

AMENDMENT TO SECTION 10 REPORT

OVERTON GRANGE SCHOOL
15th - 19th November 1999

Please note that an amendment has been made to the report and parents' summary following its publication.

A new sentence has been added in the Main Findings section, Standards in Subjects paragraph (at the end), as detailed below in italics and bold:

"..... that are being identified. ***Apart from in one attainment target in religious education and in music composition standards in the other subjects are securely approaching, and in many cases already exceeding, the levels expected of pupils by the end of Year 9.***"

INSPECTION REPORT

Overton Grange School

London Borough of Sutton

Reporting inspector: Mr David Carter

Dates of inspection: 15th - 19th November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 708286

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
Type of control:	County
Age range of pupils:	11-16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Stanley Road Sutton SM2 6QT
Telephone number:	0181-239-2383
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Brenda P Morley
Date of previous inspection:	This is the first inspection of the school.

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MAIN FINDINGS

The school is providing a good standard of education and gives good value for money. It has established itself as being popular and successful in a relatively short time. The strengths far outweigh the weaknesses. The weaknesses reflect the stage of the school's development. It is important that the Governors and staff balance the planning for the expansion of the school with the need to address current issues which affect the pupils on the roll now. These will be addressed through the Governors' action plan.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

This is the first inspection of the school. It has established itself well and has the capacity for continued improvement.

Standards in subjects

No pupils have yet taken national tests or GCSE examinations.

Based on the evidence from the inspection a high proportion of pupils in Year 9 are already working at the levels expected of them by the end of the year in English, mathematics and science. The school's target for this group would put them at above national average levels of attainment, and inspectors agree with the standards that are being identified.

Quality of teaching

Years 7-9	Mathematics, English, science, modern languages, art, design and technology, physical education	
Years 10-11	N/A	N/A
Sixth form	N/A	N/A
English	Good	
Mathematics	Very Good	

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: Excellent, very good, good, satisfactory, unsatisfactory, poor, very poor.

'Satisfactory' means that strengths outweigh any weaknesses.

Teaching is excellent in 10% of lessons, it is very good in 26%, good in 39%, satisfactory in 20% and unsatisfactory in just 5%.

Teaching is well planned. Some departments do this collaboratively and, particularly where some staff are teaching their second subject, this generally ensures common standards and a secure coverage of the subject.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour.

Teachers are skilled in using a variety of approaches during a lesson. In mathematics, for instance, pupils are given opportunities to work practically, to discuss in pairs and small groups, to learn from their text books and to record their work in writing and in diagrams. In practical lessons, such as PE, music, art and design technology, teachers make their expectations of performance, or the quality of artefact produced, very clear and pupils strive to meet these.

All departments have displays of key vocabulary relevant to the subject. In some, for instance science, teachers use them as active teaching aids by moving the words relevant to the lesson into a prominent position. Less attention is paid to pursuing pupils' accuracy in spelling generally, standards are not high enough and limit the quality of pupils' work.

Some teachers set out the structure of the whole lesson with their expectation of what the pupils will learn at the start. Pupils are clear as to what they are expected to cover in the time available. This is good in maintaining a pace and showing the expectations of the teacher.

Many teachers use questioning or a brief introductory summary by themselves or a pupil to remind the class of what they had done in the previous lesson. A recurring feature at the end of many lessons was that the teacher carefully drew out the main points of the lesson to reinforce the learning that has taken place.

Teachers know pupils well and are aware of those who may be experiencing difficulty, based on the work they completed in a previous lesson.

Teachers offer additional support after school or at lunchtime to ensure that pupils can complete homework or revise parts of the lesson which they found difficult.

Other aspects of the school

Behaviour:

Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good

Attendance:

Good. Attendance is above the national average. The level of unauthorised absence is one quarter of the national average.

Ethos*:

A strength of the school, excellent. Pupils and teachers share a commitment to work and strive to reach high standards. Relationships between pupils and all staff are based on mutual respect and are excellent

Leadership and management:

Very good leadership from the Governors, Headteacher and Achievement coordinators has established the school well and has set a distinctive and well understood educational direction. There is very good management of subject departments. The Governors are beginning to monitor the work of the school more critically.

Curriculum

Key Stage 3 only:

This is good and meets the range of pupils' learning needs. The work planned for pupils with special education needs results in them making good progress. In some classes where pupils are not set by ability the more able pupils are not fully challenged. The provision for careers education is inadequate at present.

Pupils with special educational needs:

The provision and support for pupils with special educational needs is good overall. That for pupils in the Hearing Support Department is excellent

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development:

This is good overall, but shows wide variation. The provision for pupils' social development is excellent, but that for their spiritual development is unsatisfactory.

Staffing, resources and accommodation:

Good overall. Good use is made of the available accommodation. A few shortcomings, for instance the lack of small practice rooms for music, will be overcome when the next phase of building is complete. The dining accommodation is very cramped and results in congestion and some pupils having to rush their meal to get into afternoon school. Books and other resources in departments are mostly good, but the provision of books in the library and the accessibility of computers for teaching are unsatisfactory.

Value for money:

The progress made by the pupils is good. The school has benefited by receiving an above average allocation of money per pupil to invest in establishing the school, but unit costs are now approaching the average and falling. The overall value for money provided by the school is good.

*Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.

The parents' views of the school

Approachable and supportive Head and staff

Large range of opportunities for out-of-lesson activities and clubs

Very good attitudes promoted by the school both socially and academically

Support from tutors and subject teachers for pupils experiencing problems.

The high level of expectation placed on the pupils by the teachers.

The setting of pupils in the same ability group for a number of subjects.

There is concern when pupils are not equally good in all subjects, or may be good in one but weaker in the others, placing them in a lower set for all

Variations in amount of homework set and speed of marking it.

Timing of parents consultation meetings

The loss of a day's teaching for academic tutoring

Inspectors support the parents in the positive comments they make about the school. Inspectors found there are few problems for pupils who may be in high sets for a number of subjects, but not equally good in all, teachers provide good support. Inspectors agree that some attention needs to be paid to pupils who are in middle bands, or classes taught in mixed ability groupings, who may be "coasting". As the school grows and more

teachers are employed there are plans to modify the system for placing pupils in groups. Homework is used well and all books seen showed that homework has been marked. Some teachers set homework to cover more than one evening, where this is done well it is made clear that this is the case in pupils' diaries. Parents have good opportunities to talk with tutors about their children's work, twice a year. The meeting with all subject teachers is timed differently for all year groups and this will change as the school grows. Inspectors view the academic tutoring process as being very beneficial in that it gives pupils a clear understanding of the level at which they are working and what they need to do to make further progress. It is an effective use of the day. Pupils reported that extra work was set for them to do at home during the day.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to continue the development of the school and to raise the standards of pupils' attainment the Governors, Headteacher and staff should:

Develop the use of ICT so that pupils experience all the strands of the subject.

Devise a curriculum plan which identifies where ICT is to be used in subjects. This should show how pupils' knowledge and skills are to be developed in each year.

In the review of curriculum ensure that subject schemes of work identify the use of ICT at appropriate points, and that it is being used at a level appropriate to the stage of pupils' development.

Review the provision of ICT facilities to ensure that they match the needs of the curriculum.

(Paragraphs 10, 46, 89, 124, 129, 133, 144, 156 and 157)

Improve the range and quality of books in the library. (Paragraphs 94, 108, 144, 150 and 164)

Improve the provision of Careers Education and guidance. (Paragraph 50)

Ensure that opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual understanding are improved.

Ensure that AT2 in Religious Education is planned for and taught consistently.

Review subject schemes of work to identify where there are opportunities for pupils to reflect and consider their response to the world and natural phenomena.

Ensure that all assemblies and acts of worship include a period of reflection which is guided by the teacher leading the event.

(Paragraphs 10,11,22, 36, 55, 56, 84,180 and 185)

Ensure that the school meets legal requirements by:

Holding a daily act of worship when pupils are not in full school or year group assemblies.

Reporting pupils' attendance in the school brochure.

Training teachers in child protection procedures.

(Paragraphs 56, 57, 66, 68 and 83)

In addition the school will wish to pay attention to the following issues:

Ensuring that planned developments to enable pupils to improve their skills in music composition are implemented quickly. (Paragraphs 18, 56, 165 and 170)

Improving the pupils' spelling. (Paragraphs 7 and 38)

Involving the learning support assistants more directly in planning for pupils with special needs in mainstream subjects. (Paragraph 41)

Making explicit the proportion of the school's budget that is spent on pupils with special education needs. (Paragraph 98)

Developing a policy on restraint. (Paragraph 67)

Considering how to deal with the limited space and resulting congestion in the dining hall. (Paragraph 92)

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1Overton Grange is a new school which admitted its first 180 pupils into Year 7 in September 1997. The school is being constructed in three phases. Phase One, to hold Key Stage 3 (KS3) was complete for the opening of the school. Phase two will be completed for the commencement of Key Stage 4 (KS4) in September 2000 and phase three will be ready for the newly approved Sixth Form in September 2002. Because of a shortage of places in the Local Authority the school was asked to admit 240 pupils in September 1999 and 210 in each subsequent year. The number of pupils currently on roll is 606, comprising Years 7 to 9. Overall there is a balance in the number of boys and girls in years 7 and 9, but there are 35 more boys than girls in Year 8. The first pupils will be taking the national standard assessment tests (SATs) at the age of 14 in the year 2000.

2At the time they enter the school the majority of pupils are already achieving at levels which are close to the national expectation of Level 4 in the core subjects. The proportion of higher attaining pupils in the group reaching Level 5 is slightly below the national average. The proportion of pupils at the lower levels is broadly similar to the national picture. Over the last three years the proportions of pupils in each group has remained similar. In tests administered by the school the picture is similar. Overall the ability of the pupils on entry to the school is in line with national averages.

3The school has specific targets to continue to raise standards through promoting good teaching and good relationships between all those in the school. It wants to establish a good KS4 curriculum in buildings which provide an excellent environment for learning.

4Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 3 for latest reporting year: N/A

The school opened in September 1997. The first group of pupils will take the Key Stage 3 Tests in May 2000.

Attainment at Key Stage 4 reporting year 1998: N/A

Attainment in the Sixth Form 1998: N/A

Attendance

Absence for the latest complete reporting year:

Authorised School Absence	4.2
National comparative data	7.9

Unauthorised School Absence	0.3
National comparative data	1.1

Exclusions

the previous year:

Fixed period	2
Permanent	0

Quality of teaching

Very good or better	38
Satisfactory or better	95
Less than satisfactory	5

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

5There are no end of key stage results to allow comparison with other schools or national averages. Evidence of pupils' attainment is based on the work seen during the inspection, which included an extensive sample of books, files and art work which for some pupils covered their experience from Y7 to the current point in Y9. Teachers use National Curriculum levels in marking books and reporting to parents, records of these were also used to judge the levels of attainment.

6Pupils are reaching the nationally expected standards for their age in most subjects; in some a significant number are likely to reach above average standards by the end of the year. Attainment is particularly good in English, mathematics, science, art, design and technology, modern foreign languages and physical education.

7In English, pupils participate in a wide range of speaking and listening activities including debating, discussing, presenting and role play, with increasing confidence and ability to adapt their talk to the demands of the differing situations. Pupils in Year 8, for example, present advertisements for favourite books, providing key information through role play. In an extra-curricular debate, pupils from all year groups argue about custody of children, taking account of the views of others. Pupils read fluently and accurately in English and in other subjects. They can show that they understand what they have read by using the information, or presenting it in a different way. In English lessons they can, for example, support their views on texts such as Barbara Smucker's 'Underground to Canada'. Pupils produce a wide range of writing, most of which is structured well. Standards in spelling are below average. Boys do not reach the same high standards as girls.

8In mathematics pupils' ability to handle data begins well when they start in year 7. This is developed in mathematics lessons as they move through the school. Exceptionally good standards are achieved in algebra. Older and more able pupils understand the use of letters as variables and confidently use this to learn about simple linear functions. Even low ability pupils can substitute values into simple formulae and understand what they are doing. Work in shape, space and measures is also good, with older pupils learning about Pythagoras' theorem. Pupils' knowledge and use of the correct mathematical terminology is a particular strength. All pupils learn multiplication tables and in year 9 almost all pupils have learnt them thoroughly. More able pupils have very sophisticated understanding of number. They know how percentages, decimals and vulgar fractions can be used to describe proportions and they understand the relationships between these different notations. Pupils' mathematical knowledge is used and developed well in other subjects. For example, in science pupils plot graphs to record and explore the results of investigation, and in design technology they design questionnaires and measure accurately.

9Most pupils have a good knowledge of science and use the appropriate vocabulary with confidence. By the beginning of Year 9 they are able to

use simple formulae and equations, collect experimental data accurately and systematically, make accurate predictions based on prior knowledge and experience and draw conclusions. Pupils' investigative skills are developed systematically through well structured activities but their skills of analysis and evaluation are underdeveloped. They have a good understanding of experimental technique and have developed well the ability to judge evidence.

10In lessons in information and communication technology (ICT) pupils are attaining standards which are within the nationally expected levels in the communicating and handling information strand they are being taught. In individual lessons they are now making good progress in that strand. The curriculum plan does not currently cover all strands of the subject adequately. The computer room is now used almost entirely for teaching discrete ICT lessons. It is difficult for other departments to make full use of ICT in other subjects as the network currently supports only one computer in most classrooms, although there are some stand alone machines. This has reduced the opportunity for some departments to use as much ICT as they have planned in their schemes of work, and contributes to the slower progress of pupils, which is unsatisfactory overall.

11In religious education standards of attainment are below those set out in the Sutton Agreed Syllabus for RE and are erratic. Some pieces of work meet, and occasionally even exceed expectations in attainment target 1 (learning about religions); but overall the most common pattern is for pupils to display limited depth involving no more than basic factual knowledge. Standards in attainment target 2 (learning from religions) are well below expectations.

12There are particular strengths in pupils' ability in art, where they show good skill at applying graphic techniques to create their design work but because of building constraints they have had few opportunities this year to explore their ideas through the use of computers. They show imagination and technical skill when making sculpture and can use a wide range of materials creatively. Personal research is used effectively to support class projects. Individual investigations into artists which pupils undertake during the holidays are of a high standard. Pupils confidently use a wide variety of sources to gather information and can justify their opinions about the artist they have chosen. In lessons, pupils talk clearly about their work and offer thoughtful evaluations of the work of their classmates.

13By the first term of Year 9 in design and technology, many pupils are attaining at above the national expectation, most of the remainder are in line with it, with a very small minority of pupils who are below. Overall the level of attainment is above average. The scheme of work ensures that the pupils experience working in a variety of materials and techniques, which contributes significantly to the standards attained and the good overall progress made by pupils.

14Standards in geography are in line with national expectations in most respects. The strengths in geography are that pupils can identify and describe patterns and relate features, for instance linking the boundaries of tectonic plates with the occurrence of earthquakes or volcanoes. In carrying out surveys of shopping centres they have an understanding of the hierarchy of settlements, and the probable relationship of large and small centres. However their attainment is

limited in because of their weak knowledge of places, and restricted general geographical knowledge.

15In history, pupils reach standards in line with national expectations. They show a sound knowledge and understanding of key historical topics including, in Year 7, why the Romans came to ancient Britain. In Year 8 they can describe the causes and consequences of poverty in the sixteenth century. The standard in Year 9 is already within the level expected by the end of the year. Pupils' writing about features of the slave trade in the eighteenth century, gave evidence of some above average attainment. Pupils use and interpret a range of historical evidence including artefacts in addition to visual and textual primary sources. In a lesson on Roman artefacts, pupils showed that they could ask good questions about the origins of this type of evidence.

16In modern languages attainment overall is good and comfortably in line with national expectations. It is better in listening and speaking skills, which are particularly well developed. The attainment is particularly good in Year 8 and especially in lower ability classes. Pupils use the target language routinely for classroom conversation, often using complex sentences. They frequently try to incorporate previously learnt language into spontaneous remarks in order to communicate with the teacher. There was evidence of higher level attainment in writing in some Year 9 work but no evidence was seen of extended or higher level reading tasks.

17Overall standards at KS3 in physical education are in line with expectations with higher than expected standards in volleyball, dance, Y8 gymnastics, football and badminton.

18Performance in music is a good feature, with a large number of pupils reaching good standards both in class and individually. Overall attainment is below the standard expected for the final year of the Key Stage 3 course. This is because standards in composing are below those expected. This element of the subject is not planned sufficiently into the scheme of work. There are difficulties in pupils practising their compositions during lessons because small practice rooms are included in phase two of the building plan.

19Research skills are developing well across subjects. For example, Year 8 pupils produce information books with bibliographies in science on topics such as 'Our Solar System', in modern languages about countries such as Saudi Arabia, and in humanities about the River Ganges. In English lessons pupils in Year 9 use skills in skimming and scanning well to retrieve information from a number of different sources.

20Pupils enter the school with levels of attainment that are close to the national average. The school expects pupils to make progress from this point and sets clear targets for individuals and groups. These are challenging and are resulting in the pupils making good progress.

21In mathematics, pupils make very good progress. Even the most able pupils find there is work to challenge them. Progress can be seen in individual lessons, across topics and across terms and years. For instance in one lesson pupils expanded their knowledge of polygons to include concave shapes and learnt the correct terminology. In a lower set pupils grappled successfully with the concepts of line and parallel.

Progress in pupils' work in handling data is highlighted in year 7 work where they learn what makes a good bar chart. High attaining pupils learn how to solve algebraic equations with one unknown. They understand what they are doing because earlier work in this topic was investigative - they move onto the technicalities afterwards. The use of ICT for demonstration is a very good spur to progress. Pupils talk about their work, mirror the teacher's words and gestures to promote understanding. In science, pupils make good progress. Through discussing all aspects of their work they develop their understanding of concepts such as particle theory, change of state, cause and effect, the impact of variable factors in investigatory work and the use of controls. In design technology in some projects they make very good progress. This was evident when Year 9 pupils were involved in a task to design and make foods with edible wrappers, which resulted in each pupil producing a good quality outcome, all of which were different. Progress is good in English, history and geography lessons because of the brisk pace of teaching and pupils' overall standards of literacy which mean that they are quickly able to understand concepts. In modern languages progress in lessons and over time is good. There was excellent progress in two year 7 lessons. The clear objectives set at the beginning of the lesson and the personalised target setting seen in exercise books have a major impact on pupils' progress and attainment. In ICT pupils make good progress in specialist lessons, and since the start of this term. There was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about their progress prior to September 1999.

22Progress is unsatisfactory overall in religious education and music. In religious education lessons progress is variable; in some lessons it is good, but in others it is unsatisfactory. This is in contrast to the picture in the other humanities subjects which are taught by the same teachers. The lack of a specialist to lead the teaching of the subject results in teachers lacking confidence in dealing with the detailed knowledge required. In music pupils do not build sufficiently upon their compositional skills. The time allocated to the subject is insufficient to allow for the delivery of the National Curriculum. Pupils make satisfactory progress in lessons where they improve their standard of performing. In specialist tuition lessons they make good progress by building well upon the guidance offered by their teachers.

23Pupils with English as an Additional Language make satisfactory progress, they are known to teachers and some have received support from the LEA programme, though this was for only a short time. Pupils with special educational needs make mainly good progress because work is planned to meet the requirements of their individual education plans, and these are reviewed as part of the whole-school academic tutoring programme. Pupils in the Hearing Support Department make very good progress both in mainstream lessons and particularly in the small number of sessions held in the department. Progress is evident in mathematics lessons with pupils making significant gains. Pupils' progress in the range of curriculum subjects is re-inforced very well in withdrawal sessions. Students benefit from discussing knowledge, skills and concepts in a small group situation.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

24This is a strength of the school.

25Parents feel very positive that the school's values and attitudes have a positive impact on pupils. At the meeting for parents, they commented that pupils are expected to show respect for their teachers, who, in turn show respect for pupils. Inspectors agree with the parents' views.

26Pupils' attitudes to learning and their standards of behaviour are both very good. These features have a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress in lessons as well as in other aspects of school life. They are alert and attentive, concentrate well and are keen to work with their teachers. Pupils take responsibility for their learning through the punctual completion of homework, for instance in preparing the materials necessary to produce a game in geography. They make good use of personal research to support class projects in art. They make good use of computers and other facilities after school to complete work. Pupils listen very well to teachers, to one another and to learning resources, for example, a video tape about the First World War. Where pupils have opportunities for discussion, for example in English and drama, pupils contribute very well to whole-class and group discussion. Across the range of special educational needs, pupils speak effectively in both mainstream and withdrawal lessons. Pupils are punctual for lessons and do not mind lessons over-running slightly, particularly when they are able to participate in quizzes, for example, in history. In design and technology, lower attaining year 7 pupils sustain concentration well throughout double period sessions. In a few lessons, for example in science, if the work is not challenging pupils wait patiently until the lesson takes off. There is a willingness to stay after school to work in the library or use computers for homework

27Pupils' behaviour overall is very good. They show respect towards each other, to adults and for other people's property. The general movement of pupils around the school, before and after school as well as at break-times is very orderly and efficient. Behaviour during assemblies is particularly good. The Governors' behaviour policy is concise, well-structured and informative. It seeks to reward positive behaviour and help pupils to understand why sanctions might be imposed. The policy is clear and is being implemented effectively. Two pupils were given a fixed term exclusion during the whole year prior to the inspection, this is well below average for the size of the school.

28Inspectors did not observe any bullying and pupils commented that they had not experienced any bullying. Parents who had concerns commented that the school had taken swift action and they felt supported, and confident that the school's systems for dealing with bullying are secure.

29Pupils' personal development is very good. The school takes many opportunities to develop its students personal qualities. Pupils serve as librarians, prefects, help to run discos and represent their forms on the school council. The many extra-curricular clubs serve to boost pupils' independence. For example, the micro-society club in which pupils are involved in a business simulation exercise. Pupils who attend the sign language club use this facility with hearing-impaired pupils.

30The Debating Society provides pupils with good opportunities for public speaking and all participants show a very good understanding of procedures in a debate. Pupils also display a high level of maturity during school council meetings.

31 Teachers work effectively through the range of activities to support pupils' personal development.

32 Year Group assemblies are held each week, providing opportunities to celebrate and value the wide range of pupils' attainment, which includes school attendance and sporting and as well as academic achievement.

Attendance

33 Pupils' attendance at the school is good at 95.5 per cent. The school works hard to reduce unauthorised absence. This has more than halved from 0.3% in 1997/98 to 0.1% in the current year which is well below the national average.

34 Registration provides an orderly start and conclusion to the school day. Lessons begin promptly with formal registration. Punctuality is good and only a few instances of pupil lateness were observed during the inspection. This contributes positively to pupils' attainment and progress.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

35 The quality of teaching is very good, in some lessons it is excellent. The commitment of the staff to meeting the needs and aspirations of all pupils is excellent. High standards of work and behaviour are expected by teachers.

36 Teaching is well planned. Some departments do this collaboratively and, particularly where staff are teaching their second subject, this ensures common standards and a secure knowledge of the subject. This does not happen in RE where there is no specialist to reinforce teachers' subject knowledge within the otherwise effective humanities department.

37 Teachers are skilled in using a variety of approaches during a lesson. In mathematics, for instance, pupils are given opportunities to work practically, to discuss in pairs and small groups, to learn from their text books and to record their work in writing and in diagrams. In many lessons teachers are very clear in setting out the purpose of the lesson, and what pupils will be expected to learn. In the best examples these objectives are included in the pupils' books. In practical lessons, such as PE, music, art and design technology, teachers make their expectations of performance, or the quality of artefact to be produced, very clear and pupils strive to meet these high expectations.

38 All departments have displays of key vocabulary relevant to the subject. In some, for instance science, teachers use them as active teaching aids by moving the words relevant to the lesson into a prominent position. This very good practice is not consistent. Less attention is paid to pursuing pupils' accuracy in spelling; standards are not high enough and limit the quality of pupils' work.

39 Some teachers set out the structure of the lesson so that pupils are clear as to what they are expected to cover. This is good in maintaining pace and showing the expectations of the teacher. Pupils are fully involved in these well paced and interesting lessons. The importance of

good behaviour and cooperation is reinforced in most lessons. Teachers clearly have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. In only a very few lessons pupils became restless because the pace of work or level of challenge was unsatisfactory.

40 Many teachers use questioning, or a brief introductory summary by themselves or a pupil, to remind the class of what they have done in the previous lesson. A recurring feature at the end of many lessons is that the teacher carefully draws out the main points of the lesson to reinforce the learning that has taken place.

41 The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good, in the Hearing Support Department it is very good. In lessons most teachers know the pupils who have special needs and many have clear plans which relate to the pupil's individual education plan. In a few instances the pupils who are working at levels below the remainder of the group are less well catered for because the work is not set at an appropriate level. Learning support assistants are skilled in helping pupils. They provide good support, but their knowledge of individual pupils is not always taken into account when work is being planned. They are not always sufficiently involved in the planning of work to enable them to prepare their support in order to make a full contribution to the lesson.

42 Within the Hearing Support Department learning tasks are broken down well into small steps and teaching shows a very good grasp of the different subjects of the curriculum. Teaching makes effective use of these subjects in order to improve significantly pupils' standards of literacy. Teachers make very good use of a suitable range of learning resources, particularly the overhead projector. Lesson planning is detailed and very clear about learning objectives. There are high expectations about pupils' standards of attainment and homework is used well to reinforce what has been learnt in class. Class teachers and learning support assistants work well together during lessons.

43 Teachers assess pupils' work effectively. They use a system of grades consistently, they know pupils well and are aware of those who may be experiencing difficulty, based on the work they completed in a previous lesson. Occasionally, where pupils are working in subjects which do not use setting to group pupils of similar ability quite able pupils are set work which is not sufficiently challenging for them, for instance in some history and geography lessons and proficient musicians in whole class music lessons.

44 Homework is used as an integral part of learning. In some departments, for instance history and geography, it is included in the overall scheme of work. It is set at the most appropriate point in the lesson. If it is intended to build on and develop points to be covered in the lesson the teacher will set it at the beginning so that links can be made with points as they emerge. Where there is to be preparation for the next lesson it is set towards the end. A good example of setting an extended homework to develop pupils' learning skills was seen in geography where some time was spent to ensure that pupils had established what they needed to do, and by when, to be able to arrive fully prepared at a future lesson.

45 Most teachers set homework according to the school's timetable. Parents and pupils commented that some homework was set out of sequence, with

short time scales, and some was set only intermittently. Marking sometimes took a long time to be completed. In the inspection where extended pieces of work were set over a number of scheduled homework sessions the teacher was careful to ensure that pupils recorded the homework in each relevant page of the diary. Some short tasks were set, but usually to complete a small piece of work. It is marked regularly with constructive comments from teachers as to how future grades may be improved. All books seen during the inspection were marked up to date, and teachers' record books showed a pattern of regular recording of homework completion and marks.

The curriculum and assessment

46The curriculum at Key Stage 3 is broad, balanced and soundly based. Curriculum provision is very good in mathematics, PE, modern foreign languages, and design and technology. It is good in English, history and geography, and unsatisfactory in RE, IT and music. The quality of curriculum provision is good overall.

47The curriculum framework for Key Stage 4 has been agreed and meets statutory requirements. There will be a range of option subjects, and pupils will be guided on their choice of options by their form tutors, following departmental advice. Curriculum planning in departments for Key Stage 4 is at a very early stage of the process but is satisfactory overall.

48In year 7 pupils are taught in the same ability sets for mathematics, science, modern foreign languages and information technology. Other subjects are taught in mixed ability groups. In year 8 and year 9, pupils are taught in ability sets for mathematics, science, modern foreign languages, information technology and design and technology. They are taught in mixed ability groups in English, humanities, art and music. Setting arrangements are satisfactory, except where an individual pupil may be either weak or particularly strong in one subject but in line with the rest of the class in the others. Overall, the way in which sets are arranged has a positive impact upon pupils' progress.

49All pupils follow the same curriculum, and provision for equality of access and opportunity is very good. Pupils with special educational needs are identified and supported in lessons either by the teacher's planning or direct support from specialist learning support assistants. The provision for higher attaining pupils is not consistent across departments. Higher attaining pupils in modern foreign languages are given the opportunity to study a second foreign language in extra curricular time, and receive intensive support from the language assistant. In English, art, mathematics, and design and technology higher attaining pupils are identified and appropriate provision is established. Able musicians receive appropriate teaching individually and in small groups. However, higher attaining pupils are not identified or challenged in humanities.

50Form tutors deliver the PSHE curriculum to their groups, using a framework of units of work, which includes drugs awareness for year 9 pupils. The provision for careers education is under development but is currently unsatisfactory. Year 9 pupils who are about to make Key Stage 4 option choices have had minimal careers advice.

51Extra curricular provision is very good. All teaching staff offer some aspect of extra curricular provision, and all pupils participate. There is a wide variety of provision, and although some classes for higher attaining pupils are by invitation, there are always alternatives for pupils who are interested in a subject but have not as yet developed a high level of expertise. There is a particularly wide range of music classes on offer. All pupils are offered the opportunity to go on some form of residential visit during an activity week in May. Pupils and parents speak very positively about the quality of extra curricular provision. Inspectors view the provision as being particularly effective in providing opportunities for more able pupils to produce work of a very high standard, and good motivation for all pupils to extend their range of experiences.

52Teachers arrange a number of visits during the course of the year , such as year 9 pupils in design and technology who are involved in a mechanical toy project visiting the Cabaret Mechanical Theatre. Geography classes visit the local town centre to carry out a shopping survey as part of an investigation into settlement hierarchies. These effectively support the curriculum.

53Assessment procedures are good overall. The school's assessment policy is applied consistently across all subject departments. Procedures are very good in mathematics, art, history, geography, modern foreign languages and design and technology. They are good in English and science, satisfactory in IT, music and PE, and unsatisfactory in RE. The strengths of the very good subject assessments are the knowledge it gives teachers of the progress being made and pupils which enables them to plan for the needs of individuals and groups. The mathematics department, for example, has clear and effective procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. For each topic there is a checklist of learning objectives in language which the pupils understand. It is departmental policy, which is implemented, for pupils to use these for on-going self-assessment during each topic. . Pupils are tested at the end of each topic and records are kept of these scores. Each term teachers summarise all the results and tell each pupil the National Curriculum level at which they are working for the whole subject. These are used for setting pupils into groups, alongside information from other subjects. They are also used for setting targets for each individual pupil. Teachers are aware of the levels and bear in mind those pupils who are not within the normal range for the set. In humanities, English and other subjects where there is regular moderation of grades and assessments by the whole department together it ensures a consistent approach, including newly appointed staff. In RE in the absence of a specialist, there is a lack of knowledge by teachers of the detailed requirements of parts of the Agreed Syllabus and of the best ways to assess pupils' attainment.

54Pupils are kept well informed of their grades and National Curriculum levels. The system of academic tutoring, which involves a suspension of the timetable for one day each term, is used to provide the opportunity for a regular dialogue about attainment and target setting between tutors and pupils. Pupils in all years view this as a positive initiative and feel that they are kept well informed of their progress. A few parents were concerned at the loss of a day's teaching but pupils said that they were given additional work to do. Inspectors view the process as very beneficial in that it gives pupils a clear understanding of the level at which they are working and what they need to do to make further progress.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

55 Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good overall and there are many strengths, notably in pupils' moral and social development. Pupils' spiritual development includes some positive features but it is unsatisfactory overall.

56 Pupils attend two acts of collective worship each week in the school hall. Some assemblies create successfully a sense of awe and wonder. For example, on one occasion, pupils entered the hall listening to a recording of Louis Armstrong singing "What a wonderful world". The Headteacher spoke about some of the many features of our world for which we should be grateful. Two pupils took part and, in conclusion, one read out an Irish blessing, with pupils showing excellent listening skills. Pupils attend a second assembly each week in their year groups. On these occasions, they take part in a time of praise for a wide range of pupils' attainments. These sessions contribute a great deal towards re-inforcing the school's ethos with pupils gaining credit from the school. Concluding with a time of reflection, these occasions make a small contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Following a series of themes, it is the school's intention that group tutors should hold times for reflection on the other three days of the week; this does not happen. Some of these sessions contribute broadly to pupils' development, for example, in one session, pupils followed up on the work of UNICEF, in terms of transport for children. RE makes a sound contribution in terms of pupils learning about religions but less so in terms of drawing out their deeper significance for people today. Other curriculum subjects do not make a particular contribution to this area.

57 The school has recently undertaken a valuable audit of how each subject of the curriculum contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This indicates that subjects and extra-curricular activities provide positive support for pupils' moral, social, and cultural development, but that opportunities for spiritual development were limited.

58 Pupils' moral development is very good. There is a strong emphasis on working in partnership with parents, with whom the school successfully promotes this aspect of its work. In all areas of its life, the school emphasises the importance of promoting the moral development of its pupils. Pupils show respect for property and for one another. The school displays a sense of community which benefits both adults and pupils. It is successful in its expectation that students will "work hard and allow others to learn". Pupils' moral development is supported well in English, mathematics, drama and RE. For example, in English pupils discuss the motives and moral behaviour of characters in fiction, and in mathematics they consider the reasons for having behaviour rules. In RE, pupils discuss some of the moral dilemmas involved in the issue of abortion.

59 Pupils' social development is excellent; it is wide ranging in its scope. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility. Having received training, year 7 students show prospective new entrants around the school. Pupils can be prefects, librarians, assist in discos and represent their classes on the school council. The overall school ethos and practice of integrating pupils

with a wide range of special educational needs, including hearing impairment and physical disabilities, benefits all members of the school community. The school is very strong on challenging stereotyping of different groups in society. For example, adults with severe learning difficulties work with year 8 pupils in art lessons and, through assemblies, the girls' football is praised for its successes. Pupils attend a signing club run by an adult with hearing impairment and they use this facility with deaf pupils. Students have good opportunities to learn about citizenship by asking questions to visiting MPs and local councillors. Pupils support a range of charities including comic relief, an appeal for Bangladesh and sponsor a Vietnamese child on a regular basis.

60Throughout the school, there is a consistent picture of pupils working well together in mixed gender groups. In art, pupils work together in teams to solve problems. Pupils collaborate effectively in English, mathematics, history and PE, particularly in paired activities.

61Pupils' cultural development is sound. In English, pupils study a suitable wide range of literature, some of which comes from different cultures. In history, pupils undertake visits to museums and exhibitions. The modern foreign languages department provides exchange visits to both France and Germany; pupils also undertake projects which promote cultural understanding. Music plays a positive role in promoting cultural understanding both in lessons and through extra-curricular activities. Pupils consider music associated with the African slave trade as well as modern Caribbean music. They have heard demonstrations from groups of Swedish Fiddlers and African drummers. Other extra-curricular activities, for example drama, contribute positively to pupils' cultural development.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

62The school shows great care and concern for the welfare of pupils. A very good system for monitoring academic progress, support, guidance and welfare has been introduced and is effectively monitored. Form tutors have direct oversight of pupils throughout their time in the school. Regular academic tutoring and interim reports provide opportunities for tutors and pupils to focus on individual target setting. This actively promotes pupils' progress and learning and makes a significant contribution to the standards they achieve.

63Pupils' academic progress is recorded by subject teachers who also identify and negotiate targets for development. The system is particularly effective in those subjects where targets are displayed prominently on pupils' work. Pupil diaries are used effectively to record tutor agreed targets. Parents expressed satisfaction for this system in helping their children identify where improvements need to be made to their work. Achievement assemblies held regularly in each year group and the awarding of merit certificates encourages pupils to improve on their personal best.

64Form tutors play a central role in the delivery of the PSHE programme which incorporates drug and substance awareness. Resources and visitors are used effectively to promote learning but form tutors receive little support. An evaluation process is underway involving tutors and pupils but there is no formal monitoring. A good programme of induction prepares

pupils for secondary school education. It includes open evenings, an induction pack and a tea for primary school teachers. Senior managers and other staff visit or contact primary schools to liaise regarding pupils' learning needs. Subject based taster days are developing for Year 5 pupils. Plans for careers guidance and preparation for the next stage of education are at an early stage. Careers guidance is planned within the PSHE programme and will be supported by an external careers service. However, the current provision is unsatisfactory and uncoordinated.

65Regular form time takes place each day. Most of the sessions are organised effectively to deal with routine administration and to ensure pupils are kept well informed of day-to-day matters. Some tutors utilise this time beneficially to support subject based learning tasks and to plan tutor group assemblies. Although clearly planned and expected to occur the links between form time and assembly themes are unsatisfactory because they are too informal.

66Pupils' attendance is very well managed. Registers are accurately marked and monitored properly. The computerised system is used effectively to record pupils' attendance throughout the school day. Tutors, the deputy headteachers and administrative staff monitor absences efficiently. Attendance certificates, tutor group attendance shields and detentions are effective in promoting pupils' attendance and punctuality. In order to meet statutory requirements levels of absence must be reported in the school prospectus.

67The behaviour policy sets out the processes to promote an anti-bullying culture. The Policy involves classroom rules and a structured system of rewards and sanctions. These play a prominent part in school life. They are consistently implemented by all staff and understood well by pupils. Pupils' behaviour and involvement in lessons is monitored regularly through the academic tutoring system. The school lacks a policy on pupil restraint.

68The Headteacher is the person responsible for child protection. Satisfactory procedures are in place but staff have not received appropriate training and guidance with regard to child protection issues. The school has good working relations with local agencies: for example, to address educational needs and school attendance.

69The school buildings and equipment are in very good condition and procedures are in place to monitor pupils' health and safety. These are effective with the exception of public access onto the site through the shared use of the school field. Procedures for school visits are satisfactory. Staff, including appropriately trained personnel, are on duty at key points of the day. However, levels of supervision outside at brektime and lunchtime do not adequately cover all areas of the site.

Partnership with parents and the community

70The schools' partnership with parents and the community is very good. Parents are actively involved in school life. They make valuable contributions as part of the governing body. Parents are fully supportive of children's learning and some assist on educational visits. Special events and the annual presentation evening are well supported. The Parent, Teacher and Friends Association is very active in its promotion of fundraising, information and social events for pupils and parents. The

parents' and teachers' committee is well supported by the Headteacher and events are well supported by staff. The association produces its own newsletter and makes a very significant contribution to the life of the school.

71Regular newsletters inform parents about practical matters and specific events. Detailed homework plans and curriculum information is communicated regularly to parents. The home school agreement is in place. Pupil diaries provide a useful vehicle for home school contact. Parents find the Headteacher and teachers approachable and generally feel that complaints are dealt with appropriately.

72Parents receive regular information about their child's progress through interim reports each term, annual reports and through consultation and open evenings held during the year. The interim reports provide subject based assessments in attainment, effort, involvement and homework. They are used to good effect by the academic tutoring system which involves targets being discussed with pupils prior to inclusion in their pupil diaries. Parents are invited to attend the formal tutor pupil interviews held each term. Annual reports provide subject based assessments and overall comments regarding personal development. These assessments lack level descriptors and consistency which makes it difficult for parents to gain a clear picture. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in their annual reviews.

73Links with the community are excellent. Visitors come into the school from the community, in particular, in connection with PHSE. A wide range of visits, including some overseas, are made by each year group. These enrich the curriculum and make good use of the local environment and resources. Year 7 spend an activity week at Borreton Park, Birmingham while Year 8 camp at High Ashurst, Boxhill. The music department make good use of visiting specialists and performers and pupils studying PE attend dance and drama events.

74The school has worked hard on links with the local community, particularly through the public relations committee of the school governing body. Links are developing with the Sutton Business Federation and pupils participate in local community events. Very good use is made of business sponsorship, for example to support pupils' learning in design and technology and science, and to enhance school equipment and office systems. A large number of regular lettings promote local community links and the physical education department makes good use of links with several major sports clubs.

75A number of teachers in training, work experience students and further education college students are welcomed into the school. Pupils participate in local inter-school sports competitions and the Sutton music festival. The Headteacher participates in a local secondary heads forum and senior management are actively developing links with local primary schools. Curriculum links are embryonic at this stage although a programme of subject based Year 5 taster days is developing. The school supports several national charities particularly through the school council.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

76Governors were appointed to work with the LEA in establishing the school and appointing the Headteacher. These Governors formed the core of the Governing Body when it was formally constituted.

77The leadership of the school is very good . It sets high expectations for pupils' behaviour, attainment and progress which is supported by all staff and contributes significantly to the overall quality of education and standards achieved. The Headteacher provides very good leadership, this is recognised and respected by parents, staff and pupils. There is a strong working relationship with the Governors, who have continued to retain an interest in the detail of developments.

78The Governors are well led by their Chair and are very effective in setting the direction for the school, in cooperation with the Headteacher and staff. They are increasingly well informed about the day to day work of the school as it grows. There are some instances in sub committee where they become too involved in the detail of producing policies, from the best of motives, but do not stand back enough to be critically supportive. A good initiative in the absence of SAT and GCSE information is the use of the targets which the school has set to show to parents the level of planned progress for each year group of pupils. This is being done by setting the targets against the ability of the group when they entered the school and indicating the added value which is expected. This is a useful move to positively hold the school to account.

79The Headteacher and senior staff, particularly the Achievement coordinators who in effect held the position of deputy heads in the evolving structure, have established very good systems and policies. Most staff held a number of responsibilities and have shown flexibility and enthusiasm in following the lead of senior colleagues. They set a clear direction for the school and have supported the rapid change and growth well. This leadership has enabled other staff, many of whom were the only teacher of their subject until September 1999, to produce consistent approaches to teaching and some very good schemes of work. The success of the structure is evident through the ability of the school to increase the number of staff by 50% and quickly establish consistent approaches to teaching, and discipline. Monitoring of teaching is planned and carried out. Heads of Department have meetings each term with teachers individually. Consistent standards are established through joint planning and moderation of work.

80The school has well presented and carefully considered aims, and is successful in achieving them. It has a clear set of values which permeate policies and promote high achievement, good progress and high quality opportunities for pupils' personal development.

81The school has planned its development carefully. There are well prepared and presented budget papers which project spending to the point in September 2001 when all five years will be in place. These relate to separate papers showing the development of the curriculum and staffing, including a proposal for a Sixth Form. The summary school development plan identifies the key areas for growth. It does not identify consistently the time scales for tasks or specific target dates for their completion. There is insufficient clarity about the allocation of resources to elements of the plan. The methods of monitoring progress are inconsistent . When taken together the plan with the budget and other

projections do complement each other. There is a growing need to summarise more clearly target dates and budget intentions together so that Governors are in a position where they can monitor progress towards their completion and are secure in determining the efficiency of the school. Departmental plans are clear in setting direction and intentions, but, again, are not sufficiently clear in showing the relationship between planned developments and the allocation of finance.

82The school has an excellent ethos. Pupils are confident and appreciate the support which they receive. Parents are clear that the school has high and appropriate expectations, and that there is a strong partnership between the school and themselves.

83The school does not meet all statutory requirements. There are deficiencies in the way in which the daily act of worship is organised. Some information about pupils' attendance is missing from the school brochure. Training has not been given for teachers to raise their awareness of the requirements of Child Protection legislation.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

84There is a good match between the number, qualifications and experience of teaching staff to the demands of the curriculum. In some subjects, such as mathematics, science, design and technology, modern languages, art and PE it is very good. The match is unsatisfactory in RE and music, where the lack of teachers' qualifications and experience in some aspects of the subjects has a negative impact upon pupils' attainment.

85The match between the number, qualifications and experience of support staff to the demands of the curriculum is very good. The high level of learning support staff in lessons has a very positive effect upon the progress made by pupils with special educational needs. Other support staff have a positive impact upon learning. However, there is no technical support provision for IT, which is unsatisfactory.

86Arrangements for the professional development of staff are good. Teachers who have been on courses are expected to feedback their experience to other staff who may benefit. For example, following the attendance by a mathematics teacher at a particularly useful course, and the subsequent in-school feedback, the tutor who had delivered the course was contracted to deliver it to the whole of the mathematics department.

87The programme for the induction of newly qualified teachers is carefully structured and meets the recently introduced statutory requirements. New staff who are not new to the profession are formally inducted into the philosophy and practices of the school through a structured programme which has included a residential weekend.

88All members of staff have professional development interviews each term, and targets are set and reviewed. This process is effective but because action by the teachers' unions is not permitting the full appraisal arrangements to be followed the school does not currently meet the statutory requirements for appraisal, which is unsatisfactory.

89The adequacy of the accommodation for the effective delivery of the curriculum is good. The quality of departmental accommodation is very good in science, good in English, history, geography, design and

technology, modern languages and art, and satisfactory in mathematics, RE and PE. It is unsatisfactory in IT, because of the lack of specialist facilities, and in music, where the lack of practice rooms has a negative impact upon learning.

90The quality of display in classrooms and corridors is very good, and displays are often used as a teaching resource. For example, in English, art and design and technology key words are displayed and used to familiarise the pupils with subject specific vocabulary.

91The accommodation is meticulously clean and is very well maintained by the site supervisory staff.

92The dining facilities are small, the service is slow, and sometimes pupils have to queue for an extended period and then have very little time to eat lunch. This issue is likely to be compounded over the next two years as the school expands.

93Learning resources are satisfactory for the effective delivery of the curriculum. They are very good in design and technology, science and modern languages, good in mathematics, history music and PE, and are satisfactory in IT, RE, geography and art. They are unsatisfactory in English because there are insufficient texts to support the scheme of work. The review of resources and their development is included in the department's development plan

94The book provision in the library is currently unsatisfactory in terms of both quality and quantity. There are plans to develop the provision, which will include an Internet connection, but at the moment the library does not adequately support pupils' learning.

95The school is not currently connected to the Internet, which limits the opportunities that pupils have to develop their research and investigational skills.

The efficiency of the school

96The Governors, Headteacher and Administrative Officer have worked well together to plan the development of the school while maintaining a secure budget. The school development plan lacks detail with regard to financial commitments and intentions. There are supporting documents dealing with specific areas of development which contain links to the overall plan and show a consistent vision of the way in which the school is planned to grow.

97Departments are required to produce development plans which support their claims for budget support. The plans have covered both routine allocations, and special projects which have been part of the capital funding provided for the opening and growth of the school. Departmental funding for KS3 is now based on a formula agreed by Heads of Department. In this way the planning of spending is moving quickly towards the position found in most schools.

98The school's budget and current spending does not match the averages found in established schools. For instance from the time the school opened it was necessary to have a specialist teacher with a responsibility point to lead each department, although the early curriculum plan did not require this. A number of teachers were appointed

who were qualified by training or experience to teach more than one subject. Similarly the number of administration support staff, and caretaking and cleaning staff could not grow slowly, as the tasks had to be carried out. Thus for the first three years the way in which the school allocated its finances was not directly comparable with those of other schools. The amount spent on SEN is not immediately evident in either the LEA allocation or the school's figures, other than that for the Hearing Support Department. The school has prepared a budget plan to cover the time until September 2001, when the whole of the Key Stages 3 and 4 curriculum will be in place. The planned spending for September 2001 is close to that found in other schools, although the spending on books and teaching resources is below average from revenue spending, as the school is building up some of its resources using development funding allocated to enable the school to grow.

99The spending on staff and other resources, has matched the projected spending indicated in its plan. Good use is made of the skills and experience of teachers some of whom teach more than one subject. Many staff have temporary positions of responsibility for a number of elements of the school spanning academic, pastoral or management areas, which will be reallocated as the school grows and new staff are appointed. This has been the picture in the past three years. For instance it was only in September 1999 that a single post of KS3 co-ordinator was filled, and the substantive post of Deputy Headteacher supplanted that of Achievement Coordinator. The KS3 coordinator was a newly appointed member of staff, as was one of the Deputy Headteachers, the other had previously held a post as a Head of Department in addition to being Achievement Coordinator in the school. Good use is made of the available accommodation. Text books for the teaching of subjects are readily available and used effectively. The number of books in the library is unsatisfactory, and the access to computers is limited.

100The control of the school's budget is good. The spending has been very slightly below the budget for the past two years. Consideration has been given to the changing patterns of spending as the school grows. Funding has been built in to allow for the appointment of experienced staff. Predictions for the likely budget for teaching staff have been met.

101There are no National Test (SAT) or GCSE results to show externally moderated levels of attainment. Inspection evidence shows that many pupils are already, in November, approaching the nationally expected levels for the end of Y9. More importantly, pupils are making largely good progress, and those with special needs and in the Hearing Support Department, are making good progress. The quality of teaching is very good. Although the unit costs of the school are high, because of its stage of development, it is providing good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

102There are no Key Stage 3 National Curriculum Test data. The evidence from inspection shows that most pupils are already working at the national expectation. It is expected that the pupils will exceed the national average by the end of the key stage and that they will reach the school target for English. Girls attain higher results than boys.

Attainment of pupils with SEN is good. It is sound for those with English as an additional language.

103The rate of progress across the key stage is above the national average. Pupils make very good progress in speaking and listening. They participate in a wide range of activities including debating, discussing, presenting and role play, with increasing confidence and ability to adapt their talk to the demands of the differing situations. Pupils in Year 8, for example, present advertisements for favourite books, providing key information through role play. In an extra-curricular debate, pupils from all year groups argue about custody of children, taking account of the views of others.

104Pupils make good progress in reading a range of fiction and non-fiction texts, supporting their views on texts such as Barbara Smucker's 'Underground to Canada' with relevant quotation and researching information. Research skills are developing well across subjects, for example, Year 8 pupils produce information books with bibliographies, in science on topics such as 'Our Solar System', in modern languages about countries such as Saudi Arabia, and in humanities about the River Ganges. In English pupils in Year 9 use skills in skimming and scanning to retrieve information from a range of sources.

105Most pupils make good progress in writing, although some lower attaining pupils and those with English as an additional language, are insufficiently supported in structuring language for different purposes. Where pupils, and particularly boys, are supported by models of language patterns in writing frames, as in a Year 7 lesson on poetry, and in science and design and technology, they make good progress. Skills in note making, planning and drafting are developing well across the school, although there is limited use of ICT. Pupils produce a wide range of writing and progress is marked by more extended and increasingly well structured texts. Progress in the presentation of work is excellent. There is insufficient progress in spelling.

106Pupils, and particularly boys, are motivated by collaborative tasks in English, such as, in Year 7, identifying different types of text from the language used. They are also motivated by a system of reading merits, certificates and book projects, to read each day for homework.

107The quality of teaching is good overall. A particular feature of the many very good examples of teaching is the use of a wide range of methods including demonstrating skills, questioning to extend the understanding of all pupils in whole class and group tasks, and involving pupils in evaluating their learning, such as, in Year 7, evaluating understanding of the differences in style of newsreaders and storytellers. In some lessons, insufficient use is made of the good assessment procedures to match tasks and resources to the varying needs of pupils.

108Management of English is very good. Development planning is strong and the curriculum and teaching are monitored to good effect. Suitable schemes of work are being prepared but as yet are not linked explicitly to the comprehensive curriculum map. Resources are in need of further development, both within the department and in the library, to support the schemes and the continuing success of the department.

Mathematics

109 Pupils standards of attainment in mathematics are good. There are no end of Key Stage test results to enable comparison with national figures. Despite this, inspection evidence shows that standards are above average for many pupils. Pupils enter the school with results from primary school which are broadly in line with national averages, though slightly lower for the first cohort into the school. Pupils make very good progress and many pupils are working at high levels. The school is likely to exceed the targets it has set itself for end of Key Stage 3 mathematics national tests. Pupils learn to handle data well when they start in year 7. This is developed in mathematics lessons as they move up through the school. Exceptionally good standards are achieved in algebra. Older and more able pupils understand the use of letters as variables and confidently use this to learn about simple linear functions. Even low ability pupils can substitute values into simple formulae and understand what they are doing. Work in shape, space and measures is also good, with older pupils learning about Pythagoras' theorem. Pupils' knowledge and use of the correct mathematical terminology is a particular strength. All pupils learn multiplication tables and in year 9 almost all pupils have learnt them thoroughly. More able pupils have very sophisticated understandings of number. They know how percentages, decimals and vulgar fractions can be used to describe proportions and they understand the relationships between these different notations. Pupils' mathematical knowledge is used and developed well in other subjects. For example, in science pupils plot graphs to record and explore the results of investigation, and in design technology they design questionnaires and measure accurately.

110 Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning mathematics. They are very well behaved in lessons, listen to their teachers and concentrate. The school is exceptional in that in almost every lesson all pupils were on task all of the time. They take an active part in lessons, asking questions when they do not understand. They explain their methods to other pupils in the class, often coming to the front to demonstrate a technique on the board. The pupils' very good progress is firmly grounded in understanding. This is achieved by a high proportion of investigative work. Pupils explore a situation, for example the squares on the sides of right-angled triangles and make their own discoveries. They then go on to learn and practice efficient techniques. Pupils with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language make good progress, which in some lessons is very good because of the quality of support from learning support staff.

111 Teaching is very good. All the teachers know the subject very well and also how best pupils learn. Every lesson has a clear structure which engages and motivates the pupils. Pupils are taught in a variety of ways, including listening to exposition from their teachers. They are given opportunities to work practically, to discuss in pairs and small groups, to learn from their text books and to record their work in writing and in diagrams. Every lesson finishes with a clear summary from the pupils of what they have learnt. There are, however, limited opportunities for pupils to use computers in mathematics. The department is aware of this and has plans to increase access. Appropriate homework is set according to the school's timetable. There is a very high rate of successful completion of homework.

112 Pupils are organised into teaching groups according to prior

attainment. Within these sets there is still a range of needs which teachers manage very well. Pupils with special educational needs are included very well in lessons. All pupils have equal access and opportunities to the learning. The inclusion of pupils with a hearing impairment or other physical disability is excellent. The most able pupils, in the top sets are encouraged to excel. They are challenged in class and through written comments in their exercise books. Less able pupils in mathematics, including those with special needs, make very good progress with the things they are taught. There is however an anomaly in the curriculum for these pupils. Although they are effectively taught multiplication facts, some of them do not know basic addition facts. Numeracy is included in the department's development plan. There is not sufficient liaison with the learning support department at present. Top sets contain a higher proportion of girls, while lower sets contain more boys. This reflects the unsatisfactory difference in attainment between girls and boys which exists nationally.

113The department is very well managed. There are clear policies, for example, for assessing pupils. Each mathematical topic has a checklist of learning objectives which pupils use to guide self-assessment. All teachers agree with and implement all departmental policies. Teamwork and consistency are particular strengths of the department. The department has good resources to support teaching.

Science

114In the absence of KS3 SATs data, the evidence from inspection shows that attainment is at national standards in all year groups. A number of pupils in each year are working at levels which are above average. The pupils have good scientific knowledge and use the appropriate vocabulary with confidence. This is reinforced by the teachers' effective use of key words, an approach which could be used more consistently across the department. By the beginning of Year 9 they are able to use simple formulae and equations, collect experimental data accurately and systematically, make accurate predictions based on prior knowledge and experience and draw conclusions. They have a good understanding of experimental technique and have well developed ability to judge evidence.

115Progress is good throughout the Key Stage. Given their current rate of progress it is likely that the department's targets will be met and be in line with national expectations. Investigative skills are developed systematically through well structured activities but pupils' skills of analysis and evaluation are underdeveloped. Results are presented accurately with the correct use of appropriate units. Pupils are able to discuss all aspects of their work and this helps them to develop their understanding of concepts such as particle theory, change of state, cause and effect, the impact of variable factors in investigatory work and the use of controls.

116All pupils are encouraged to plan and perform experiments and to think critically about the value and accuracy of their results. They learn to recognise the key factors in the experiments and use their existing knowledge to predict the outcomes. Pupils are given some opportunities to use ICT for example with data logging in Year 9, but there is insufficient access to hardware for their skills of data analysis and modelling to be developed progressively throughout the Key Stage. All pupils learn how to work safely.

117Pupils with special needs make good progress. All staff plan effectively for these pupils and the focussed involvement of support staff is a strength of the department.

118Pupils respond well in lessons. They behave sensibly and think carefully about their work. They work well together and experimental work is conducted safely. Opportunities for group work and the use of collaboration to ensure the active involvement of all pupils and to gather a wider range of experimental results could be more consistently adopted across the department. Pupils show a good regard for apparatus and equipment.

119Teaching is good throughout the department and is a major factor in ensuring pupils make good progress throughout the Key Stage. Lessons are well planned, with high expectations and good pace. The teachers' clear expositions helped pupils' understanding but opportunities for more challenge and consolidation of learning could be achieved through a more systematic approach to questioning the pupils and ensuring all are involved. The range of activities and the use of 'Thinking Science' materials is having a positive impact on pupils' progress. The teachers are involved in extra curricular activities which the pupils enjoy and which enhance their progress and interest in the subject.

120Pupils regularly receive homework which is linked to work in class and is effective in consolidating and extending their learning and developing their literacy and numeracy skills.

121Assessment and marking is regular, comprehensive and provides useful feedback to the pupils, helping them to make improvements. Teachers have a good knowledge of all the pupils, their current attainment and potential which results in effective individual target setting which pupils find helpful and developmental.

122All teachers are well qualified and have a very good knowledge of the subject. The department has researched and planned for introducing Key Stage 4 but consideration needs to be given to the range of teachers' expertise and the need to offer a full GCSE programme. There is good technical support which contributes to the quality of pupils' learning through investigatory work.

123The department is very well managed. There is a strong ethos of achievement supported by detailed planning, effective monitoring and high expectations. Teachers support one another and strive successfully to improve pupils' attainment.

124The accommodation is good and resources are well managed. There is insufficient access to ICT hardware which limits pupils' opportunities to analyse, model and present experimental data.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

Art

125Overall standards of attainment in art are good. The department offers a high quality art education for all its pupils.

126By the end of Key Stage 3, the majority of pupils attain levels in art

which are above national expectations. Basic skills such as drawing and painting are systematically developed over the key stage so pupils' ability to use a variety of media to make visual responses, particularly when working from observation, is good. Painting is lively and vivid; pupils tackle colour work with confidence and enthusiasm.

127Pupils in year 7 are producing exciting and imaginative designs for a project on futuristic machines, showing their ability to collaborate in teams and use their drawing skills effectively.

128In year 8, the standard of observational drawing is above the level expected. Pupils were observed using a variety of drawing materials to make expressive self portraits. In year 9, pupils can draw confidently using the laws of perspective and make imaginative surrealistic compositions.

129Pupils are skilled at applying graphic techniques to create their design work. At present further development of this is limited because, due to building constraints, they have had few opportunities this year to explore their ideas through the use of computers. They show imagination and technical skill when making sculpture and can use a wide range of materials creatively. Personal research is used effectively to support class projects. They are exposed to a great deal of information about art and artists and most have acquired a sound grasp of the chronology, style and genre of art from different periods and cultures. Personal investigations into artists which pupils undertake during the holidays are of a high standard. Pupils use a wide variety of sources to gather information confidently and can justify their opinions about the artist they have chosen. In lessons, pupils talk clearly about their work and offer thoughtful evaluations of the work of their classmates.

130All pupils, including those on the SEN register, are making at least good progress in lessons. In some lessons progress is very good; pupils themselves are delighted at the progress they have made especially when they can see a significant improvement in their work. The very good teaching ensures that progress is steady over the key stage; assessment procedures allow for tracking pupils to ensure that individuals do not fall behind.

131Pupils are motivated, show interest in their work and concentrate well. They are well prepared for their lessons and complete their homework assignments on time. All pupils are respectful of their environment and take responsibility for their materials. They show initiative in using various sources to find out about artists.

132Teaching is purposeful and dynamic. In all lessons it is at least good and in nearly half of the lessons seen it is excellent. Teachers trust and believe in their pupils and always expect them to do their best. In return, pupils work extremely hard and show pride in their work. Teachers have a very good knowledge of the subject. Work is sufficiently challenging, time and resources are very well used and teachers supply a rich and stimulating range of supporting materials. In all lessons teachers ensure that the aims are very clear to pupils and encourage them to use and understand specialist language. Planning is excellent and the teaching methods used ensure that all pupils concentrate well and understand the concepts being taught. Very good use is made of presentations about art and artists and the demonstration of

art techniques. Teachers make full use of pupils' own experiences and interests to ensure that lessons are pertinent and meaningful. Expectations of behaviour are high and good classroom routines are well established. There are very good procedures for assessing pupils work. These are used consistently by teachers and explained carefully to the pupils. Homework is regularly set and marked and the tasks are appropriate.

133Overall management is excellent and leadership provides a clear vision for the development of the department. The curriculum meets statutory requirements, ensures a good balance of both attainment targets and provides an excellent preparation for Key Stage 4. To enhance the curriculum some use is made of local artists and galleries but this is an area which needs further development. Resources such as books, including library books, slides and videos are fairly limited in range and will need augmenting to ensure that they meet the demands of the Key Stage 4 curriculum next year.

Design and Technology

134There are wide variations in pupils' attainment when they enter year 7, generally because of the very different experiences they have had at Key Stage 2. Pupils' standards of attainment on entry are in line with those expected nationally. By the first term of year 9, many pupils are attaining at above national expectation, and the remainder are in line with national expectation, with a very small minority of pupils below. Overall the level of attainment is above average. The curriculum devised and delivered by the teachers in the department ensures that the pupils experience working in a variety of materials and techniques, which contributes significantly to the rise in standards. For example, pupils in year 8 learn how to manipulate aluminium sheet when designing and making Post-it note holders, and year 9 pupils use a computer controlled milling machine to cut out plywood profiles for CD racks.

135Pupils, including those with special needs, make good progress across the key stage. In some projects and during some lessons they make very good progress. This was evident when year 9 pupils were involved in a task to design and make foods with edible wrappers, which resulted in each pupil producing a good quality outcome, all of which were different. Pupils' progress is supported by the strong curriculum, the high quality of the teaching, and the pupils' own commitment to the task.

136Across the key stage, pupils' response to learning is very good. They enjoy their design and technology work and are keen to learn more about it. They are excited by the diversity of skills that they learn, and are proud of the high quality outcomes that they achieve. For example, a group of year 9 pupils who were involved in a mechanical toy project had produced some highly functional products, and were keen to demonstrate how they worked. Pupils work well in pairs and share tools and equipment sensibly and with a due regard for safety.

137The quality of teaching is good overall, and there are many instances of very good teaching. Teachers have very good subject knowledge, explain tasks and activities clearly, and have high expectations of pupils. There is an evident focus on accuracy and quality, which challenges the pupils to achieve higher standards. For example, year 8 pupils in a textiles lesson were making hats. The teacher explained very clearly what was expected, and what was unacceptable in terms of quality, which left the

pupils in no doubt about the standard of work they had to produce. Assessment is very good with a combination of pupils' self assessment, formal assessments by teachers during and at the end of projects and a clear link with the school's academic tutoring programme.

138The facilities in the department are very good, although the second resistant materials room is yet to be fully commissioned, which has a small impact upon pupils' learning.

139The head of department demonstrates outstanding leadership skills. She has an excellent grasp of the demands of the curriculum, and the most appropriate methods of delivery. Teachers in the department set themselves high standards, and there is a very consistent approach to the delivery of the subject across all lessons.

Geography

140Based on evidence from the inspection of work in lessons and samples of work pupils are approaching the nationally expected levels of attainment in Year 9; most should reach the expected level by the end of the year. They can describe significant geographical features, for instance how the earth's crust is divided into plates. They can relate these to events which impact on the lives of people in different parts of the world, through earthquakes and volcanoes. In younger classes they can describe the features which result from the erosional effect of rivers, and can relate these to a landscape. They have difficulty in relating information to maps and atlases, for instances knowing that the Pacific Ocean is contained within the "Ring of Fire" or the countries, as opposed to the continents, which are affected by earthquakes in South America.

141Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 7 and 8, this improves in Year 9 when work becomes more challenging. Overall progress is satisfactory. By Year 9 they can link ideas together to show how people impact on their environment and change it. More-able pupils make more limited progress since in most lessons they are set work which is similar to that set to the remainder of the class. Pupils with special educational needs are well-known to the teachers and are supported effectively to make good progress.

142Pupils show very good attitudes to their work. They arrive ready to learn, with all the necessary equipment. In one class where they were to devise a game they had prepared before the lesson, to the extent of bringing materials from home, and drafting ideas ready to discuss in their group. They support each other well in most instances, and listen to each other and the teacher in a mature fashion. This helps lessons to progress at a good pace as the pupils help the teacher to develop ideas.

143Teaching is good. The scheme of work is well developed and shows what is to be done in each lesson in some detail. Teachers adapt this to meet the needs of each class recognising where particular pupils or groups may have difficulty with vocabulary or other parts of the lesson. The timing for each section of the lesson is contained in the plan and teachers use this to sustain pace well. This only fails when pupils do not have sufficient knowledge to complete tasks in the time allowed, for instance when they have to fill details on a map but lack the necessary preliminary knowledge. Teachers set out the purpose of the lesson clearly and in the best lessons they also set out what is to be covered, so that

pupils are learning how to pace the work to meet all the objectives. In some pupils' books the objective of the lesson or homework is included with the title. This helps pupils to refer back to previous work and revise what they have learned. The relationship between teachers and pupils is very good. Teachers set an example with regard to the setting and completion of homework by making themselves available after school to support those who may be experiencing difficulty.

144The department is well managed. The scheme of work is used to maintain consistency between classes, and work is monitored. Assessment procedures are good, particularly where departmental meetings are used to compare pieces of work from different classes. This contributes to a consistent and high standard, and also supports teachers who are not specialists in geography. The subject has adequate resources in the form of text books and videos. There are just enough atlases, though they are not used enough. There are some Ordnance Survey maps but they are not used. The department has access to one networked computer in each room, and some additional stand alone machines were used in one classroom. This is a worse position than last year because use of the ICT room with whole classes is planned into the scheme of work, and the room is not available. Teachers make effective use of the available machines by adapting lessons and offer after-school sessions where they will help pupils with homework using computers in the library. The provision of books in the library is inadequate to provide additional material, particularly for more able pupils.

History

145At Key Stage 3, pupils reach standards in line with national expectations. Pupils show a sound knowledge and understanding of key historical topics including why the Romans came to ancient Britain, the causes and consequences of poverty in the sixteenth century as well as features of the slave trade in the eighteenth century. Pupils use and interpret a range of historical evidence including artefacts in addition to visual and textual primary sources. In a lesson on Roman artefacts, pupils showed that they could ask good questions about the origins of this type of evidence.

146Pupils make good progress, both in lessons and during the Key Stage. In one lesson, Year 8 pupils made good gains in their understanding of the causes of poverty in the sixteenth century before considering how this problem might be tackled. Pupils adopted the role of being an adviser to the Tudor government before writing up their findings for homework. Progress is good because of the brisk pace of learning and overall standards of literacy which mean that pupils are quickly able to understand historical concepts. For example, in most lessons, pupils take part well in effective speaking and listening work, particularly in whole-class lessons. The department is achieving its aim of promoting classroom discussion with students learning to listen as well as expressing their own viewpoint. Occasionally, progress is unsatisfactory; this is because pupils are not sufficiently clear about what they have to do. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because teachers target them with extra support in order to explain the work.

147Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Their enjoyment of history was clear in a follow-up lesson to a visit to a local museum. Pupils

work well in pairs and show consideration for others. Their behaviour and attitudes were impressive in a lesson where they handled Roman artefacts. In particular, pupils contribute well to plenary sessions. For example, in one year 8 lesson, some pupils used the whiteboard effectively to explain aspects of the changing fortunes of the monarchy and parliament in the Middle Ages. Occasionally, pupils do not concentrate sufficiently in lessons.

148The quality of teaching is good. Teachers display good subject knowledge about a wide range of historical topics and have high expectations about the level of application they want pupils to show. Teachers manage pupils well and lessons proceed at a brisk pace, with suitable time limits being set for students to complete tasks. Learning objectives are mostly well tackled. For example, in one year 8 lesson about the Tudors, the teacher set out the learning intention clearly at the beginning of the lesson and explained that this would lead on to a suitable homework exercise. During the lesson itself, the tasks set provided pupils with the knowledge and understanding needed to tackle the homework. Teaching provides extra support for pupils with SEN by means of extra explanations and reinforcement. The main weakness of teaching is that lesson planning does not meet sufficiently well the needs of higher attaining pupils and, sometimes, there is a lack of clarity about learning objectives.

149The department makes good use of assessment data in order to monitor pupils' attainment and progress as well as for setting out strategies for under-attainment.

150The quality of management is good. There is a detailed and well-structured development plan and the quality of planning for Key Stage 4 is good. There are clear procedures for monitoring the work of the department. The quality of communication is very good and members of the humanities department work well together as a team. The provision and use of resources for teaching, including the use of museum loan collections, is good within the department. The provision of books in the library is unsatisfactory.

Information and Communication Technology

151Information technology is delivered through one dedicated lesson in the computer room each week, and subject specific use of ICT in other subjects.

152When communicating and handling information, pupils' attainment in lessons is at national expectation overall. Year 7 pupils can use Excel software to enter information and sort it into categories. Year 9 pupils can present information in a variety of forms to suit different purposes, and use the software package to solve number problems. Year 8 pupils in science lessons use computers to track information, for example on the changes in temperature during the school day in various parts of the building. Pupils in design and technology lessons use computers to control sewing machines and milling machines, and achieve high quality outcomes. Year 8 pupils in geography lessons use computers effectively for modelling to determine areas that would make the most appropriate industrial sites.

153Pupils have made good progress in ICT lessons over the course of this

academic year, and some pupils have made very good progress. Pupils' progress is evident in the gains in knowledge that they make in lessons, and the way they apply that knowledge to the other subjects of the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress in lessons. There is limited evidence about pupils' progress prior to this academic year.

154Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good overall, and excellent at times. The pupils are very keen to learn and are curious about the new skills that they are able to develop. They listen attentively and work well in pairs to achieve a common outcome when computers have to be shared. They are confident in their use of the machines, which is helped by the fact that the majority of the pupils have computers at home.

155The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers have secure subject knowledge, set tasks that challenge and stimulate the pupils, resource lessons effectively, and use the equipment to its fullest potential. There are, however, inconsistencies in lesson planning and approach that sometimes have a negative impact on learning. For example, learning objectives are not always made clear which results in some pupils being unsure about what they are being asked to do.

156There is no scheme of work at present, which is unsatisfactory, and the new head of department has not yet carried out a curriculum mapping exercise to see where the National Curriculum is being delivered in other areas of the school..

157Access to the computer room is very limited for other subject areas, which is unsatisfactory. The scheduled setting up of just one additional computer room is unlikely to ease the situation as the school expands. The network supports only one computer in each teaching room, though there are some stand alone machines of suitable quality.

158Currently there is no technical support in information technology, which is unsatisfactory because the head of department has to commission new machines and maintains existing ones. This added burden has had a negative impact upon curriculum development in the subject.

159The school is not on the Internet, which limits the development of pupils' research and investigational skills.

Modern Foreign Languages

160Attainment overall is good and comfortably in line with national expectations. It is better in listening and speaking skills, which are particularly well developed. The attainment is particularly good in Year 8 and especially in lower ability classes. Pupils cope well with the teacher using the target language, rarely having difficulties in understanding instructions and having strategies if they need to ask for further explanations. They use the target language routinely for classroom conversation, often using complex sentences. They frequently try to incorporate previously learnt language into spontaneous remarks in order to communicate with the teacher. There was evidence of higher level attainment in writing in some Year 9 work but no evidence seen of extended or higher level reading tasks. Many pupils should exceed national expectations in at least listening and speaking by the end of KS3.

161Progress in lessons and over time is good. There was excellent progress in two year 7 lessons. The clear objectives set at the beginning of the lesson and the personalised target setting seen in exercise books have a major impact on pupils' progress and attainment.

162Attitudes to learning are very good and in most lessons excellent. Pupils are courteous, well behaved and thoroughly engaged in the lessons. They want to learn. The high level of motivation was impressive. The pupils were treated very well and in turn they treated each other very well.

163Teaching in general is very good and in many lessons excellent. Expectations are high for pupils of all levels of ability and they respond accordingly. The teachers enjoy teaching. The target language is used systematically throughout the lesson, including for the teaching of grammar. A multi-sensory approach is used to help pupils learn and retain vocabulary and a wide range of activities; chosen for their motivational as well as learning benefit, ensure concentration, enjoyment and achievement. Assessment is used effectively, especially during lessons where tasks are well targeted to meet the needs of pupils. In a small minority of lessons where teaching was not so effective, the teacher was less confident, the target language was not used consistently and the range of activities offered was rather narrow.

164The department is very well led. The Head of Department has established a good curriculum for KS3. The teachers ensure that it works by working together and consulting with each other. The department has trialled, evaluated and adjusted the Scheme of Work to the point where it now works very well, with very good assessment procedures. The challenge now is to create an equally effective curriculum for KS4. Resources in classes are very good, and have a wide range of first hand materials in the target languages. Provision of books in the library is inadequate.

Music

165The department achieves good levels of attainment in pupils' performance but the unsatisfactory coverage of composition and analysis results in Year 9 pupils' overall attainment in music being below national the expectation for the final year of the Key Stage 3 course. Year 9 pupils show good technical control when playing musical instruments, for example when playing an arrangement of "Arribba" and those that receive specialist instrumental tuition play their instruments competently and confidently in class activities. When performing as a class orchestra pupils keep well together, reflecting good listening skills. Year 9 pupils' composing skills are unsatisfactory. They are able to improvise short musically-logical phrases but do not compose their own pieces. Their knowledge of music of different times and places is superficial and unsatisfactory in relation to national expectation.

166Instrumentalists attain satisfactory, and in some instances good, playing standards for the lengths of time they have been learning. Pupils attain good standards in performance. Recordings of concerts indicate that pupils perform confidently and with musical conviction when playing to audiences.

167The extent of pupils' progress across the Key Stage 3 music course is

unsatisfactory. Year 7 pupils produce some imaginative creative work, such as 'Bumps and Crashes', though they do not build upon these good beginnings to produce more refined compositions over time. Pupils, including those with special needs, make satisfactory progress in lessons, where they use their appraising skills to improve the standard of their playing. Too frequently more able musicians are not sufficiently challenged by the work they are given and so make limited progress for their ability. In specialist tuition lessons they build well upon the guidance offered by teachers and make good progress.

168Pupils' attitude is good in class music lessons, instrumental lessons and extra-curricular activities. They are keen to learn and engage enthusiastically in activities. Standards of behaviour are good, allowing pupils to work productively. When engaged in practical work, pupils work well independently and, where opportunities arise, share expertise well to help each other to improve.

169The quality of teaching at Key Stage 3 is satisfactory. Initial teacher expositions are concise, maximising the time available for music-making. Good technical expertise across a wide range of instruments is used well to assist pupils to develop their performing skills. Lesson planning is satisfactory. There is an appropriate emphasis on practical involvement and plans give some indication of extension tasks for more able pupils. Lesson plans and the useful assessment information gathered on pupils' performing skills are not used in a sufficiently focused way to address effectively pupils' needs at their different stages of musical development. Class management is good, with well-established codes of musical discipline established within an environment where pupils are encouraged to participate. Relevant homework tasks are set regularly. These are almost exclusively of a practical nature. This promotes the development of pupils' performing skills though homework is not used to extend pupils' musical knowledge and understanding, for example, through mini-research activities. The quality of instrumental teaching is good. Lessons are well paced and teacher expectation in most is high. Teachers use their instrumental expertise and experience well to identify suitable strategies to assist pupils in improving their playing. The quality of teaching in extra-curricular activities is good, and at best, as in the rock/jazz groups, is very good. The department has very good resources in the form of keyboards and instruments to enable pupils to improve their performance. The lack of small rooms, at present, to enable pupils to work in groups to refine and develop compositions is contributing to below average standards in this part of the curriculum.

170Four key factors contribute to pupils' standards being below national expectation at Key Stage 3. The total time available for delivering the course is insufficient to allow the National Curriculum programmes of study to be covered in suitable depth. Lack of professional development focusing on delivery of the Key Stage 3 music course has resulted in a scheme of work that lacks progression and continuity in developing pupils' composing skills and their knowledge of music. The lack of practice areas in the immediate vicinity of the music room has imposed restrictions on the way activities have had to be organised. This has adversely affected pupils' attainment.

171The department offers a good range of extra-curricular activities across a broad range of musical styles, ranging from string quartet to jazz/rock groups. These are well supported by pupils. Pupils have good

opportunities to perform in concerts and occasionally in assemblies, though there are few opportunities for them to perform on less-formal platforms, such as to groups of friends at lunchtimes. Pupils have been provided with a number of good opportunities to listen to other musicians perform, though as yet, no visits have been organised to musical entertainments.

Physical Education

172Overall standards at KS3 are in line with expectations with higher than expected standards in volleyball, dance, Y8 gymnastics, football and badminton. In gymnastics pupils can jump from a bench showing height, control and a variety of body shapes although some find difficulty in linking actions fluently; they support each others' weight confidently. In rhythmic gymnastics pupils control a ball with their hands but are less skilful when using other body parts. In netball pupils show good control when throwing and catching, understand possession tactics but cannot apply them confidently. In football they perform a half-volley in both co-operative and pressurised situations. They can dig and smash effectively in volleyball in both co-operative and competitive situations. Pupils can push and stop a hockey ball with control, some can block tackle and show good spatial awareness when playing games. In badminton they understand and apply simple attack and defence strokes. In dance pupils good knowledge of dynamics helps them to change speed and levels of their action. Their movement vocabulary is good and they move sensitively to the music. Pupils ability to evaluate their own and others' work is good.

173Pupils' very good capacity to recall and retain information leads to the majority making good progress and a few make very good progress. Pupils who have special educational needs are fully integrated into lessons and make good progress.

174Pupils attitudes to work are very good and occasionally excellent. They concentrate and work very hard. They collaborate well, showing respect and trust for each other. Their answers to questions show good depth of understanding, particularly in dance.

175Teaching is good with some very good features. Planning is good, subject expertise is used well to provide very effective teaching points. Feedback to pupils is positive and helpful. All teachers recap on previous work and recall the main points of the lesson. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good.

176Curriculum provision is very good. Schemes of work and lesson frameworks provide a good base for planning. Assessment procedures are sound. Evaluations of lessons are not sufficiently focused on the next stage of learning. Extra-curricular provision is very good and provides a wide range of activities. Teams and individuals have been successful in local and county events particularly in cross-country and girls football. Coaches from local clubs supplement the programme giving pupils an introduction to community provision. Visits to dance performances are often linked appropriately to curriculum work.

177Management is good. The head of department has worked very hard to

develop his staff. Regular monitoring of planning and teaching is effective, leading to a consistent approach. The department is in a solid position to move forward.

178Resources are good although limited for gymnastics, book provision in the library is poor. Accommodation is well maintained and adequate for the existing programme.

Religious Education

179Standards of attainment are below those set out in the Sutton Agreed Syllabus for RE.

180Standards are erratic and some pieces of work meet, and occasionally even exceed expectations in attainment target 1 (learning about religions); but overall the most common pattern is for pupils to display a limited depth of understanding involving no more than basic factual knowledge. Standards in attainment target 2 (learning from religions) are well below expectations.

181Occasionally, standards in the first attainment target are good; for example, an extended account of the similarities and differences of three Christian denominations by some pupils in year 8. In some lessons in year 7, work on the origin of the Christian gospels meets the expected standard but in other lessons it does not do so.

182In the later part of the key stage, standards are below expectations in both attainment targets. Pupils can express a personal viewpoint on the issue of abortion but this is not grounded sufficiently in religious beliefs or their implications.

183Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make unsatisfactory progress; it is variable and inconsistent across the Key Stage. In lessons, progress ranges from good to unsatisfactory but with weaknesses outweighing strengths overall. Progress is good when pupils are clear about how to perform a task and when they use their speaking and listening skills well in order to deepen their understanding. Progress is unsatisfactory when pupils are uncertain about the purpose of the work and when learning lacks sufficient pace.

184Pupils' attitudes to learning are sound overall and are good in some lessons. Pupils work well in pairs or small groups and they are keen to be involved in oral work. They are eager to volunteer ideas and to make helpful suggestions. Pupils' personal development is often restricted by limited opportunities to discuss issues or to write personal responses in the light of religious beliefs and practices.

185The quality of teaching is sound. The strengths are that in some lessons teaching shows good expectations about pupils' behaviour and application to tasks and good classroom management skills. In some instances, teachers use enterprising methods to explain complex ideas. For example, in two lessons, teaching used lively and interesting methods in order to help pupils understand the origins of the gospels in Christianity; one of these involved modern day soap-operas. In another lesson, teaching made suitable use of time deadlines so that pupils were aware how much time they had in order to complete a small piece of research into Christian communion. The main weakness is that teaching

displays insufficient subject knowledge and understanding in some aspects of the first attainment target, and particularly in relation to the second attainment target. Teaching demonstrates a weak match between the work set and the range of pupils' learning needs.

186Management shows both strengths and weaknesses but it is unsatisfactory overall. Humanities teachers work well together and plan to use skills and concepts common to history, geography and RE. At times this works well but, on other occasions, it does not. The main weakness relates to understanding and implementing the particular requirements of the LEA's Agreed Syllabus for RE. In respect of the contribution of RE to pupils' spiritual development it makes a sound contribution in terms of their learning about religions but less so in terms of drawing out the deeper significance for people today. There are adequate books within the department to support the teaching, but the provision of books in the library is unsatisfactory.

Hearing Support Department

187The Hearing Support Department is a strength of the school; it provides excellent support for its pupils. Students are integrated very well into the everyday life of the school.

188Pupils' attainment is below average in relation to the expectations of the subjects of the National Curriculum. However, in relation to pupils' prior attainment, standards are good and pupils make very good progress.

189Standards in literacy are very good. Reading standards are close to national averages and pupils read almost fluently. Pupils use extended speech very effectively, for example, in discussing moral dilemmas.

190Standards in numeracy are also very good; they are just below national expectations for all pupils. Younger students know "the order of operations" and have strategies to work out correct answers. Older pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding about shape, area, weights and measures.

191Attainment in science and food technology is good and close to national standards. In music, standards are above average in percussion, for example, using a drum kit.

192Pupils make very good progress both in mainstream lessons and particularly in the small number of sessions held in the Hearing Support Department. Progress is strong in mathematics lessons with pupils making significant gains. Pupils' progress in the range of curriculum subjects is re-inforced very well in withdrawal sessions. Students benefit from discussing knowledge, skills and concepts in a small group situation.

193Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. Pupils enjoy their work and display admirable perseverance in their determination to overcome obstacles to learning. When it is important to read a lot of text, pupils show very good application. When discussion work is vital to a lesson, pupils speak clearly and almost fluently, even when this imposes a considerable challenge.

194The quality of teaching is very good. Teaching shows a high level of subject knowledge and understanding about the learning needs of pupils

with hearing impairment. For example, learning tasks are broken down well into small steps and teaching shows a very good grasp of the different subjects of the curriculum. Teaching makes effective use of these subjects in order to improve significantly pupils' standards of literacy. Teachers make very good use of a suitable range of learning resources, particularly the overhead projector. Lesson planning is detailed and very clear about learning objectives. There are high expectations about pupils' standards of attainment and homework is used well to reinforce what has been learnt in class. Class teachers and learning support assistants work well together during lessons.

195The curriculum is excellent. The curriculum model of providing pupils with subject expertise and learning support in mainstream lessons reinforced by a small number of withdrawal sessions is working very effectively.

196Pupils' statements of special educational need are well organised and students' individual education plans (IEPs) are excellent. Pupils are set very specific targets to attain. There are also separate subject specific plans for each student in each subject; these are reviewed each term.

197Management of the unit is excellent. There are comprehensive development plans using a well-structured pro-forma; these are broken down into short- and long-term plans. There is an extremely good departmental policy document which is comprehensive and set out in clear language. Communication with the Governing Body is very good; the head of department meets with a designated link governor. The department also undertakes a monitoring exercise and gives feedback to teachers on classroom observations. It provides in-service training for all teachers on how best to teach pupils with hearing impairment.

198Communication with parents is very good; this includes a regular newsletter. The department reports strong support from outside agencies, particularly the Educational Psychology Service though there is a temporary shortage of support for speech therapy.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

199The Registered Inspector and Support Inspector met with the Headteacher and Chair of Governors to explain the inspection and begin the collection of evidence. They then met 34 parents and received their comments about aspects of the school. The school distributed 606 copies of a questionnaire for parents, 151 were returned and analysed by inspectors.

200All the inspectors reviewed the policies, schemes of work and other documents presented by the school, and wrote a pre-inspection commentary and identified issues for the inspection.

201Eleven inspectors spent a total of 36.5 days in the school over 4 days. During that time they observed 144 lessons or parts of lessons. They inspected the work of 6 pupils from each year group and interviewed them in groups for 50 minutes about their work and views about the

school. They interviewed the Headteacher, deputy headteachers, Heads of Department and other teaching staff with responsibilities. There was an extended interview with the Chair of Governors and the chairs of the governing body's sub-committees. Interviews were also conducted with the Senior Administrator and secretaries, with learning support staff, welfare assistants and meal supervisors. Pupils were tested to ascertain their knowledge in mathematics.

202 DATA AND INDICATORS

Pupil data

Y7 - Y9	606	21	117	55
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Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (Y7- Y9)	
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	17.31:1

Education support staff (Y7 - Y9)	
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	294.5

Financial data (£)

Total Income	955343
Total Expenditure	927904
Expenditure per pupil	3156
Balance brought forward from previous year	61458
Balance carried forward to next year	88897

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires returned: 151

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	23.1	61.9	10.2	4.8	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	39.5	50.3	6.8	2.0	1.4
The school handles complaints from parents well	20.9	41.8	32.8	2.2	2.2
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	34.2	54.4	10.1	1.3	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	45.7	41.4	10.7	2.1	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	48.3	44.8	5.5	1.4	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	53.0	42.4	3.3	1.3	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	30.5	50.3	11.9	6.6	0.7
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	45.6	46.9	6.1	1.4	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	38.8	56.5	4.1	0.7	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	53.6	42.4	4.0	0	0