

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **GAYNES SCHOOL**

Upminster, Essex

LEA area: 311 Havering

Unique reference number: 102344

Headteacher: Mr. Russell Ayling

Reporting inspector: Brian Oppenheim  
2686

Dates of inspection: 13 – 16 May 2002

Inspection number: 193382

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	11-16 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Brackendale Gardens Upminster Essex
Postcode:	RM14 3UX
Telephone number:	01708 502900
Fax number:	01708 502901
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Cllr Owen Ware
Date of previous inspection:	11 November 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2686	Brian Oppenheim	Registered inspector	Business education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9502	Rosalind Hall	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
23393	Brian Dower	Team inspector	English	
23289	Carol Singh	Team inspector	Mathematics	
2687	D. Morton Phillips-Davies	Team inspector	Science	
2731	Penny Holden	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Special educational needs English as an additional language Art	How well are pupils taught?
10761	Patrick Willan	Team inspector	Geography	
22601	Lucia Devine	Team inspector	Physical education	
18447	Ronald Cohen	Team inspector	History Religious education	
27058	Kathleen Cannon	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages	
8624	Ann Cartwright	Team inspector	Music Drama	

6364	Geoff Strack	Team inspector	Information technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
7084	Jack Haslam	Team inspector	Design and technology	How well does the school care for its pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

icp

360 Lee Valley Technopark  
 Ashley Road  
 London  
 N17 9LN

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Gaynes School is an average sized comprehensive school with 968 boys and girls aged 11-16. From September 2002 it has specialist Language College status awarded by the Government. Pupils come mainly from local primary schools but about 22 per cent come from the neighbouring local authority. There are more boys than girls and nearly all pupils come from white heritage backgrounds and a very small proportion are from a range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds including Black, Chinese, Pakistani and Indian. No pupils speak a language other than English at home. The proportion of pupils entitled to school meals free of charge is much lower than average but slightly higher than shown in the official figures. Eight per cent of pupils have identified learning needs which is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of need is about average at almost two per cent. When pupils start at the school, their attainment has been broadly average but this year the Year 7 pupils are slightly above average.

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

Gaynes School gives its pupils and their parents a good deal. It is led with passion and vision and this has a strong impact on the school's ethos and pupils' experiences. As a result, teaching and learning are good, standards are above average and all staff work together well for improvement. All in all the school gives good value for money.

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

- Standards in English, mathematics, French and information and communication technology are high.
- Good teaching helps pupils to learn effectively, make brisk progress and achieve well.
- The school is led effectively and many subjects are well managed: this means that staff work together well and teaching is good.
- The school has created a strong ethos: as a result, pupils' personal development, their relationships and their attitudes to their work are very good.
- The school works closely with parents to improve the quality pupils' experiences.

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

- Raise pupils' achievements further so that standards are high in all subjects.
- Evaluate teaching and learning more sharply so that the rigour and challenge of the best lessons becomes common practice in all subjects.
- Meet the requirement to teach information and communication technology in other subjects.
- Use assessment consistently to set pupils targets for improving their learning and to identify how well different groups of pupils achieve.

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

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

The school has made significant progress in the last few years and there have been unmistakable improvements since the last inspection in 1996. The most telling improvement is in the quality of teaching: nearly all lessons are now effective and one in five is very effective. Standards continue to be above average overall. Senior and middle managers are involved fully in the leadership of the school and the curriculum is balanced and relevant. Provision for pupils with special needs is good but arrangements are complicated. Health and safety issues have been resolved appropriately. Assessment is still not used well to help improve pupils' learning and the statutory requirements for a daily act of collective worship are not met in full: however, school assemblies are thought provoking, and often humorous, contributing well to pupils' personal development.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved at the end of Year 11 based on average point scores in GCSE examinations.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
GCSE examinations	A	C	B	C

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

Standards are above average. The results of the 2001 GCSE examinations are above average for England and pupils' results are on a par with those schools with characteristics similar to Gaynes School.<sup>1</sup> When standards at GCSE are compared with pupils' results in the Year 9 national tests, performance is below other schools.<sup>2</sup> This suggests that pupils do not make enough progress during Years 10 and 11. However, the figures are very close to being average: moreover, the evidence from lessons shows that the great majority of pupils in Years 10 and 11 make good progress because they are taught very well. What all this means is that between Year 7 and Year 11 pupils make good progress and achieve well overall. The school has set itself challenging but realistic targets for pupils' GCSE achievements: by 2006, for example, it predicts that over 70 per cent of pupils will achieve five GCSEs at the higher grades. It met its targets successfully last year and is on track to meet this year's.

GCSE results have been broadly above average during the last few years although this masks variations: in 1999 results were well above other schools but in 2000 they were only average. The lower results in 2000 explain why the school's performance is not rising as fast as the national trend. However, the 2000 results look like a blip: it is the only time over the past five years when results have not been at least above average. The rise in the 2001 results confirms that the overall picture is above average.

The best GCSE results were in English, mathematics, information and communication technology and physical education where pupils make particularly good progress. Results were also good in art and business studies where they were above average. In science overall performance is a little above average and in French, drama, geography and history results are broadly average. Results were weakest in German and design and technology. The overall figures also show that girls did better than boys last year and that the gap was slightly more than the national picture. This is partly because there are more boys than girls and partly because boys are more likely to be difficult in class than girls: however, all pupils learn best when the work is challenging.

The work seen in lessons confirms the picture provided by the examination results but in both modern foreign languages and design and technology pupils' achievements are now higher than last year. This is because French is now managed very well and the improved teaching has raised achievement considerably. Improved teaching and curriculum means that achievement in design and technology is now satisfactory. Broadly, pupils make good progress as they move through the school and achieve well compared with where they began at the start of Year 7. This shows that the school adds value to pupils' learning and is reflected in the good teaching seen right across the school. Similarly, the progress made by pupils with special educational needs is good because of the effective help they receive in lessons from subject teachers and support assistants.

<sup>1</sup> Schools with similar characteristics means schools with a similar proportion of pupils who qualify for school meals free of charge which, for Gaynes School, is between five and nine per cent of pupils.

<sup>2</sup> This means that pupils' GCSE results are compared with other schools that have similar National Curriculum test results (SATs) at the end of Year 9.



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very positive attitudes to school: they speak enthusiastically about many aspects of their school life.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good. There are many examples of very good or excellent behaviour in lessons, and at break and lunchtimes most pupils are well behaved. A few boys can sometimes be difficult in class and every so often behaviour around the school is boisterous.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good and their relationships with others are very good: this is a strength of the school.
Attendance	Satisfactory overall. During the week of the inspection attendance was high.

The good teaching means that pupils' attitudes and their relationships with others are all strengths of the school. This has a strong impact on pupils' learning and achievements.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 7 – 9	Years 10 – 11
Quality of teaching	Good	Very good

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

Teaching has improved a great deal since the last inspection and the vast majority of lessons are at least good. Just seven lessons out of the 181 seen during the inspection were less than satisfactory. Teaching is of consistently high quality in English right across the school and it is good in mathematics and information and communication technology. This is one of the main reasons why standards are high in these subjects. In science, teaching is satisfactory overall but there is some good and very good teaching.

Teachers know their subjects well and make their lessons interesting so that pupils understand and make good progress, particularly in Years 10 and 11. They set high goals for their pupils, in the main, and do all they can to help them achieve. Pupils recognise and value this support which contributes towards the good relationships between teachers and pupils. Almost all pupils are keen to do well and make every effort to succeed, often persevering when work is demanding or difficult for them.

Literacy is taught well in most but not all subjects and the numeracy strategy is beginning to be used appropriately. The school meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs well because teaching takes notice of these needs and plans for them. Classroom assistants are used effectively to support these pupils in lessons. Where teaching is less effective it is sometimes because the boys' behaviour goes unchecked. Girls are better at getting on with their work and thus do better than some boys.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. The school provides a wide range of courses that meet the needs of pupils well but there are some gaps in the use of ICT in subjects and in the provision of design and technology in Years 10 and 11.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils get a good deal overall but the arrangements for identifying their needs are over complicated which means that sometimes the end result is not always as good as the intention.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good: the school provides well for pupils' moral, social and cultural development and has established clear moral values and a strong sense of community. Spiritual development is satisfactory but is not consistently planned across the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good: pupils are supported well by teachers who respond to their needs effectively. Pupils' progress is checked well but assessment is not used adequately to set pupils' targets for improving their learning.

The school has a strong partnership and very effective links with its parents. This means that many parents play a crucial part in supporting the school and its positive ethos. At the moment reports do not provide enough information for parents about how well their children are doing but the school already has new reports for next year. The school also has effective plans ensure that it meets the statutory requirements for teaching design and technology to all pupils and to teach information and communications technology in other subjects.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good: Gaynes School is led very successfully and managed effectively: all staff take responsibility for making the school good and senior managers share the headteacher's passion for education and for the future. This is one of the reasons why teaching and learning are good and standards are high.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good: governors have a good understanding about where the school is and where they want it to go in the future. The governing body takes its work seriously and has identified what it can do even better.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The reviews of the work of subjects are proving successful but the evaluation of teaching is not sharp enough. The progress of individual pupils is tracked well but examination results are not analysed as fully to identify trends and patterns to show the broader picture.
The strategic use of resources	Good: the school links spending decisions to its educational targets well.

Great progress has been made in establishing an effective school development plan but the way success is measured, and the link to staff training, still lacks sharpness. Accommodation is adequate and the school has been successful in improving significantly the drama and music rooms. However, accommodation for physical education, and some rooms for science, are unsatisfactory

and limit the range of activities for pupils. The library is very well managed and there is a good range of books. The big drawback is it is far too small. Staffing is satisfactory and good in some subjects, and the school has adequate learning resources. The school takes good account of the principles of best value.

### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That their child likes school</li> <li>• The school expects their child to work hard and achieve their best</li> <li>• It is helping pupils become mature and responsible</li> <li>• That the school is well led and managed</li> <li>• That it is easy to approach the school for help or with a concern</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The variety in marking makes it difficult for parents and pupils to understand what it means</li> <li>• Pupils have to wait a long time for lunch and then have to eat very quickly</li> <li>• Homework does not follow the homework diary and makes it difficult for parents to help</li> <li>• Some accommodation is poor</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with the positive views of parents, pupils do well both in their work and their behaviour. Leadership is a strength of the school and helps to make it the pleasant place to be. The parents' concerns have been recognised by the inspection team and the school, which is already seeking ways to improve them. Homework is usually set on the right day but not always regularly which explains why some parents may be uncertain about it. There are examples of very good marking as in English where it is detailed and supportive and care is taken to explain how work can be improved. However, this good practice is not consistent throughout the school and there is insufficient constructive comment on how the work could be improved in some departments. The school does its best at lunchtime but it takes so long for pupils to get their meal because space is limited.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. Standards at Gaynes School are above average. The results of the 2001 GCSE examinations are above average for England and pupils' results are on a par with those schools with characteristics similar to Gaynes School.<sup>3</sup> When standards at GCSE are compared with pupils' results in the Year 9 national tests, performance is just below other schools.<sup>4</sup> This suggests that pupils do not make quite enough progress during Years 10 and 11, but a more detailed analysis of examination and test data shows some important facts:

- the school achieved well above the average in the national tests at the end of Year 9, particularly in English and mathematics;
- the proportion of pupils who gained at least five A\* - C grades in the 2001 GCSE examinations was well above average;
- the proportion of pupils who gained at least five GCSEs at any grade was above the average.

2. However, the results also show more pupils fail to gain any GCSEs than in other schools. This is largely because about eight pupils were either doing work-related courses away from school or did not attend. Of course, this represents just a small number of pupils but it is just enough to pull the overall figures down a little and explains two things. First it explains why the figures show pupils making less progress than expected between Year 9 and Year 11. However, the figures are very close to being average: moreover, the evidence from lessons shows that the great majority of pupils in Years 10 and 11 make good progress because they are taught very well. What all this means is that between Year 7 and Year 11 pupils make good progress and achieve well overall. Second, it explains why performance overall is not quite as good as in 1999. This might seem odd when fewer pupils achieved the higher grades at GCSE in 1999 than in 2000 but overall performance is an amalgamation of all the GCSE results not just the higher grades. In other words the headline figure is very good but when all pupils are included in the equation the statistics show that performance is a little lower. However, performance is still above the average.

3. Another reason why the school is successful in helping pupils in Years 10 and 11 to make good progress is the challenging targets it has set itself for GCSE achievements: by 2006, for example, the school aims to get over 70 per cent of pupils achieving five GCSEs at the higher grades. It met its targets successfully last year and is on track to meet this year's targets.

4. GCSE results have been broadly above average during the last few years although this masks variations: in 1999 results were well above average but in 2000 they were only average. The lower results in 2000 explain why the school's performance is not rising as fast as the national trend. However, the 2000 results look like a blip: it is the only time over the past five years when results have not been at least above average. The rise in the 2001 results confirms that the overall picture is above average and that performance is rising.

5. The best GCSE results are in English, mathematics, information and communication technology and physical education where pupils make particularly good progress. Results are also good in art and business studies where they are above average. In business studies the above average results are much better than they appear on paper: many more pupils take the examination than in other schools making their performance even more significant. In science, overall standards are a little above average: the proportion of Year 11 pupils gaining the higher grades in

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<sup>3</sup> Schools with similar characteristics means schools with a similar proportion of pupils who qualify for school meals free of charge which, for Gaynes School, is between five and nine per cent of pupils.

<sup>4</sup> This means that pupils' GCSE results are compared with other schools that have similar National Curriculum test results (SATs) at the end of Year 9.

the GCSE double award examination is above average but it is below for those taking the single award examination. More students took the double science which is why overall standards are a little above average. However, bearing in mind their National Curriculum test results two years earlier, progress is just about satisfactory and the GCSE results were lower than in English and mathematics. Examination results are also broadly average in French, drama, geography and history. Results are weakest in German and design and technology but pupils achieved appropriately given their starting point.

6. The overall figures also show that girls did better than boys last year and that the gap was slightly more than that found nationally. But these, too, show differences between subjects. In mathematics and business studies, for example, boys did better than girls although both groups of pupils did better than in other schools nationally. In French, on the other hand, girls' performance was well above the average for girls but boys' results were below the average for boys: the boys' results pulled down the overall performance of French which was just a bit above the average. A different picture emerges from English: here the results of boys and girls were higher than those of their counterparts nationally but the girls' results were better than those of the boys by a greater margin than the national difference. The evidence from the inspection shows that there are a number of reasons for boys achieving better in some subjects than others.

- in business studies boys are very well motivated because of the excellent relationships between teachers and pupils: this helps to manage boys' behaviour very effectively;
- boys are more likely to be difficult in class than girls and although this only happens sometimes it can restrict their learning;
- there are more boys in the school than girls which makes their influence over the examination statistics greater;
- all pupils learn best when the work is challenging, and when they are motivated and want to do well.

7. The work seen in lessons confirms the picture provided by the examination results but in both modern foreign languages and design and technology pupils' achievements are now higher than last year. In modern foreign languages this is because the subject is now managed very well and this has improved teaching considerably. Improved teaching and curriculum has helped to raise achievement in design and technology so that it is now sound. Broadly, pupils make good progress as they move through the school and achieve well compared with where they began at the start of Year 7. This shows that the school adds value to pupils' learning and reflects the good teaching seen right across the school.

8. Number skills are being used well to support learning in science, business studies and physical education at GCSE: these also contribute to pupils' learning in music, art and drama. Most pupils are able to apply what they have learned in mathematics but some find it difficult to transfer skills to another subject. However, number skills are not really used to support learning in other subjects: as a result pupils' standards are broadly sound.

9. Standards of literacy throughout the school are generally good. Pupils are confident and fluent when speaking and read the different books they meet in all subject areas self-assuredly. Pupils listen well and can concentrate for extended periods of time. Most pupils adapt their writing to the varied demands of subjects. There are, however, a small number of pupils who struggle with technical accuracy and make mistakes in the spelling of key words.

10. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs is good because of the effective help they receive in lessons from subject teachers and support assistants.

## **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

11. Pupils have very positive attitudes to school. They arrive on time and ready to start work. In their interviews they spoke enthusiastically about many aspects of their school life and in particular about the extra-curricular activities provided. Year 11 pupils were particularly proud of their school and have enjoyed their time at it. They were looking forward to the Leavers' Ball that is to take place after they have completed their exams and were delighted that so far 53 teaching and non-teaching staff were going to celebrate with them on that evening.

12. Standards of behaviour are good in lessons and there were many examples of good or excellent behaviour in lessons across all year groups. The great majority of pupils take pride in their work, are conscientious and want to do well. In a Year 9 physical education session on indoor shot put, pupils demonstrated a genuine will to work with the teacher and achieve success. In a Year 7 science lesson there was a high level of engagement in a session on the properties of planets and the solar system and very good written and ICT-based work was produced. In the majority of lessons pupils are managed well and rise to the teachers' high expectations of work and behaviour. Where these expectations are not so high, or the techniques used to manage behaviour are not secure, some pupils, often boys, are quick to take advantage and become inattentive and sometimes disruptive. In assemblies pupils behave well and listen carefully. They applaud the successes of their peers sincerely, such as the achievements of the girls' athletics team. Although there are instances of boisterous behaviour at break and lunchtimes, most pupils are well behaved and move around the site in an orderly manner. Incidents of bullying or racism are rare and pupils stated that such situations are dealt with effectively. Exclusions are kept to a minimum; they are appropriate and systematic with detailed records kept. There have been no permanent exclusions which show that not only is the school committed to including all pupils in school life but also that it works successfully to make good that commitment.

13. Pupils' personal development is good overall. Relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils are very good and are a strength of the school. Just as the staff work together as a team so the quality of support and co-operation between pupils is high. This was evident in a Year 9 reading recovery group where excellent work was produced as the pupils worked first in pairs and then as a whole class on an exercise editing text. Pupils respect their teachers and Year 11 pupils commented that the staff 'treat us like equals' and valued this. Pupils stated that they felt fairly treated.

14. Those pupils in wheelchairs are included and assisted in activities very well by their classmates. In lessons, such as a Year 11 discussion on 'The Lord of the Flies', pupils listen to each other's views well. They have a very good understanding of the impact of their actions on others, which is partly a result of personal, social and health education lessons where the issues of personal responsibility are revisited often throughout the programme. Pupils develop their spiritual awareness appropriately often in a personal and meaningful manner. In a Year 10 personal, social and health education lesson, for example, pupils defended their beliefs about racism well. They showed an understanding and empathy for others and some, particularly the girls, challenged discrimination. Pupils have a proper sense of right and wrong because the school has a clear and effective code of conduct that is understood well.

15. Pupils take on responsibility well. The school prefects work as a team and take on a significant role in running the school. They are a mature and serious group. They run the school council and have plenty of ideas for its development. Year 7 council members also spoke of their role with enthusiasm and commitment. There are further opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility as part of the house structure and in organising sporting events.

16. Levels of attendance are satisfactory and in line with the national average. During the week of the inspection attendance was high. A few pupils were late but were challenged appropriately. Pupils move from lesson to lesson with reasonable speed.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

17. Teaching at Gaynes School is good overall. Over seven lessons in every 10 are at least good and just seven lessons out of the 181 seen during the inspection were unsatisfactory. Teaching is better for pupils in their GCSE years. There are obviously variations from subject to subject and teacher to teacher. In English, for example, teaching is consistently good and often very good. In other subjects there is more variation with a higher proportion of lessons that are satisfactory rather than good.

18. There is a very strong link at the school between the quality of teaching and the pupils' learning. Pupils are motivated and inspired by good teaching; they learn well where teaching challenges and stretches their thinking. When this is the case they concentrate and work really hard. In a Year 9 physical education lesson, girls learning to shot put, watched a pupil demonstrate a number of times; each time the teacher focused their attention on a different aspect of skill. This helped them improve their own skill when they went to work independently and ensured they learnt a great deal. However, pupils are unforgiving in dull or poorly managed lessons and quickly become bored, chat and occasionally behave badly disturbing the progress of the lesson. For example, in a few lessons a minority of boys appear uninterested in the subject, are openly inattentive and because this is ineffectively challenged they make little progress. This is one of the reasons why boys do less well than girls in some lessons and at GCSE.

19. A great strength at Gaynes is the subject knowledge of teachers and how well they use this knowledge to help pupils learn, particularly in Years 10 and 11. In a Year 10 French lesson the teacher used her excellent knowledge of the language to encourage the pupils' understanding and pronunciation. Teachers plan lessons well so that information is well presented and in a way that the pupils will understand and remember. Where this happens pupils respond very positively and put significant effort into their work. To start a Year 7 geography lesson, the teacher used two overhead transparencies to draw out pupils' observations and this ensured a brisk and challenging pace which was maintained throughout because the lesson was so well planned.

20. Teachers' expectations are high, they expect the pupils to work hard and to achieve well. Pupils react positively when given work that pushes them and makes them think; they persevere and make good progress. In a Year 10 personal, health and social development lesson on race and citizenship the teacher's high expectations of the pupils led him to tackle difficult and controversial issues about racism head on. The pupils responded well by raising interesting and thought-provoking questions of their own.

21. In the vast majority of lessons, homework is set at the beginning of lessons so that it has a high profile, pupils have long enough to write it down and time to be really clear about what they have been asked to do. Homework is nearly always linked closely to the lesson and often gives pupils the opportunities to do research around the topic they are studying. In art, for example, homework preparing for the next lesson is often set as part of the introduction of each lesson.

22. One of the reasons for the less effective teaching can be found in lesson planning. Teachers identify the tasks to be completed by pupils but not what they are to learn from the lesson. This leads to activities that occupy pupils, are related to the lesson, but do not challenge them or move their understanding forward.

23. Marking is an area of great variation, as departments have different marking schemes. There are examples of very good marking as in English where it is detailed and supportive and care is taken to explain how work can be improved. However, this good practice is not consistent throughout the school and there is insufficient constructive comment on how the work could be improved in some departments.

24. The teaching of literacy is broadly good but it is not provided consistently across all subjects. Some departments use class discussion as a spur to learning and the result in music and drama, for example, is that a lively exchange of ideas often develops. In some subjects there is no focus on literacy skills in teachers' marking and only rarely do they comment on the literacy aspects of their subject during the course of a lesson.

25. Number skills are being used well to support learning in a number of subjects: work in science and physical education, for example, includes data collection and analysis, and using graphs to present data. In some subjects, such as music, art and drama, the teaching of ideas about number patterns, and shape and spatial awareness, contributes to pupils' learning well. However, not all subjects use numerical skills to support learning.

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

26. The school offers a broad curriculum in Years 7 to 9, including taught courses in ICT and personal, social and health education (PSHE). The overall quality of the curriculum for these pupils is good with particular strengths in the learning opportunities provided by drama, English, languages and mathematics. The current arrangements provide a good balance overall. The opportunity to learn German and Italian as second foreign languages, offered to one third of the pupils in Years 8 and 9 respectively, is a good feature of provision for these pupils.

27. The curriculum in Years 10 and 11 has a satisfactory balance of time allocated to subjects. Pupils follow a core course of English, mathematics, science, a modern foreign language, physical education, religious education and PSHE. Design and technology however, is studied by only half of the pupils because of the way the system for choosing subjects works: as a result the breadth of the curriculum is not quite as wide as it could be and the statutory requirement for all pupils to be taught design and technology are not met. The school proposes to redress this by offering design and technology to all as a half GCSE alongside information technology. The curriculum is completed with choices from a good range of options including GCSE courses in drama, music, ICT and physical education. The quality of the curriculum is very similar to that for Years 7 to 9, and in contrast to the last inspection, ICT for Years 10 and 11 is now a strength.

28. The school has developed a curriculum that is well matched to the abilities and aspirations of most of its pupils. There is currently a lack of vocational subjects as alternatives to GCSE but this is under consideration in the curriculum review.

29. The full National Curriculum is taught, but its thinking and planning are strongly influenced by a desire to offer a broad range of educational experiences and the aspirations to become a specialist language college. As in the previous inspection, the school fails to meet with statutory requirements in design and technology and now for ICT across the curriculum. Although there is encouragement by the teachers for pupils to use their home computers, pupils are not able to use their ICT skills in any subject other than ICT itself.

30. There has been an improvement since the last inspection in that the quality and range of learning opportunities overall for special needs pupils is now good. Special needs pupils are well integrated in mainstream lessons. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good because of the good teaching they receive in subjects and the effective support they get in lessons from support assistants. Pupils with special educational needs are supported in a variety of ways. Those with learning needs who have a statement generally receive support from a support assistant in lessons. There is some additional support out of lessons for some pupils from the special educational needs co-ordinator but this can be counter productive as pupils miss a subject they enjoy or have some success in. Pupils with low reading skills are helped through the English department's very effective reading recovery scheme. Pupils with behaviour difficulties receive



support from the pastoral support centre. These arrangements mean that there is a possibility of duplication of support as the pupils in the pastoral centre may also have learning needs.

31. All pupils in Years 7 to 11 have timetabled provision for personal, social and health education that is good and includes sex, health and drugs education. A wide range of cross-curricular themes is covered by a team that includes senior members of staff. Careers and vocational education begins in Year 8 and is good, with pupils receiving detailed and comprehensive guidance on education and career pathways leading from school. There are good links with the local sixth form and further education college and the good relationships with Havering Education Business Partnership have been maintained. This provision of pastoral support is good and meets the needs of most pupils well.

32. A good programme of extra-curricular activities, that reflects a high level of staff commitment, provides further enhancements. The programme includes a wide range of clubs and other activities that enable pupils to extend their interest and expertise in curricular areas including art, drama, ICT, Christian club, design and technology, maths club and revision classes in geography and history. There is also a range of the more traditional activities including music, cricket, trampoline, athletics, rounders, swimming and P.E. Study visits and other after school activities are good. These include theatre trips, sporting visits and matches, study tours abroad, exchanges and field trips.

33. Links between the school and the community are good. Relationships between the school and its local feeder schools are good particularly in the area of modern foreign languages. A teacher from the school helps with the teaching of French in two primary schools and there are good links with a further school that also teaches French. Links with the local business education partnership provide 20 mentors who work with some Year 11 pupils. The governing body's curriculum committee is very committed and closely involved in the work of the school. Governors are involved in curriculum discussions and are meeting their statutory requirements in relation to the school's sex education policy.

### **Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

34. Provision for the spiritual development of the pupils is satisfactory. It is fostered well in areas of the curriculum such as art, English, history, music, and religious education where sensitive provision dealing with the major and fundamental issues of life enables pupils to develop their spiritual awareness appropriately. There are good plans for collective worship and the school is committed to further improvement in this area. The whole-school assemblies, when observed, were sympathetically planned, thought provoking, and were often humorous. However, this provision is not uniformly or universally spread throughout the school. The school does not have a policy to underpin such provision, and the spiritual dimension does not yet feature in curricular planning.

35. Provision for the moral development of pupils is good. The school has very good and clear moral values which include high and consistent expectations of the way pupils conduct themselves in class and how they behave to each other generally. The school promotes such behaviour by establishing, within an orderly community, a clear and effective code of conduct which encourages a proper sense of right and wrong. Staff provide good role models and pupils understand what is expected of them in terms of behaviour and respect and consideration for other people and for their property. The work covered in religious education plays a significant part in the provision of pupils' moral development, providing opportunities for pupils to study the impact of religious ideas on moral behaviour. They are encouraged to examine their own moral codes. Provision for pupils' moral development is very much at the heart of the very good programme of personal and social education. This is supported in several areas of the curriculum, including for example, history, where pupils are encouraged to consider the moral questions associated with such diverse topics as the holocaust and slavery.

36. The school offers good provision for pupils' social development. Pupils are encouraged to have a sense of community both in the school and out in the community. They are involved in work experience programmes and youth award schemes. In the community at large, pupils are particularly involved with ensuring extension of such provision through such organisations as the Havering Education Business Partnership. Opportunities for the pupils to develop social skills are afforded by the provision of a large number of extra-curricular activities, including a range of creative and performing art activities. Pupils are further encouraged to participate in house competitions. Pupils are offered a wide range of opportunities to undertake personal responsibilities. These include several in-school opportunities, such as membership of school council, involvement in the "Bully line" counselling and mentoring activities, and the prefectorial system. Pupils' social development is further enhanced by a range of residential opportunities, including foreign visits, such as the skiing trip to North Vermont in The United States, and visits to the twinned towns of Hesdin, in France, and Ludwigshafen, in Germany. Social responsibility and concern are promoted through a good programme of personal and social education and several subjects make further contribution to this area by helping pupils develop social skills. For example, in physical education lessons, pupils have a variety of opportunities to work co-operatively.

37. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. The school teaches pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions and many areas of the curriculum involve pupils in studies of diverse cultural interest. For example, in religious education, pupils study the traditions and customs of the world's major religions. There is some promotion of the awareness of the cultural development of the art, music and literature of other cultures, for example, the work done in art includes African and Aboriginal art. The culture of the world beyond Europe is also brought into school, such as the Indian Dance Group.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

38. One of the strengths of the school is the way in which it cares for pupils and the contribution this makes to its success. Staff know pupils well and the school provides a healthy, safe environment in which they can learn. Pupils feel secure and know to whom they can turn if they have any worries whether they are academic or social.

39. A senior member of staff is the named and trained child protection person for the school, and has ensured that all staff are aware of their relevant responsibilities. There is good liaison kept with external agencies including the police, education welfare service and social services. The school keeps a very detailed incident record book, and all specific documentation is securely locked away.

40. Through the broad curriculum of personal, health and social education which begins in Year 7, pupils are given good advice about important matters such as the inherent dangers of smoking, alcohol and drug abuse. Pupils are given good guidance about study skills and what they can expect from secondary education. As they move through the school, issues such as relationships and sex education and parenting are included. Years 10 and 11 are given good advice about citizenship, the environment, disability, crime and punishment, human rights and civil liberties. Invited speakers from such organisations as the careers service and the local police help pupils' understanding and discuss important issues.

41. The procedures to monitor attendance are good. The attendance rate is broadly average but the school continues to make efforts to improve attendance. This explains why attendance during the inspection was high. Certificates are awarded for good attendance and improvement in attendance.

42. Good systems have been introduced to monitor and assess the pupils' personal development, behaviour and their academic work. Form tutors, heads of year and subject teachers

make good contributions to these assessments. Assessment procedures are generally good. The information is satisfactorily used on a day to day basis in the classroom and to guide curriculum planning. The records follow the pupils from year to year as they move through the school and are then sent forward to their sixth form college or further education college at the end of Year 11.

43. Teachers have appropriate information about the pupils with special educational needs they teach through individual education plans and other information circulated by the special needs co-ordinator. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory and used well by support assistants and subject teachers. Subject teachers are asked to contribute towards the formulation and evaluation of these plans and most do. This means that the plans are generally practical and written with good knowledge of the pupil. The special needs co-ordinator is responsible for the teaching element identified on pupils' statements of special educational need.

44. The school has established a Link Advisory Group to promote inclusion and to manage the use of teacher assistants time effectively and flexibly. The Advisory Group ensures that all faculties and pastoral teams are involved in reviewing provision to ensure inclusion. Pupils who show real ability in certain subjects are given extension work to do to maximise their potential achievements. The use of assessment to guide curricular planning is used effectively, although some of this information is quite recent. The school is aware that teachers require a greater focus on using all available information to inform future teaching, learning and curricular planning.

45. The good quality of educational support and guidance stems from the school's commitment of making a difference. Through the dynamic attitude of the headteacher, who seeks to know every pupil by name, staff at all levels are encouraged to treat all pupils as individuals. This is assisted by tutors and heads of year remaining with their pupils when moving upwards through the school.

46. Certificates of achievement are presented in assemblies from time to time to recognise personal achievement in school and the local community. Before examinations, pupils have a good opportunity to attend revision groups and, for all year groups, sessions are available at lunchtime and after school to assist anyone having difficulties with an academic subject. Staff are very generous with their time.

47. From their knowledge of the pupils and guided by the monitoring of their personal development and academic progress, tutors and heads of year are able to give good advice to pupils and their parents. They advise on how pupils should proceed with choices of subject, decisions about colleges or other further education and with possible choices of career. In addition, there are very good links with the two colleges to which the majority go. Staff from the local colleges are frequent visitors to the school and pupils have many opportunities to visit the colleges while they are making their choices. A careers adviser visits on a regular basis to help pupils, particularly those who are not particularly academic, and to interview and guide them towards possible careers. The school and the parents receive a written report on such interviews. The school has used the expertise of the local Education Business Partnership to train and use other adults as mentors for older pupils.

48. There are very good arrangements for keeping track of pupils' overall academic progress. Pupils' work in each subject is marked regularly and teacher comments are encouraging and supportive in tone. The comments do not, however, give clear enough advice and guidance about what the pupils should do to improve their work nor how they might achieve that improvement. Pupils' work is also assessed formally at intervals during the year and then recorded centrally twice a year. This allows subjects flexibility over the types of assessments they use while requiring each to report results in a common way. A strength of the system is that it helps form tutors and heads of year to quickly spot anyone who is falling behind or doing particularly well. Information is shared with parents, keeping them in touch with their children's progress.



## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

49. The school has a strong partnership with its parents. This is supported by parents' positive comments about the friendly welcome they receive in the reception area. The views of parents as expressed at the meeting and in the findings of the questionnaire are very positive and were endorsed by the findings of the inspection. Over 85 per cent of parents agree or strongly agree that the school expects their child to work hard and achieve their best, that their child is making good progress and that the school is helping children become mature and responsible. The same percentage stated that their child likes school and that the school is well led and managed. Parents who spoke at the meeting repeated these positive views. They also commented that the school is improving and that the headteacher has played a significant part in this. They stated that behaviour has improved and that the expectations of staff are now higher, with more work demanded from pupils. While some parents who responded to the questionnaire felt that the school did not work closely with them, 48 per cent of parents strongly agreed that they would feel comfortable in approaching the school with problems or concerns.

50. A quarter of parents disagree with the statement that their child gets the right amount of work to do at home and others raised concerns about the amount of activities provided outside the curriculum. However, inspectors judge these to be good overall: homework is regularly set and extends the work covered in class well; after school activities are a positive feature of the school and those provided by the physical education department are very good. The present reporting system is in the process of being improved so that parents receive more information throughout the year but the annual reports produced currently by the school are unsatisfactory. There are occasional comments about areas for development but the reports give parents too little information about levels achieved and the grading system used. For many subjects the descriptors are too general and there is no room for parents' or pupils' comments. This means that it is difficult for pupils to know what to improve and how to improve and difficult for parents to support their children.

51. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is very good. The information provided by the school in the form of the prospectus, the annual report to parents and the school diary is of good quality and is readable. It is also available on the school's website which is regularly updated. Parents are kept well informed about changes, for example, through the newsletter, and are often asked to give the headteacher direct feedback, which they do. They were fully consulted about the changes to the school day through the publication of the draft proposals that were sent to all for their comments. A meeting was held to discuss the changes and parents are overwhelmingly supportive of them. Parents are appropriately involved in their children's annual reviews if they have recognised special educational needs.

52. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is very good. The places for parent governors are contested by elections. Parents support the school through an active parent/teacher association that organises fundraising and social events such as quiz nights and discos. The parent/teacher association has contributed £17,500 towards the bid for Language College status. The great majority of parents are supportive of their child's learning through ensuring they attend school regularly and punctually and complete their homework and many assist in extra-curricular activities. Parents' attendance at parent consultation evenings is high.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

53. Gaynes School is led very successfully and managed effectively. The headteacher is passionate about the school and about the achievements of pupils: this passion is infectious and reflected in the way teachers, teaching assistants, technicians and caretakers all take responsibility for making the school good. Much has been achieved since the appointment of the headteacher with the full support of senior managers. In the past 18 months or so, for example, much has been done to improve the way the school evaluates its performance and understands its strengths and weaknesses, although it still has some way to go. The way the governing body works with and for

the school has also improved. But what is most significant is the way the school has a clear notion of where it is going: this is reflected in the school's mission statement which puts teaching, learning and pupils' achievements right at the top of the agenda. Much of this vision is the result of the headteacher's effective leadership but it is also because senior managers share in his passion for education and for the future. This is why teaching and learning are good and standards are high.

54. The governing body plays an important part in supporting the school and in working for improvement. Governors have a good understanding about where the school is and where they want it to go in the future. Many governors have a particularly clear view about their role and how to take up their responsibilities. This is partly due to the experience of many governors but also because the governing body has taken seriously the need for its own development. Recent training, through the LEA, has helped governors identify their own areas for development: in their words they want to become better governors. There are two points here: first, the governing body is well on its way to being very effective. For example, it keeps the school under review by monitoring performance in tests and examinations carefully and receiving regular reports from staff. It also has a clear procedure for visiting subject departments to find out about how things are going. Similarly, it receives regular information about the school budget and this helps it to play a strong part in keeping school finances under review. Second, the governing body shares the vision for the school and the direction it is being led. It is this, and the close partnership between school and governing body, that helps to make overall leadership effective. Nevertheless, governors still need to be vigilant about making sure that all statutory requirements are met.

55. The work of heads of departments and faculties is also having a positive impact on the way the school is led and managed, and pupils' achievements. Most significantly, those subjects that achieve the highest standards are also those that are led most effectively. These subject departments have a clear educational direction and staff work as a team committed to improving the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. In English, for example, there have been significant improvements in standards and pupils' speaking skills. Standards in mathematics have improved steadily over the past few years and there has been a complete turn-round in the performance of modern languages where provision is now very good. Similarly, standards in the GCSE information and communication technology courses are high. Unsurprisingly, not all subjects are as effectively led and with the same clear focus on the future. But in all subjects there is a growing understanding of the link between effective leadership and good teaching: this is one of the reasons why teaching has improved so much since the last inspection. The development plan for improving special educational needs is rather unspecific. It does not show practical steps that lead to identifiable and measurable outcomes to achieve the improvement wanted.

56. Different strands of a pupil's special needs are dealt with in two different ways in the school. Behaviour is improved through the pastoral support centre whilst learning needs are supported by the special needs co-ordinator and the learning support centre. Both centres can call on the time of classroom support assistants. However, one pupil may have both behavioural and learning needs; indeed, learning needs unresolved may have sparked off the behaviour problems. In addition the English department runs an effective reading recovery scheme for pupils with low reading ages. The school manages this overlap through the link advisory group but it is not the most effective way to combine and target resources.

57. The school takes good account of principles of best value. A significant example is the changes in the times for the school day from next term. Here, the school has been very careful to consult with parents and take account of their views. Another way the school applies best value principles is by setting itself challenging targets: over the next five years it expects to improve GCSE examination results by nearly 10 percentage points. Similarly, the school is careful to ensure that contracts are placed following a proper bidding process.

58. Performance data is compared in a variety of ways: with all schools in England, with similar schools and with local schools. However, there is one aspect of these comparisons that is not quite as sharp as it could be. The school has a great deal of data about pupils' examination

results and uses these well to track an individual pupil's progress, to pick up those who are not doing as well as they should and help them to improve. But this data is not always used as fully as it might be to analyse performance in a broader way to identify trends and patterns: in other words the school sometimes does not see the big picture. An example is in English where there is a large difference between boys' and girls' GCSE results: girls do very much better at getting the top grades than boys but this is not identified as an area for improvement. Of course, this is not a major weakness, as all pupils achieve well in English: but the school has missed an opportunity to push results up even further.

59. One of the developments over recent years is the new systems to monitor and review the work of departments. Reviews have been carried out in science, modern languages and humanities. These have been generally successful in identifying areas for improvement and moving the subjects forward: they are a good first step in developing the school's procedures for monitoring and evaluating teaching and much has been achieved. Now that this start has been made the school is in a strong position to improve these systems further: at the moment the evaluation of teaching is not sharp enough to ensure success in pushing up standards further. Part of this is using the evaluation of teaching to be able to identify what works and what does not work at Gaynes School so that teachers can learn from the rigour and challenge provided by the best lessons.

60. Another very important achievement is the school development plan and the way this is used by senior managers to check the progress subjects are making to meet agreed targets. One of its particular selling points is that it is in the form of an IT database. This makes it more easily available to a wider number of people: governors, for example, all have their own copy on CD-ROM which they can use when they make visits to subject departments. Importantly, too, it means that the plan can be interrogated in different ways: for example, it will produce a report showing the cost of developments or the priorities for ICT. This is used well to link spending decisions to the school's priorities. It thus has the potential to be a very valuable tool for improvement. However, the way the plan identifies objectives and measures success still lacks sharpness. The objectives in the ICT development plan, for example, are not sharp enough to make a clear statement about what the school wants to achieve. As a result the plan provides few measures of success. Of course, this does not mean that the school is ineffective in developing its curriculum but it does make it difficult to be sure that the pace of improvement is realistic. It is here that the real point lies: without tight objectives and sharp measures of success there is a danger of trying to do too much too quickly. Given the stage at which the school is, this is an indication of how the school development plan needs to evolve to reflect the considerable achievements so far.

61. Broadly accommodation is adequate and the school has been successful in improving significantly the drama and music rooms. This has been the result of careful management and the effective way additional funding has been gained. The new accommodation has a positive impact on the school's ethos. There remain, however, some areas where the building does not provide such good accommodation. There are problems with the accommodation for physical education: the tennis court surface is uneven and slippery in the wet and thus unsafe; the girls' changing rooms are in poor repair. In science some rooms have been refurbished but other still need considerable improvement. Lunchtime arrangements are unsatisfactory because it takes so long for pupils get their meal: the school does its best with limited space. Resources are generally appropriate and adequate throughout the school.

62. In the library there is a good range of books and a rolling programme to replace stock. Very little of the stock is over six years old. The library is very well managed. The librarian monitors its use well and presents an annual evaluative report to governors which is of a high standard. The librarian assists with the Year 7 library skills lesson, the Year 8 personal, social and health education programme when required and organises book week and the world book day, other monthly themed events and competitions. She contributes to pupils' literacy development through improving their library-based research and retrieval skills. The big drawback is that the library is far

too small for a school of this size and has too few computers. It can just about accommodate one class.

63. Staffing is adequate to deliver the current curriculum and good in some areas: mathematics and modern languages, for example, are fully staffed with well-qualified and committed teachers. This has a very positive impact on pupils' achievements.

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

64. The school should:

Raise pupils' achievements further so that standards are high in all subjects (paragraphs 2, 4 – 7, 55, 88 – 100, 108 – 115, 128 - 136) by:

- improving the way teaching and learning are monitored and evaluated so that the rigour and challenge of the best lessons becomes common practice in all subjects (paragraphs 59,73, 98, 184,194);
- using assessment more consistently to set pupils targets for improving their learning and to identify how well different groups of pupils achieve (paragraphs 48, 58, 84, 95, 98, 114, 125, 133,143, 152, 194);
- including information and communication technology in subjects so the pupils get greater access to computers and so that statutory requirements are met in full (paragraphs 29, 60, 84, 99, 105, 109, 144, 154, 176, 194, 111, 115, 127, 134, ).

The issues highlighted here are areas that the school has already identified as needing improvement.

### **Other issues which should be considered by the school**

- Ensuring that the statutory requirements for teaching design and technology are met in full (paragraphs 27, 29,110).
- Meeting in full the statutory requirement to hold a daily act of collective worship (paragraph 34).



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	182
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	29

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	6	30	94	44	7	0	0
Percentage	3	17	52	24	4	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y7 – Y11
Number of pupils on the school's roll	968
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	41

Special educational needs	Y7 – Y11
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	12
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	80

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	8.2
National comparative data	8.1

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 (Year 9)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	2001	108	90	198

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	81	87	86
	Girls	80	73	69
	Total	161	160	155
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	81 (84)	81 (82)	78 (71)
	National	64 (63)	66 (65)	66 (59)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	49 (39)	67 (57)	37 (30)
	National	31 (28)	43 (42)	34 (30)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	72	89	83
	Girls	83	75	73
	Total	155	164	156
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	78 (n/a)	83 (n/a)	79 (n/a)
	National	65 (64)	68 (66)	64 (62)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	26 (n/a)	57 (n/a)	46 (n/a)
	National	31 (31)	42 (39)	33 (29)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 (Year 11)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 4 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	96	78	174

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	52	88	90
	Girls	53	76	76
	Total	105	164	166
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	60 (53)	94 (92)	95 (99)
	National	48 (47)	91 (91)	96 (96)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	43.0
	National	39.0

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	n/a

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	4
Black – other	1
Indian	4
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	2
White	947
Any other minority ethnic group	6

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	30	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

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

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y11**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	52.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.3

#### **Education support staff: Y7 – Y11**

Total number of education support staff	22
Total aggregate hours worked per week	412

#### **Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y11**

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	73.2
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#### **Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y11**

Key Stage 3	23.1
Key Stage 4	21.2

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	2,722,512
Total expenditure	2,697,077
Expenditure per pupil	2,873
Balance brought forward from previous year	40,874
Balance carried forward to next year	66,309

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	33.4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	35.0

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*



**Results of the survey of parents and carers**

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	968
Number of questionnaires returned	175

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	33	53	9	4	2
My child is making good progress in school.	39	51	7	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	19	61	13	1	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	19	52	22	6	1
The teaching is good.	20	67	8	2	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	25	51	18	6	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	48	43	7	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	43	4	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	18	59	17	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	38	51	5	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	41	48	7	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	43	14	7	17

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

**ENGLISH**

65. Overall, the quality of provision in English is **very good**.

**Strengths**

- Pupils attain well above average standards in national tests and examinations because of the very good progress they make in the subject throughout their time in the school.
- The predominantly good and very good teaching results in pupils achieving well in relation to their levels of attainment on entry to the school.
- The very good leadership and management of the subject and the significant improvements made since the time of the last inspection contribute to the quality of pupils' learning.

**Areas for improvement**

- The standards attained by the boys in national tests and examinations are lower than those of the girls by a greater margin than expected.
- Pupils do not have access to computers to enable them to improve and then present their writing in varied ways.

66. At the end of Year 9 pupils' attainment in the 2001 national tests was well above average, as has been the case in all but one of recent years. The results were also well above average when compared to those of similar schools. When judged against the standards attained at the time of the last inspection, the results represent a significant improvement. The results of boys and girls were higher than those of their counterparts nationally but the girls' results were better than those of the boys by a greater margin than the national difference. Because pupils came to the school with average levels of attainment the results represent very good achievement for all groups, including those with special educational needs and those few pupils with an ethnic minority background.

67. The proportion of pupils obtaining a grade in the A\*-C range in the 2001 GCSE English Language and English Literature examinations was well above average and was further evidence of the improving trend of recent years. The girls performed better than the boys at this higher level by a margin greater than that of their national counterparts. The proportion of girls in both subjects attaining at the highest A\* grade was three times that of girls nationally. In both subjects very nearly all pupils who were entered for the examinations gained a grade, testimony to the progress made by all groups. Overall, the results were much better than the average standards attained at the time of the last inspection. Standards in both subjects were better than those in other subjects apart from mathematics and sports studies. When compared to the attainment of the Year in the 1999 national tests, the standards obtained at GCSE in 2001 represent very good achievement.

68. The standards of work seen in the current Year 11 are above average but not as high as the standards attained in the 2001 GCSE examinations. This is because of the different ability profile of the year. Pupils are able to write in a range of styles which take account of the readership and generally they use correct spellings and appropriate punctuation. A small number of pupils in all years, however, do have difficulty with written accuracy, particularly the use of capital letters and the apostrophe. There is very good analytical writing on the set texts and good creative writing. Many pupils use vivid vocabulary in their writing. One Year 11 girl, for example, starts her imaginative writing on the subject of 'December' with, "Christmas is looming once again." The unusual choice of 'looming' grabs the reader's attention and he wants to know more. Standards of writing in the current Year 9 are well above average and reflect the standards attained in the 2001 national tests. These pupils also write in a range of styles and most do so fluently and accurately. Good work was seen on the use of complex sentences. There remain two significant areas for improvement in all Years. Pupils undertake a lot of extended writing but at times it is not well



structured and some pupils fail to use paragraphs. Secondly, pupils are not using computer technology in school as a tool to improve the standard and presentation of their writing. The department is developing strategies to address these two issues.

69. Standards of reading are high. Those pupils with a low reading age on entry to the school make very good progress because of the excellent provision of the reading recovery scheme. Such pupils become reasonably fluent readers, as was seen in a Year 8 lesson where pupils combined simple words into compound words and then pronounced them correctly. The pleasure they took in succeeding in this gave them the confidence to attempt more demanding reading. Pupils of high attainment are stretched intellectually by reading a range of increasingly demanding texts and by Year 11 can, for example, understand the portrayal of truth and falsehood in Arthur Miller's, 'The Crucible'.

70. Nearly all pupils listen carefully and show respect for each other and the teacher. They learn well in lessons because most display positive attitudes to their work and behave. The result is that standards of listening improve as pupils mature. There were only two occasions in lessons when a small number of boys tried to be troublesome but they were well managed and failed to disrupt the learning of others. Standards of speaking are very good and pupils use Standard English correctly. They are confident and fluent and use vocabulary appropriate to the context in which they are speaking. Class discussions are animated and lively. Pupils answer questions readily and are able to expand on an answer and give detail in their talk to illustrate the points they are making. When spoken to on a personal level they are polite and responsive and eager to talk about their experiences and learn about those of others. Standards of speaking have improved significantly since the time of the last inspection when many pupils needed help with expression and pronunciation.

71. Pupils achieve well because of the quality of the teaching which is consistently good and often very good. Through their planning and teaching strategies staff ensure that all groups learn and progress. Pupils with special educational needs learn well because the provision made by the department is very good. This should now be taken forward by securing the support of the special needs co-ordinator in developing and implementing the department's special needs policy. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds and those with physical disabilities also progress well because of the inclusive approach of the teaching staff to their work and the welcoming nature of the pupils.

72. Teachers know their subject well and plan their lessons with care, ensuring that support material is available for weaker pupils and extension activities for the more able. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant but the one thing that is not provided is the opportunity for pupils to use computers as a learning aid. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils which, together with their high expectations of them, results in good learning gains in lessons. This was seen in a Year 9 lesson where pupils of low prior attainment were editing the text of Shakespeare's play, 'Macbeth'. They had to shorten and simplify the text in preparation for their acting of certain scenes and they had to do so without losing the tension and drama of the script. They worked successfully and well together at this challenging task because the teacher had built a very positive climate for learning in her classroom. Good use is made of varied and effective teaching strategies and questioning is used extensively and well to develop pupils' understanding. There are regular assessments of pupils' work and the use of performance information to monitor pupils' progress over time is being developed. Teachers' marking is detailed and supportive and care is taken to explain how work can be improved. The quality of this feedback is a strength of the teaching. Progress has been made in the use of starter activities in lessons but the practice is not uniform and the department needs to adopt a consistent approach in deploying this useful technique. When used well it engages pupils' attention and provides a prompt and rigorous start to the learning process.

73. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The head of department provides strong leadership for the subject and gives clear educational direction to the work of her colleagues. She is well supported by a united and able team which is committed to improving the

quality of teaching and pupils' learning. There has been very good progress since the last inspection. Mention has already been made of the significant improvements in standards and pupils' speaking skills. In 1996 the progress of some pupils was unsatisfactory and pupils of average ability were not being challenged and stretched in their work. Both these issues have been addressed and the progress of all pupils, including those of average attainment, is now very good. The one area for improvement is the monitoring and evaluation of teaching. Time needs to be found to enable all teachers to observe and share in the very good practice which is characteristic of the best lessons. These have a rigour which stimulates pupils' thinking and develops their independence by making them use their own initiative when learning. Such a challenging approach needs to become part of all teaching.

74. The department has the capacity to improve on what is already very good provision because teachers are self-critical and seek ways to raise standards further.

## Literacy

75. Standards of literacy throughout the school are generally above average. Pupils are confident and fluent when speaking and have the reading ability to understand the range of texts they meet in all subject areas. In information and communication technology, for example, Year 11 pupils gave group presentations to the whole class and spoke clearly and at length about their chosen topic. They also understood a range of texts displayed on screen and could use technical words accurately to explain what they had read. Pupils listen well and can concentrate for extended periods of time. This was seen in a Year 11 French lesson preparing for the oral examinations. Pupils listened to themselves speaking the language on tape and then evaluated their performance. Very good listening skills were evident throughout the lesson.

76. Most pupils are able to adapt their writing to the varied demands of the curriculum. In design technology the standard of writing for design notes, specifications and evaluations is good. Accurate and coherent writing to a set pattern was seen in business studies coursework. A wide range of writing was undertaken in drama covering poetry, diaries and written analyses and evaluations. There are, however, some pupils who struggle with technical accuracy in certain subjects. In geography, for example, there were mistakes in the spelling of key words.

## MATHEMATICS

77. Overall, the quality of provision in mathematics is **very good**.

### Strengths

- Pupils achieve well and reach high standards in mathematics.
- Teaching is good and teachers have high expectations.
- The curriculum is well planned and challenging.
- Pupils enjoy their lessons. They are keen to learn and want to do well. The standard of presentation of work is very good.
- The department has very good strategies for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress.
- The department works well as a team. It is very well led and managed effectively.

### Areas for improvement

- There is a need for more explicit and regular teaching of mental calculating strategies.
- Use a range of techniques that help pupils to explain methods and justify answers, deepen understanding and improve speaking and listening skills.
- Ensure that all pupils are given opportunities to develop their skills in using and applying mathematics.
- Incorporate the use of ICT into the mathematics curriculum.

78. In the GCSE examinations in 2001 over two thirds of pupils at the end of Year 11 gained grades A\* - C. This was well above the national average of just under half. The school enters almost all of its pupils for the GCSE examination and the proportion gaining a pass at GCSE (grades A\* - G) was close to 100 per cent compared with a national figure of 96.7 per cent. Pupils at Gaynes perform well in mathematics compared with their performance in other subjects, against a national trend that shows pupils generally doing less well in mathematics than they do in other subjects. Standards achieved by boys were above those achieved by girls in 2001.

79. At the end of Year 9 standards achieved by pupils in national tests are very good compared with all schools and good compared with similar schools. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels is also well above the national average. Girls and boys do equally well. Teacher assessments are broadly in line with test results. Standards have improved since the last inspection, and the rate of improvement has been better than that seen nationally.

80. Evidence from the inspection supports the picture outlined above. Pupils in Year 9 successfully tackle some challenging work on simultaneous equations and apply proportional reasoning to work on similar shapes. Lower attaining pupils use data they have collected from practical work on distance, time and speed to plot and interpret line graphs accurately. Younger pupils understand the concept of scale factor and can enlarge and reduce shapes, calculating and measuring the required lengths accurately. Written calculating skills are often good and pupils use calculators appropriately. They would benefit from more opportunities to discuss and develop strategies for calculating mentally. Across all years understanding of algebra and skills in manipulation are well developed and pupils have a good understanding of number patterns and relationships. In the context of GCSE coursework most pupils use and apply the skills they have learnt well. They explain the steps they have taken to solve a problem and present their findings clearly using tables and graphs. However, on the whole pupils' reasoning and communication skills and their ability to apply their mathematical knowledge are less consistently well developed than other aspects of the subject.

81. Overall the quality of teaching in all year groups is good, with very little unsatisfactory teaching and some which is very good. In the great majority of lessons teachers have high expectations of their pupils in terms of the standards they should reach, their levels of engagement with learning and their behaviour. Pupils respond positively to these expectations and achieve well. Lessons are planned well. Teachers are able to explain and present ideas clearly, often using a step-by-step approach underpinned by understanding. Practice work is well matched to the knowledge, skills and understanding being taught, and textbooks are used appropriately as a resource. Teachers know what questions to ask to uncover and clarify misconceptions and challenge pupils and make them think. Some teachers require pupils not just to know but to be able to explain their reasoning, thus building confidence and developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. This is supported by the focus on mathematical vocabulary in the department and is a practice that should be developed with all classes. During lessons teachers assess pupils' levels of understanding well and take this into account when planning the next steps. Time is well used and homework is used very effectively to support and take forward work done in class.

82. Where teaching is less effective planning is in terms of topics and activities, and there is not enough focus in lessons on the mathematics pupils should be learning. Teachers' explanations are not sufficiently clear and there are too few opportunities for pupils to ask questions or explain their thinking. This leads to slower progress in pupils' learning. There is scope in all lessons to develop methods for teaching strategies for mental calculation and using a wider range of resources and visual aids to support this.

83. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They value the good opinion of their teachers and are motivated to learn through high expectations and good teaching. Behaviour is good and teachers manage their classes well.

84. ICT is not currently used in teaching mathematics and this is addressed in the development plan for the coming year. Otherwise, the curriculum is well planned. There is a strong emphasis on algebra and a good level of challenge for all pupils. The system the department uses for monitoring and tracking pupils' progress from the start of their time in school is very effective and helps to keep both teachers and pupils informed of the standards they are reaching and what they need to do to improve. Both of these contribute to the high standards of pupil attainment. The department is very well led and effectively managed. There is a culture of high expectations and teachers work together as a team and with their pupils within a collaborative and supportive ethos. Staff organise a number of extra-curricular activities which are well supported by pupils. These help to stimulate and sustain interest in mathematics, and contribute to the progress made by those pupils involved.

85. Significant improvements have been made in the provision for mathematics since the last inspection:

- The leadership and management of the department is now a strength and the department works effectively as a team.
- Long-term and medium-term planning is good. There is some scope for improvement in planning on a short-term basis.
- Pupils make good progress in both key stages and at all levels of attainment.
- Teaching is mostly good or better, and more consistent in quality.
- There is greater variety in teaching styles and some very good practice.

86. Display is good. It celebrates pupil achievement and supports learning. It helps to create a pleasant environment with a clear mathematical focus.

## Numeracy

87. Number skills are being used well to support learning at GCSE: the work is mainly data collection and analysis, and using graphs to present data. Business studies also use these skills appropriately to help with areas such as cash-flow. In music, art and drama elements of work on number patterns, and shape and spatial awareness contribute to pupils' learning. Most pupils are able to apply what they have learned in mathematics to good effect although sometimes they find it difficult to transfer skills to another subject. In a business studies lesson, for example, Year 11 pupils found simple adding difficult. There is little evidence of numerical skills being used to support learning in other subjects or of work in other subjects contributing to knowledge and understanding of aspects of mathematics. The school will have whole school training on developing numeracy across the curriculum later this term, and there are currently informal links with the science department relating to common areas of the curriculum in each subject.

## SCIENCE

88. Overall, the quality of provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### Strengths

- The monitoring of subject performance is very good.
- Teachers display good knowledge and understanding of their subjects.
- The management team provides good leadership and management.
- There is good support for the development of aspects of numeracy.

#### Areas for improvement

- The quality of teaching, particularly the pace of learning and for some teachers their classroom management skills.
- The unsatisfactory attitudes and behaviour of pupils in some lessons, which has an adverse effect on learning.
- Ensuring pupils are clear about the learning goals in lessons and that ongoing assessment is used more consistently to inform planning.
- The greater use of information and communication technology to support teaching and learning.

89. When pupils enter the school in Year 7, their attainment is broadly in line with the national average. They make satisfactory progress during their time in the school and attainment in the GCSE examinations at the end of Year 11 is also broadly in line with the national average.

90. The National Curriculum test results in 2001 at the end of Year 9 were significantly above the national average. The results have improved in both of the last two years. They are not as good as those in English and mathematics, which are identified as major strengths of the school. Inspection evidence indicates that current performance towards the end of Year 9 is not as high as last year but above the national average. Pupils make good progress in Years 7-9 and achievement is good. There was a good emphasis on thinking skills in Year 9 lessons that helped pupils to manage information and develop their ideas. Pupils showed above average levels of attainment in their presentation, consideration and evaluation of information through the use of graphs. A number of higher-attaining pupils were, however, not able to sketch the change in temperature when frozen peas are added to boiling water.

91. The overall proportion of Year 11 students gaining the higher (A\* - C) grades in the GCSE Double Award examination in 2001 was above the national average but it was below for those taking the Single Award examination. Bearing in mind their National Curriculum test results two years earlier, progress was barely satisfactory. The results were lower than in English and mathematics, which were significantly above the national average. There has been little change in the results in recent years. The modular test results for the present Year 10, however, indicate a marked improvement in performance. Performance of the present Year 11 is broadly consistent with the recent examination results. Higher-attaining pupils were secure in undertaking calculations on energy and lower-attaining pupils were able to construct simple electrical circuits. Graphical work in the books was often poorly presented and this skill is not as effectively developed as among the Year 9 pupils. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Year 11.

92. Pupils in a Year 9 class showed good skills in obtaining, presenting and considering evidence in an experiment on friction. Pupils in a Year 8 group were less confident in applying their investigative skills in an experiment on the physiological effects of caffeine, whilst some showed good achievement others had difficulty with the task. The department has successfully focused on improving investigative skills in Years 10 and 11 and this focus could usefully be provided at an earlier stage.

93. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls or among different groups of pupils, such as those with special educational needs. However, pupils achieve less of the highest levels and grades than could be expected. Work seen indicates a good facility with number but pupils in a Year 8 lesson experienced difficulty in calculating the average of ten decimal fractions. Communication skills are good but there was limited evidence of extended writing.

94. The quality of teaching seen ranged from very good to unsatisfactory and this is reflected in the quality of the learning. Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory. They are good in Years 7-9 and satisfactory in Years 10 and 11.

95. Lessons are usually well prepared and the tasks and activities are made clear to the pupils. There is, however, insufficient emphasis on the learning goals when the work is introduced in lessons. This limits many pupils' understanding as to why they are undertaking the tasks and their ability to improve. In many lessons teachers began by briefly reviewing previous work, to assist pupils to recall and build on their learning and in the better lessons seen this effectively supported the good development of knowledge and understanding. Teachers have a very good command of their subject and this is usually used well to support pupils' learning. Question and answer sessions are normally used well both to check on pupils' knowledge and to further develop it, but only in the better lessons are they used to clarify and develop pupils' understanding. Work is normally marked regularly using the departmental scheme but there is insufficient constructive comment on how the work could be improved. The classroom management of pupils by a few staff is sometimes less than satisfactory and in these lessons unsatisfactory pupil behaviour disrupts the learning. The pace of work and the expectation of pupils are too low in a number of lessons particularly for the more able pupils. This was seen clearly where there was insufficient distinction between the top groups in Year 9 and a bottom group in a lesson on graphical work. Homework is set regularly and normally usefully builds on and extends work undertaken in the lessons.

96. Pupils' attitudes to learning are normally good. They normally behave well and in a number of lessons showed good levels of motivation and applied themselves to the tasks. Attitudes and behaviour are better in Years 7-9 than in Years 10 and 11, where occasionally they are unsatisfactory, to the detriment of the learning. Good relationships exist between teachers and pupils that effectively support learning but this is not universal.

97. The department has recently updated its Years 7-9 syllabus and adopted the Modular Science syllabuses in Year 10. The improvement in performance seen in the end of module test results is partly attributed to the change of syllabus with its shorter-term goals.

98. The head of department and the teacher with management responsibilities in the department work very well together and provide good leadership for the department, which is well focused on improving pupil attainment. They have the confidence of other teachers who are also committed to improving the provision for pupils. Test and examination results are used very well to monitor performance, to diagnose strengths and identify areas for development. The department also monitors the quality of teaching through classroom observation. Whilst the way this is undertaken needs to be developed further, inspection evidence confirmed a number of their findings. Based on their findings the department takes action to bring about improvement but this needs to be given higher priority and be more effectively supported at whole-school level. The newly appointed senior manager responsible for the department is well aware of the issues and plans are being developed to bring about improvement in the areas identified.

99. Some of the laboratories are unsuitable for the full range of practical work. For example the poor state of the blinds in all laboratories would diminish the effectiveness of investigations on the behaviour of light and the limited access to water in some laboratories restricts investigations on materials and their properties. During the inspection teachers and pupils largely overcame the deficiencies but at this point in the schemes of work practical work was limited. The access to and availability of information and communication technology (ICT) is unsatisfactory. A good lesson was observed where Year 7 pupils were seeking information on the solar system from the Internet. They worked at a good pace and showed good motivation. However, the use of ICT is limited and the department is not meeting statutory requirements in this respect.

100. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Attainment in GCSE has improved but not sufficiently. There have been other improvements such as in the monitoring of performance, particularly the monitoring and use of pupil performance information. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 now have textbooks. However, pupils' behaviour is not consistently good as reported in the last inspection.

## ART AND DESIGN

101. Overall, the quality of provision in art and design is **satisfactory**.

### Strengths

- Pupils develop very good technical skills in drawing and painting. Their use of paint and colour is outstanding.
- Their work shows sensitive use of tone, shade, pattern and texture.
- Pupils take enormous care over their work and finish it to a high standard.
- They begin to learn about the work of other artists from their first days in Year 7.

### Areas for improvement

- The experiences pupils have in art differ too much from teacher to teacher.
- Some art projects do not give pupils sufficient opportunities to use their individual creativity.
- Pupils need more opportunities to be intellectually challenged by, for example, drawing from observation and communicating their own ideas by their work.

102. Results at GCSE are good. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher grades is better than average: girls do rather better than boys partly because more take art in Years 10 and 11. The results include the relatively small number of pupils taking art textiles as well as art and design GCSE. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory; the curriculum now includes the study of female artists and artists from different cultures.

103. Standards for all pupils are high in drawing and painting. Pupils quickly learn to use colour vibrantly and effectively. For example, in Year 7 pupils complete a project designing a playing card using bold and vivid colours. They develop a good understanding of colour mixing through theory and practice when, rather than paint a colour wheel, pupils in Year 8 work on a study in brown linked to Van Gogh's early brown paintings. Pupils in Year 9 paint a city nightscape directly onto black paper and use paint skilfully to represent lights and neon signs, obtaining a vivid luminosity. Work produced by Year 9 pupils exploring cubism in drawings and collage of vegetables is excellent. Standards in Year 11 and Year 10 are high; they are particularly in Year 10 with a good number of pupils likely to achieve the highest grades at GCSE. In both Years 10 and 11 pupils confidently produce their own work using the skills they have learnt in previous years using references from the work of the range of artists they have been introduced to. These pupils produce comparatively large and very detailed drawings and paintings. Year 11 pupils have produced perceptive and sensitive paintings and drawings of flowers and parts of flowers.

104. Pupils taking the art textile GCSE achieve average standards, producing attractive and effective products which reflect thoughtful design and execution. This examination will not be studied after this year.

105. In Year 7 pupils using their own first hand drawings of the landscape around school begin to learn about abstraction and about conveying mood in their work. In Year 8 they learn to use symbolism and colour to portray aspects of their personality. However, overall, pupils have insufficient opportunities to use their individual creativity or to communicate their own ideas in their work. They do not do enough drawing and painting from first hand sources and have too little intellectual challenge in their work especially in Years 10 and 11. Whilst achievement in drawing and painting skills is high, achievement is less in other art techniques including three-dimensional work. This explains why pupils achieve well in GCSE but less well in lessons. Pupils have some opportunity to study art over many centuries and of other cultures, including aboriginal and Japanese, but there is room in the curriculum to learn about the art of more cultures. Numeracy plays a part in art, for example, pupils are introduced to the golden ratio and literacy is given attention through the use of key words and a project in calligraphy. Pupils have limited access to computers in the art rooms and rarely use computers as a tool for producing art except occasionally for homework.

106. Teaching is satisfactory overall with some important strengths. All lessons are well planned and organised. Every lesson has a clear purpose and builds skills up developmentally. Teachers work diligently to organise tasks so that all pupils experience success. If pupils experience difficulty in art teachers give useful added support and guidance, thus pupils with special needs are supported. Pupils learn to take great pride in their work and almost all work is finished with considerable care. Homework is completed in sketchbooks and is used as the basis of pieces completed in class. Information and communication technology is used for homework and adds a great deal to research knowledge and occasionally to art pieces as, for example when a boy recreated with clip art Arcimboldo's famous painting of a head made from vegetables. Some excellent sketchbooks include experiments in colour and texture, notes about techniques and other information built up over time, to become useful reference material for the pupil. Girls generally do better than boys with more girls taking the subject at GCSE and this fact has yet to be addressed by the department.

107. The art curriculum is currently too diverse; pupils get too different an experience from teacher to teacher. The department has yet to devise a curriculum that gives every pupil the same entitlement to art by,

- building on the strengths of each teacher
- giving each pupil the opportunity to build up high quality technical skills letting each express themselves individually through their art.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

108. Overall, the quality of provision in design and technology is **satisfactory**.

### Strengths

- Pupils achieve well and make good progress, including those with special education needs because the skills taught lead to more demanding tasks.
- Teaching is consistently good; lessons are planned well and proceed at a good pace.
- Leadership and management of the department are good.

### Areas for improvement

- The standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 11.
- The assessment data available to the department is not used sufficiently well to set targets and to improve standards in the department.
- Meet the statutory requirements for design and technology in Years 10 and 11 and for using ICT.

109. Attainment at the end of Year 9 is well below the national expectation. However, evidence from lessons and the review of pupils' work show that standards are rising and are now are broadly average. This is because of the improved teaching and the curriculum where a series of focused tasks and design assignments build up pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Work in folders is varied and includes opportunities for pupils to generate and develop their ideas in different product areas. The quality of graphics is satisfactory throughout the key stage although not all pupils have the skill and techniques to fully represent their ideas effectively. Pupils lack skills in the use of information and communication technology, they do not experience control technology and computer aided design. The lack of provision and access to computers limit the development of these skills. Pupils experience parallel programmes in Years 7, 8 and 9, in food, textiles, resistant materials and graphics. They develop key planning skills and techniques alongside a range of practical skills, which provide a basis for more open-ended work in the GCSE course. Standards are higher for practical work, particularly in textiles where in Year 7 pupils make a cushion cover incorporating individual designs. Pupils show interest in the design assignments and many are beginning to develop a personal style. They are confident in practical situations and they use tools and equipment sensibly and effectively. There is much good work and pupils obviously enjoy the



challenge. Pupils are aware of assessment criteria and what they need to do if they are to improve their work. Teachers review the progress of pupils regularly and details of National Curriculum levels attained, progress made and targets for improvement are communicated to parents. Pupils' achievements are good.

110. In 2001, the number of pupils gaining the higher grades in GCSE examinations (A\*- C) was below the national average. However, a significant number of pupils do not take a course in design technology in Years 10 and 11 and this makes the results even at this level. The school is planning to offer a design and technology subject for all pupils from September 2002.

111. The work seen during the inspection shows that attainment the end of Year 11 is in line with the national average. Pupils opt for a GCSE course from food technology, graphics and resistant materials. These programmes make different demands on pupils although they work to a common framework for the presentation of their work. Graphics is a skill which all pupils use effectively and there is evidence of an emphasis on the use of illustration skills in graphics and food technology. There is evidence of the use of ICT, particularly in the folder work in project coursework. The department has not developed the use of ICT further, particularly control systems and manufacture. Design folders are of a good standard and there is evidence of considerable depth of research and analysis as pupils plan their work. Presentation is good and there is much evidence of attractive and innovative design work. Practical work is done carefully and pupils use tools, equipment and machinery with confidence. In Year 10 they use their skills and knowledge to research and evaluate a range of commercially produced food products. The quality of design products overall is satisfactory and reflects a wide range of pupil styles and interests. Health and safety matters are given high profile and pupils use appropriate guards, eye protection and clothing.

112. Pupils' attitudes are generally positive and many demonstrate enthusiasm for, and enjoyment in, their studies. In Year 7 they learn about healthy eating and the importance of a balanced diet. In Year 8 they can use mechanisms to produce a mechanical toy. They are active and show interest in the challenges and assignments offered. Levels of skill improve through practice. Pupils respond positively to codes of conduct in specialist rooms and their behaviour is good. Relationships between pupils and with teachers are good; this ensures that pupils have the confidence to seek support and this helps their progress. Pupils maintain concentration throughout lessons and they are keen to succeed. Pupils with special educational needs pupils make progress and achievement is good because teachers and support staff ensure that pupils are secure with their knowledge and understanding before moving on to the next stage of learning. Higher and lower attaining pupils achieve well. Assessment profiles and periodic review provide all pupils and parents with important information about progress and attainment. They are prepared to use their own time to complete projects during lunchtimes and after school.

113. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers are enthusiastic and this creates a positive learning environment that many pupils find interesting and stimulating. Teachers are experienced and have good subject knowledge. They plan lessons well and use a wide range of resources. They plan opportunities in lessons to enable pupils to introduce their own ideas and influences. The recently introduced assessment system is beginning to provide information to pupils and teachers about progress and will help to raise standards. Teachers have high expectations, set purposeful tasks and keep work moving at a good pace that sustains pupils' enthusiasm and concentration. This is effective in maintaining good behaviour. Homework is closely linked to class work and diary/planners are used to communicate with parents. Teachers use display well and this contributes considerably to pupil interest and the development of ideas.

114. The leadership and management are good. The head of department has a clear view of how the subject should be developed and is fully aware of the need to provide more support for pupils in the form of monitoring and assessment of attainment and progress. There is a shared commitment to improvement and the capacity to succeed. The assessment data available to the department is not used sufficiently well to set targets and to improve standards achieved by pupils.

The workshop technician and the food technology assistant provide a good level of support and make an effective contribution to the smooth running of the department.

115. The level of resources and equipment available for practical work is satisfactory but the department does not have the necessary computer equipment for control systems and computer aided design.

### **Child Development (GCSE)**

116. Standards in child development are above the national average and this is reflected in the quality of the work seen during the inspection. Practical work, which includes research and observational studies, is good standard and pupils present their ideas carefully, taking pride in quality. Their attitude to learning is good: they clearly enjoy the subject, are interested, concentrate well throughout the lesson and work well by themselves. These attitudes explain why pupils learn well and achieve standards that are above average.

117. Overall teaching is good. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and this helps to ensure that work is suitably demanding. Well-organised activities and work that is linked clearly to the examination syllabus mean that there are suitably high expectations of pupils. Learning objectives are stated clearly and work provides well for pupils' different levels of prior attainment and interest: this is why pupils achieve well.

### **DRAMA**

118. Overall provision for drama is **good**.

#### **Strengths**

- Standards of attainment in examinations.
- Good scheme of work for drama which allows for progression and continuity in the subject.
- Good teaching and knowledge of the pupils.
- Access for pupils of all abilities.
- New accommodation with studio access.

#### **Areas for improvement**

- Extending ICT provision across the curriculum.
- Developing studio technology and support work as identified in the development plan.

119. Due to some temporary teaching of drama in the term prior to inspection, it has not been a settled year for many pupils from Year 7-11. The newly appointed head of department has only been in post for four weeks.

120. In the 2001 GCSE examination, 55 per cent gained grades A-C which is close to national expectations, whilst grades A-G exceed the national average. Results in drama over the past three years remain high. Trends show that the number of girls opting for the subject is higher than boys, but the attainment of both boys and girls is good in examinations. Overall, standards in examinations have been maintained since the previous inspection and results compare favourably with pupils' achievement in other subjects.

121. By the end of Year 9 most pupils attain average standards in drama whilst higher attaining pupils standards are above average. Pupils have a good understanding of drama skills which they can apply with confidence. They apply techniques such as 'freeze frame', with conviction. They can retain characterisation by using good facial expressions and mime. Through the exploration of themes, topics and texts, they develop confidence in both the depth and range of techniques in drama over the key stage. Pupils also develop more fluency and confidence in their speaking skills.

Listening skills are occasionally weaker, mainly at the beginning of the course, but they improve from Year 7 – 9. Overall, achievement is good for pupils of all abilities.

122. Standards of work seen in the current Year 11 classes are good and for higher attaining pupils very good: they confirm examination results. Pupils in their final lesson of the course showed a very good understanding and knowledge of drama technique. The quality of mime and gesture, improvisation, the use of space and the ability to sustain characterisation is very high. The performance of a scripted play 'Turning a Blind Eye' produced commendable co-operation and achievement from all groups. Pupils show initiative and take responsibility. They are imaginative and can explore character and performances and are prepared to 'take risks in their work. Pupil's responses and levels of concentration are excellent. In Year 10, of a small sample of lessons seen, pupils are attaining standards close to national expectation for this first year of the course. Pupils make good progress in exploring strategies such as 'marking the moment', through evaluative discussion, through careful questioning and through practical group tasks.

123. From Year 7 - 9 drama skills are built upon appropriately throughout the key stage. Boys and girls generally perform and work co-operatively together. Teachers use a range of drama techniques to promote confidence and flexibility in drama situations and pupils respond well to them. In Year 7, pupils working on a scene from the Titanic were able to demonstrate a good level of concentration and control in group work, producing a 'still image' of a frozen action. They answered questions well and showed enthusiasm in their work. The use of warm-up activities and careful use of time during lessons helps to promote a good level of pupil motivation and helps focus listening skills. Evaluation and reflections of their own work and that of others is noted in their diaries. By the end of Year 9, most students show good progress in their ability to work together constructively, they improvise with confidence, develop more confidence in speaking and their understanding of dramatic plot develops well. Pupils become familiar with key words in drama and understand and can explain their use.

124. Although some lessons are taught by non-specialists, teaching is at least satisfactory with good and very good lessons observed right across the school. All teaching is well planned and sequenced and this promotes confidence in pupils' work. Teaching motivates pupils well and lays down clear routines and procedures for learning to take place. For example, teachers often lead a brain storming session to investigate aspects of a theme or topic, which produces a range of ideas for pupils to take away to work on in group tasks. Drama techniques are used effectively to assist pupils' concentration: for example 'freeze' or the use of a gesture or signal when pupils become over-excited and do not listen well. Teachers positively encourage pupils of all abilities to take part in lessons and are able to extend the more able, whilst supporting those who need more assistance. They are also sensitive to other issues such as gender stereotyping. For example, in a Year 9 class working on an advertisement theme, the teacher guided the group away from a theme that would result in the over-dominance of the boys in the group and carefully suggested other ways of developing their plot. It was a strategy which worked well.

125. The broad and balanced curriculum provides for the systematic development of drama skills and conventions through the use of poetry, and exploring texts from various times and cultures. Themes and issues such as 'bullying' and 'isolation' are also dealt with sensitively and such issues make a good contribution to pupils' understanding of moral values and beliefs. Assessment procedures are clear and allow for assessment at the end of units and also for pupils' self-evaluations. Some use is made of video to encourage evaluation, to 'freeze' a particular frame, for example, or to look at the use of space and levels in performance. There is potential to develop aspects of this work further as a record of pupil achievement. Drama vocabulary is used extensively in lessons and key words are displayed. There are clear links with English and literacy. In view of changes in the GCSE syllabus, schemes of work have been revised to take account of the need for written course assignments. This will also have some impact on the Year 7-9 scheme. The use of drama diaries is appropriate in assisting pupils to evaluate and articulate their thoughts and feelings.

126. Drama plays, clubs, various performances, visits to the theatre and performances invited into the school, ensure that drama makes a valuable contribution to pupils' social and personal development. It is a subject, which also clearly supports the social and cultural potential of pupils in the school. Standards in Year 11 are such that a pupil was able to take over the directing of the school play 'Notre Dame' in the Autumn term. The level of maturity and responsibility required to accomplish this feat is indicative of the high standards pupils attain in their examination course.

127. Drama has maintained good standards since the last inspection. The newly appointed head of department has already reflected on future needs, which are identified in the department development plan. This includes extending provision for ICT which is limited at present. Planning is also underway to extend the support role of drama at GCSE by increasing the opportunities for pupils to make use of sound and lighting and in the new studio.

## GEOGRAPHY

128. Overall, the quality of provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

### Strengths

- Good subject knowledge of teachers.
- Good relationships between staff and pupils.
- The recent introduction of field study.

### Areas for improvement

- Develop a wider variety of teaching approaches the support the range of ability in classes.
- Make more use of ICT and the library to support pupils' learning of geography.
- Extend the use of national curriculum and GCSE guidance to assess pupils' work, and to help pupils understand how well they are doing.

129. The 2001 GCSE results were average. Teacher assessment of pupils in Year 9 in 2001 indicated they were working just above national expectations. Evidence shows that these grades are slightly inflated partly because the department has had staffing difficulties and this adversely affected standards in Years 9 and 11. However, teachers are now working hard to hold and improve standards. In both GCSE and Year 9 results, girls performed significantly better than boys.

130. Standards of work of current pupils in Year 9 are in line with national expectations. Given their starting points on entry to the school, this represents good progress. Many pupils reach expected levels for their age group. For example, in their work on climate and environment, higher attaining pupils made perceptive observations of photographs and climate graphs from three different environments. They went on to suggest relationships between the environment and climate, using the three different locations as evidence. However, the written work of lower attaining pupils showed weaker knowledge and understanding than their oral responses.

131. Pupils in Year 11 taking GCSE are currently working around national expectations, making good progress in the light of their prior attainment. In one lesson seen, the higher attaining pupils were successful because their observations of the unintended consequences of actions taken to control the Mississippi River demonstrated good understanding of the physical challenge. Their higher attainment came from building into their accounts the technical characteristics of rivers and their human management, drawing well on previous learning. The lower attaining pupils in this group had still acquired a sound knowledge of the challenge of the Mississippi, and brought some of their prior knowledge about rivers and their management into their responses.

132. Teaching is good. In lessons observed during the inspection, teaching ranged from satisfactory to good, and occasionally very good. Teaching was good in a Year 8 class, for example, when the teacher's experience in her subject resulted in her providing suitable materials

for all pupils to work with and remain on task throughout the lesson. All the pupils achieved some valid observations and interpretation of the data, including climate graphs, and showed understanding of the variations in climate to be found in Europe. Not all pupils were as successful in their written accounts. However, the teacher's careful preparation of key words to aid those of lower attainment ensured that all pupils in this class made progress. Pupils made most progress when the teaching was planned and focused on clear objectives shared with the pupils. This was seen in a Year 7 class studying river basins. The various activities were briskly conducted, challenging, and carefully sequenced. A teacher assistant supported pupils with special educational needs in their written tasks, and as a result they successfully completed their work. However, pupils made slower progress where teaching was only satisfactory. For example, in a Year 7 lesson on river flooding, pupils made slower progress in their understanding of support networks and their roles. The tasks they were set took too long for them to complete in the time allotted. This meant that lower attaining pupils had difficulty completing the follow up written exercise. They would have benefited from some additional support with their writing, to enable them to demonstrate what had been learned.

133. In their marking of the pupils' work, teachers regularly used the school's common marking scheme. There were, however, some inconsistencies in practice, for example regarding literacy. While key words are on display in classrooms, sometimes in set exercises technical words were mis-spelled and uncorrected. Comments to support pupils' work were rarely specific and related to the level descriptors used to judge their attainment and progress.

134. Pupils with special educational needs were seen overall to make progress in line with their peers. Progress was more secure when their needs had been recognised and planned for in advance. Gifted and talented pupils are identified in the department, although there are not planned activities to meet their needs beyond the work of the whole class. Some use of information and communication technology is made by individual pupils, for example, in their GCSE field study. The use of a digital camera, and graphical display of field results, made a significant contribution to the quality of research in some of the completed projects seen. However, in the main, teachers make little use of the opportunities afforded by information and communication technology to support their teaching of geography.

135. Since the last inspection the department has introduced fieldwork to include a major project on coastal erosion in Norfolk, and a Year 9 river study in Epping Forest. Pupils are introduced to the development of hypotheses emerging from academic study, and the testing of these through observation and data collection. The use of geographical enquiry in Years 7 and 8, for example drawing on the local area, is at present fairly limited which, in turn, limits pupils' opportunities for geographical enquiry a little. However, the planned curriculum offers opportunities to get weather data by pupils, and road and land use investigations.

136. The head of department provides good leadership. There is now a stable team which is well placed to build on the strengths that currently exist. Practical fieldwork has been introduced in Year 9, and for the GCSE examination and helpful support is provided for newly qualified teachers.

## HISTORY

137. Overall, the quality of provision in history is **good**.

### Strengths

- Teaching is good, sometimes very good.
- Achievement is particularly good in Years 7 to 9 from low base line of historical skills.
- Good pupil response overall.
- Department dedicated to further success.

### Areas for improvement

- Assessment requires sharper focussing on data analysis from which targets are produced.
- Monitoring of teaching and pupils' work, particularly in Years 7 to 9.
- Access to ICT.
- Time for development work in the subject.

138. At the end of Year 9 standards are in line with national figures. In work seen during the inspection, standards of pupils' attainment were in line with national expectations. A pleasing aspect of the inspection, however, is that in lessons seen, pupils sometimes attain above national norms. They handle facts well and they increase their short-term knowledge. For example, Year 9 pupils, in their study of the First World War, are able to contrast the battle of the Somme with that of Passchendaele, and they point out the differences which the use of tanks made to the outcome of the latter. However, the transfer of such short-term historical knowledge to meaningful notes which can be used in longer-term revision is not yet successful for a large proportion of pupils, nor have pupils sufficiently developed independent enquiry skills. These both prevent pupils maximising their potential achievement.

139. At the end of Year 11, standards are in line with the standards achieved in similar schools nationally. Results in the GCSE examinations, with the exception of a slight dip last year, have generally remained at the national average. Standards in work seen are in line with national expectations. In lessons, however, some pupils often attain above national expectations. Yet many pupils do not yet demonstrate either the oral or the written analytical ability which is important to acquire higher levels of marks at GCSE. Moreover, many pupils, whilst being skilful at linking several facts together to make a comprehensive and cohesive historical picture, can only effectively do so after several prompts by the teacher. For example, Year 11 pupils, in their revision studies of life in Nazi Germany could analyse and evaluate life for Jews in the Hitler period in general terms, but needed reminding of key historical dates, events and terminology such as "Krystallnacht" and the "Final Solution". They lack strategies for retention recall of facts and there is heavy reliability and dependence on staff support in class. The absence of these skills and support later leads to pupils' lack of confidence when dealing with the complexities of analysis and evaluation in tests and examinations. The department is aware of the work needed in these areas.

140. Pupils' progress in each year from Year 7 to Year 11 is satisfactory overall. This is especially pleasing in the first three years since many pupils enter the school with a low base-line of historical skills and knowledge, particularly the lack of skills concerning accessing and evaluating historical evidence. By the end of this stage of their learning, pupils have a good knowledge of the periods they are studying and they are effectively able to relate causation to effect. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 effectively build on the progress made in the first three years. Learning through empathy is a strength of the subject. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. This reflects the particularly good teaching which often has to compensate for the lack of appropriate in-class specialist support. However, the achievement of gifted and talented pupils is not yet maximised because of the lack of a more rigorously focused and targeted provision.

141. The response of pupils is good overall. With the exception of a small but significant group of pupils, often but not exclusively of low ability, who exhibit unsatisfactory attitudes towards both work and behaviour, pupils generally show application to their work. They respond diligently, settle to task and sustain concentration, although their oral contribution is often better than their written work. Pupils' positive behaviour and response, which is an important factor in their increased learning, is often a direct result of good teaching and good classroom management.

142. Teaching is good throughout Years 7 to 11. On some occasions it was very good. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject. Lessons are well planned and well prepared and lead to pupils' learning. Teachers are particularly adept at drawing out significant points from material which is both challenging and exciting. For example, in a Year 8 lesson concerning the execution of Charles 1, the teacher introduced a range of contemporary sources which were used well to foster empathy within the pupils to this very awesome event. Pupils' discussions about the role of the monarchy and the concept of the divine right of kings were at a high level. The quality of teaching led to good learning since pupils were stimulated by the challenge and applied their best intellectual and creative efforts to fulfil the tasks he set. The quality of teaching makes a significant impact on pupils' learning, attainment and progress.

143. The department is led effectively by the head of department, under whose leadership the department has produced informed and informative policies which are being implemented with success and which are beginning to impact effectively upon pupils' learning. She is particularly well supported by her colleagues in the department. There are some areas, however, where progress is underdeveloped. For example, the assessment policy for the department, though based on sound principles and achievable outcomes, requires better, sharper focusing on data analysis, from which attainment targets, predicated against national curriculum criteria, can be produced in order to make more effective and positive impact on the guidance of pupils' learning and attainment. National curriculum levels are posted on the walls of the history rooms but are not posted in all pupils' exercise books. There is insufficient moderation, particularly of work in the Years 7 to 9, and there is insufficient time dedicated to the continuing development of the subject.

144. The teaching rooms have displays of pupils' work which act as an incentive and which create an atmosphere conducive to learning. However, the rooms lack appropriate blackout materials which makes it difficult to use of a range of visual aids. There is insufficient use of computers to support learning and artefacts to stimulate learning and visits are currently restricted to the upper school. However, the Year 11 visits to the nuclear bunker at Kelvedon Hatch, for example, have a positive impact on learning and attainment.

145. Since the time of the previous report, there has been satisfactory improvement in several areas. Teaching is continually improving and GCSE performance is being raised. Some issues are underdeveloped. The department is aware of them and has a dedicated team with a clear vision of how to take the department even further forward.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

146. Overall, the quality of provision in information and communication technology is **good**

### **Strengths**

- GCSE examination results are high.
- Teaching is good: teachers have a good knowledge of ICT, especially the requirements of the GCSE course.
- Teachers' relationships with pupils are good.
- Pupils have good access to computers outside of school hours.

### **Areas for improvement**

- The use of ICT in other subjects.
- Ensuring that the assessment of ICT work in Years 7, 8 and 9 is accurate and thus helps to push standards higher.

147. The results of teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 have steadily improved over the last three years and are now in line with national expectations. Pupils' current work indicates that

standards are slightly below this but are continuing to get better. This is as a result of good planning, good teaching and increasing attention to assessment.

148. Pupils in Year 7 are competent users of the Internet making good use of the website Think.com to publish information, in a closed-area, and send emails to each other. Use of Logo by pupils is a frequent feature of work in ICT and Year 7 pupils calculate external angles in the process of creating polygons. In Year 8 pupils use desktop-publishing software to produce a newsletter front-page, with news on the defeat of the Spanish Armada. In the process they show a good sense of audience. Year 9 pupils demonstrate competence in a range of applications when completing a project on a circus. They use painting software to create circus-illustrations, a spreadsheet to model the finances and desktop publishing to produce posters and three-fold leaflets. Through homeworks there are good opportunities to consider the wider effects of ICT in society.

149. GCSE results have improved over the last two years and examination results for 16 year olds are now very good with 86 per cent of pupils achieving A\*-C. More than half of the age group are entered for this examination with more than 20 per cent obtaining A\* or A. There are no significant differences throughout the school in the performances of girls and boys. The practice of including special needs pupils in normal ICT lessons ensures that these pupils make good progress and at the same time, intervention by the extra person in the room has a positive effect on the achievements of other pupils.

150. Evidence from portfolios and observation of lessons shows that pupils in Years 10 and 11 achieve above average standards. Pupils in Year 10 work on a project on a golf club. This involves using a wide range of software and accessing information on golf clubs from the Internet. Presentation software is used to good effect by all year groups. In Year 11, it is used as a medium for revision purposes whereby pupils plan and present a topic that they have revised to the rest of the class. This provides an opportunity to combine skills in ICT with those of speaking and presenting to a critical audience.

151. Although all pupils have good access to a good programme for the development of ICT skills through lessons in this subject, there is too little opportunity to use computers in other subjects. Even the library is poorly resourced with regard to ICT and this too denies pupils satisfactory access to computers throughout the day. However, many pupils are encouraged by teachers to produce good work in subjects, such as history and geography, using their computers at home. The lack of access in school means that all pupils are unable to develop the use of ICT in other subjects and statutory requirements are not being met.

152. The teaching of ICT is good. It was mostly good or better in the lessons observed during the inspection. Teachers' management of pupils and expectations of their behaviour are good even though they sometimes have to work at this. Teachers demonstrate good technical knowledge that enables them to deliver good class presentations. Good levels of individual support are provided and this, together with the structured support, provides a good framework for pupil learning. It is particularly supportive of low attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. The technician makes an important contribution by both maintaining the computers in good order and by providing classroom support, particularly at the start of lessons with the younger pupils. Marking and other assessment procedures provide regular guidance that enables pupils to improve their work. However, teachers' assessments of work completed in Years 7, 8 and 9 are not always accurate and this means that they are not as useful as they might be in helping to push standards higher. The department is now giving more attention to this area in order to improve teaching and further raise standards. Homework is set at the start of lessons, it is relevant to class work which it supports and is a regular feature of ICT lessons.

153. Overall, learning in both key stages is good but is better for pupils in Years 10 and 11. This is because the course for the older pupils is better established and criteria for success are clearly defined by the examination boards. Pupils develop their computer skills, remember what they have previously been taught and learn to use their computer programmes with increasing independence.



They work at a good pace and show interest and good concentration. Overall, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Pupils respond positively to the structured approach being used and engage enthusiastically to the tasks set.

154. The department's improvements since the last inspection are satisfactory. Standards have risen and pupils of all abilities realise their potential in the taught ICT courses as they provide good coverage of the National Curriculum. However, the use of ICT in other subjects is still a weakness. Computer facilities have improved significantly and look to continue to improve, but lack of access to these facilities is still affecting the use of computers by other departments.

155. Management and leadership of the subject are good. The scheme of work is a working document that effectively sets out the teaching and subject requirements. This is enhanced by daily meetings of the department and shared lesson planning.

## MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

156. Overall, the quality of provision in modern languages is **very good**.

### Strengths

- The high quality of the teaching is reflected in the pupils' standard of achievement.
- All the teachers have excellent subject knowledge.
- The needs of higher achieving pupils' are well met.
- There are strong links with other educational establishments.
- There is good pupil liaison with French and German schools.
- Pupils' cultural awareness is well promoted through foreign visits and exchanges.
- Departmental planning is very good.

### Areas for improvement

- Continue to develop its use of computer technology to promote learning.
- Address the imbalance of boys' and girls' examination results.

157. By the end of Year 9, the attainment of the majority of pupils is above average. They achieve standards at or near national averages in French, which is the main language taught. Additionally, a significant number of pupils achieve standards above the national average for their age. The department has recently re-introduced German in Year 8 and Italian in Year 9 for higher achieving pupils. In both subjects, their level of attainment is at and above national expectations for their age.

158. The 2001 GCSE results in French at the end of Year 11 are above the national average, and show an improving trend over the past three years. For example, the percentage of A\* - C grade passes in 2001 is almost double that of the previous year. Girls do best and achieve significantly above the average for girls while boys achieve a little below the average for boys. In German GCSE results are lower than the national average and, again boys do not do as well as girls: here, however, both boys and girls performance is below the average. Italian results are also below average but the small number of pupils who took the examination means that it not possible to compare boys and girls.

159. The evidence of pupils' work in lessons shows that standards have improved well since last year because teaching is very good. The majority of pupils in Year 7 have no previous experience of modern languages. By the end of Year 9 they make very good progress. In French for example, lower achieving pupils use a good range of vocabulary and verbs to express their views on sports. They conjugate regular and irregular verbs accurately and use negative responses with confidence. In Italian, higher achieving Year 9 pupils respond well to everyday phrases, and describe their country of origin and their nationality, matching nouns, verbs and

adjectives correctly. In Year 8, pupils use story frames to construct German sentences in the present tense and change these to the past tense. In all languages they listen well, read aloud and try hard with their accents, reinforcing their learning with neat written exercises. They expect to learn and eagerly raise their hands in question and answer sessions.

160. Currently in Years 10 and 11 pupils study French only, and their work is dictated by examination requirements. By the end of Year 11 pupils speak and write with confidence on a range of topics from about themselves and their families to original reports on personal holidays and school visits to Northern France. A number of pupils also correspond with French pen pals. They show a keen interest in their learning and do not expect to speak English in the classroom. They are well motivated and want to succeed. Pupils of all ability levels make good and sometimes very good gains in their knowledge and understanding of European languages and culture.

161. Teaching is very good, which is reflected in the pupils' very good progress. In the 18 lessons seen, eight were very good or excellent. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. Teachers have an exceptionally wide range of linguistic ability and excellent subject knowledge. Well-planned lessons are balanced and structured to include elements of speaking, listening, reading and writing, which strongly promote improving literacy skills. Imaginative teaching, with a good balance of fun and appropriate humour, retains maximum pupil interest and encourages pupils to extend their linguistic skills. For example, the teachers' lively pace and excellent use of the subject language promotes enthusiastic and positive responses, and there is very little English spoken by anyone throughout these sessions. Pupils participate well in class games, such as when playing a whole-class dominoes game in Italian, or in German, by allocating a question to another pupil. The teachers' high expectations encourage the pupils by the consistent and constant use of the language being studied. Learning is further reinforced by the teachers' repetitions, body language and hand gestures. Good use of an overhead projector promotes the visual impact of the language, and there are frequent opportunities for the pupils to read aloud, which they do willingly, making every effort to read with expression and good accents.

162. Pupils are expected to speak at all times in the target language, and are prompted to do this by the phrase sheet of everyday questions which are attached to the fly leaf of their exercise books. There are good opportunities for role-play exercises, and there is evidence in the pupils' books of carefully prepared conversations, which they practise in the classroom. Relationships are very good and if poor behaviour occurs, staff use effective strategies to ensure minimal time is wasted and maximum learning takes place. Marking is consistent and organised, and the pupils translate the teachers' constructive comments against an 'aide-memoire' inside their books. Homework is regularly set as an extension of or preparation for class work.

163. Leadership of the department is excellent, as is the teamwork between staff. There is a united commitment and shared vision for the development of languages, which indicates a very good capacity to fulfil the school's aims. There are good procedures for monitoring the pupils' progress and matching this against National Curriculum levels of attainment. This information is used well to develop the curriculum and to inform the ability setting of each class. The use of computers to support learning is currently underdeveloped due to the lack of technology resources: however, there are recently approved plans for the installation of a video conferencing and computer suite in the languages department. The department has significantly improved since the previous inspection. The quality and standard of teaching have improved. Consequently, pupils' achievements and progress have also improved significantly.

164. Opportunities to promote spiritual, cultural, moral and social awareness are good. In addition to the occasional use of the Europa experience, a nearby facility which allows pupils to experience at first hand a range of aspects of European life and culture, the department also arranges visits to local French markets and has close connections with the local twinning association. Additionally there are working links with schools in Hesdin, France and Ludwigshaven, Germany, as well as occasional trips to towns such as Le Touquet and St Omer in the Pas de Calais region of France. The department is currently seeking to develop similar links with Italy.

There are also very good relationships with local primary schools, and one teacher gives French tuition to Year 6 pupils in two of these schools on a regular weekly basis, which has been well received by primary staff and pupils alike.

## MUSIC

165. Overall, the quality of provision in music is **good**.

### Strengths

- Good quality of teaching with well planned and sequenced lessons.
- Standards and progress improving from Years 7-9 through a scheme of work which builds progressively.
- Performance opportunities are increased through additional curricular activities.
- New music suite provides much improved facilities for music lessons.

### Areas for improvement

- ICT provision across both key stages.
- Further developing assessments to include national levels.
- Soundproofing practice rooms.

166. After a period of some temporary teaching, the appointment of a new head of department and the move to a new music suite is helping to raise the profile of the subject in the school.

167. In the GCSE examination for 2000 and 2001 the proportion of pupils gaining grades A-C was close to the national average, but the size of the cohort (11) were too small to make valid comparison with national data. However, pupils reach their predicted levels in the course and achievement is good.

168. In the small group of Year 11 pupils who have music in extra-curricular time, attainment meets the expected levels for the course. Most pupils benefit from instrumental lessons and have good and very good performance skills. Pupils talk with knowledge about their compositions. Work includes compositions for two flutes and piano, for violin and 'cello. Pupils write in a range of styles and have the confidence to experiment with their music. Compositions demonstrate a good understanding of composing technique, key signatures, structure and appropriate tempo markings. In Year 10, standards are slightly below expectations for this stage of the course. However, the foundations of the GCSE course are being taught systematically with the appropriate balance of performing, listening and composing activities, underpinned with grounding in theory. Pupils have the potential to achieve well over the coming year.

169. Currently, attainment by the end of Year 9 is below average for many pupils, apart from those who are learning instruments. This is due to insufficient breadth and range of practical work in previous years. However, from the work seen in lessons, it is clear that Year 9 has made satisfactory progress this year, despite starting from a low skill base. Rhythm, notation and musical terminology are being studied and applied to practical tasks. Lessons build on prior experience systematically.

170. Standards in Year 8 are close to average and classes make good progress in lessons. Pupils are beginning to use key words accurately and relate theory and notation to their practical work. For example, they improvise simple melodies with increasing confidence over a chord sequence and can keep in time. In one Year 8 class, pupils were able to sing a three-part song, maintaining separate parts with conviction. Boys and girls sing well together, with evident enjoyment in their achievement. Singing is tuneful and the quality of intonation is good. The success of the lesson is due to a well-chosen extract called 'Vocal Textures', which clearly motivated pupils. Standards at Year 7 are at the expected levels for most pupils and they are showing good achievement at this stage of the school year. In one Year 7 class pupils are quick to

learn the tune of 'Love Me Tender'. They respond well to questioning, showing a good understanding of a 'step' and 'leap' in the shape of a tune. Many correctly identify the structure of the tune and can understand the time signature and note values. Most pupils work out the melody on the keyboard.

171. Paired work often helps pupils to collaborate effectively, whilst the use of headphones helps pupils sustain concentration in lessons. In Year 7 and 8, standards in composing are presently less secure. However, with the curriculum planned to allow the development of the musical skills necessary for use in composition, pupils will have the tools to apply this knowledge more confidently in their composing tasks. There are no ICT opportunities in the music department for pupils to use as an aid for composition, which limits the potential to achieve high standards in this area of work.

172. The overall quality of teaching observed is good, and some very good teaching takes place at Key Stage 4. All lessons are well planned and well sequenced throughout both key stages. Activities of listening, musical literacy and performance are balanced, so that pupils can see and experience their inter-relatedness. Time is well used and the pace in most lessons is brisk. Relationships are supportive and the climate is right for learning to take place, consequently attitudes and behaviour in the subject are often good. Teacher expectations are high and the introduction of new work or skills is undertaken clearly and systematically which helps to promote a good rate of progress in lessons. For example, a Year 10 class used songs from various musicals to explore the use of sequence in various melodies. Pupils listened to extracts of song containing sequence, looked at and identified written examples and then learnt to play melodies which contained examples of sequence. This provides a rounded experience for them and progress was good for all pupils.

173. Of particular note is the way teaching takes account of varying levels of ability. For example, pupils learning instruments bring them to their weekly lesson. This extends their musical skills and also contributes significantly to class music-making. Pupils learning instruments are encouraged to work at a more challenging pace, the only constraint being in the use of practice rooms, as the sound carries into the main teaching room. Pupils requiring extra support are integrated well into lesson activities through the lesson structure, careful questioning and in the level of support they receive. The quality of in-class support was also most effective in helping one pupil to achieve in a Year 7 class.

174. Instrumental tuition is organised by the LEA Music Service and currently includes percussion, saxophone, flute, clarinet and guitar. Lessons are heavily subsidised by the school and this year 100 pupils benefit from this provision. In the sample of lessons seen, teaching is very positive and promotes a high level of motivation and good progress. The tutor checks pupils' understanding, often modelling extracts of the work for pupils and providing constructive advice on how to practise. The repertoire is varied which broadens and extends pupils' musicianship skills. Relationships are supportive and achievement is good.

175. The introduction of the reed choir, vocal group and percussion ensembles at lunchtimes over the year has proved popular and broadened the opportunities for pupils to participate in ensembles. Standards of performance are good. Links, such as those with musicians from Guildhall, provide the opportunities for pupils to engage in project work. The well-established school orchestra and concert band make a worthy contribution to school concerts and the borough festival performances. Music makes a valuable contribution to the social and cultural life of the school.

176. Improvement since the last inspection has been particularly significant this year. The head of department is providing new direction and strategies for music to develop and pupil attitudes towards the subject are positive. Accommodation is greatly improved. In order to further raise standards in music the provision of ICT as a tool for extending opportunities for composition is an increasing priority.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)

177. Overall, the quality of provision in physical education is **good**.

### Strengths

- Teaching is good: as a result learning is also good and pupils make clear progress.
- Attitudes to learning are positive and pupils enjoy meeting physical challenges. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good.
- The teaching of health related fitness is very good, informing pupils and helping them take responsibility for their fitness.
- The extra-curricular programme extends a wide range of opportunities to pupils and is well supported.
- The department is a well-organised, cohesive team with good leadership and a commitment to improvement.

### Areas for improvement

- Share good practice across girls' and boys' PE, with a view to more consistent standards.
- Continue to develop dance and introduce GCSE, as planned.
- Develop the use of ICT in PE.
- Improve the changing room environment and the hazardous surface of the tennis courts.

178. Standards in physical education are above average in Years 7, 8 and 9. By the end of Year 9, the attainment of boys is in line with expectations nationally, while that of girls is above expectations. This gap closes in Years 10 and 11, markedly so in GCSE physical education, where, in the most recent examination, the proportion of pupils gaining A\* - C grades was significantly above the national average at 81.1 per cent. This continues the trend of improvement since the first examination three years ago. A number of pupils gained a higher grade in PE than in other subjects they studied. In physical education in Years 10 and 11, pupils' attainment is in line with the national average, with both girls and boys achieving satisfactory standards.

179. Pupils achieve well as they move through the school and most make good progress. By the end of Year 9, pupils have developed a range of skills, which they perform with increasing confidence and accuracy. They apply these skills in different situations such as games or athletics events, often with good understanding of the rules and conventions of the activity. When they are given opportunities to do so, they are able to observe others' work, give and receive feedback, and use this information to improve their own performances. This is a strong feature of girls' PE lessons, where the expectation in this regard is high, and pupils are able to respond well. In health-related fitness, pupils gain a very good understanding of the principles of warming up and cooling down. They take responsibility for raising their own pulse rate, and many are able to lead their group in a series of mobility or stretching activities. They can explain how their body reacts to exercise and the benefits of regular exercise.

180. By the end of Year 11, pupils have increased and developed their knowledge and skills in the activities they take part in. They know rules and positions in games and show understanding of how to create or deny scoring opportunities. In a Year 11 rounders lesson, a team accurately identified their own strengths and weaknesses, planned a fielding strategy and carried it out to good effect. Their knowledge of athletics is sound, and many are able to take on coaching or officiating roles. Some pupils achieve higher standards, especially those who follow the GCSE course. GCSE pupils develop their expertise through study of theoretical aspects of the subject, applying their understanding to their performance, as in a Year 10 badminton lesson where pupils were able to analyse the strokes used and to identify how to gain a tactical advantage.

181. Pupils with special educational needs achieve consistently with their fellow pupils and are encouraged by their teachers to take part fully and try hard. Pupils who are wheelchair users take

an active role in lessons. They work alongside their peers and make a valuable contribution to lessons, achieving appropriate standards and making good progress.

182. The quality of teaching is good. All teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic specialists. Almost all the teaching observed was at least satisfactory, with the majority of lessons seen being judged to be good. Some very good and excellent teaching was seen. A real strength of the teaching is that written lesson objectives are shared with pupils together with key words. In the best lessons, these are referred back to as the lesson progresses and are used at the end to assess how much learning has taken place. As a result of the key words, many pupils in all years develop a vocabulary of technical language, which they use with increasing confidence. Pupils respond well to high expectations and rise to the challenge this presents to them, physical and intellectual, as in a Year 9 girls' athletics lesson, where pupils refined their observation to very specific criteria and were able to structure supportive feedback to help a partner improve performance of a shot put. In the majority of lessons, time is used well to achieve the planned outcomes. Almost all pupils have very positive attitudes to work and behave well. Relationships between pupils and their teachers are very positive; enjoyment of the subject is much in evidence. Most teachers manage the small amount of challenging behaviour in lessons well. Where unsatisfactory teaching was seen, expectations were too low and the pace of the lesson was too slow. As a result, behaviour deteriorated and insufficient learning took place.

183. The extra-curricular programme extends a wide range of opportunities to pupils and is well supported. A full programme of fixtures, together with open access training sessions, meets the needs of participants at all levels and is a strength of the department. Very talented pupils are helped to access clubs in the local area in their chosen sport, a number progress to become local, regional and even national representatives.

184. The department is well-organised with good leadership and a commitment to improvement. In many aspects of its work, effective communication leads to positive changes. The difference in standards of attainment between boys and girls, linked to teaching and learning, is one exception to this, and the department needs to find ways to share good practice, with a view to greater consistency.

185. Improvements to the changing room environment are much needed. Currently, teachers have to work very hard to ensure that this does not detract from pupils' attitudes to learning and consequently impact negatively on standards: they are successful in this. The surface of the tennis courts is hazardous and this space is only useable in limited circumstances.

186. Good progress has been made since the last inspection in teachers' planning and in meeting the requirements of the national curriculum, although the requirement to ICT in physical education is not being met. Better use of time in lessons and the inclusion of dance in the programme for girls have also brought about improvements. Due concern for health and safety was observed throughout the inspection: pupils are taught safe practice, and teachers adequately carry out risk assessments.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

187. Overall, the quality of provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### Strengths

- Increasing numbers for the full GCSE course indicate the growing popularity of the subject.
- Teaching is good.
- There is a clear vision for future of subject.

### Areas for improvement

- Schemes of work do not reflect syllabus effectively.
- Assessment is not yet firmly in place.
- Routine monitoring of teaching is not yet established. This was an issue in the previous report.

188. By the end of Year 9, pupils attain standards that are in line with national norms and a scrutiny of pupils' work indicates similar standards. There have been no teacher assessments in the subject for the last two years. In many classes observed during the inspection, pupils' attainment is often in line with national expectations and in line with the expectations of the local agreed syllabus. In these lessons, although pupils know some of the conceptual beliefs of all the religions they study, they do not always relate to them effectively in order to use them to attempt to provide answers to the fundamental questions of life. For example, Year 9 pupils can discuss, with sensitivity and poignancy, the possible meaning of a spiritual experience, but they do not always relate their projects sufficiently to themselves and balk at deeper personal involvement when describing their own special spiritual place. Pupils' overall attainment across time is affected by these lower levels of religious knowledge and skills.

189. By the end of Year 11, the standards attained by pupils are in line with national expectations. The numbers taking the full course, both in 2000 and 2001, are too small to make valid comparisons with national figures. However, results in 2001, in the GCSE short course, are in line with the national levels. A pleasing feature is that standards of pupils' work in several lessons seen during the inspection are rising in line with the standards achieved in similar schools nationally. Pupils know the central beliefs and practices of world religions, yet cannot always relate to them at an appropriate level. For example, Year 11 pupils, in their final revision lesson, are able to answer many questions appertaining to the facts of their course of study. However, most pupils are only happy to deal superficially with concepts such as "relative and absolute morality". This lack of confidence when dealing with the complexities of analysis and evaluation militates against pupils' increased success when confronting them in tests and examinations.

190. Pupils' achievement in each year from Year 7 to Year 11 is satisfactory. Pupils enter the school with a well below average baseline of religious skills and knowledge. Pupils who have strong analytical ability consolidate their prior learning with appreciation of concepts such as the application of prayer as an act of devotion. Pupils who are strong in learning facts consolidate their prior knowledge with additional information about artefacts used in religious ceremonies and customs. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve well at all stages between Years 7 and 11. However, gifted and able pupils are not always fully stretched.

191. The response of pupils is good. Throughout the school, there is a small but not insignificant minority of pupils, mostly of lower ability, whose behaviour is not conducive to good learning. However, the response of the vast majority of pupils is good. Pupils show application to their work. They settle to, and remain, on task, and they show pride in their work, although some pupils' presentation could be improved.

192. Pupils' personal development is good. It is enhanced by the study and discussion of a range of ideas about their own and other people's values and beliefs, and about concepts of right and wrong which they are asked to apply to a range of fundamental issues which confront them in

real life. These include such issues as the unequal distribution of wealth, abortion and genetic engineering, to which pupils demonstrate sensitivity and tolerance. For the first three years of school, religious education is planned effectively, promotes progression and follows the syllabus which has been agreed by all schools in the borough. This meets the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. There is also sufficient time in Years 10 and 11 to ensure full and effective coverage of the course.

193. Teaching is good overall and occasionally very good with no lessons being less than satisfactory. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject. Lessons are well planned and well prepared and clear aims and challenging activities lead to pupils learning. In the best lessons, planning is augmented by the use of a range of teaching strategies and resources which stimulate the pupils. Teachers have high expectations both of pupils' work and behaviour and there is a strong correlation between good teaching and good behaviour. For example, in a Year 7 lesson on building a Hindu shrine, the teacher sensitively introduced a range of artefacts at appropriate moments in the lesson. Pupils, who might have had behavioural problems, were stimulated and applied sustained intellectual rigour and concentration and were able to plan and construct their own shrines. Their interest led to their sustained concentration and thus to their learning. In the weaker lessons, teachers do not use their teaching methods or classroom organisation sufficiently to motivate and challenge pupils. In these lessons, pupils are often "teacher-led" and not always sufficiently encouraged to become independent learners. Teaching is often best where the teacher has the confidence to be less didactic and more facilitative. Homework is set and marked regularly.

194. There are several areas for development. Schemes of work do not yet reflect new curricular changes, particularly, but not exclusively at GCSE. The department does not yet have a comprehensive assessment policy based on sound principles and achievable outcomes. There are no teacher assessment figures for pupils at the end of Year 9. Monitoring of teaching and the setting of targets for pupils are in the very early stages of development and remain an issue for development. Resources are inadequate, particularly in terms of artefacts and differentiated text books. The designated room lacks blackout material which would help to create an atmosphere conducive to learning. There are no clear policies for the use of ICT and, as yet, there is insufficient access to, training in and the use of ICT to support the subject. There is insufficient use of visits to nearby places of religious interest, which would add immeasurably to the pupils' experience of religious education. There is insufficient time for the development of staff at all levels.

195. However, the very recently appointed head of department has identified the issues clearly. The profile of religious education has been raised and there is a commitment to raising standards. The head of department is well supported by teachers. They provide extra after school and lunchtime lessons for the increasing number of pupils who choose the GCSE course. There is a vision for the future which is based on a realistic evaluation of its strengths and the areas for development.

196. The appointment of the head of department, and the improving standards particularly in Years 10 and 11, are evidence of satisfactory progress since the last inspection. Although there is much yet to accomplish, this is now a department with capacity and potential for increasing success.



## BUSINESS STUDIES

197. Overall, the quality of provision in business studies is **good**.

### Strengths

- Teaching is good and has a strong impact on pupils' learning.
- Standards are above the average and pupils achieve well particularly in their knowledge of business.
- Pupils' attitudes to the subject are consistently good.

### Areas for improvement

- Pupils' ability to apply what they know to different situations, and to analyse information, is relatively weaker than their knowledge.

198. Standards in business studies are high. The 2001 GCSE results show that the proportion of pupils gaining the higher grades is above the national average: however, further analysis of the figures shows that the proportion of pupils entered for the exam is much higher than average. What this means is that performance is better than the crude figures suggest and show how successful the department is in helping pupils achieve their best. Interestingly, boys do better than girls although both groups of pupils did better than other schools nationally. Part of the reason for this is that boys are very well motivated: the excellent relationships between teacher and pupil are very effective in helping to manage boys' behaviour successfully.

199. Pupils have a good knowledge of business studies. In a very good Year 10 lesson, for example, pupils had a good knowledge of market segmentation and franchised businesses. The teacher's good subject knowledge and very good relationships ensured that pupils learnt effectively and made good progress in what they knew about how markets are divided. In a good Year 11 lesson, on the motivation of staff and their productivity, pupils strengthened their knowledge well and made good progress with their learning. Over Years 10 and 11 as a whole, pupils acquire a good range of knowledge about the main concepts and terms used in business and use ICT skills well to present their GCSE course work to a good standard. Pupils discuss different ideas quite confidently but they are not as good at applying these to a different situation or analysing information to draw conclusions. This happened, for example, in a Year 10 lesson where pupils were analysing primary and secondary research about the ice-cream industry. They applied good effort to their work but found it difficult to think for themselves and were quite dependent on the teacher.

200. Teaching is good. There are two particular strengths of the teaching:

- the wide knowledge that teachers have of business studies;
- the relationships between pupils and teachers: these help teachers to manage pupils very effectively and promote very positive attitudes.

201. One of the important characteristics of teachers' subject knowledge is the way this encourages and re-assures pupils: it ensures teachers' credibility and pupils' trust. As a result pupils readily ask questions if they are not sure of something and are able to take suggestions for improvement maturely. In the very good Year 10 lesson on franchised businesses, for example, pupils were able to deepen their knowledge of markets by asking questions and by taking the advice of the teacher. Similarly, in a good Year 11 examination revision lesson, the teacher's very good relationships with pupils meant that they responded well to the high expectations: they concentrated on their work effectively and were productive, making good progress with their work. In a few other lessons pupils make satisfactory rather than good progress because the work is not quite challenging enough. This happened in a couple of Year 10 lessons: pupils responded well but were not really pushed hard enough. As a result learning was not as brisk and achievement was not as high as it was in the better lessons.

202. Business studies is led and managed effectively. Business studies was not reported on in the last inspection but examination results have improved over the last three years.