

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST GREGORY'S CATHOLIC
COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL**

Odd Down, Bath

LEA area: Bath and North East Somerset

Unique reference number: 109329

Headteacher: Mr D W Byrne

Reporting inspector: Mrs D Wheatley
3538

Dates of inspection: 2 – 5 October 2000

Inspection number: 223807

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

© Crown copyright 2000

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Comprehensive

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 11 to 16

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Combe Hay Lane
Odd Down

Bath

Postcode: BA2 8PA

Telephone number: 01225 832873

Fax number: 01225 835848

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Fr T Gunning BA

Date of previous inspection: November 1995

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
Dee Wheatley	(3538)	Registered inspector
Sally Hall	(19693)	Lay inspector
Andrew Stillman	(14429)	Team inspector
Robert Allan	(19278)	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

Dorset School Inspection Services
School Effectiveness Service
Dorset County Council
County Hall
Dorchester
Dorset
DT1 1XJ

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL	11
WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED	15
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	16
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	17

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Gregory's is an 11 to 16 mixed Catholic comprehensive school, situated in Bath. It has Voluntary Aided status through its Catholic denomination and is maintained by the local education authority. There are 799 boys and girls on roll. The ethnic mix is predominantly white with a small number from minority ethnic backgrounds. Very few of those with English as an additional language are in the early stages of acquiring English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average. The range of special needs includes dyslexia, emotional, behavioural and moderate learning difficulties, and some physical disabilities. The attainment of the pupils on entry is above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Gregory's Catholic Comprehensive School is a very good school which is wholly committed to its mission. It has a real concern to enable each pupil to achieve his or her best. Through very effective leadership and teaching it achieves high standards and a purposeful and caring climate to the benefit of all. It has successes on many fronts and its strengths far outweigh its weaknesses. It provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school achieves high standards through very good teaching and monitoring of pupils' progress.
- Talented and gifted pupils and those with special needs achieve particularly well in relation to their prior attainment.
- The distinctive Christian ethos is characterised by care for the individual, excellent relationships and particularly strong spiritual and moral development.
- The very strong leadership sets high expectations of work and behaviour, which are well realised.
- Pupils' attitudes and motivation are exceedingly strong and contribute significantly to their very good learning.

What could be improved

- The provision for information and communications technology (ICT) at Key Stage 4 is not as well co-ordinated as it could be.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The last inspection took place in November 1995. Many strengths were identified in the report and good improvements have been made since then. The school has received national recognition as a Beacon School and achieved Investors in People (IIP) status, which was recently re-confirmed. Very focused and effective measures have been taken to continue to raise standards, and the high standards have been sustained. The analysis of performance data on entry and throughout the school has been increased to provide a very well founded basis for setting targets for individual pupils. The school's procedures for

checking progress are very effective in enabling pupils to reach their potential at GCSE. The system is slightly less effective at Key Stage 3 and requires further refinement to link it to the National Curriculum levels. The accommodation, which was an issue raised in the last report, has been improved with the addition of three new classrooms and further planned improvements to technology. The other key issues in the previous report, with the exception of one, i.e. information and communications technology (ICT) provision at Key Stage 4, have been effectively addressed. The requirement to provide better information about pupil progress in reports is in place. With the regular progress sheets now sent home, as part of the target setting system, parents are kept well informed. The high standards achieved by the ablest pupils have been sustained. The proportion of the highest grades (A*/A) achieved at GCSE reflects this. With regard to ICT, the school has made significant improvement in the development of resources and staff competence but, despite reviewing provision, has not ensured that all the key elements of ICT are taught and assessed effectively at Key Stage 4.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 16 year olds based on average point scores in the national tests at the end of Year 9 and GCSE examinations.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
GCSE examinations	A	A	A	A*	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E

The school has continued to improve the already high standards seen at the time of the last inspection. GCSE results in 1999 were well above the national average and in the top five per cent of similar schools nationally. The proportion of A*/A grades was well above average in 1999 with a further increase in 2000. Pupils achieved well above average results in several subjects in 2000, including English, science, French, geography music, drama, statistics, food technology and systems and control. Girls achieved outstanding results in English. Pupils performed less well in mathematics, although still above average, and much less well in art. Inspection evidence, however, showed achievement in art to be satisfactory.

In the national tests for 14 year olds in English, mathematics and science, the results in 1999, taking all three subjects together, were well above both the national average and the average for similar schools. Taking the subjects separately, the results in science were in line with those in similar schools, in mathematics they were above and in English they were very high, i.e. in the top five per cent. In 2000, all three subjects were well above average.

These standards are matched by the quality of work seen during the inspection which indicates that the achievement of pupils at both key stages is very good. The progress of gifted and talented pupils and those with special educational needs is particularly good in relation to their prior attainment.

The school sets appropriate attainment targets which are well founded on detailed analysis of performance data and regular progress checking for individual pupils. Through this system, supported by other positive action, it has successfully improved results in targeted areas, e.g. French, and for particular groups, such as boys.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes are excellent. Motivation is high. It positively contributes to their very good learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave very well. They are polite, respectful and listen and respond very well. The atmosphere in the school is friendly and hardworking.
Personal development and relationships	These are excellent at all levels. Pupils support each other; they work well collaboratively and demonstrate an active interest in helping others less fortunate than themselves.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory. Truancy is rare.

The pupils want to learn and succeed. Their motivation makes a real difference to the quality of their learning. They appreciate and thrive on the opportunities offered to them. At the same time, they are actively caring of others both in school and beyond.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 11-14 years	aged 14-16 years	aged over 16 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Very good	N/A

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

The teaching is very good overall. It is strongest in Years 10 and 11 where 80 per cent of good or better teaching was seen during the inspection, with 40 per cent being very good or excellent. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen at either key stage. At Key Stage 4, close attention to the GCSE requirements concentrates both teachers' and pupils' minds in a very positive way. There is a real drive to achieve the best possible grade for each pupil. This is actively pursued through the very good marking and assessment and the target-setting process by which individual pupil progress is tracked. Other features of the successful teaching at both key stages are very good subject knowledge and very well planned lessons. Teachers' explanations are thorough, helping pupils understand and synthesise new information with previous learning and challenging them to think for themselves. These features, combined with very warm relationships and high expectations of pupil effort, characterised some excellent, even inspirational, teaching in music, geography and science. Work is carefully matched to pupils' understanding and skill levels to ensure all are stretched; this is reflected in the very good progress of both the able pupils and those who have special needs. The teaching of literacy is very good, that of numeracy is satisfactory. Occasional shortcomings in lessons which are otherwise sound, include overlong introductions which more able pupils do not need and a lack of pace. The fact that pupils are so self-motivated and ready to respond to every activity offered makes a real difference to the quality and pace of their learning overall. They also work independently and collaboratively very well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum provides a very good range, breadth and depth of opportunity. The quality and range of extra-curricular activities are very good. Weakness in the co-ordination of ICT leads to pupils getting different levels of provision and experience in Years 10 and 11.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good support for these pupils. The identification of needs, support and tracking of progress are very thorough.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school has few pupils with English as an additional language. Provision is very good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The all round personal development of pupils is very well catered for through many opportunities to show responsibility and independence. Provision for spiritual, moral and social development is excellent; for cultural development it is very good. The personal and social education programme is thorough.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good attention to pupils' well-being, both pastorally and academically. The school's systems are very effective and pupils know where to go if they need help.

The school makes stringent efforts to cater for the aptitudes of all by making provision over and beyond the statutory National Curriculum requirement. The provision of three additional languages from Year 8, the three separate sciences, as well as double and single science at Key Stage 4, and statistics for able pupils, are examples of this. Effective action is taken to tackle any weaknesses in subject provision; both French and, more recently, mathematics have been the focus of such support. As well as the very good extra-curricular provision, the curriculum is further enriched by opportunities as diverse as the commitment to regular spiritual reflection and engaging in public speaking competitions. The care of pupils, already very good, has been further strengthened by the involvement of tutors in the checking of pupils' academic progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent leadership by the headteacher, who is very ably supported by the deputies and the governors. The combination of high standards and warm relationships make the school a good place to be. Beacon School status and Investors in People (IIP) are clearly well earned.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are very well informed about the school's strengths and areas for development and are actively involved in its work.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good, both in the analysis of data and other information, and its use in setting performance targets and improvement priorities.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning is very good. The school uses its resources very well to both maintain high standards and bring about needed improvements. Stringent efforts to improve the accommodation have been made over a number of years.

The headteacher has a strong vision of how good the school can be and takes staff, governors, pupils and parents with him in putting that vision into effect. The school's mission is well realised. With the committed staff, he has created a distinctive ethos which combines

humanity and care for the individual with high expectations of work and behaviour. The principles of best value are appropriately applied.

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 pupils work hard and achieve their best.• The school is well led and managed.• The teaching is good.• Staff are dedicated and approachable• Their children like school.• The pupils' good attitudes and sense of community.• The pupils' good behaviour and respect for the individual.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The provision of homework. Some parents felt there was too much homework, others that there was too little or that the schedule was not adhered to.• The range of extra-curricular activities.

As the foregoing sections indicate, there is a great deal of agreement about what parents like about the school and what the inspectors found. This is a school with strengths in all the significant areas of school effectiveness, i.e. standards, leadership, teaching and personal development. It is not, however, complacent about its success.

With regard to the areas parents would like to see improved, the inspection found the following:

- the provision of homework is more regular and effective than in many schools; it makes a definite contribution to the very good learning;
- the extra-curricular provision is very good, both in terms of its range and the quality of the teaching.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The school achieves high standards through very good teaching and monitoring of pupils' progress.

1. The school has sustained the high standards recognised in the last inspection. At the end of Key Stage 4, standards are well above average overall and show a rising trend. The pupils' performance at GCSE in 1999 was in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally. There was a further substantial increase in 2000. In all three years from 1996 to 1999, the girls' GCSE results were very high and boys' were well above the national average. The proportion of pupils achieving five or more A* - C grades rose substantially in 2000, as a result of very effective improvement strategies focused on boys' achievement and excellent target setting and progress checking for all pupils. The proportion of A*/As, the highest grades, achieved in 1999 was more than twice the national average with a further increase in 2000. The standards of work seen during the inspection reflected this high achievement, particularly in English, science, music, and geography. High quality extended writing which shows clear proficiency and confidence in a range of styles was evident in the course work in English. In science, there was high quality work, showing clear understanding and very good presentation, about topics such as radioactivity, waves, inheritance and the effects of chemicals on the body. In geography, pupils debated the implications of a real environmental issue showing excellent ability to analyse information from a variety of sources and argue a case. In mathematics, the GCSE results are above average and the inspection indicated the achievement of pupils to be satisfactory. However, the examination results are less strong than in the other core subjects owing to a number of factors, including some disruption to the staffing in the recent past. The school has taken appropriate action, involving new curriculum resources and staffing, to strengthen the standards. In art, pupils achieved much less well than in other subjects at GCSE in 2000. However, the results of several pupils are the subject of appeals to the examination board and the inspection found the achievement of pupils to be satisfactory.

2. Standards are well above average at the end of Key Stage 3. In 1999, the national assessment test results, for all three core subjects together, were well above average, and above the average for similar schools nationally. Taking the subjects individually, English and mathematics were well above, and science above, the national average. When compared with similar schools nationally, English is in the top 5 per cent, whilst mathematics is above, and science in line with, like schools. Part of the reason why science was less strong, was that it achieved fewer of the higher levels. The school focused effectively on this the following year with the result that the 2000 results show a considerable increase in level 6 and above. In 2000, the results in all three subjects are well above average, although the English results declined somewhat to bring them more in line with the other core subjects. The teacher assessment in the other subjects of the National Curriculum were also well above average. Work seen during the inspection showed the achievement of pupils in mathematics to be good and in English and science to be very good.

3. The teaching is very good overall, and is particularly strong at Key Stage 4 where the GCSE course requirements are carefully planned for, and assessment of pupils' work is used very effectively to help them improve its quality. There is a clear focus on providing effective teaching across the school. The high proportion of good or very good teaching is characterised by very high expectations of the quality of pupils' work and of their interest in, and response to, lessons. Teachers' subject knowledge is very good and in most areas the quality of the planning, including schemes of work, contributes significantly to the very

effective learning. Very good or excellent teaching was seen during the inspection in several subjects, and particularly in English, geography, music and French. For example, a Year 9 music lesson, where the teacher provided challenging activities with 'time targets' for completion which really concentrated pupils' minds, resulting in successful compositions of four-bar melodies with a specified rhythm which they performed and evaluated very well. In a geography lesson, Year 11 pupils, discussing the pros and cons of whether a park-and-ride scheme should be built near Cheddar Gorge to protect the environment, were provided with a good range of paper and video resources showing different contexts, viewpoints and counter arguments, in order to prepare their case. Together with excellent planning and very good teacher input, they wholly engaged pupils' interest, stimulating well-developed presentations which were then evaluated.

4. The analysis of performance data on entry and throughout the school is systematic and effective. It is used well to analyse and ask questions about pupils' performance. It also provides the basis for a very effective target-setting system at Key Stage 4 for individual pupils. The process involves using 'minimum target grades' (GCSE), based on pupils' prior attainment, and 'value-added' grades which recognise potential over and beyond what might be predicted on prior attainment, adding a dimension of challenge. The pupils' performance against their target grades and other indicators related to effort and behaviour, are monitored at regular progress checkpoints throughout their course. Time is set aside to enable tutors to discuss their progress reports with pupils at the half-termly intervals. Both pupils and parents speak highly of the effectiveness of the system in keeping pupils on track with their work. The inspection wholly concurs. There is a similar system at Key Stage 3 but it is not yet sufficiently tied to attainment and needs to incorporate the National Curriculum levels to increase its effectiveness.

5. There is clear evidence of the very good use of data to identify strengths and weaknesses in standards and of direct action to address weaknesses. For instance, the headteacher's analysis of performance data of boys and girls (the 1999 Year 11 cohort – when they were in Year 10) showed relatively little difference in performance up to the end of Year 9, but with a widening gap in Year 10, showing boys falling behind. Discussions with staff provided the hypothesis that GCSE coursework and extended writing were responsible. A programme of action to support boys at risk of missing their target grades was put in place. This involved a series of workshops which the identified boys had to attend, focusing on study, organisational and writing skills. The support of parents was also harnessed. The successful outcome of this positive action was a significant increase in the 1999 results with many boys exceeding their minimum target grades. The school is not just leaving it there however, it also has a longer-term strategy to improve boys' writing skills which it has instituted in Year 8. Another example, of very effective action to address under-performance is to be found in French, where data indicated that too many potential GCSE C grade candidates were attaining grade D. Following a series of measures, there was a very considerable increase in the C grades in 2000, establishing the notion that the fourth set is capable of achieving the higher grades.

Both talented and gifted pupils and those with special educational needs achieve particularly well in relation to their prior attainment.

6. The school has focused very effectively on the needs of its gifted and talented pupils. Their achievement is reflected in the well above average proportion of A*/A grades overall achieved at GCSE and in the statistics course which the most able mathematicians take alongside GCSE maths. During the inspection, the teaching of most of the top sets was challenging and learning was very good. Both performance data and teacher assessment is used to identify these pupils on entry and to track their progress. A policy for gifted and talented pupils has been developed, awareness training has been provided for staff and each

faculty has identified the ways in which they will cater for these pupils. A very good range of enrichment activities is made available, in addition to extension tasks in lessons, including public speaking and writing clubs in English, master classes and UK maths challenge, specialist resources for bilingual pupils in languages, involvement in model United Nations conferences and magistrates' court competitions in geography as well as several other activities. The school also takes advantage of opportunities provided through the LEA such as the summer school for gifted and talented pupils in July 2000.

7. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The identification is very thorough, involving cognitive ability tests (CATs), which are taken by all pupils, Key Stage 2 national assessment (SAT) information (from primary schools) and reading tests, which are re-administered twice yearly. The quality of the pupils' individual education plans (IEPs) is excellent; the special needs co-ordinator has re-designed them to make them more readily accessible. Pupil progress is carefully charted against the IEPs. Scrutiny of the records of 1999 Year 11 pupils with special education needs shows them to have made very good progress, as indicated by the range of GCSE grades, and the certificates of achievement, attained. Apart from the withdrawal of a small number of pupils for intensive reading sessions, most of the provision for special needs pupils is through small lower sets. During the inspection, the teaching in these sets was mostly good or very good. For instance, in a very effective English lesson on Flannan Isle, the teacher provided a rich variety of resources, including factual research on the area and the context, which clearly gripped pupils' imaginations. She also provided very good learning 'tools', including writing templates and ICT, enabling them to undertake a range of related writing activities with enthusiasm and confidence. The resulting progress was excellent.

8. The school fulfils its intention to meet the needs of all pupils. This is achieved by the very good tracking of progress, particularly at Key Stage 4, and the way it actively tries to ensure that pupils at both ends of the 'attainment spectrum', as well as those in the middle, achieve their potential.

The distinctive Christian ethos is characterised by care for the individual, excellent relationships and particularly strong spiritual and moral development.

9. Real efforts are made to ensure the school's mission is discernible in its day-to-day life. It has a distinctive Christian ethos which manifests in many ways, including the excellent relationships and attitudes to learning and the care for others who are not so fortunate.

10. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. This is achieved by the effective integration of extensive ventures and activities by deeply committed staff. Pupils enrich their own lives and the lives of others through sincere and willing contributions to the school community, local people and communities abroad. Older pupils provide valuable pastoral support to fellow pupils as peer counsellors. They also work in local primary schools.

11. Staff reinforce personal development very well by reflecting on related issues in National Curriculum subjects and voluntary activities as well as during the good personal and social education lessons. Pupils show real empathy and understanding when exploring conflict and other issues through literature in English. Morality and ethics in world trade are thoroughly treated in geography lessons, culminating in thoughtful and sensitive work by pupils. These issues are reinforced by related reflection on poverty and injustice as seen, for instance, when the prayer group planted seeds of hope as part of their morning meeting.

12. Charitable work is undertaken willingly and sincerely. Many pupils participate in fund-raising during 'fast days' and 'rice days' to support work in Cambodia and an orphanage in Croatia where pupils have worked voluntarily and hosted return visits to the school.

13. The recent annual festival of arts, dedicated to addressing prejudice, strongly enriched pupils' cultural understanding. Visiting groups worked intensively with pupils and presented productions to the local community. Asian music and dance, African-Caribbean poetry, Eastern and contemporary art, orchestral music and theatrical techniques were brought together, engaging pupils in a spiritual celebration of real cultural richness and variety.

The very strong leadership and committed staff set high expectations of work and behaviour.

14. The headteacher has a clear vision of how good the school can be and, with the very able support of the deputy headteachers and the governors, provides excellent direction for its work. Achieving the best possible academic performance whilst at the same time 'living', in its daily operation, the Christian tenets which underpin its mission, are key to this vision. An effective process of continuous improvement has been established. This has been achieved through very good use of information from data analysis and monitoring and evaluation to identify the school's strengths and tackle weaknesses. Examples of this are provided at paragraph 5 above. The senior management team have managed to combine high expectations of the quality of teachers' work with an atmosphere which is clearly supportive and enabling. Everyone's efforts are valued in a climate where it is safe to take risks and try something new.

15. The school runs very efficiently on a daily basis. Policies are accessible and consistently applied. The staff handbook is a very useful and informative document. Organisational systems and processes work well and are designed with an eye to conserving energies, and 'not doing things for the sake of it'. The leadership make every effort to keep bureaucracy to the minimum, realising that the more teachers can remain focused on the classroom the better the outcomes for pupils.

16. The staff demonstrate their real commitment to their pupils by the quality of their preparation, teaching and marking, the support they provide, the wide range of extra-curricular activities and overall, by the 'extra mile they are willing to walk' to help pupils. The leadership of subject faculties is well focused on maintaining high standards and is very effective overall.

17. The financial planning is very effective. Resources are very well targeted on maintaining the high standards and planning judiciously for improvement. One of the most challenging problems the school has had to tackle concerns the buildings. Basically, the accommodation was built for a smaller school and is under increased pressure as numbers have grown. Through stringent efforts the headteacher and governors have managed to build three new humanities classrooms. They have also refurbished the library and plans are in hand for new technology rooms and science laboratories.

Pupils' attitudes and motivation are particularly strong and contribute significantly to their very good learning.

18. During the inspection, the attitudes and behaviour of pupils were good or better in 93 per cent of the lessons, and very good or excellent in 62 per cent. There were no lessons in which behaviour was unsatisfactory. These pupils just want to learn; they demonstrate it in the way they listen, the respect they show their teachers and other adults and the readiness

with which they undertake tasks. Mixed in with this serious intent, there is good humour and buoyancy which are demonstrated in the way pupils interact with their teachers and with each other. These are normal teenagers who like to have fun and who have problems from time to time. That they have a good level of parental support is indicated by the large proportion of parents who attend consultation evenings, and who responded to the inspection questionnaire about the school. In school, it is clear pupils feel well supported and secure, and if they need help they know how to get it. They respond well to the expectations and routines of the school and indeed, appear to take pride in contributing. As well as the examples provided in paragraph 10 above, older pupils are mature and responsible when acting as monitors, class representatives and prefects. Pupils of all ages also respond in large numbers to the regular initiatives to help the more disadvantaged, both here and abroad.

19. Behaviour around the school is equally good. Despite the tight corridor spaces which are congested at breaks and lesson changeover times, good-humoured orderliness is the norm inside the buildings. On the playground, at breaks and lunchtimes, it is somewhat less orderly but with no less good-natured, if more boisterous, interaction.

20. Overall, the high levels of motivation and excellent attitudes have a significant impact on the very good learning of the pupils.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The planning and coordination of ICT teaching at Key Stage 4.

21. Since the last inspection, the school has introduced some significant improvements in the provision of information and communications technology (ICT). All teaching staff have benefited from training, computer rooms have better facilities and these are well used. There is a clear programme for teaching at Key Stage 3, well supported by specialist staff. As a result standards are high with all pupils demonstrating basic skills and many capable of refined applications in other subjects. For example, by selecting information from a variety of sources, editing and refining it, very many pupils produce good quality presentations.

22. In Years 10 and 11, ICT is taught through other subjects rather than in special ICT lessons at Key Stage 3. The newly appointed ICT co-ordinator has not yet had the time to establish procedures that provide a clear view of what is taught to all pupils, and in which subjects. An audit of subject schemes has identified where opportunities for learning or reinforcing ICT skills can be incorporated. However, this is linked to the criteria of the certification scheme used by the school and not to the requirements of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. Many pupils successfully develop extended ICT skills through options such as GNVQ business, geography, art and music. Staff training has prepared the ground for further developments but the absence of a comprehensive scheme of work, clearly identifying subject responsibilities, is a continuing weakness at Key Stage 4. Some subjects are currently revising schemes of work to make explicit provision for aspects of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. For example, a new module for religious education will teach pupils to 'reflect on the impact of ICT within their lives and the lives of others'. The principal means of assessing attainment is through a certification programme. This provides an indication of which skills pupils have demonstrated but no indication of the quality of their work or how they might improve their skills, knowledge or understanding.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

23. The school should now:

Improve the provision of information and communications technology at Key Stage 4, by:

- identifying how each subject will contribute to the teaching of ICT;
- monitoring the range and quality of experience pupils receive across the curriculum; and
- providing effective procedures for assessing the quality of pupils' work in ICT.

(See paragraphs 21 and 22.)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	37
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	17

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
14	19	41	27	0	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	799	N/A
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	55	N/A

Special educational needs	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	14	N/A
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	115	N/A

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	16

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	32

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.6
National comparative data	7.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
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	76	78	154

National Curriculum Test/Task Results	English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	60	63
	Girls	65	57
	Total	125	120
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	81 (90)	78 (77)
	National	63 (63)	65 (62)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	44 (67)	53 (53)
	National	28 (28)	42 (38)
			30 (23)

Teachers' Assessments	English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	59	61
	Girls	60	59
	Total	119	120
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	77 (86)	78 (81)
	National	64 (64)	66 (64)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	47 (50)	60 (59)
	National	31 (31)	39 (37)
			48 (51)
			29 (28)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year	2000	74	61	135

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	71
	Girls	53	60
	Total	105	131
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	78 (66)	97 (95)
	National	** (46)	** (91)
			100 (98)
			** (96)

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

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

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

*** National figures for 2000 not available at time of publication.*

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	9
Black – African heritage	7
Black – other	2
Indian	6
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	3
White	767
Any other minority ethnic group	5

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	1	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	36	1
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y11

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	41.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y7 – Y11

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	248

Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y11

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	78%
---	-----

Financial information

Financial year	1999/00
----------------	---------

	£
Total income	1,847,499
Total expenditure	1,843,070
Expenditure per pupil	2,394
Balance brought forward from previous year	24,809
Balance carried forward to next year	29,238

Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y11

Key Stage 3	26
Key Stage 4	22

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	799
Number of questionnaires returned	437

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	35	52	7	1	5
My child is making good progress in school.	37	48	2	0	12
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	48	3	1	10
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	49	10	1	14
The teaching is good.	41	48	2	0	9
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	37	44	7	1	11
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	56	32	4	0	8
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	30	1	0	6
The school works closely with parents.	37	49	6	1	8
The school is well led and managed.	57	34	1	0	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	46	41	1	0	11
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	43	11	2	14

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

What parents like about the school:

- Pupils work hard and achieve their best.
- School is well led and managed.
- Teaching is good.
- Staff are dedicated and approachable.
- Children like school.
- Good attitudes and sense of community.
- Good behaviour and respect for individual.

Note: The higher than normal proportion of 'don't know' responses are mainly from parents whose children have just started in the school in Year 7.