29. The school publishes a clear statement of pupils' entitlement to a curriculum which is broad, balanced and relevant. A core curriculum is offered to all in Key Stage 3, which ensures breadth of study. All National Curriculum subjects and religious education are provided for a reasonable time, although the times for music and PE are below average. Additionally time is provided to support the development of pupils' literacy skills in the form of lessons in Year 7 and Year 8 for literacy and communication skills respectively. Pupils also have a lesson of drama at this stage. In Year 8 pupils have a choice of modern foreign language: to continue with French or to take up Urdu. The coherently designed course in personal social and health education (PSHE), which covers health education, including drug and alcohol abuse, sex education and careers education is offered to all pupils in all years.
30. In Key Stage 4 all pupils study English, English literature, mathematics, dual award science, physical education and religious education. They continue with the language chosen in Year 8, a design and technology subject, a humanities subject or a life skills programme, an arts subject and PSHE. This arrangement continues to ensure that pupils experience breadth of study. All subjects lead to an accreditation or qualification: GCSE full or short course or Certificate of Achievement.
31. The school is relatively small and does not have the flexibility to offer vocational courses alongside the range of GCSE courses. However, the school takes advantage of the flexibility to disapply aspects of the National Curriculum for small numbers of students to enable them to receive additional support or take vocational courses for part of the week in a Further Education College. A Certificate of Achievement is offered as alternative accreditation in most subjects.

32. The provision for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has improved since the last inspection and all pupils in Key Stage 3 have a discrete lesson in the subject in each of Years 7,8 and 9 and progressively develop a range of ICT skills which can be applied to the work in other subjects. All pupils in Key Stage 4 take a full or short course in ICT. Pupils are also receiving increasing opportunities to use ICT in English, mathematics, science, art, design and technology, music, French, history and geography lessons. Further planning for the development of ICT across the curriculum is good and is well advanced.
33. Provision for PSHE has improved substantially since the last inspection and is good and well planned. However, there are some inconsistencies in pupils' experiences owing to variations in the quality of teaching. The school has several links with the local business community, but does not really exploit the curricular opportunities such links could offer. Careers education is taught as part of the PSHE course. The course is good, very well planned and is supported by the local agency providing careers advice. Work experience in Year 11 is also well managed and evaluations of provision carried out with pupils, parents and employers indicate that it provides a valuable experience for pupils. Pupils are prepared for work experience through PSHE and their experiences are discussed afterwards; as yet pupils' work experience is not linked to other areas of the curriculum.
34. Good attempts are made to match the courses with pupils' aptitudes and abilities and there is a strong commitment, throughout the school, to ensure equality of access to the curriculum provided. Additional 'out-of-hours' funding has enabled the school to make available a wider range of enrichment activities. The school is very sensitive to pupils' cultural and religious requirements; examples include, the flexibility over uniform, Halal and vegetarian food served in the canteen, prayer supervision and minor adjustments to the curriculum during Ramadan.
35. Productive initiatives have been put in place for the development of literacy across the curriculum during the past two years. The Head of English, who is also the school's literacy co-ordinator, has provided the focal point for these developments. With colleagues in other departments, an action group has been formed which meets regularly to review progress. It was evident from observation of additional timetabled literacy lessons in Years 7 and 8, that this work is helping pupils to recognise curriculum links in their literacy learning. For example, a Year 7 literacy lesson presenting the theme of 'chaos and calm' through a study of Japanese art, both enriched pupils' descriptive vocabulary and also extended their ability to reflect upon and appreciate the images chosen. Key words linked to subject-specific requirements feature in departments throughout the school. More significantly, there was evidence of their use as a reference point by pupils in improving their work. Other useful strategies for raising literacy attainment include, for instance, Year 10 pupils providing reading support to those in Year 7 who have not yet achieved National Curriculum Level 4 in English. This again indicates a positive response to the findings of the last inspection report. It also provides further evidence of the school's commitment to raising literacy attainment, the success of which can be identified in improving standards of attainment for English in National Curriculum tests and at GCSE level.
36. There has been no specific planning to develop numeracy skills across the curriculum but pupils are able to use their numeracy skills satisfactorily to support work in different subjects.

37. Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good. All pupils who have English as an additional language are assessed on entry to school. Currently there are 370 pupils on the register, of whom 35 are at the early stages of language acquisition. There is regular updating of the register after assessments are made every term, to ascertain pupils' progress and to identify any areas of particular concern. Pupils with English as an additional language who also have special educational needs are supported through close liaison between the learning support team and the teachers of English as an additional language. The school provides a beginners programme for casual entrants on a withdrawal basis, three mornings a week, which enables pupils to make progress in basic English. There is also a beginners handbook which pupils take with them in classes and it enables them to learn the basic language of mathematics and science as well. English as an additional language support extends into subject areas and is regularly reviewed. The co-ordinator for English as an additional language and other teachers of EAL, provide in-class support on a regular basis. Subject teachers have good strategies for meeting pupils' specific needs and learning support teachers also help pupils improve their skills of speaking and listening, reading and writing.
38. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is also good. The school has a real enthusiasm and sense of mission which relates to a belief that a number of pupils' abilities have been masked by, for example, their limited knowledge of English on arrival at the school and low expectations for a variety of other reasons. A few pupils are withdrawn from lessons for a specific purpose, for example, to follow the 'Arrow' reading programme or to join a group following a Speech and Language Therapy programme. The Learning Centre is used well to induct pupils new to the school and to provide focused support by withdrawal for limited periods. In the main support is provided within classes. All pupils with statements, and most at stages 2 - 4 of the Code of Practice have a designated member of the Learning Support Department as a key worker who is responsible for making sure that all relevant members of staff are informed about pupils' needs and have a copy of their individual education or behaviour plan.
39. The school has worked hard to establish a system to identify pupils who are gifted and talented. All departments are asked to identify pupils and those identified by five or more areas are taken forward. Recommendations are cross referenced with assessment data. Designated pupils choose the subject area in which they would like to develop their skills and heads of department are expected to make suitable provision. There is a register of Able Pupils and pupils each have an individual learning plan (ILP). Pupils met their academic targets for 2000 with ease. In the longer term, Heads of Department are expected to incorporate a curriculum for this group of pupils into their schemes of work.
40. Since the last inspection some improvements have been made to support pupils' spiritual development and provision is now satisfactory. The introduction of a 'thought for the week' gives pupils the opportunity for reflection at the beginning of each day. The themes are well chosen and good use of them is made in assemblies and in form tutor periods; they make a good link between spiritual considerations and pupils' everyday lives, although they do not constitute a daily collective act of worship. Parents commented very positively on the impact of these 'thoughts for the week'. Religious education provides a good contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Pupils learn about religious experiences, sharing their own commitments to their faith while respecting each other's beliefs. They have opportunities to share experiences, empathise with and help each other. There is little support from other subject areas in promoting pupils' spiritual development.
41. By contrast, several subjects contribute well to pupils' moral development. Examples include exploration of morality and amorality in English, discussions of conflicts between nations in history, the attention paid to sportsmanship in physical education and work in religious education on roles and responsibilities. Provision overall for pupils' moral development is good.
42. Good attention is given to pupils' social development, with frequent opportunities for pupils to work in pairs and groups, sharing resources and ideas and learning to respect each other's opinions and to defend their own sensitively.
43. The richness of the school's diverse cultural population is not yet fully exploited; however, the teaching in several subjects, including art, music, dance, English, science, history and modern foreign languages does extend pupils' cultural horizons. A particular innovation is the development of a

website on the history of immigration in Walthamstow, funded by a grant from British Telecom. Major festivals are also celebrated.

44. The curriculum is enhanced by a range of extra-curricular activities which are available in the lunch hour and after school. The programme for sporting activities is good and there is a limited range of other activities including science, ICT and chess clubs. There is some, but not extensive, use of outside visits by pupils and visitors to the school. Where these occur, they extend the learning opportunities for pupils, for example there are geography field trips, history visits to museums and lessons led by careers service staff.
45. The school has good links with its feeder primary schools. Particular use is made of information about pupils' special educational needs and levels of competency in English for planning. Other records are used by heads of year and heads of departments have visited primary schools to help plan curriculum continuity. Links with post-16 institutions help ensure effective transition for pupils at 16.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

46. The support and care of pupils is good and is much improved since the last inspection. At Willowfield the achievement and well being of each pupil really matters to the school and it has faith in each and every one of its pupils. The whole staff is willing to tackle the many different challenges that pupils bring to school, whether they are linked to attendance, behaviour, special educational needs, family problems or cultural tensions. The school sets a very good example of how to include each and every pupil in purposeful education and achieve good results.
47. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good. Over the past four years the school has made a concerted effort to improve attendance and has successfully instilled in most pupils and their families a recognition that regular attendance improves academic performance. Attendance statistics are regularly published and rewards routinely given for good attendance. Pupils can win individual certificates or the year group shield and one pupil has even won computer equipment for 5 years of uninterrupted attendance! Registers are completed promptly and efficiently at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions. Pupils with unexplained absence are immediately checked on. Although the support from the educational welfare department is variable, the form tutors and other staff are very effective in making contact with families with lateness or absence problems. A deputy headteacher tracks attendance data regularly and can accurately pinpoint where there are any concerns about an individual or a group. Those pupils who find coming to school difficult are supported and encouraged very effectively.
48. The school has good strategies for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. The headteacher, the deputies and the assistant headteacher are extremely visible around the school and give a clear message on their high expectations of behaviour. There is a good range of supporting documentation, regularly revised, to ensure consistency of approach in dealing with matters of discipline. There are good lines of communication between the staff and clear notes are kept of any worries or useful information about pupils. Each head of year keeps a record of pupils who are causing concern or doing particularly well. Pupils are kept well informed about what is going on in the school via display boards and the student bulletin. They are made to feel partners in the school and to be responsible for the school's standing in the wider community. All staff and pupils know the systems for rewards and sanctions and how they fit into the life of the school. The exception is newly arrived staff, who sometimes are not sufficiently knowledgeable about the recognised ways to deal with poor behaviour and so have difficulty in containing their classes. The heads of year are often seen about the school helping pupils and checking misbehaviour, although sometimes they are not sufficiently quick to stem inappropriate behaviour in some Key Stage 3 classes that need extra support.
49. The Learning Support Department (which includes work with pupils with EAL, the Learning Centre and the work of the Learning Mentor) is very well informed about pupils' academic and social needs and provides a secure safety net for vulnerable pupils. The recently opened learning centre, funded with Excellence in Cities money, plays a very important part in the arrangements for managing discipline and preventing disaffection. The policy underpinning the use of the centre is to put a firm emphasis on keeping pupils in the classroom and support them as part of their peer group. Pupils who are

particularly disruptive are given individual behaviour plans so that the pupil and staff work on a consistent approach to improvement. Groups of pupils who are having trouble fitting into school are given very good support and enabled to integrate into ordinary lessons. Currently there are two breakfast clubs for Year 8 black girls and for Year 9 girls in danger of disaffection. The learning centre is proving to be most effective in encouraging the whole school to be a “virtual centre” to support a wide range of needs. Rather than being a “bolt on” with a narrow focus, the centre slots seamlessly into the school and its ethos.

50. The school is very effective at monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour. It is quite rightly proud of its practice in promoting equal opportunities and preventing any racism or sexism amongst its pupils. Priority has been given to creating a harmonious atmosphere, rather than spending a disproportionate time on drawing up policies and paper work.
51. Procedures for assessing pupils’ attainment and progress are good. The school has a methodical system of checking how each pupil is doing, whether via the national tests at Year 9, certificates of achievement and GCSEs or through its own cognitive assessment tests. There is a good initial assessment of Year 7 pupils which provides “first impressions” to be shared with parents and a sound basis for future assessment. Every term the progress of each pupil is assessed. Each subject teacher completes a monitoring form giving a judgement on effort, attainment, behaviour and homework. For those pupils who either deserve commendation or who are not making sufficient progress, a letter is sent home. In some subjects, most importantly English, the monitoring of academic performance needs greater clarity to be effective in supporting each individual pupil. The school is aware that it needs to develop current practice and has included this task in the current development plan.
52. The use of assessment information to guide curricular planning is satisfactory. Assessment information is used effectively to find the most suitable examination for pupils. For example some pupils were entered for a different type of GCSE examination because of the religious education department’s knowledge of the ability of this particular cohort. However, assessment procedures and records do not enable the school to track the progress of the different groups of pupils with SEN over extended periods of time or to have an overview of the effectiveness of the school’s provision and success in working with these pupils.
53. The school has very good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils’ personal development. They go hand in hand with effective systems for supporting academic progress. The school justifiably espouses the theory that pupils who are at ease with education and feel safe and secure consequently achieve better academically. Although the form tutors act as the first point of contact if a pupil needs care and guidance, the heads of year are also effective in ensuring that the whole staff give cohesive support. The school is most effective in including all pupils, whatever their particular ability or background, in a full education. The recent appointment of an assistant headteacher to manage the staff involved in supporting special educational needs and the gifted and talented, teaching English as an additional language and running the Learning Centre has highlighted the importance the school places on “educational inclusion”.
54. Pupils receive a good grounding in personal, social and health education (PSHE). All classes receive one lesson a week from their form tutor, with specialist teaching available for sex and relationships education. Insufficient work has been done to include citizenship in the curriculum and some years are not having enough lessons on sex education. However, the tutorial time at the beginning of each day is used well to promote personal and social education. The school is recognising the growing importance of PSHE in the curriculum and it is starting to be established at the heart of school life. There are opportunities for personal development such as the school council, running the school bank and acting as a reading mentor, but there is scope for providing more. The co-ordinator has undertaken some useful audits of the use of visits to enrich the curriculum and how learning skills are taught in each subject. The development of independent learning skills has been addressed in the PSHE timetable, but now needs to be extended across all areas of the curriculum to bolster achievement.
55. The school takes good steps to ensure the welfare and health and safety of the pupils. There are clear procedures to check for potential hazards. The few recommendations raised by the recent health and

safety audit have now been addressed effectively. First aid procedures are good. There is a good number of staff with first aid certificates around the school and any accidents are recorded systematically. Procedures for child protection are satisfactory. The deputy headteacher ensures that key staff are kept up to date with recent guidelines and staff are given a refresher course within school when the policy is revised. However there are some members of the support staff who have not had sufficiently recent training.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

56. The parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting and the parents who returned their questionnaires indicated good overall satisfaction with the school. They particularly like how the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible, the progress their children are making, the good teaching and the high expectations. Nearly all parents said that their children like coming to school and there were accolades for the head teacher and her senior management team. The inspection team concurs with all these views, but feels that the school could extend the opportunities both in and out of the classroom for pupils to take more responsibility for their learning and their school community.
57. A significant number of parents have concerns about the limited range of extra-curricular activities, inconsistent homework, insufficient information on their children's progress and the school not working closely enough with parents. The inspectors judge that the number and variety of clubs and activities is satisfactory as is the setting and marking of homework in general. However some departments are not consistent in checking that all their teachers keep up to date with homework monitoring.
58. The quality of information provided for parents on their children's progress is good. The school has worked effectively since the last inspection to improve the quality of progress reporting at parent teacher meetings. Surveys of parents' views have been carried out to help ensure that parent consultation meetings meet the needs of the parents. Parents of pupils in Year 7 have a useful special meeting with the form tutor to be given the "first impressions" of how their child is coping in their first term. Additionally, each term across the school, parents of pupils who are having problems or doing particularly well are sent letters of concern or commendation to keep them up to date with progress. The arrangements enable parents to contribute to setting agreed targets for their child's progress. End of year reports are now sent out to parents in advance of the consultation with the form tutor and parents can request further meetings with selected subject teachers. Reports have improved considerably since the last inspection but some parents quite rightly still feel that reports can be bland and do not give a direct message on how their child has progressed over the year. The school is good at providing translation or interpretation whenever it is needed. Over the past few years the school has made great strides in improving the effectiveness of its links with parents in relation to academic standards and this has had a good impact on the achievement of the pupils.
59. On a more general note, several parents complained that the school does not work closely enough with the parent body. They felt that information about life in the school in general is unsatisfactory and that the school is not including parents enough in supporting its positive ethos. The school provides good information in a clear and detailed prospectus and option booklet. Also, there are useful and practical newsletters each term. There is scope for more detail about celebrations, achievement during the year, particularly in the early stages of Key Stages 3 and 4 and general pupil-related information to help encourage a stronger link between home and school.
60. The contribution of parents to their children's learning at school and at home is satisfactory. Parents are beginning to be much better involved in tracking and supporting their children's education. The school ensures that those parents who miss a consultation are offered an alternative date and has set targets for parental attendance at these meetings. Most departments give clear guidelines of when homework is to be expected each week, so parents can share in supporting their children. The school has realised that it is difficult for some pupils to do homework at home, so has set up homework clubs to give added assistance. The involvement of parents in the life of the school is very limited. There is no parent teacher association although the school has tried to establish one. The turnout at the annual governors' meeting is poor and an attempt to set up a directory of skills has fallen by the wayside. However there is a good representation on the governing body and parents support certain

departments, such as art, by willingly lending costumes and artefacts when requested. Overall parents are making a satisfactory impact on the work of the school and the general level of achievement of the pupils.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

61. The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher and senior staff. As a result, the school is a well organised and safe and secure place in which to learn. There is a clear commitment to raising standards and the strategies that have been set in place to achieve this are appropriate and are working. Parents are pleased with the school and have confidence in the headteacher.
62. The governing body has a very good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and fulfils its statutory responsibilities well. There is a good committee structure and committees have clear remits and meet regularly. Governors monitor progress on the targets in the school improvement plan well and they monitor standards using both externally and internally provided performance information. Governors monitor financial expenditure and are fully involved in strategic decision making. There is scope for more use to be made by governors of financial benchmarking data. Academic targets are agreed and also targets for other areas, for example, increasing attendance and increasing the numbers of parents attending consultation meetings. Progress on these targets is monitored. Governors take an active interest in the welfare of students and have been successful in working with parents to help avoid permanent exclusions. There is a good range of expertise amongst governors.
63. There is good delegation and responsibilities of teaching and non-teaching staff are set out in clear job descriptions. The senior management team work very well together and a good division of responsibility ensures that their time and expertise are used very effectively. There are good arrangements for monitoring the work of the school, for example monitoring of teaching is planned and is systematically carried out. The outcomes from monitoring are used to set targets for individuals and identify priorities for the school improvement plan.
64. Subject and year group leaders, in the main, manage their respective areas of responsibility very well and make a significant contribution to the attainment and achievement of pupils. Weaker subject leadership, which is limited to only a few areas, does have an adverse effect on the work of other teachers who teach the subject and consequently on standards. Action has been taken by the school to improve subject leadership in areas of significant weakness and this has had a very positive impact, for example the recruitment of a new head of information and communications technology.
65. The arrangements for school improvement planning are good and the school improvement plan is a very useful document which contains appropriate priorities, targets and action. It provides a very clear framework for the development of the school over the immediate and longer term. Individual departmental development plans address whole school targets and also contain appropriate action; not all are costed, however, some have clearer outcome indicators than others and few have quantified reference to standards. There is good monitoring of the implementation of the whole school plan and departmental plans.
66. The school has received quite large grants for the development of specific projects. These include funding for social inclusion, supporting gifted and talented pupils and the Excellence in Cities initiative. These funds have been used very well and are having a significant impact on the work of the school. For example, the school has been able to accept pupils and integrate them into the school, whereas in the past the nature of their individual needs would have precluded this.
67. The school spends a relatively high proportion of its total income on staffing. This partly arises from the requirements of the additional grants received by the school and also from deliberate policy to ensure that there is sufficient level of support available for the many students on the special needs register or with English as an additional language. The match of numbers, qualifications and experience of teaching staff to the needs of the school is satisfactory and currently covers all areas of the curriculum. The overall provision of support staffing is good. The school has suffered from a high turnover of staff during the past two years, generally caused by circumstances beyond the school's

control. It has been difficult to fill some subject vacancies but members of the senior management team have covered some crucial vacancies between them including mathematics and religious education. Despite this, there has been significant disruption to pupils' education in some areas, particularly drama and music.

68. The arrangements for staff development are very good and activities are planned to support achievement of the targets in the school improvement plan. Where the school is unable to provide the necessary training, staff are directed towards training from other providers. Newly qualified teachers and staff new to the school feel very well supported. Each year, the school provides training for a number of trainee teachers. There is good systematic monitoring of teaching by senior staff and arrangements for performance management are very good.
69. Financial administration is good. The school buys into LEA financial support services and this helps ensure that financial records are accurate and correct procedures are followed. No matters of concern were raised in the last external audit which took place three and a half years ago.
70. The school is aware of issues surrounding best value, although there is no formal policy. A good example is the way the school tries to recruit vacancies for management positions. The small size of the school limits the responsibility allowances that it can afford to pay but it addresses this issue by recruiting on the basis of capability and potential and not just experience.
71. The accommodation comprises old and new buildings. It is in a reasonably good state of maintenance but other financial priorities have meant that there has been little redecoration. In some areas, the accommodation is somewhat drab and does not provide a very stimulating working environment. The school has sufficient accommodation but there is no spare space. There are few meeting rooms, the mathematics department is spread around the school and there is no space for lockers for the pupils. The lack of locker space results in students having to carry their coats and all their books with them throughout the day. Space for storage and display is inadequate in art, but satisfactory in other areas. Facilities for physical education are satisfactory but limited. There is sufficient indoor space and extensive use is made of the playground for team sports. Games fields are a ten minute walk away along a busy road.
72. The school library is pleasant and well organised. There is a full-time librarian. The books and computers in the library are extensively used by students at break times, specific timetabled times and as directed by teachers for specific individual work.
73. Learning resources in all areas of the curriculum are adequate. The number of computers available is satisfactory but many are old and need replacing. The school recognises this and has planned for the replacement of some of these later this year when the current lease expires.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

74. To raise standards further, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:
 - (a) Continue to improve the quality of teaching, especially at Key Stage 3 by:
 - ensuring learning objectives are clear and are shared with pupils (paragraphs 19, 82,110,171);
 - encouraging and enabling more oral work (paragraphs 25, 78, 89,130,160,178);
 - extending the range of strategies to match tasks to the abilities of students (paragraphs 21, 102,115,120,130,138,164,177,178);
 - developing students' independence as learners (paragraphs 25,82,121,177);
 - improving the consistency of behaviour management (paragraphs 18,111,156,164); and
 - ensuring the consistency of subject leadership, to reflect best practice in the school (paragraphs 64,159,132).
 - (b) Improve standards in music (paragraphs 160, 161,162).

75. In addition, other weaknesses identified in the report that governors should consider including in their post-inspection action plan are:
- Improving the quality of teaching and learning in drama (paragraphs 16, 115,116);
 - Developing record keeping systems to enable the school to track the attainment and progress of different groups of pupils with special educational needs over extended periods of time (paragraph 52);
 - Improving the quality of information provided for parents in reports (paragraph 58);
 - The provision of collective worship (paragraph 40); and
 - Ensuring that design and technology fully meets the Key Stage 3 programme of study (paragraph 122).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	154
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	74

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	15	32	45	8	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y7 – Y11
Number of pupils on the school's roll	596
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	214

Special educational needs	Y7 – Y11
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	23
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	224

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	370

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	31
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	35

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.6
National comparative data	7.7

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.7
National comparative data	1.1

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	73	47	120

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	43	31	28
	Girls	35	21	19
	Total	78	52	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	65 (48)	43 (54)	39 (49)
	National	63 (63)	65 (62)	59 (55)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	18 (6)	26 (32)	13 (18)
	National	28 (28)	42 (38)	30 (23)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	28	31	31
	Girls	30	21	17
	Total	58	52	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	48 (49)	43 (58)	40 (53)
	National	64 (64)	66 (64)	62 (60)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	16 (23)	24 (31)	15 (23)
	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	73	43	116

GCSE results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A*-G	1 or more grades A*-G
Numbers of pupils achieving the standard specified	Boys	30	67	73
	Girls	15	36	42
	Total	45	103	115
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	39 (42)	89 (97)	99 (100)
	National	47.4 (46.6)	90.6 (90.9)	95.6 (95.8)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	35.7 (37.3)
	National	38.4 (38)

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

Vocational qualifications	Number	% success rate
Number studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all those they studied	School	0
	National	0

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	34
Black – African heritage	28
Black – other	38
Indian	21
Pakistani	242
Bangladeshi	4
Chinese	4
White	180
Any other minority ethnic group	45

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	8	0
Black – African heritage	1	0
Black – other	1	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	26	1
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	11	0
Other minority ethnic groups	1	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y11

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	43.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	13.6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y7 – Y11

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	324

Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y11

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	67.4
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Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y11

Key Stage 3	21
Key Stage 4	18.8

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
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	£
Total income	2,120,739
Total expenditure	2,173,098
Expenditure per pupil	3,642
Balance brought forward from previous year	95,195
Balance carried forward to next year	42,836

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	278
Number of questionnaires returned	112

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	38	55	6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	40	51	3	3	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	47	11	4	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	46	13	9	4
The teaching is good.	33	56	5	1	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	38	18	10	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	53	33	7	4	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	41	1	4	1
The school works closely with parents.	29	41	18	4	7
The school is well led and managed.	48	31	7	3	12
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	45	5	1	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	28	34	15	9	14

Other issues raised by parents

Their children had felt let down when staff had left midway through the year. This had caused particular problems in some subject areas, for example drama.

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

ENGLISH

76. Standards of attainment in English at the end of Key Stage 3 are close to the national average with 65 per cent achieving Level 5 and above in last year's tests. Of these, the percentage reaching Level 6 was 18 per cent, which is below national standards. However, in comparison with similar schools, most recent results are well above national norms at both levels. Results over four years show a rising trend and confirm the progress the school is making in raising attainment in English.
77. At Key Stage 4, GCSE results for English in 2000 were below national standards, at 38.7 per cent A*-C grades compared with 56.1 per cent nationally. Taking the fuller range of grades A*-G, attainment is slightly above expected standards with 99.1 per cent achieving a GCSE qualification compared with 98.9 per cent nationally. This pattern is repeated for English Literature, where 44.9 per cent A*-C is below the national level of 60.7 per cent but 99 per cent A*-G is just above the average for all schools of 98.2 per cent. The attainment of boys is higher than that of girls relative to boys' and girls' respective results, nationally. As with Key Stage 3 levels of performance, comparison with similar schools shows that the school is making good progress in raising English attainment at Key Stage 4. The comparative performance across all GCSE grades and the high level of entry for English Literature, in addition to English, confirm the department's inclusive approach to providing opportunities to achieve success in external examinations.
78. Work seen in lessons, exercise books and folders confirms that pupils across the age and ability range are achieving standards consistent with national expectations in English. Lower attaining pupils make good progress in lessons and can write with reasonable accuracy and control when work is closely structured. More able pupils can use complex sentence structure and sophisticated word choices in their writing. There are planned opportunities for pupils to develop speaking and listening skills and pupils across the ability range are able to present their ideas as well as reflect upon and respond to alternate viewpoints. This is also true for pupils with special educational needs or with English as an additional language where adult support and well planned tasks enable them to build on initial responses. However, there is evidence of limited understanding of basic punctuation and vocabulary choices by less able pupils where independent writing is not supported by preparatory oral work. There are a significant minority of pupils in Key Stage 4 whose attainment in writing is well below national expectations and this considerably impacts on the progress in other areas of the curriculum.
79. Pupils in Key Stage 3 are able to read a range of challenging texts with expression and fluency and progress in reading skills continues in Key Stage 4. More able pupils can read 'between the lines' to infer meaning from texts. For example, in considering character and motive in the set Shakespeare play, a Year 9 pupil could explain how Macbeth goes through stages of being 'immoral' but becomes increasingly 'amoral' in later scenes, losing all concern for right and wrong. In a Year 10 GCSE lesson on Miller's 'The Crucible', an able group spoke of how Abigail, a central character, 'shows no remorse for her actions'. Other middle and lower ability pupils in the same class could select and note relevant information on characters but were not able to interpret it with such understanding of motivation. The department has taken a systematic approach to improving reading strategies and spelling, issues highlighted in the last inspection. The positive impact of this was reflected in most pupils' understanding of, for example, synonyms and the confident use of dictionaries to explore some complex language in pre-twentieth century literature.
80. Pupils' motivation was good in almost all lessons observed. They sustained concentration and worked well with each other. Positive attitudes to learning were consistently promoted and achieved in almost all lessons. This included support for a minority of pupils whose learning needs included challenging behaviour. They were well managed by teachers and support staff so that their own participation was assured and the concentration of the rest of the class maintained. Pupils collaborated well during group and paired activities and productive working relationships between pupils and with the teacher were a feature of almost all English lessons.

81. Of sixteen English lessons observed in Key Stages 3 and 4, teaching was satisfactory in fourteen, of which two were good and two very good. The most effective teaching was characterised by well focused teacher questioning to clarify, challenge and extend pupils' own ideas. There was also effective support for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language to ensure that the pace of their learning was maintained in lessons. This was especially the case where structured oral tasks provided pupils with opportunities to negotiate their ideas before writing and to reflect together on work in progress. In addition, some very good examples of marking were seen in both key stages, especially in Years 10 and 11 where specific guidance was provided to pupils on ways to improve both the accuracy and content of their writing.
82. In a significant number of lessons, however, more clarity is needed about what pupils are expected to learn. Most objectives described in planning are too general to provide a clear basis for subsequent assessment or shared evaluation of progress. The pupils themselves are often unsure where the work is leading or what skills they are developing. They achieve less well as a result. Pupils in a Year 7 lesson, for instance, were identifying key points in an article about the Loch Ness monster, without knowing how they were going to use the information they were selecting. The purpose and possible outcomes of all work in English need to be more systematically shared with pupils. Furthermore, while tasks set are of interest to pupils and usually challenging, more should be done in using assessment to plan and teach the English curriculum, to match work in advance to the wide range of attainment in classes at both key stages. A good but isolated example of this was a Year 10 lesson where the teacher, having noted some pupils' difficulties in organising ideas in the previous lesson, provided additional prompts to structure their group discussions.
83. The curriculum for English is broad, balanced and well planned. Schemes of work for Key Stage 3 show appropriate links to the National Curriculum programmes of study. They also provide a firm basis for further development of the National Literacy Strategy in Years 7 to 9. In Key Stage 4, work is effectively planned to meet the requirements of examination courses.
84. The department is well managed. Development planning is systematic, costed and linked to whole-school priorities. The work of all English teachers has been monitored as part of the school's programme of self-review. However, more curriculum focus is needed in monitoring, to evaluate more clearly the impact of curriculum developments for literacy and identify areas for further improvement. Although some impressive examples of word-processed and desktop published work were seen on display and in pupils' folders, the systematic, planned use of information and communication technology in English is not yet adequate.
85. Accommodation for English is good. A suite of departmental rooms includes attractive wall displays. These, in the best examples, both celebrate pupils' work and provide useful pointers to improving literacy skills. Resources confirm the department's commitment to cultural diversity and are sufficient to meet the current needs of the curriculum in both key stages.

MATHEMATICS

86. Pupils' attainment in the 2000 mathematics tests at the end of Year 9 was well below the national average. In comparison with similar schools attainment was below average. Pupils in this cohort entered the school with low test results at the end of Year 6 in 1997. They made significant headway to attain the standards they did in 2000. Some pupils experienced several changes of mathematics teacher and this prevented them making even better progress. Results in Year 9 tests are on a broadly upward trend but dipped in 2000. There is little difference in the results achieved by boys and girls. Inspection evidence from observation of lessons and scrutiny of work shows that current attainment, by the end of Year 9, is closer to the national average. Pupils in the top set reach a standard above the national average while those in other classes in Year 9 are below this level. Higher attaining pupils carry through substantial investigational tasks, solve linear equations, complete questions on Pythagoras' Theorem and determine a line of best fit on a scatter-graph. Many lower attaining pupils lack confidence and find it difficult to retain previous knowledge and understanding. They require help from the teacher to calculate the perimeter and area of a rectangle or to find the mode of a set of data. Lower attaining pupils complete some basic questions on negative numbers, fractions and decimals but make careless errors in others.

87. The percentage of pupils attaining GCSE grades A*-C in 2000 was in line with the national average. Results rose steadily until 1999 and fell back slightly in 2000 as a result of the high staff turnover and concomitant lack of continuity. Nonetheless there is a high level of commitment and attention to detail from the established mathematics teachers and the school has endeavoured to minimise disruption by covering a vacancy internally.
88. Well planned and presented revision classes after school enable borderline pupils to achieve higher grades than expected. The GCSE results attained by boys were much better than girls' results in 1997, 1998 and 2000 but identical in 1999. In 2001, eighteen per cent of boys were entered for the higher GCSE tier compared with eleven per cent of girls. However, recent appointments of women mathematics teachers should provide positive role models for girls' aspirations and raise their standards. Inspection evidence, gleaned from observing lessons and scrutinising work, indicates that attainment by the end of Year 11 is in line with the national average. Pupils in the top set reach an above average level while those in other classes are in line with the average or below it. The highest attaining pupils manipulate algebraic formulae successfully, use the sine rule to find sides and angles of a triangle and calculate the standard deviation of a set of data. Lower attaining pupils are at a level that is above that anticipated because teachers have high expectations of them and encourage them to work independently.
89. Teaching and learning are good in more than sixty per cent of lessons and satisfactory in the remainder. Teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of the subject, enabling pupils to make steady progress. In some lessons teachers incorporate work on the basic skills of literacy and numeracy effectively to deepen pupils' understanding, including helpful methods from the National Numeracy Strategy. In the best lessons teachers start with a short mental activity and end with a plenary session to draw together pupils' ideas and achievements. In a well-planned Year 8 lesson on area and perimeter of rectangles the teacher used an investigational approach and ended with a session where the pupils were helped to conclude that a square gives the largest area if the perimeter of a rectangle is constant. Pupils gained a much better appreciation of the concept after this whole class discussion using the results they had obtained. In other lessons opportunities to draw together ideas are missed so pupils' do not acquire skills and understanding so readily. Teachers' presentations are clear and purposeful but sometimes run on too long or do not engage pupils sufficiently. In a well taught Year 7 lesson on negative numbers the teacher did involve pupils fully by asking them at the start how negative numbers occurred in real life and later on encouraged pupils to come to the front to show their answers on a number line. This approach broadened pupils' knowledge and understanding and gave them the confidence to tackle increasingly challenging tasks. In most instances teachers manage pupils' behaviour sensitively and effectively and relationships are good. For example, in an essential but routine Year 11 GCSE revision lesson the teacher's calm and composed manner won over the pupils and reaped dividends in the respect and attention they gave. Most lessons move at a brisk pace. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and systematically and are particularly thorough in assessing the GCSE test papers taken by older pupils as part of their revision programme. Homework is set and marked regularly.
90. The provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language is good. Teachers are aware of their needs and enable them to make good progress. For example, a Lithuanian pupil has settled well in a top set and is studying mathematics at an appropriate level as is a Turkish pupil in Year 7 and two Sri Lankan pupils taking GCSE in Year 11. In other instances support staff provide individual help and suitable material for second language learners. A translation sheet in Urdu that lists key geometrical words, such as quadrilateral and diameter with brief annotations, helps pupils understand the topic much better.
91. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The department has developed a comprehensive set of assessment tasks for pupils at different levels of ability linked to National Curriculum attainment targets and levels. This helps both higher and lower attainers to work at an appropriate level. In a well-planned Year 9 test revision session the teacher helped pupils prepare individual revision plan grids and linked these to selected booklets. The pupils made significant gains in their knowledge and understanding, for example one pupil in finding the mode and another in early algebraic work. Support teachers in mathematics lessons cater for pupils' individual needs effectively.

In a Year 7 class the support teacher was sensitive to a pupil with friendship problems. In a Year 8 class the teacher provided worksheets in a larger font size for two pupils with visual impairment.

92. Pupils' attitudes to their work are mostly good and behaviour overall is satisfactory in Key Stage 3. Pupils' attitudes are good or very good in Key Stage 4 and their behaviour is good. Many pupils are interested in mathematics and work hard on the tasks set so that they make good progress in lessons. In the best lessons pupils are very well motivated, tackle tasks with persistence and co-operate in such a way that they gain knowledge and understanding from each other. In a few other lessons pupils have a low attention span, chatter when the teacher is talking or lose momentum towards the end of the session.
93. The department is very well managed and it shares a commitment to high achievement for its pupils. A very well planned assessment system tracks pupils' progress and helps maintain and raise their standards of attainment, for example in GCSE examinations. The department is poised to make even better headway with the prospect of a period of stable staffing. There has been good progress since the last inspection in 1996. The leadership remains a major factor in the department's success. Overall teaching quality is higher. The use of information and communication technology is improving, for example in using LOGO to improve geometric understanding in Year 7. Unfortunately the mathematics rooms continue to be dispersed around the building, limiting the scope for mutual support and co-operation.

SCIENCE

94. Lesson observations at Key Stage 3 indicate that by the age of fourteen pupils are performing at levels in line with national expectations. In work on photosynthesis, top set pupils can write the word 'equation' and remember chemical symbols and they are able to apply their knowledge to new problems such as explaining energy transfer in food chains. Their attainment is above average. In other Year 9 sets attainment is in line with expectations, for example, pupils showed an understanding of the variables involved in a fair test and could explain changes of speed in terms of unbalanced forces. This evidence, indicating a normal spread of pupil attainment at all levels, is at odds with the most recent Year 9 National Curriculum assessment results, which show below average performance after a period of steady improvement. The department suffered severe staffing problems during that period which may have been a contributing factor to this under-achievement.
95. In the mixed ability groups of Year 7 and Year 8 observed performance is less strong. Although in investigational work on cooling some pupils are able to identify a range of variables to be controlled and explain differences encountered, a significant number perform at a lower level. Similarly pupils observed, investigating sound and vibrations, are only making slow progress.
96. Overall standards attained at the end of Key Stage 4, as demonstrated by last year's GCSE examination results in double science, are just below national averages. Over half of boys gained an A* to C grade which is above the national average for boys. Girls attained less well with nearly two fifths gaining grades in this range compared with one half of all girls nationally. Pupils overall are achieving well.
97. Attainment seen in lessons and in pupils' written work is, overall, in line with national expectations. Some very good work on polymerisation was seen in which pupils used knowledge of bonding and energy transfers to explain the process. A group of pupils following the Certificate of Achievement in Science course showed ability to use complex scientific terms in naming the parts of the heart and their function. A top year ten class, whose individual Key Stage 3 results last year were below expectation, had a very good understanding of food webs. In all years, investigational work is of a high standard with pupils working accurately and safely with a good understanding of the potential hazards.
98. Despite indications in both Key Stage 3 tests and GCSE results that girls do not perform as well as boys, this was less of an issue in lessons. Girls often contribute well to discussions, for example in work on the properties of light and on circulation. In some classes, though, boys are more outgoing than girls resulting in a reluctance on the part of the latter to reveal what they know. Sensitivity and directed questioning by the teacher often overcomes this problem. The department has made positive

attempts to improve girls' attainment by organising 'drop in' sessions for girls after school. Also, girls are well represented in the science club and the revision classes organised for GCSE groups.

99. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress. Similarly, pupils with special educational needs make good progress, particularly when assisted by support staff. In work on electricity in Year 7 they showed an understanding of the work and enjoyed participating. In these mixed ability classes of younger pupils the provision of a range of opportunities to meet the wide spread of needs and abilities is necessary. Key Stage 4 pupils are able to follow the Certificate in Achievement in Science course which produced good results and allowed some pupils to go on to take GCSE examinations with some success. Their written work is of a satisfactory standard overall and sometimes very good, for example records on atomic structure and the accounts of the measurement of speed. Practical investigations are well presented with good quality graph work and calculations.
100. Teaching is good overall. Of the 20 lessons seen, 61 per cent were good or better and 28 per cent were very good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and prepare their lessons well using a good range of resources. Expectations are high and there is a clear desire on the part of staff for pupils to do well. Good questioning techniques are in evidence and clear concise instructions ensure satisfactory outcomes to the work. A variety of strategies are used and are well matched to the needs and abilities of the pupils. Lessons have a good balance of teacher and pupil participation, for example, work on adaptation and competition allowed Year 10 pupils to demonstrate a range of scientific skills and understandings and the use of group presentations reinforced the learning. Pupil progress is effectively monitored, recorded and reported on.
101. Pupils respond well to the work. They are keen and enthusiastic, willing to answer questions and make suggestions about their work. They are able to sustain concentration and show that they have acquired new knowledge and understandings as well as being able to recall and apply previous work. In lessons on cooling and light younger pupils showed interest in the work and good practical skills. No examples of inappropriate behaviour are to be seen in practical sessions.
102. Attitudes and behaviour at Key Stage 3 are satisfactory to good in a significant majority of lessons. On some occasions they are very good. The involvement and commitment seen in Year 9 classes is of a high standard. Those very few occasions where poorer attitudes are to be seen relate to the work being wrongly pitched resulting in lack of pupil engagement. These are associated with younger mixed ability classes. In all lessons observed at Key Stage 4 attitudes and behaviour are always satisfactory and often good.
103. The curriculum offered is broad and balanced and available to all pupils. Schemes of work are well prepared with particular attention being paid to include appropriate work and approaches that reflect and celebrate the cultural diversity of the school. Cognitive acceleration in science (CASE) resources are being introduced into Years 7 and 8. The science curriculum is enhanced by opportunities such as visits, field studies trips, clubs and the provision of outside speakers. ICT activities are being improved as and when equipment and software become available. More use could be made of Key Stage 2 results to help planning in Key Stage 3.
104. The organisation and management of the department is of a high standard. The teaching staff are well qualified, enthusiastic and effective, however, the fact that several have major commitments in other aspects of the school puts great pressure on the head and second in the department who carry a very heavy administrative load. The accommodation and resources are appropriate, with a good range of pupil texts available. The hard work and commitment of the technical staff adds greatly to the quality and effectiveness of the learning.
105. Issues raised in the last inspection have been addressed satisfactorily.

ART AND DESIGN

106. Standards in art at the end of Key Stage 3 are broadly in line with national expectations and some pupils' work is better than this. By the end of Year 9, pupils have worked in a wide range of two and three dimensional media. Their work often shows a confident and expressive use of the visual

elements, especially line, colour and pattern and an appropriate level of skill in using equipment and tools. Three dimensional work is often creatively formed and decorated. A variety of cultural influences are evident, including cultures of different times and places and pupils' own 'youth culture'.

107. Year 7 pupils have enjoyed exploring the use of coloured pencils and oil pastels to make colourful large-scale observational drawings of natural objects prior to creating soft sculptures based on them. Linked to this, they were beginning to research the life and work of William Morris, who lived locally and whose wallpaper designs also used natural forms extensively. In Year 9, pupils wrote evaluations of the impact of, and techniques used, in 'The Last Supper' by Leonardo da Vinci before recreating the scene themselves in modern style using a digital camera and then scaling up the print with a grid as a basis for their own paintings. These evaluations of the work of other artists show developing artistic appraisal and research skills that vary from below to above average.
108. At the end of Key Stage 4, standards are also currently in line with national expectations. In the 2000 GCSE examinations, many girls did significantly better in art than in their other subjects, and boys did slightly better. In recent years, results have fluctuated according to the pupil cohort, sometimes being in line with national figures but more often being well above.
109. In Year 10, pupils developed their colour drawing skills through observational drawings of different styles of shoes prior to designing and creating 3D shoe sculptures. Their carefully observed drawings showed good use of tone and shape and some pupils also demonstrated that they could use colour effectively and creatively. In Year 11, pupils were developing their supporting studies for the forthcoming timed GCSE test based on the theme of 'inside'. Some pupils showed they had a clear understanding of the process of moving from brainstorming through research to project design while others found this more difficult. By the end of Year 11, pupils have explored different themes such as 'pomp and ceremony', carried out research using books, the internet and art galleries and developed their visual ideas through drawing, painting, textiles, sculpture and other media.
110. Overall, the teaching of art is good, ranging from very good to satisfactory at Key Stage 3 and very good or good at Key Stage 4. All the lessons observed showed that the art staff use their good subject knowledge to deliver well-planned lessons and give individual pupils good help with their art work, including pupils with SEN and EAL. While all pupils make at least satisfactory progress, the progress of the latter groups is good in art. The better teaching in both key stages also shows teachers communicating high expectations to their classes. They give very effective introductions to lessons that help pupils relate the lesson to previous work, engage them well through questions that stretch their thinking and provide very clear explanations that leave pupils in no doubt about what they should do and why. During extended practical sessions, where the teacher circulates giving help to individuals, in the better lessons teachers share learning points with the whole class while they continue working and vary the pace from time to time with fresh whole-class input. Pupils respond well to this teaching, behaving well, many concentrating on the work for extended periods and generally working at a good pace.
111. Only two lessons were seen at Key Stage 3, where teaching was less than good. In one, pupils were not engaged by the introduction and took longer than necessary to settle to their work. In another, a new activity was started too close to the end of the lesson to allow for that work to be completed as well as it could have been and clearing up was rushed. In both lessons there was insufficient varying of pace during practical sessions with pupils becoming restless and the teachers were slow to follow up some of the off task behaviour.
112. The art department and the expressive arts faculty to which it belongs are well led, with clear expectations documented for quality teaching and learning and sound systems for monitoring and evaluating how well this area of the school is doing. The recent faculty staff turnover and maternity leave of the head of department/faculty mean, however, that many previously well-established practices need re-embedding. In particular, while much art teaching is good or better, strategies for whole-class teaching and pupil behaviour management need to be made consistent across the department in line with its best practice.

113. There has been overall good progress in addressing the few art issues raised at the last inspection: GCSE is now taught within curriculum time to flourishing numbers of pupils; at Key Stage 3, art appreciation is now satisfactory and pupils' practical understanding of colour theory is good; the use of ICT to enhance pupil research has been built in to the schemes of work but appropriate equipment for pupils to use in making art has only recently been installed and this aspect still needs further development.
114. The Key Stage 3 curriculum delivers the art National Curriculum with breadth and balance, incorporating a variety of units and activities of relevance to the school's population which leads to pupils having generally good attitudes towards art. The department benefits from having a part-time technician and curriculum resources are well used, including local and regional art galleries and museums. The department's working space is adequate although storage facilities are very limited. The poorly decorated and otherwise rather unstimulating environment is enhanced by good displays of pupils' work, 'brainstorming' ideas for GCSE projects and exhibition posters.

DRAMA

115. Provision for drama at Key Stage 3 is a cause of concern. The two lessons observed were judged unsatisfactory. Following a period of difficulty with specialist staffing for the subject, a teacher in charge of drama was appointed for the spring term 2001. The current post holder is reviewing schemes of work but was not able to demonstrate an effectively planned curriculum for the subject. The departmental handbook includes 'end-of-project evaluation' proformas and summarises attainment targets for drama. However, there was no evidence of these being used. The structure of the lessons seen was disorganised and time was poorly used in setting up activities which did not fully engage the pupils or help them to develop their drama skills.
116. A similar concern arises with drama as part of the expressive arts course at Key Stage 4. Teaching of drama at this level was not observed during the inspection. However, the lack of recent documentation, especially current, active schemes of work is unsatisfactory and the teacher in charge of drama did not have a fully developed understanding of the relationship between drama and other subjects within expressive arts.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

117. Standards of attainment in design and technology at the end of Key Stage 3 are improving and are in line with the national average. Pupils do not get the opportunity to work with textiles and little work is covered on electronics and electrical control.
118. The 2000 GCSE examination results show that the proportion of pupils gaining grades A* - C in food technology, graphic products and resistant materials was 26 per cent and well below the national average of 50 per cent.
119. Evidence from classroom observation, scrutiny of work and talking with pupils indicates standards in Year 9 are satisfactory overall, but are below average in Year 11. In one lesson where attainment was better, pupils were able to talk confidently about how they made their cakes, listing the stages of preparation. In another class, pupils were competent in describing the characteristics "linear, reciprocating, rotary and oscillating movement". In many classes, pupils' knowledge of tools, processes and materials is satisfactory, but they are less confident in design presentation skills and this is reflected in the poor quality of written work.
120. Of eleven lessons observed in Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, teaching was satisfactory in all, good in two lessons and very good in one. An example of very good teaching was seen in a Year 8 graphics lesson where pupils were developing skills in "orthographic projection". The teacher set high but appropriate expectations, provided good whole class teaching and individual support during the practical sessions and intervened regularly to keep the whole class focused. Good teaching was seen in Year 8 food technology, where the lesson was thoroughly planned and skilful questioning was used to determine the pupils' levels of understanding and pupils were given the opportunity to work collaboratively. Where teaching was less satisfactory, the pace of the lesson was very slow and the

range of planned activities did not take into consideration the range of needs and abilities of pupils in the class.

121. Throughout the school, pupils respond well to the opportunities provided for them in design and technology. In the lessons observed, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make progress at both Key Stages and their learning is at least satisfactory. At Key Stage 3, learning was good in 50 per cent of lessons. Pupils show much interest in the subject, work with sustained concentration and take pride in their designs. In practical food lessons, pupils work collaboratively in groups, for example, they determined roles for each member and worked together successfully to prepare their cake designs for a garden party. When learning is less satisfactory, groups of more able pupils are left waiting repeatedly for a minority of students to finish writing information down from the board before the whole class is allowed to progress onto the next task. In some double lessons, particularly at Key Stage 4, pupils' concentration would often deteriorate towards the end for the last 30 minutes or so. In some classes there is a culture of "working comfortably" where small groups of pupils enjoy their lesson and generally behave well, but are not adequately challenged and work well within their capability which leads to underachievement.
122. At Key Stage 4 design and technology now broadly meets statutory requirements with all pupils undertaking either a GCSE full or short course. The curriculum however does not fully address the programme of study in Key Stage 3. It needs to include planned opportunities for pupils to undertake the work on electrical control, together with developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of "smart" materials. Work with business and industry is covered effectively in food. Cultural diversity is drawn on in project work, for example, a Year 9 activity was to design a clock to represent the "Muslim" faith. Another brief was to design a holiday brochure and display stand to promote trips to the country of your choice.
123. The Head of Department provides sound leadership for a hard working team of teachers and has ensured that the department has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. The separate strands of technology are now working together within a progressive scheme of work and pupils now have a positive attitude towards the subject and associate all the different activities as being "design and technology". The co-ordinator is concerned rightly about the current lack of provision for CAD/CAM work and has written a proposal to purchase a computer controlled milling machine and "pro-desktop" software to address this omission.
124. The quality of accommodation and level of resourcing in resistant materials, food and graphics is adequate. The department makes effective use of display materials to support the design and technology curriculum. There are two part time technicians who provide valuable support for resistant materials and food technology and who make a positive impact on the quality of education provided within the department.

GEOGRAPHY

125. Standards at the end of Key Stage 3 are below national expectations although pupils' work, both written and oral, confirms the improvement that has been seen during the last three years.
126. In Year 7, where standards are broadly in line with national expectations, pupils are competent in the application of basic mapping skills, such as the use of four and six figure grid references using local maps and latitude and longitude on world maps and a globe. In work on tectonics they can describe the causes and effects of volcanic eruption, with correct use of technical terms and most show understanding of how different types of plate movement can result in earthquakes. In Year 8 most pupils can describe relief, convection and frontal rainfall and standards are further improved through the opportunity for weather related fieldwork. Much diagrammatic work is good, with carefully drawn and correctly labelled river profiles showing and explaining important physical features such as waterfalls. Much work in Year 9, particularly on Italy, approaches national expectations with sound analytical work on the economic differences between north and south and physical factors such as climate and relief. Standards are depressed by the proportion of pupils in Years 8 and 9 who are unable to make links between the physical and the human aspects of the subject and whose written work, particularly homework, reflects only a partial understanding and by incomplete and poorly executed diagrams and

maps. In a Year 9 lesson on population the standard of work, both oral and written, was in line with national expectations. Tasks had been designed to enable pupils of all abilities and linguistic backgrounds to acquire an understanding of the factors that explain different densities, with pupils of higher ability able to describe the population of the United Kingdom, give reasons for this and assess the effects of over-population.

127. In Key Stage 4 the standard of work seen of those pupils entered for the higher GCSE paper indicates an improvement on last year when boys' performance was below national averages and girls' performance was well below. The standard of work of those entered for the foundation paper is commensurate with the lower grades of this range. Attainment in last year's GCSE examinations was below national expectations, but confirms a steady improvement.
128. The marked difference in performance between boys and girls in 2000 is not reflected in the lessons observed and the work examined. Sound standards were indicated in the analysis of data collected during fieldwork on Loughton Brook. Pupils were able to describe the significance of the data and the relationship between it and the stream profile at different locations. Recording the data, calculating discharge and analysing bedrock samples showed a high degree of competence, combined with an understanding of the physical processes. The presentation of the data, both manually and using a spreadsheet, showed a concern for accuracy. Coursework on service hierarchies showed that most pupils understood how a hypothesis can be tested through conscientious fieldwork and that conclusions must be supported by evidence. In a case study of the Lynmouth flood of 1952, pupils in Year 10 showed a sound grasp of the causes of the flood and could describe the features of a flood plain and the effects of impermeability, slope and changes to a settlement. Exercise books contain work of good quality, such as diagrams showing how concentric and sector models of cities can differ between countries that are less or more economically developed. Work relating to agricultural policy is poor overall and some pupils lack a basic understanding of relationships such as that of the rainforest to climate. Mapping skills have been identified as a weakness for many pupils and targeted support is helping to raise the skill level in Year 11.
129. Pupils' learning in relation to their prior attainment is sound in both key stages. Where tasks are appropriate for their ability, pupils achieve well. Pupils in Year 7 made a good response to the case study of the eruption of Mount St Helens, using prior knowledge about volcanoes to describe the process using geographical terms. In Year 9 pupils completed population maps devising their own key. Throughout both key stages pupils show confidence with a range of forms of graphical representation and numeracy is reinforced in many contexts in the schemes of work. In one Key Stage 4 lesson pupils assisted one another in constructing a graph. Attitudes to the subject are positive and relationships with teachers are good. Consistency in the quality of learning is supported by active in-class support for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language.
130. Teaching was satisfactory or better in all but one of the lessons observed. In one half of the lessons teaching was good. In the best lessons the learning objectives were understood by the pupils and assessed both during and at the end of the lessons. Pupils were provided with appropriate learning activities, many involving practical, group or pair work. Learning was consolidated through a range of different types of written or illustrative work. Lessons had a clear structure and a brisk pace. Pupils knew what was expected of them. Confidence with the subject matter made a significant contribution to teaching quality in both key stages. ICT is effectively embedded as a learning tool in both key stages, particularly in supporting fieldwork in Key Stage 4. In an unsatisfactory lesson pupils were provided with a low level task concerned with the completion of a writing frame without adequate attention being given to the geographical meaning of the terms. In both key stages more opportunities should be provided for pupils to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding orally. Questioning is rarely challenging and often consists of a limited number of closed questions. Pupils' work is assessed regularly and assessment data used to identify strengths and weaknesses. Marking is, however, inconsistent and in some cases irregular and haphazard.
131. The curriculum in Key Stage 3 meets National Curriculum requirements. The scheme of work does not, however, reflect the good practice of the department in matching work to pupils of different abilities and this should now be incorporated using the model developed by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. The lack of continuous provision of the teaching of geography throughout the school year in

Years 7 and 8 makes it more difficult to achieve a satisfactory progression in geographical skills, knowledge and understanding. This should be remedied. Pupils in these year groups should be provided with a separate exercise book for geography in view of the different assessment criteria used for different subjects within the humanities, to make it easier for pupils to review their own progress and identify weaknesses.

132. The departmental development plan sets out relevant priorities, most of which have been addressed. Work on ICT and the matching of work to pupils' abilities is commendable. However, the monitoring of the quality of work throughout the department is unsatisfactory; it needs to be systematic and should include work sampling so that standards can be monitored using the exemplars which are available. Since the last inspection the time allocation to the subject has been increased and is now adequate.

HISTORY

133. Standards at the end of Key Stage 3 are below national expectations although there are signs of improvement throughout the Key Stage. In last year's National Curriculum teacher assessments the achievement of boys came close to the achievement of boys nationally.
134. In Year 7 work on the Roman Empire is broadly in line with national expectations of this age group with most pupils able to extract relevant information from a range of written and visual sources, to identify key features of the period and to construct simple narratives. Much work on this topic is carefully and attractively presented. In Year 8 pupils are beginning to show competence in defining terms such as 'civil' war and recognise that events often have different causes, both short and long term. Much work on the period 1500-1750 is at least sound. In work on Islamic civilisations most pupils can suggest reasons, based on evidence, to explain why medicine developed in Islamic countries. There is a greater incidence of unsatisfactory work in Year 9 with a significant minority of pupils unable to develop written responses to historical questions. Some pupils' exercise books are disorganised with loose information sheets and diagrams randomly stored. Across the Key Stage pupils' grasp of the chronology of individual periods is secure and they show a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the events, people and changes studied. By Year 8 they are beginning to demonstrate the ability to interpret and compare sources. They show less evidence of the ability to carry out and report an historical enquiry and to select, organise and evaluate information and communicate this in written form.
135. In Key Stage 4 standards are also improving and are higher than those reflected in last year's GCSE results which were below national averages. Work in both Years 10 and 11 more closely reflects national expectations for schools in a similar context.
136. The majority of work on the American west shows a sound understanding of the main events and issues in a complex study although, in a small minority of cases, written work is fragmentary and sentences lack meaning. Both oral and written work on the Arab-Israeli conflict is at least sound and in many cases, good. Most pupils can demonstrate an accurate knowledge of the background to the conflict, the chronology of the main events since the first Intifada and can make an assessment of the obstacles to peace. Some pupils are able to use their knowledge of other areas of the course to make connections with, for example, the end of the Cold War. In Year 11 pupils show an impressive understanding of the role of war in the development of medicine; pupils can sequence events accurately over a long period of time and give assessments of the importance of discoveries.
137. Progress is sound in Key Stage 3 and good in Key Stage 4. In Year 7 a focus on literacy is helping pupils to write and speak meaningful sentences, to spell correctly and to begin to use historical terms accurately. Throughout the key stage the use of different tasks for different ability groups is enabling all pupils to progress in historical knowledge and understanding and effective use is made of the support provided by the school for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Pupils' note-making skills improve consistently throughout both key stages and are good in Key Stage 4. By Year 11 pupils are accustomed to working under examination conditions and to recalling and using information without recourse to text and exercise books. Attitudes to the subject are positive and relationships between pupils and teachers are good.

138. Teaching was satisfactory overall at Key Stage 3 and good at Key Stage 4. It was satisfactory or better in all but one lesson, good in three lessons and very good in two lessons. In the very good lessons, the pace and nature of the tasks set were challenging, with a high work rate and good outcomes. Pupils were engaged in the lesson from the outset and there was an appropriate balance of oral and written work. Through questioning pupils were encouraged to think critically about their responses and to develop their thinking. The lessons were effectively structured using a range of tasks. In all lessons learning objectives were clearly communicated to pupils and in most, these were assessed both during and at the end of the lesson. In some cases, where pair or group work was used, insufficient time was allowed for pupils to complete the task. In the unsatisfactory lesson too much time was devoted to a low level task with consequent loss of interest and engagement. Assessment is a strength of the department and marking is detailed with grades based on the department's mark scheme with constructive comments. National Curriculum levels are used in monitoring progress through key assessment activities in each study unit.
139. The history curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and makes a positive contribution to the overall aims of the school. In 2000 the department played an important role in black history month and, through an award from BT, is about to develop a web site on aspects of the history of immigration in Walthamstow. In Key Stage 4 pupils show a high level of interest and commitment to the module on the Arab-Israeli conflict and are eager to relate their understanding of its origins to contemporary events. The department makes effective use of museums and resources such as films and exhibitions relevant to the course and these opportunities could be further exploited.
140. The teacher in charge leads the department with energy and commitment. He has clear goals for the department supported by priorities to raise standards. He sets a very good example as a class teacher. Colleagues are well supported. The present schemes of work require revision and completion and account should be taken of the models published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Display in the main departmental room sets a high standard and reflects the priority of literacy in the study and communication of history.
141. Good progress has been made since the last inspection. Expectations in lessons are now high and work demanding. Marking is now good. The time allocation for history has been reviewed and is now adequate. Resource provision is good and ICT is being developed as an important tool for learning in history.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

142. Overall results in information and communications technology (ICT) at both key stages have improved significantly since the last inspection. Last year, the Key Stage 3 teacher assessments for ICT showed attainment to be broadly in line with national expectations with 42 per cent of pupils attaining Level 5 and above.
143. At the end of Key Stage 4, the proportion of pupils gaining A*- C grades at GCSE for ICT in 2000, is 55 per cent, which is slightly higher than the national figure of 54 per cent for comprehensive and similar schools. This is an improvement of 12 per cent from the 1999 results.
144. Work in lessons, folders and talking with pupils confirms that the majority of pupils achieve standards in line with national expectations at both Key Stages 3 and 4. In Year 8 classes pupils were competent in using "Logo" to produce predetermined graphical shapes on the screen. They were able to do the calculations required to produce accurate geometric shapes and patterns. Pupils in Year 11 were confident in using the more sophisticated facilities of word processing, where they set up and used "mail merge" for a leisure club publicity event. This work also included advanced work for text, graphics, tables, sorting and desk top publishing facilities. In other classes pupils were competent in setting up their own spreadsheets and databases.
145. Of the 6 lessons observed for ICT, the quality of teaching was good in 4 and very good in 2. Very good teaching was characterised by: well planned lessons with clear learning objectives, which were shared with pupils at the start of the lesson; good pace; and regular teacher intervention to ensure all pupils remained on task throughout the lesson. For Key Stage 4 lessons, the teacher had prepared

assessment spreadsheets, which listed each pupil and their performance against the examination criteria for their coursework. This provided an excellent diagnostic tool for identifying underperformance or lack of understanding and enabled the teacher to raise achievement for specific pupils by targeting these aspects in preparation for the GCSE examination.

146. In the lessons observed, all pupils, including those with special needs and English as an additional language, make good progress at both key stages. Pupils are very positive towards their project work, are friendly to their peers and adults, work purposefully and are well motivated, especially when working at a computer. At Key Stage 4 pupils are able to work independently and with sustained concentration. They take pride in their work, set themselves high standards and are keen to return after school to use the computer to complete their activity. The department has prepared support materials to help pupils with special educational needs and others who are language beginners (EAL). Schemes of work have also been revised to support high attaining pupils by giving them the opportunity to work at higher levels at Key Stage 3.
147. Throughout the school, pupils respond well to the opportunities provided for them in ICT. All pupils receive a discrete lesson for ICT in Years 7, 8 and 9. This enables pupils to develop their ICT skills and use them in other subject areas. At Key Stage 4 all pupils undertake either a long or short GCSE course in ICT. Pupils are also receiving increasing opportunities to use ICT in English, mathematics, science, art, design and technology, music, French, history and geography lessons.
148. The co-ordinator for ICT provides very good leadership and has ensured that good progress has been made since the last inspection. He has been in post for just 4 terms and has transformed the way ICT is managed and taught within the school. A key role has been to develop ICT across the curriculum, identify and place resources into departments and to facilitate training to maximise the impact ICT can have on raising pupils' achievement. He has developed a curricular mapping grid and worked with departments to identify units of work to be covered in each subject, which can be enhanced with the use of ICT. Each subject area now has an ICT rich scheme of work, which is to be introduced into the next academic year. The Co-ordinator chairs the "ICT Action Group" which includes a representative from each curriculum area and meets regularly to discuss the planned development of ICT within the school. The school has recently been successful in winning the "BT Future Talk Award", receiving £5000 towards developing a local history web site.
149. The school has a good ICT development plan and has appropriately targeted, the funding they have received from the National Grid for Learning. The library is well resourced with computers and access to the Internet. The school is working towards the Government's target of a pupil: computer ratio of 7:1. The majority of ICT teaching is currently undertaken on old Apple computers, which are not able to connect to the Internet. Whilst effective, but limited, use is made of these, they will reach the end of their useful life within the next 12 months. Replacement is planned, pending the level of Standards Funding available.
150. Progress in addressing the issues raised in the previous inspection has been good. At Key Stage 4, ICT now meets statutory requirements with all pupils following a GCSE in Information and communication technology. At Key Stage 3, ICT lessons are helping to raise achievement in ICT capability significantly. The ICT curriculum does not currently provide measurement and control activities for all pupils, but the necessary resources have been purchased and schemes of work updated to include measurement activities in science and control activities in design and technology; these aspects are being piloted in a selection of classes in preparation for next September.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

151. At the end of Key Stage 3, teacher assessments are below the national averages for French. Girls perform consistently better than boys. There has, however, been a steady improvement over time in the performance of both boys and girls. In Urdu, pupils' attainment is in line with national averages and boys perform slightly better than girls.

152. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 in French is below the national average and results in 2000 were considerably lower than the two preceding years. Girls perform consistently better than boys. In Urdu, results are slightly above national performance in the subject and results have shown regular improvement over the past two years.
153. The overall standard of attainment seen in French lessons at Key Stage 3 is satisfactory. The more able pupils can use and understand a range of language. The less able pupils are not able to perform at a satisfactory level in listening, speaking, reading and writing tasks. Attainment seen in Urdu is also satisfactory. Pupils respond appropriately to the teacher's questions and instructions spoken in Urdu. They can read aloud independently and with confidence.
154. The standard of attainment seen in French lessons at Key Stage 4 is below national expectations. This reflects the below average literacy skills of many pupils on entry to the school. Pupils make many errors in their language and they experience some difficulty understanding both the written and the spoken word. Attainment in Urdu lessons was in line with national expectations. Pupils show an understanding of vocabulary and structures and are able to perform the language tasks required of them. Most pupils attempt to offer answers and ask questions in target language and have good pronunciation and intonation patterns.
155. Learning by all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory overall in French. At Key Stage 3 learning was satisfactory or good in every lesson seen. For example in a Year 9 lesson on personal descriptions, pupils were moved on and helped to build on previous knowledge. At Key Stage 4 there are some inconsistencies in learning. In one Year 11 lesson, pupils made little progress; in a Year 10 lesson where progress was good, pupils learned new vocabulary and then used it in written work and in conversation. Learning in Urdu is satisfactory overall. Pupils with special educational needs and a small minority of higher attaining pupils make less progress than expected.
156. Pupils' attitudes to both languages and their behaviour in the department are satisfactory. Most pupils are responsive to tasks set and willing to participate in a variety of activities. For example in a Year 10 French lesson, pupils were keen to make good contributions to whole class oral work. They work well with each other and take a pride in their work. In a Year 8 Urdu lesson pupils responded particularly well to tasks set.
157. The overall quality of the teaching of French is good. At Key Stage 3 teaching is good and it is satisfactory at Key Stage 4; no unsatisfactory teaching was seen in either key stage. Teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding. They can use the target language effectively for classroom management as well as for teaching. For example in a Year 9 lesson, pupils have a good role model to follow and are able to ask questions as well as give answers about their birthdays. Best practice is exemplified by clear objectives, brisk starts to the lessons and good reviews of learning intentions. Teachers sustain pace and some actively involve pupils in their learning. For example, pupils in a Year 8 class on parts of the body, were encouraged to lead the lesson from the front of the classroom. Teachers make good use of the variety of resources available to them, including the language displays around the classrooms. Behaviour management is good. For example in a Year 10 lesson on food and drink, pupils arrive expecting to be challenged but their good classroom management helped them settle down to work. Planning is good and teachers match work to pupils' needs and abilities. Most pupils' books are seen regularly by a teacher but marking does not give ideas on how to improve and there are no levels or grades recorded for the pupils to see. The teaching of Urdu is satisfactory with some good strategies in place for the teaching of writing. The teacher has an excellent knowledge and understanding of both the linguistic and the cultural aspects of Urdu. In just one lesson seen, unsatisfactory behaviour management of some boys had a negative impact on standards.
158. The school offers Urdu as an option in Year 8 and this is a positive aspect of the department's work. Gains made in Urdu are far greater than those made by the same pupils in any other subject. Pupils would benefit further if it were to be offered earlier and if they had the opportunity to study two languages each. It is possible for speakers of other languages to be entered for GCSE in the language of their choice, for example German and Turkish. At Key Stage 4 there is currently no alternative accreditation for pupils for whom GCSE is not an appropriate examination. There are few extra-curricular activities on offer to pupils and some areas of the National Curriculum still do not have

adequate coverage. For example, there are few opportunities for extended writing, for extended reading and for the use of information and communication technology.

159. Leadership and management of the department is unsatisfactory and consequently progress since the previous inspection is unsatisfactory. Some improvements have been made, new and more appropriate textbooks have been purchased for Key Stage 3 pupils, although there are still not enough copies for pupils to use at home. Teachers are using the target language more consistently and they incorporate cultural references into their lessons. However, departmental documentation is unhelpful. Many documents are several years out of date. Department planning is unsatisfactory. It is still not clear how continuity and progression are addressed. Monitoring of all aspects of the department's work is poor. There are no documented procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. Results at Key Stage 4 are monitored by gender and by group, but not by ethnicity and there was no evidence available of analysis of results at Key Stage 3. There has been no clear direction within the department for some time. If the good practice which exists is to be allowed to move the pupils forward and to raise standards, then the school needs to address this issue immediately.

MUSIC

160. The standards of attainment in music at age 14 are below national expectations. Most pupils in Key Stage 3 are able to clap back simple rhythms and compose and perform short pieces. However, the majority of Year 9 pupils show little technical skill in their compositions which lack structure, musical expression and dynamics. A small minority of pupils are achieving beyond national expectations. In one lesson, a group of Year 9 pupils produced a well crafted musical interpretation of a short text which contained a mixture of cleverly interwoven sung and spoken elements - but this was the exception rather than the rule. The majority of pupils across Key Stage 3 are not able to discuss their work, or the work of others, confidently using appropriate musical vocabulary. Girls generally attain higher than boys, but this difference is broadly in line with results nationally.
161. Attainment of pupils studying music at age 16, judging from work seen and GCSE results achieved, is well below national subject averages and school GCSE averages. The school offers an expressive arts GCSE course which combines the study of music and drama. No Year 11 class was seen during the inspection, but in a Year 10 class pupils lacked the background knowledge of musical scales expected at this level. School GCSE A*-C results for expressive arts in 2000, at 14.7 per cent, are significantly below national averages for the subject and the school's GCSE average. Results fell significantly from the previous year and the low success rate is likely to be repeated in 2001. The results of pupils specialising in music within the course are better than those of pupils specialising in drama, but they are still well below national and school averages. Pupil numbers are dropping in the subject - from 38 in Year 11 to 24 in Year 10.
162. At Key Stage 3 pupils do not achieve in line with their prior attainment. There is insufficient progress in skills across the key stage, with Year 8 pupils, for example, producing compositions of a similar quality to those produced by pupils in Year 7. Progress at Key Stage 4 is also unsatisfactory for the majority of pupils as borne out by recent examination results and observation of pupils' work during the inspection. In both key stages different groups of pupils achieve equally, although little targeted provision in lessons was observed for the most able pupils, pupils with special educational needs or pupils with English as an additional language.
163. The attitudes and behaviour of many pupils are satisfactory and most pupils work together well in groups. However, a significant minority of boys show a lack of interest and motivation and find it hard to work together at a good pace. This affects their progress and results in off-task activity which at times interferes with the progress of the whole class and leads to a lack of care in the use of instruments.
164. Teaching quality is satisfactory overall. The new teacher in charge of music has made a promising start, bringing energy, enthusiasm and high musicianship to his work. The overall planning and content of lessons is good in most lessons and the teacher makes good use of his expertise in delivering the musical content. There is an appropriate practical focus in lessons and pupils are well supported in developing their musical skills and knowledge. However, at Key Stage 3 classroom routines are not yet

well established and behaviour management is not yet secure. Lesson planning overall also needs to show more specific attention to the needs of pupils of different abilities and backgrounds.

165. The current music curriculum does not deliver the statutory national curriculum programme of study. The old scheme of work at Key Stage 3 is out of date and the current one is only partially developed. At Key Stage 4, teachers are working from a course outline for expressive arts agreed with the examining board, but a more detailed written scheme of work and a set of matched lesson plans is needed to support the effective teaching of the subject. There were no extra-curricular opportunities on offer at the time of the inspection, although there is evidence that a range of activities were in place before the current staffing difficulties. There is no development plan this year for music as a separate subject and forward planning is inadequate as a result. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are unsatisfactory and current assessment records are incomplete. Key Stage 4 reports to parents this year, do not provide adequate information about pupils' progress in music.
166. Music accommodation and resources are adequate, although access to ICT resources is hindered by the lack of suitable tables, cabling and power points for safe and practical use of existing equipment. The current use of the music room for non-music lessons may need to be reviewed in this context.
167. It is clear that the school has experienced major recruitment and retention problems in music which accounts for many of the difficulties outlined above. In the term preceding the inspection, music was taught by a non-specialist. The staffing situation leading up to the inspection was further complicated by the maternity leave of a key member of staff. Senior and middle management at the school, however, are well aware of the issues identified above. The most urgent staffing issues have now been resolved and the school is well placed to make quick progress in raising standards.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

168. At the end of Key Stage 4, standards of attainment have improved markedly since the last inspection. Whereas GCSE results in 1996 were well below the national average, those pupils taking the GCSE short course in 2000 attained results which were only slightly below the national average. Those pupils who do not take the GCSE course, follow a course leading to the Certificate of Achievement in physical education. Most pupils completed this course successfully.
169. In lessons at Key Stage 4, the standards attained in practical work are often above those expected for pupils of this age. For example in basketball the GCSE group perform extremely well. Several pupils have very good control of the ball, can dribble fluently and change direction swiftly. They use space well and support each other in drawing off the opposition. They have good defensive skills and can shield the ball effectively to retain possession. They have good understanding of the rules of the game and are beginning to think strategically. Pupils following the Junior Sports Leadership Award (JSLA) attain well above the expectation for the course. They plan their work carefully, manage groups of primary pupils well and give clear and concise instructions about the activities they are organising. The more able have learnt the names of the pupils they teach, observe well and give feedback on how the pupils are progressing. They encourage them with praise and round off the session by recapping the learning. Amongst the certificate of achievement pupils, attainment is often in line with expectations for performance and sometimes below them. Their planning skills are more limited and are below expectations.
170. In Key Stage 3, attainment in athletics has been affected adversely by the weather, as many lessons have been adapted for work inside. Attainment is mostly in line with national expectations. The pupils have good understanding of the link between exercise and fitness and they know how to warm themselves up safely. They understand some principles, e.g. how to gain height, land safely and throw effectively although not all are successful in performing skills.
171. The quality of teaching is good. In over one third of the lessons the teaching is very good, in about two thirds it is good or better and it is never less than satisfactory. The very good teaching is characterised by clear learning objectives, which are shared with the pupils, judicious use of questioning to encourage pupils to think and to develop understanding, high expectations of pupils of all abilities and a wide range of teaching styles used to sustain interest and promote learning. In most of the teaching the teachers have good knowledge of their subject and share their enthusiasm for it. The teachers

manage their classes well and intervene quickly to ensure good behaviour. They plan the lessons carefully to offer a variety of activity and maintain a brisk pace. In the lessons where teaching is less successful, but still satisfactory, too little thought is given to what the pupils are learning, even though the tasks have been clearly specified. These lessons lack pace and pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.

172. Pupils are invariably well behaved in PE lessons. They know what is expected of them and respond accordingly. Most pupils enjoy their lessons, they know they will have a well-structured and worthwhile experience and are well motivated. Most are keen and work hard. They support each other and tolerate each other's strengths and weaknesses. They develop a good sense of sporting behaviour and fair play and work very well in groups. They are willing to take responsibility for coaching, officiating or simply evaluating each other's work in lessons. The latter they do sensibly and with sensitivity. The JSLA group in Year 10 show great maturity in the way in which they approach their work with primary pupils, taking their leadership responsibilities seriously. A few pupils are very lacking in confidence and are reluctant to try new things. This adversely affects their progress. The participation rate in lessons is high.
173. The department is very well led. The curriculum meets the statutory requirements for breadth and balance, although the allocation of time to the subject is below the recommendation at both key stages. The necessity of travelling to off-site field facilities further erodes available time. Arrangements for assessment of pupils' progress are good. The teachers make good use of a range of resources although ICT is insufficiently developed as a learning tool. The department makes a considerable contribution to the school's programme of extra-curricular activities.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

174. At the end of Key Stage 3, attainment is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils' knowledge and understanding about religion is better than their learning through religious education. For example, in the lessons observed in Year 9, pupils demonstrated a sound understanding of the story of the fall of Adam and Eve. They discussed the reasons for the fall and some of them came up with some interesting ideas as to why it happened and who could be responsible, but they found it harder to extend their own understanding of relating belief to practice such as their own moral responsibility, though they could understand 'temptation' in the light of their own experiences.
175. At the end of Key Stage 4, the proportion of higher grade passes in the 2000 religious education short course, is above the national average for boys and girls and it is in line with the national average for A*-G grades. This is particularly significant as it was the first year of the short course and all pupils in this multi-religious school were given the opportunity to enter and to gain a qualification. This also represents satisfactory and often good levels of achievement for many pupils for whom English is an additional language and for those with special educational needs.
176. In the Year 11 revision lessons observed and the written work seen, standards were just above the national average. Pupils show that they are consolidating their understanding of social and moral issues such as marriage and divorce, family life and the role of men and women, sanctity of life and abortion, attitudes to wealth and poverty, social harmony and discrimination from the perspectives of their chosen two world religions. They are increasingly responding to these issues of meaning and purpose by relating them to their own lives as a result of some very effective teaching.
177. The quality of teaching is mainly satisfactory at Key Stage 3 and good at Key Stage 4. A small amount of unsatisfactory teaching was seen at Key Stage 3 and some very good and excellent teaching at Key Stage 4. This teaching was characterised by lesson planning that takes into account the needs, interests and motivation of pupils. In most classes, teachers display sound subject knowledge, good relationships with pupils and effective classroom management. Resources, time, support staff both for learning support and for English as an additional language are used well and there is ongoing assessment. Weaker teaching had a lack of variety in teaching methods, including independent research based learning and did not always meet the diversity of learning needs in classes. A lack of rounding off and conclusion to some lessons deprived pupils of the opportunity to

share together their progress and for the teacher to draw out the religious significance of pictures, artefacts and stories; when this was done, however, it had a positive impact on pupils' learning. Homework is regularly set and marked. As a result of bilingual teaching support available in class, an Urdu speaking pupil made satisfactory progress in accessing and in participating in the lesson orally and in writing.

178. Pupils respond well to religious education particularly where teaching is linked to their interests, experiences and matters of concern to them. They like to talk about different religions, their relationships with each other and sharing their own experiences but they have few opportunities to do so in classes. They can empathise and respect the feelings and beliefs of others. They sometimes struggle to sustain concentration because the work set is inappropriate or too challenging for them or the teacher does not have effective class management strategies and they then become distracted and somewhat disruptive.
179. The religious education curriculum, which is based on the locally agreed syllabus, meets statutory requirements. At Key Stage 4 pupils study a short course and none are withdrawn from religious education. Pupils have the opportunity to visit the regent street mosque but visits to local places of worship and visitors from those places to school are rare. Religious festivals are celebrated and parents are invited to participate in occasions such as the Eid celebrations.
180. Very effective support is being provided for the recently appointed teacher in charge of the religious education department by one of the deputy headteachers, who also led the development and teaching of the GCSE short course. Monitoring of pupils' attainment and progress is good. Resources for the subject such as sets of text books, worksheets, artefacts and pictures are adequate and these are further supplemented by the school library. There is a specialist room with displays of artefacts, pictures and pupils' work, which creates a sound learning environment, but all religious education does not take place in that room. Overall progress since the last inspection is good.