

INSPECTION REPORT

HIGHAMS PARK SCHOOL

Handsworth Ave, Highams Park, E4 9PJ

LEA area: Waltham Forest

Unique reference number: 103107

Headteacher: Mr Anthony Perrett

Reporting inspector: Ms Jennifer Smith
RgI No: 2069

Dates of inspection: 16th - 18th October 2000

Inspection number: 223734

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	11 to 18
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Handsworth Ave Highams Park London
Postcode:	E4 9PJ
Telephone number:	020 8527 4051
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S Carter
Date of previous inspection:	13th November 1995

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Number of full time pupils comprehensives nationally)	1362 (bigger than average)
Pupils with English as an additional language	5.3% (above the national average)
Pupils entitled to free school meals average)	10.9% (broadly in line with national
Pupils on the register of special educational needs average)	19.8% (broadly in line with the national
Pupils with statements of special educational needs	1% (below the national average)
Average number of pupils per teacher	16 (below average)

The school is a mixed comprehensive for pupils aged 11 to 18 and has a broad ability intake. The school population is 1362 and has remained approximately this size for the last few years. It is a very popular school and heavily oversubscribed each year. The school gained Technology College status in 1997. The number of pupils on the register of special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average. The school serves the whole ability range including pupils with specific learning difficulties. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is in line with the national averages; their attainment at age 14 (end of key stage 3) and at 16 (end of key stage 4) has been above the national average for the last three years. Attainment in the sixth form is broadly in line with performance nationally.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Highams Park school is a good and vibrant school with many strengths and relatively few weaknesses. Teaching in Key Stages 3, 4 and in the sixth form is good overall and almost all teaching is at least satisfactory. In a high percentage of lessons the teaching is good or very good. The headteacher and the senior management team provide clear and effective leadership and offer appropriate guidance for middle management in the school (heads of department and heads of year). As a result, the progress made by pupils in Key Stage 3 and 4 and in the sixth form is good, contributing significantly to high standards in the school. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- National test results at Key Stage 3 and GCSE examination results at Key Stage 4 are above national averages.
- The quality of teaching is good overall because the teachers know their pupils well, are able to motivate them, structure the learning to meet pupils' needs and create a positive climate for learning.
- The headteacher provides good and effective leadership. Together with his senior management team, he has been successful in motivating the staff to encompass new challenges and to raise standards still further. This is supported by an effective Governing Body, providing both challenge and support for the headteacher.
- The positive and caring ethos of the school contributes to high expectations of all pupils.
- The monitoring and evaluation of both pupil progress and the quality of teaching help to maintain good standards.
- The range and quality of extra curricular provision in the school contributes significantly to the well rounded education of its pupils.

What could be improved

- The school should develop strategies for supporting behaviour management particularly, for boys in Year 9 and Key Stage 4, in the few classes where behaviour is less than good.
- A wider range of teaching strategies should be adopted in some lessons in order to maximise learning opportunities.
- The recent differences in the attainment of boys and girls at the higher grades of GCSE should be addressed.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress since its last inspection in November 1995. The focus for the school over the last five years has been continual improvement by addressing the issues in the last inspection report and achieving this within a changing educational scene.

In addressing aspects of planning:

Considerable progress had been made in reducing the budget deficit after the last inspection during the time when the school had grant maintained status. The school now has voluntary aided status and is awaiting the outcome of financial negotiations with the LEA; at present it has a planned budget deficit. The school development plan (SDP) closely matches the school's priorities and this is further reflected in departmental plans. The plans are sound and the SDP is costed. The plan now covers a three year period which allows for lead-in time of some developments. Schemes of work have been reviewed and departments have begun to implement 'Curriculum 2000'.

In relation to monitoring and evaluation:

The budget is closely and effectively monitored by the school with the appointment of a school bursar and a fully computerised financial system now in place. The cost effectiveness of spending decisions is monitored by the Governing Body which is fully involved in rigorous financial decision making and reporting structures. The school has a systematic means of monitoring standards, policies and the quality of teaching and learning. Senior team 'link managers' support heads of department and heads of year in their monitoring role and provide an effective line of communication with the senior team.

A daily act of collective worship now takes place either in assemblies or in the 'thought for the day' in tutor bases. The quality of the latter is variable.

Although not a key issue, information technology was a weakness at the last inspection. This is being improved through the school's successful bid for Technology College status in 1997.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with		Key well above A
	all schools	similar schools	

	1998	1999	2000	2000	average	
					above average	B
					average	C
GCSE examinations 5+ A* - C	A	B	B	B	below average	D
					well below average	E
A-levels/AS-levels	A	C	C	N/A		

At the end of Year 9 pupils' results in the national tests for 14 year olds in 2000, were well above the national average in English, mathematics and science when compared to all schools nationally. This has been the general trend for the last three years. When these results are compared with schools of a similar intake, English and mathematics are well above and science above, similar schools. There was little difference in 2000 between the achievement of boys and girls at Key Stage 3.

At the end of Year 11, in 2000, the percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A* - C GCSE grades was above the national average and above the average for similar schools. GCSE results have remained consistently well above national averages for pupils gaining 5 or more A* - G results over the last three years and reflect positive value added from pupils' performance on entry to the school. In 2000, although both boys and girls reached standards above the national average, there were marked gender differences, with girls outperforming boys in many subjects at A* - C grades. Pupils did particularly well in English, mathematics, science, technology and art. They did least well in French, geography and business studies.

The school performs broadly in line with all schools nationally at A and A/S level examinations. Students across the ability range achieve well. Students with special educational needs achieve well because teachers adapt their teaching appropriately to take account of pupils' needs and the targets in their individual education plans.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils show positive attitudes to school and are keen to participate in lessons; they enjoy school and are interested in their work. They see the school as a safe place, where they are supported in their learning and personal development. Pupils are keen to accept responsibility for, and take an active role in, their own learning. They work well and co-operatively in groups.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in lessons and around school is generally good. This has a beneficial effect on learning and life in the school. There were a few lessons in Years 9 and 10 where poor behaviour of a minority of pupils impeded pupils' learning. Pupils reported that instances of poor behaviour are dealt with speedily and effectively by teachers. The number of pupil exclusions has reduced recently.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between pupils are friendly and the good relationships between pupils and their teachers contribute significantly to their motivation. Pupils value the support offered by teachers when they have difficulties either with their work or of a more personal nature.
Attendance	Attendance rates are good and are above the national average; unauthorised

	absence is below the national average. Almost all pupils arrive punctually and lessons get off to a brisk start.
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The school's positive ethos provides pupils with a secure base for their personal development. Pupils approach most lessons with a willingness to learn.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Throughout the school, teaching is almost always sound and frequently good or very good. Teaching in Key Stage 3 was satisfactory or better in well over 9 out of 10 of lessons observed; of these, over 7 out of 10 were good or very good. In Key Stage 4, in almost 9 out of 10 lessons teaching was satisfactory or better with almost 7 out of 10 being good or very good. In the sixth form all teaching seen was satisfactory or better and in 8 out of 10 lessons was good or very good. Teachers have a good knowledge of their subjects and this has a positive impact on the standards achieved by pupils. Lessons are invariably well planned and teachers are skilled at providing a very clear structure for learning. Consequently, pupils of all abilities make good progress not only in English, mathematics and science but also, for example, in art, history, geography, physical education, music and sociology. Teachers offer good support for pupils who enter the school with poorly developed skills in reading, writing and basic number work.

In the most effective lessons, clear whole class instruction is combined with opportunities for pupils to develop their skills of collaboration, creativity and independent study. These lessons are lively, well paced and offer pupils a variety of opportunities to consolidate their learning. Information and communication technology (ICT) is not always used to best effect in lessons, though in some subjects such as modern foreign languages, teachers plan a stimulating diet of activities drawing upon ICT. Overall, the learning needs are satisfactorily met for boys and girls, pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those with special educational needs. In the large majority of lessons pupils are appropriately challenged. Where teachers endeavour to develop pupils' ability to become actively involved in their own learning, the level of challenge is high.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range are good in Key Stages 3 and 4 and satisfactory in the sixth form. The provision of extra curricular activities is very good and enhances pupils' learning. All pupils have lessons in the performing arts and further excellent opportunities are provided at lunchtime and after school. The sixth form curriculum caters well for the academic students but there is only the addition of intermediate and advanced GNVQ in business studies and BTec in performing arts for those not doing A or A/S levels.
Provision for pupils	Good. Lessons are set at level appropriate to pupils' abilities

with special educational needs	and additional support is well focused to meet individual needs and the requirements of pupils' statements of special educational needs. Staff are beginning to use individual education plans effectively and to plan work accordingly. Pupils' progress is monitored through the special educational needs (SEN) department and through whole school systems.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Teachers tackle the language needs of all pupils well; subject specific language is made clear and pupils are encouraged to use and practice unfamiliar vocabulary.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall. Pupils' moral, social and cultural development are well supported. Teachers show respect for pupils and in turn this creates mutual respect for the teacher and for other pupils in the class. Cultural development is well supported by visits and theatre trips. Spiritual development is less well developed.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very effective care is provided for all pupils and their performance and development is monitored well. Procedures for health and safety and child protection are in place. The procedures are clear and understood by staff.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership and management of the school are strengths. The headteacher has been able to reshape and redirect the senior team recently and this is already having an impact on the general direction of the school. The senior management team's sights are set on further improvements and raising standards, helped by their new roles and responsibilities. Opportunities have been grasped to improve the school; for example the technology college status and the 'gifted and talented' project (part of the 'Excellence in Cities' initiative). The heads of department and year heads form a strong, committed and hard working team of teachers who have high expectations of pupils.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The Governing Body has taken a more strategic view of the school since the last inspection. Governors are effective and fulfil their responsibilities. They are well informed and make good use of their committees.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Constructive use of performance data and evaluation of teaching is made by senior managers and heads of departments. This includes work sampling and lesson observation. Tutors play a key role in co-ordinating pupils' reports, carrying out academic reviews and setting targets for individual pupils.
The strategic use of resources	The finances of the school are targeted on priorities which include appropriate and adequate staffing to support setting arrangements and, for example, in providing learning mentors for vulnerable pupils. The school closely monitors its budget and applies fully the principle of best value.

Particular strengths are in the Headteacher's restructuring of a strengthened senior management team, who all share a common purpose. The strategic direction provided by the headteacher supports further progress and builds on recent high standards. The reviews of pupil progress which are made available to all staff on a regular basis enable departments to target particular pupils who may be making less satisfactory progress. Team work and consistency across the school underpin much of the school's success. The school provides good value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is highly regarded by parents who say that the school is well led and managed. • Parents say the school promotes high standards and teaches the pupils appropriate attitudes and values. • The school responds rapidly to incidents of poor behaviour and keeps parents informed. • The setting arrangements help to stretch pupils to reach high standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents felt that behaviour in bottom sets was not as good as it should be and that the behaviour of a few boys interrupted the work of some classes. • A few parents felt the setting system lacked flexibility. • Parents of some pupils with special educational needs expressed concern that children were not always supported adequately, particularly with the resources needed.

Nine out of ten parents who completed the questionnaire agree or strongly agree that the teachers have high expectations of pupils and that pupils make good progress at school. The inspectors concurred with the positive comments made by the parents but did find a small number of disruptive boys in a minority of classes. Generally, the support offered to pupils with special educational needs has improved since the last inspection, further resources both in teacher time and material resources have been provided. The inspectors judge that there is still some work to be done in the area of special needs, in particular in relation to the identification of behaviour management strategies, which can then be shared with teaching staff.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

National test results at Key Stage 3 and GCSE examination results at Key Stage 4 are above national averages.

1. Pupils' results at Key Stage 2 tests and early assessments in the school, indicate that their levels of achievement on entry to the school are in line with national averages. By the end of Key Stage 3 (in 2000), pupils' attainment in national tests at level 5 and above, was well above the national average in English and mathematics and above the national average for science. The school's results also show pupils to be achieving above schools with a similar intake in English and science and achieving well above in mathematics. Over the last four years, attainment in English and science tests have remained above the national average, whilst performance in mathematics has been consistently high and well above national averages. The high standards achieved are attributed to the quality of teaching and the high expectations which teachers have of their pupils. Homework contributes significantly to the progress made by pupils during Years 7, 8 and 9.
2. Pupils also do well at Key Stage 4. In 2000, 57% of pupils gained 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE against the national average for all schools of 49%. Similarly, for pupils gaining 5 or more A*-G grades and 1 or more A*-G grades the school was above the national average. When comparing the school's results with schools that have a similar intake, the school is still above average for 5 or more GCSEs and in line with similar schools for 1 or more GCSEs. Pupils do particularly well in English, mathematics and science and art, drama and physical education. Pupils also exceeded national performance at A*-C grades in 2000 in the following subjects: English literature, technology, sociology, history and music. Pupils' achievement at the top GCSE grades was lower than the national average in geography, business studies and French. Whilst the results of both boys and girls in most subjects at GCSE are above or well above national averages, the girls performed significantly better than the boys in nearly all subjects. In a number of subjects the difference was greater than the national trends.
3. The trend over the last 4 years at GCSE has been consistently well above or above the national average and also in comparison with schools of a similar intake. The gains in pupils' knowledge and skills from Key Stage 3 are effectively built upon to achieve good GCSE results, this was borne out by the lesson observations during the inspection. There is considerable 'value added' as pupils move from Key Stage 3 to 4. Pupils of all abilities do well. Pupils are well prepared for tests and examinations and close monitoring of under-performance contributes to the school's success. The school uses performance data systematically and effectively and is able to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses by year group and on an individual pupil basis. The performance of boys has varied considerably from one year to the next. A mentoring programme in year 11 contributes to the overall support and provision for pupils at Key Stage 4.
4. In the sixth form students results are generally in line with national averages. Point scores for students achieving 2 or more A levels or their equivalent and for students with fewer than 2 A levels or their equivalent, are also in line with national averages. The GNVQ results have been higher than the national average and the quality of teaching supporting students' studies is good. The quality of feedback given by teachers to students in the sixth form on their written work is particularly good in many subject areas. A high percentage of students leave the school to go onto further or higher education, many gaining places on degree courses at university.

The quality of teaching is good overall because the teachers know their pupils well, are able to motivate them, structure the learning to meet pupils' needs and create a positive climate for learning.

5. The overall quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Nearly every lesson is at least satisfactory and in a very high percentage of lessons the teaching is good or very good. In Key Stage 3, nearly three quarters of lessons were good or very good. In Key Stage 4 two thirds were good or very good and in the sixth form over three quarters were good or very good. This enables all pupils to make good progress in most lessons and make significant gains in their knowledge and skills.
6. Most lessons are characterised by thorough planning which enables pupils, including those with special educational needs to grasp the lesson's key aims. Pupils are usually clear about what is required in the lesson and in good lessons, why the tasks are being set. Pupils are made aware of the connections between work learnt in earlier lessons and the work in hand. A high proportion of teachers also use the end of the lesson to good effect by pulling the lesson's key learning points together into a well structured plenary. The most effective of these provide the teachers with the opportunity to assess the pupils' learning in the lesson.
7. Teacher exposition and information giving is usually very good, clear and often with a visual stimulus to support the points being made. For example, there were some very effective board drawings in art and referencing to examples of art work on display which helped exemplify points being made.
8. Question and answer sessions in lessons are rather more variable. In some instances only brief answers are sought from pupils but where good learning takes place teachers ask pupils why they gave the answer they did and ask pupils for fuller explanations of their answers. A further characteristic of good teaching is the range of carefully prepared activities which pupils undertake. This not only helps to maintain a lively pace in the lesson but provides a variety of ways into the lesson for more reluctant pupils. The range of teaching styles is the singular most noticeable quality where teaching is very good. The school has a number of very able teachers, including some new staff to the school and newly accredited Advanced Skills Teachers. The very best practice which exists in the school, is not yet widely shared across departments.
9. Learning mentors for disaffected and under-achieving pupils are especially effective in providing vulnerable pupils with additional support. There is considerable support for literacy across the curriculum, for example, with key words and their meanings being emphasised in board work and in marking.
10. Assessment is accurate and the quality of marking is often, although not in every case, thorough. The best marking provides pupils, on key pieces of work, with a good insight as to how they might improve their work further. There is very high quality marking across a range of subjects and particularly in the sixth form.

The headteacher provides good and effective leadership. Together with his senior management team he is successful in motivating the staff of the school to encompass new challenges and to raise standards still further. This is supported by an effective Governing Body providing both challenge and support for the headteacher.

11. The clear and effective leadership from the headteacher helps to set the vision for the school.. This is recognised by staff, governors and parents. The positive ethos of the school is reflected in the collective responsibility taken by all staff, teaching and non teaching, in working collaboratively towards common goals and high standards.

12. The senior leadership and management team has considerable and diverse talents and has very recently undergone appropriate changes with regard to roles and responsibilities. The team are positive towards these changes and view these new roles as a means of taking the school forward.

13. The school has embarked on a number of challenges since the last inspection and has worked hard to bring about the required changes over the last five years. The senior team are not complacent about their successes and have identified key areas for development and set appropriate project targets. The staff are aware that developments are not even, for example, that standards still need to be raised in some departments but positive support and encouragement are being given. There is still work to be done in ensuring that pastoral and academic progress go hand in hand in raising standards.

14. The Governing Body are well informed about the school and provide both appropriate support and challenge to the headteacher. They work predominantly through their committees and report to the main Governing Body. Governors are linked to all departments and have a good understanding of these subject areas.

The positive and caring ethos of the school contributes to high expectations of all pupils.

15. Monitoring of pupils' progress is systematic and good records are kept at both departmental and whole school level. Heads of Year and, through them, individual tutors have clear and effective procedures for target setting and intervention. Heads of department also have a firm grasp of the procedures for academic progress and how this links to personal tutoring and target setting. This is a strength of the school and impacts on the standards to which pupils aspire. The school has recently undertaken work with teachers to link more effectively the pastoral and academic aspects of school work. Both in the classroom and through the academic tutoring high expectations are set by teachers and appropriate support provided for pupils to reach their potential.

16. The school has secure procedures for monitoring and evaluating attainment and progress of pupils with special educational needs. From this analysis the school is able to allocate support and additional teaching. Annual reviews are held within the statutory time limits and time is allocated to review individual education plans (IEPs). Parents are involved in both processes. IEPs are accessible to all staff; a number of teachers had these to hand in observed lessons.

17. A mentoring programme exists for pupils in Year 11 alongside pastoral support. The 'Excellence in Cities' initiative for gifted and talented pupils also contributes to the high expectations of pupils at the school. It is not unusual for a gifted or talented pupil to be an under-achiever; the school encourages these pupils to join this programme in order to enhance their overall performance.

18. The recently introduced learning mentor programme is already making an impact; pupils reported that they find this a helpful aid to their studies. The programme specifically identifies under-achievers, potential under-achievers and those at risk of exclusion. The programme also links with the SEN department and year head system of academic reviews.

19. Measures to monitor attendance are very good and are well supported by the recently strengthened pastoral system. Tutors have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities and work effectively as year teams. Tutors remain with their tutees from Year 7 to Year 11 and therefore get to know both the pupils and their parents very well. All teachers are encouraged to contact parents at the earliest opportunity to support the progress of the pupils. Tutors have a significant part to play in monitoring individual pupil progress.

20. Parents commented on the pastoral care of the school being a strength. This clearly reflects the effective tutor system in the school and the whole school community ethos which permeates many facets of school life.

The monitoring and evaluation of both pupil progress and the quality of teaching help to maintain good standards.

21. Robust and wide ranging monitoring and evaluation strategies have been put in place since the last inspection. This not only includes more secure monitoring of financial issues and the school development plan but also monitoring of pupil progress and the quality of teaching at departmental, year group and senior management level.

22. Departments operate their own quality assurance policy. Heads of departments undertake work scrutinies, observation of lessons and discussions on the progress of both individual and groups of pupils.

23. Year heads also follow up on pupils' work and homework and undertake sample book checks across the school to ensure that school policies on marking and assessment are being consistently applied.

24. Senior managers also undertake lesson observations and the headteacher sees every pupil's report before it is sent home. Questionnaires are also used with staff, pupils and parents on a regular basis to provide further information about action to be taken. From the monitoring activities and the results of pupils' achievements the senior team is aware of where teaching standards are not as good as they should be and effective action is taken.

25. A wide range of information is gathered to identify excellence both in pupils' achievement and in the approaches to teaching as well as areas for development. This will form a sound basis on which to further shape the future needs of the school.

The range and quality of extra curricular provision in the school contributes significantly to the well rounded education of pupils.

26. Pupils are offered a wide range of extra curricular activities at lunchtime, after school and at other times. Pupils reported that they valued these opportunities and recognised the time and commitment that staff have given to their organisation. The extra curricular provision at the school contributes to the social and cultural development of pupils across the year groups.

27. The school has, over the years, produced an impressive range of plays and musical events. Many of these involve a large number of pupils and not just the musically talented from across the year groups. Large numbers of pupils, at the time of the inspection, were fully involved in lunch time and after school rehearsals. These events significantly add to the curriculum time for the performing arts. It was particularly encouraging to see some of the less confident younger boys becoming fully involved and contributing well to a musical rehearsal after school.

28. There are a number of innovative extra curricular opportunities in addition. For example the links with Arsenal Football Club who contribute to sports studies and business studies. The PE department offers a large and diverse range of extra curricular activities and many pupils play in successful teams after school and at weekends. The chess club has considerable membership. The art department has introduced a life class for the sixth form, which gives a very special opportunity to young artists in the school to develop their skills in life drawing.

29. Enrichment classes are also held as part of the 'Gifted and Talented' programme.. Visits to universities for sixth formers, a poet in residence, an English extension class over Easter and a scientist working on the production and launch of rockets have all featured as part of this initiative. Although the programme for the gifted and talented is funded through the 'Excellence in Cities' initiative, all other pupils are welcome to attend as part of the schools' equality of opportunity. Each curriculum area has been asked to nominate a teacher responsible for the 'Gifted and Talented' initiative.

30. Successful summer literacy schools have been held over the last two years, convened for pupils transferring from primary schools to Highams Park in September. There have also been a number of enhancement classes held.

31. The school also offers pupils the chance of undertaking a number of foreign trips, enhancing the curriculum further. These are well supported by pupils, who spoke highly of visits made in the recent past.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The school should develop strategies for supporting behaviour management particularly for boys in Year 9 and Key Stage 4 in the few classes where behaviour is less than good.

32. The behaviour of most pupils in lessons is good, pupils are attentive and contribute well. However, a minority of boys in particular, towards the end of Key Stage 3 and at the beginning of Key Stage 4, become disruptive. This varies from silliness to being rude and disruptive. It does not happen in all lessons and is not present in lessons where teachers maintain good pace in the lesson, set clear objectives for learning and where the activities are stimulating and varied. Some poor behaviour was seen in year 11 but generally pupils in this year group were focusing on the pending examinations.

33. Parents commented that pupils reported that in some lessons boys were not always co-operative and in some instances were responsible for stopping effective learning in the lessons.

34. The range of behaviour management strategies effectively used by some teachers is limited, which means that in a few lessons pupils take too long to settle down to their tasks or fail to concentrate for any length of time. This is particularly apparent where pupils find the work difficult and where teachers are unclear about their expectations of both work and behaviour from pupils, enabling others to be disrupted in turn.

35. In some classes the opportunities provided for pupil self evaluation of classwork and the targeted involvement of potentially disruptive pupils is sufficient to keep them on track and to curb any silly behaviour.

A wider range of teaching strategies should be adopted in some lessons in order to maximise learning opportunities.

36. In some lessons pupils are under-challenged by the range of tasks they are asked to undertake. For example, pupils consolidate their learning less when asked to spend an over long period of time listening to teacher exposition, without being actively involved in the learning process or, when completing work is little more than a comprehension exercise.

37. Pupils' learning is heightened when they became actively involved and engaged in processes which require greater thinking on their part. This is particularly evident when challenged by a range

of higher order thinking skills, such as analysis and evaluative exercises. In science, for example, when unusual activities were chosen by the teacher which interested pupils, their attention was held and this led to pupils making good progress. Pupils respond particularly well when asked to work collaboratively in groups as seen, for example, in some geography lessons. They are able to organise themselves and help each other solve problems effectively. In a number of lessons the quality of pupils' self evaluation of their work is of a very high quality.

38. A significant number of teachers across the school use very effective teaching strategies to engage pupils, as seen in the high proportion of teaching which was good or very good. The school has already identified in its school development plan that teaching and learning is a priority with staff having identified the sharing of good teaching practice both within and between departments as a key target.

The recent differences in the attainment of boys and girls at the higher grades of GCSE should be addressed.

39. The differences between boys and girls performance at Key Stage 3 is not especially marked and reflects the national trends. At Key Stage 4 the overall numbers of pupils attaining 5 or more A* - C grades masks the individual gender and subject differences because both boys and girls perform above the national average.

40. The relative differences in performance in 2000 at GCSE, between boys and girls is marked in many subjects. There are significant differences in the percentage of higher grades achieved by boys and girls in English language, literature, mathematics, science, technology, history, geography, French, religious education and information technology. In all these cases the girls considerably outperformed boys. Although this is a national trend, it is a significant gap. The school's own monitoring has identified this trend.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to improve still further the Governing Body and Headteacher should now:

- (1) Improve the behaviour of the small number of boys in Year 9 and in Key Stage 4 who are disruptive by:
 - a) developing effective behaviour management strategies with the help of the SEN department,
 - b) identifying these pupils on the school's SEN register.

- (2) Improve the overall quality of teaching and the range of teaching strategies used by:
 - a) ensuring that advanced skills teachers and the significant number of other teachers who use a range of teaching styles, share their strategies across the school.

- (3) Improve the consistency of GCSE standards achieved by boys by addressing the recent **relative** weaknesses through

a) effective and early target setting

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

66

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

23

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	26%	45%	21%	8%	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils on the school's roll	1121	241
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	115	-

Special educational needs	Y7- Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	9	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	269	0

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	73

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	7.4%
National comparative data	7.9%

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.35
National comparative data	1.1%

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	2000	127	98	225

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	88 (71)	99 (86)	87 (66)
	Girls	82 (97)	79 (85)	68 (73)
	Total	170 (168)	178 (171)	155 (159)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	76 (73)	79 (74)	68 (61)
	National	63 (64)	65 (62)	59 (54)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	36 (19)	54 (50)	35 (24)
	National	28 (28)	42 (38)	30 (23)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	78 (75)	95 (71)	93 (80)
	Girls	77 (100)	76 (85)	72 (90)
	Total	155 (175)	171 (156)	165 (170)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	69 (77)	76 (67)	73 (75)
	National	65 (64)	66 (64)	60 (59)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	25 (26)	39 (38)	47 (36)
	National	31 (31)	39 (37)	29 (28)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4

Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	113	98	211

GCSE results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A*-G	1 or more grades A*-G
Numbers of pupils achieving the standard specified	Boys	52	108	112
	Girls	69	93	94
	Total	121	201	206
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	57 (56)	95 (97)	98 (98)
	National	49 (46)	89 (91)	94 (96)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	45 (43)
	National	39 (38)

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

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

Attainment at the end of the sixth form

Number of students aged 16, 17 and 18 on roll in January of the latest reporting year who were entered for GCE A-level or AS-level examinations	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	133	127	260

Average A/AS points score per candidate	For candidates entered for 2 or more A-levels or equivalent			For candidates entered for fewer than 2 A-levels or equivalent		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
School	13.8 (14.4)	15.3 (16.9)	14.6 (16.1)	1.6 (1.3)	3.8 (1.6)	2.1 (1.4)
National	17.9 (17.7)	18.6 (18.1)	18.3 (17.9)	2.8 (2.7)	3.1(2.8)	2.9 (2.8)

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

Vocational qualifications	Number	% success rate
Number in their final year of studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all those they studied	School	9 (8)
	National	N/A (72.9)

International Baccalaureate	Number	% success rate
Number entered for the International Baccalaureate Diploma and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all they studied	School	Nil
	National	-

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	22
Black – African heritage	15
Black – other	29
Indian	20
Pakistani	23
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	8
White	977
Any other minority ethnic group	22

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	2	0
Black – African heritage	3	0
Black – other	1	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	2	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	61	4
Other minority ethnic groups	3	1

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7– Y13

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	85
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y7 - Y13

Total number of education support staff	15
Total aggregate hours worked per week	451

Deployment of teachers: Y7– Y13

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

Key Stage 3	21
Key Stage 4	21.5

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	3,969,971
Total expenditure	3,989,929
Expenditure per pupil	2,978
Balance brought forward from previous year	-36,589
Balance carried forward to next year	-56,547

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	1362
Number of questionnaires returned	144

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	41	51	6	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47	44	7	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	23	63	8	1	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	54	10	2	1
The teaching is good.	40	48	3	1	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	27	48	16	3	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	44	48	3	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	31	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	23	54	16	3	2
The school is well led and managed.	35	51	5	1	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	39	51	6	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	48	38	4	1	9

Other issues raised by parents

A small minority of parents considered that some pupils with special educational needs were not supported well enough. The inspectors did not find evidence to support this view.

Parents reported that a small minority of boys were poorly behaved in a few classes, particularly in the lower sets. The inspectors found that there was some evidence of this in classes in years 9 and 10 in particular.

