

INSPECTION REPORT

STRATFORD UPON AVON HIGH SCHOOL

Stratford upon Avon

LEA area: Warwickshire

Unique reference number: 125739

Headteacher: Mr David Williams

Reporting inspector: Mr Alan Kent
3696

Dates of inspection: 4th – 8th December 2000

Inspection number: 223839

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Modern (non-selective)
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	11 to 18
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Stratford upon Avon High School Alcester Road Stratford upon Avon Warwickshire
Postcode:	CV37 9DH
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Jill Dill-Russell
Date of previous inspection:	09/10/1995

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Stratford upon Avon High School is a non-selective school which has 493 boys and 474 girls on the roll. Of these, 132 are in the sixth form. The attainment of pupils, when they join the school, covers the full range expected. There are significantly fewer high attaining pupils, as there are three selective grammar schools in the area that the school serves. Pupils come from a wide social and economic background and 6.4 % take free school meals. This is lower than the national average. There are 222 pupils on the register of special educational need, with 18 of them having statements of need. This is at the average expected. The school makes provision for up to five pupils with physical disability. Very few pupils come from a minority ethnic background.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is very effective. The head teacher provides very strong leadership and he is supported very well by other managers and school governors. Standards of achievement are high and pupils have a positive attitude to their learning. Teaching is good. The school's many strengths far outweigh the areas that might be improved. It provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards achieved, particularly in mathematics, English and science are above the national average in tests and examinations. The school does very well when compared with similar schools.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good, with a significant number of examples of very good teaching.
- The headteacher provides very strong leadership which enables the school to deliver a high quality education for all pupils. He is ably assisted by other managers in the school.
- The governors are very effective in supporting the school and monitoring the progress that is being made.
- The provision made to support pupils' social and moral development is very good.
- Pupils' attitudes are a strength. Pupils have very good relationships, behave very well and respond to teachers with both interest and enthusiasm.
- The school provides very good support for pupils and monitors their welfare carefully. Pupils are known well by all their teachers.

What could be improved

- Annual reports to parents need to give more information on attainment and progress.
- The provision of homework, particularly in Years 7, 8 and 9, is not sufficiently regular or of good quality to support progress in learning.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Good progress has been made since the last inspection. Examination results have improved and are now above the national average. Standards in the core subject of English, mathematics and science have risen over the past four years. Attendance levels have improved slightly and there has been a clear drop in unauthorised absence. Exclusions from school have been reduced. Issues identified in the last report have been addressed. Standards in information technology have risen and they are now at national expectation. A positive start has been made by the new head of department in design and technology to achieve greater consistency in standards, and he is receiving good support. Systematic

monitoring of curriculum plans and pupils' learning is being carried out by senior staff and governors. The quality of teaching has improved significantly. A programme for personal and social education has been established but more needs to be done to develop effective delivery. The school complies fully with the national curriculum, but makes no provision for religious education in the sixth form and does not provide a daily act of collective worship.

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			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
End of Key Stage 3	B	B	B	A
GCSE examinations	B	C	C	A
A-levels/AS-levels	E	E	E	

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

In 1999, fourteen year old pupils achieved above the average levels of attainment in English, mathematics and science. When compared with similar schools, these results are well above average. Standards of attainment have been rising steadily over the last four years, in line with national trends. English and mathematics have maintained standards above the national average and science has improved from below to just above national average.

When pupils take the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) they attain standards which are well above those gained in similar schools. Their performance in obtaining five or more grades A*-C is close to the national average. The proportion of pupils gaining at least five A*-G grades is well above the national average. The most recent examination results for 2000 showed that pupils had made significant progress in raising their standards of attainment from the levels at age fourteen to achieve success in GCSE that was above expectations and above national averages.

Standards of attainment seen in class were good in English, mathematics and science and also in food technology, history and geography. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in their classes, make good progress, and obtain creditable examination results. Standards of numeracy and literacy across the school are good.

In the sixth form, pupils attain results at advanced level which are good when compared to their performance at GCSE. Performance when measured against all schools appears to be low as a number of pupils take fewer A level courses than the average in other schools.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very positive about their learning and proud of the

	school and their own achievements.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are friendly, helpful, courteous and trustworthy. Pupils respond very positively to the clear code of conduct and exclusions are falling.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships throughout the school are very good and a particular strength. Pupils are confident and self assured.
Attendance	Satisfactory overall with most pupils attending regularly and punctually. Unauthorised absence is very low.

These aspects are significant strengths and make a very good contribution to the success of the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

The quality of teaching is good. A significant amount of high quality teaching takes place in Years 10 and 11. Good teaching enables pupils to make appropriately rapid progress in their learning across the age range. Some teaching of good quality was seen in almost all subjects. Particular strengths of the teaching are; careful planning of lessons; a good range of learning activities; good use of question, answer and discussion; and good management of pupils' work routines.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum provided is broad, balanced and relevant to the needs of the students across the age range. It offers a good range and quality of learning experiences and is considerably enriched by a variety of field trips, work related and other extra curricular activities. It meets legal requirements, apart from a course providing religious education in the sixth form.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision is made in class. Pupils make good progress and are supported well by their teachers.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	No pupils require additional support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Spiritual development is satisfactory. Cultural development is good, particularly in drama, art and music. The provision for moral and social development is very good and promotes respect for others well.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has effective systems in place to ensure that pupils are known well and supported effectively. It provides a very good level of care for all pupils.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher	Very strong leadership is provided by the headteacher supported by other staff. This gives the school a very clear sense of purpose and direction.

and other key staff	
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are very effective in carrying out their responsibilities. They monitor the development and progress of the school very well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The quality of teaching and learning is monitored and evaluated very well. The school has good systems to monitor attainment through tests and examination results and is beginning to use them effectively.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are deployed well to support improvement and maintain standards. The school takes careful account of priorities and achieving best value in its spending plans.

Leadership and management of the school are a strength. They are producing a strong sense of all working together to strive for higher standards and to support pupils as they mature and become young adults.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school • Teaching is good • The school is well led and managed • The school expects their children to work hard and they are making good progress • Teachers are very approachable • Behaviour is good • The school is helping their children become more mature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports are not sufficiently informative • The school does not work closely with parents • Homework is not regularly set • The school does not provide an interesting range of activities. Some parents are unclear about what is provided

Inspectors agree with the positive comments of parents. Parents are supportive of the school and pleased with improvements since the new headteacher was appointed. They are particularly satisfied with the way that any problems are handled. Reports to parents do not provide clear information about strengths and weaknesses in pupils' attainment and progress in all subjects and do not give parents a clear idea of how best to support improvement. Homework is set and some use is made of the diary provided by the school, however there is no homework timetable in Years 7, 8 and 9. Inspectors cannot agree with the view that the school does not work closely with parents. The school is very keen to promote positive relationships with parents. The headteacher operates a weekly surgery and the school welcomes parents to visit. The school does offer an interesting and wide range of extra-curricular activities, drama and musical productions.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Standards achieved, particularly in mathematics, English and science are above the national average in tests and examinations. The school does very well compared with similar schools.

- 1 Results in national tests at age 14, in mathematics, English and science are above the national average for all schools. They are well above the average when compared to similar schools. In the last three years results have risen steadily, in line with the national trend.
- 2 In GCSE standards of attainment are again well above the average achieved by similar schools. In 2000, the GCSE, results showed that pupils have done particularly well when compared to their previous attainment at age 14. In addition to mathematics, science and English, standards are also high in food technology, history and geography.
- 3 At A level, the average points score is lower than the national average. This is partly due to pupils taking fewer subjects, in some cases only two. However, pupils achieve grades which are in line with, or better than, what might be expected in relation to their grades at GCSE.
- 4 Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and make good progress. They are well supported in the classroom and take a good number of examinations with creditable results. The impact of this is seen in the high proportion of these pupils who gain five or more qualifications at GCSE.
- 5 The standard of work seen in English is high across the age and ability range. In lessons pupils work hard; they wish to succeed and levels of concentration are high. Written accuracy is good and often very good. High standards of literacy are also promoted by many other departments through emphasis on key vocabulary and appropriate style. Progress in writing is evident as pupils move through the school. By the age of 14 pupils are producing book reviews, media work, creative writing, responses to literature and working on sentence structures and drafting. In GCSE classes, examination responses are a focus, along with examples of note taking, annotation and sustained responses to literature. Pupils are able to read fluently and express their ideas with confidence. Year 9 pupils worked productively in groups analysing their class novel and in a Year 10 class discussion of "I'm the King of the Castle" boys and girls made sensitive and perceptive contributions as they explored the plight of the main character. They also displayed higher order listening skills as they built upon each other's contributions.
- 6 In mathematics, pupils achieve very high standards when compared to similar schools. For example, by age 14, basic algebraic notation is well established and most pupils can formulate simple equations from problems using symbols correctly. In higher attaining groups, these skills are extended considerably and applied to trigonometry. They are all competent to correct their numerical data to two or three significant figures. Progress is good for all groups in this subject. When working for the GCSE examinations in mathematics, progress and standards are maintained, especially for high attaining pupils. For example in one group, almost all pupils have either an A* or A as their target grade and progress through Years 10 and 11 reflects this attainment. They are able to use a computer graphical programme with high

levels of skill to obtain solutions to given quadratic equations. In addition they are able to use a number of checks on the accuracy of their solutions. In other groups, pupils use the same computer package to plot linear equations and middle attaining groups competently solve simultaneous equations using the same programme. In the sixth form A level course, standards are good. Pupils' competence in algebraic manipulation and understanding is exemplary. They are passionate about the subject.

- 7 In science, high standards are seen in lessons which cover the full range of activities in the science curriculum. Investigation and experimental skills were strong in Year 9 classes where pupils were undertaking a series of complex food tests. In a top set in Year 11, pupils were able to carry out complex mathematical calculations linked to the gas laws. In a lower set in Year 11, pupils were able to apply scientific principles to understand water pressure and make predictions about the results of another experiment. Standards seen in lessons across the school reflect the good standards that are achieved in examinations.
- 8 Numeracy skills are good. In mathematics, the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy in Year 7 is improving numeracy and ensuring good continuity from Primary feeder schools. Almost all pupils use decimals, percentages and fractions correctly and can apply them to practical everyday problems. Multiplication calculations are understood well and many pupils enjoy explaining how they obtain correct solutions. The mathematics department capitalised on National Number Day by running a 'Who Wants to be a Millionaire' competition in every mathematics class - a real highlight of the inspection. All pupils competed to answer quickly, a range of number calculations. In science, pupils measure and calculate effectively. They are able to draw and interpret graphs and use ratio. They understand and can manipulate the gas law equations. In design technology, measurement is used appropriately. In geography and history, pupils use scale, ratio and time lines to illustrate subject knowledge. In information and communication technology, spreadsheets and data analysis contribute to numerical facility.

The quality of teaching and learning is good, with a significant number of examples of very good teaching.

- 9 The quality of teaching is good. In just over three-quarters of lessons observed during the inspection the teaching was judged to be of good quality or better. Two-fifths of the teaching seen was very good or excellent. A significant amount of high quality teaching takes place in Years 10 and 11. Good teaching enables pupils to make appropriately rapid progress in their learning across the age range. Where a reasonably large number of lessons was observed, teaching was strong in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT). Some teaching of good quality was seen in almost all other subjects, but in most of these only a small number of lessons was observed. The quality of teaching is markedly better than that reported in the most recent publication on national standards in schools.
- 10 The good and very good teaching is characterised by four important factors. These enable pupils to deepen their intellectual, creative and practical capabilities very effectively.

- 11 Lessons are carefully planned. They build effectively on the knowledge pupils have already gained. These lessons have clear objectives for reinforcing pupils' understanding and extending their learning further. For example, in a science lesson in Year 9 on the digestive system, the teacher drew on previous knowledge of how the mouth and stomach function, and then, using a suitable range of activities, enabled pupils to learn about the biological processes of food digestion. The new learning challenged pupils at an appropriately high level.
- 12 Teachers use a well chosen range of activities. These are well matched to the learning objectives, so pupils retain their interest during the one hour period. For instance, variety and pace in learning were very effective in a GCSE food technology lesson in Year 11. During this practical lesson, pupils worked in groups to compare food products that are made using commercially prepared ingredients with a similar dish using basic ingredients. Clear objectives were written on the whiteboard so that pupils knew exactly what was expected. After preparation and cooking, pupils evaluated the resulting products using a wide range of criteria, which they recorded diagrammatically. All activities were completed within the space of one hour.
- 13 Questioning is used very well. Teachers check pupils' understanding very effectively as work progresses. Lessons are usually characterised by a warm rapport between the teacher and pupils. Positive, verbal dialogue goes beyond recalling facts; teachers use the secure relationships engendered to encourage pupils to express their personal opinions, suggest ideas and to explain their reasoning. For example, in a geography lesson in Year 9 on the differences between northern and southern Italy, the teacher involved a large number of pupils in responding to questions that recapped on the previous lesson. They were then encouraged to explain why particular industries and types of farming are associated with the different regions. After working in pairs to consider tourism in Italy, pupils were themselves encouraged to raise questions about how they might tackle an essay question set for homework.
- 14 Pupils are managed very well. This enables them to work effectively in a variety of learning contexts, such as when undertaking tasks as individuals, in pairs, in groups and sometimes as a whole class. In good quality lessons, teachers have developed well-established working routines. Pupils know the expectations of the teacher and apply the codes of conduct consistently. They know when it is acceptable to discuss their work with each other, to move around the room in order to access resources or to work in silence when an atmosphere of intense concentration is required. For example, very responsible learning attitudes were engendered in a religious education lesson in Year 9, on Buddhism. As a whole class, the teacher explored pupils' knowledge of devotional practices in different religions. Pupils then participated in a twenty-minute meditation, and finally discussed their experiences. The teacher managed pupils very effectively to engage them in a sensitive exploration of their own attitude to belief.
- 15 Teaching is very good in Years 10 and 11. As well as being typified by the four features set out above, the teaching is particularly effective because it reveals to pupils how their work will be assessed. Pupils are often given an aide-memoir of marking schemes and assessment criteria to which they can refer. This enables them to have self-knowledge of their effectiveness as learners. It also allows them to understand how they can target their efforts to improve further. Effective use of assessment criteria was seen in many subjects, for example in mathematics, when

Year 10 pupils were using a computer program to refine their understanding of quadratic equations and in a number of subjects when Year 11 classes prepared for their mock examinations.

- 16 In the sixth form, teaching is particularly effective when pupils are encouraged to research topics and to offer opinions drawn from personal investigations. Through harnessing pupils' independent learning skills, a wide range of information is made available for the benefit of the whole group. Much teaching sharpens pupils' intellectual skills very effectively, provides opportunities for imaginative explanations and stimulates personal responses. A number of examples were observed during the inspection. These included teaching in a Year 12 history lesson, in which pupils used the Internet to explore how the 1930s depression affected international relations. Similarly, in Year 13 art, pupils expressed personal interpretations of dreams, having previously critically appraised the work of artists, such as Edvard Munch and Vincent Van Gogh, whose work was inspired by fantasy experiences.
- 17 In approximately one quarter of lessons observed during the inspection the teaching did not reach the good or better levels described above. However, the teaching was satisfactory because it enabled pupils to make steady progress in their learning. Unsatisfactory teaching only occurred in a very small number of lessons. In these it was insufficiently strong to enable pupils to make sufficient progress. In some lessons, in which teaching was otherwise good, homework set did not consistently help pupils' learning. This was particularly evident in Years 7, 8 and 9.
- 18 There has been a positive improvement in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection.

The head teacher provides very strong leadership which enables the school to deliver a high quality education for all pupils. He is ably assisted by other managers in the school.

- 19 The headteacher is very clear in relating all activities and developments in the school to the declared aims and principles, which are known throughout the school. This generates a strong sense of purpose which is shared by governors, all staff and the pupils themselves.
- 20 The school development plan clearly identifies how actions will be carried through to achieve improvement. Subject and year leaders play an important role, both in planning and implementation, and they are generally effective. There are clear and specific responsibilities and accountabilities, and the resources required are specified and allocated.
- 21 Success in carrying out plans is carefully monitored and evaluated. A strength is the shared responsibility for monitoring classroom activity and the learning of pupils in a systematic and positive process. Expertise in analysing test and examination results and setting targets for individual pupils is growing across the school. Shared and consistent responsibility for this is a growing strength in the management of the school.

The governors are very effective in supporting the school and monitoring the progress that is being made.

- 22 The governing body shares the aims and principles which underpin the commitment of the school to provide a high quality education for all pupils. Governors provide a wide range of expertise and experience which is used to the benefit of the school.
- 23 Whilst supporting the school's planning processes, governors are active in monitoring progress that is being made, and finding out for themselves what is being done in the school. They check the school's performance against targets that have been set, using, for example, examination results, attendance or the results from parent questionnaires. Heads of subject report directly to governors' committees to account for their areas of responsibility. Governors visit the school and take part in classroom observations of pupils' learning. They are very well informed of school activities and are able to make decisions or support developments on the basis of good information and understanding.
- 24 Governors are also very active in the planning and monitoring of the resources available to the school. Careful budgeting has moved the school finances from a potential serious deficit to a balanced budget. They have been very supportive of the head teacher in this matter. Principles of best value are understood and applied effectively. For example, the cleaning contract was vigorously challenged as standards were not being met. Another example of good, forward planning is the decision to assign the business manager to the new school building project, so that the headteacher is not drawn away from his leadership role in the school.
- 25 The governors are playing a significant part in moving the school forward and supporting improvement.

The provision made to support pupils' social and moral development is very good.

- 26 The provision for moral and social development is very good. The impressive school ethos and planned events underpin the curriculum and, together with a good programme for extra curricular activities, secure very good personal development. The climate for learning in the majority of lessons encourages and promotes politeness and respect for other pupils' values and beliefs. Many lessons require students to co-operate when working together; this is a strength. The school's codes of behaviour are well displayed in each teaching room and have a positive effect on relationships. A strong sense of knowing right from wrong is a feature of school life, both in and out of classrooms.
- 27 Wall displays created by pupils relate important social issues to healthy living and responsibility, including the misuse of drugs and the short and long term effects of smoking. In English, the use of modern technology to invade personal privacy raised important social and moral issues. In history, pupils in Years 9, 10 and 11 visit war graves in France and participate in Remembrance Day activities. In science, pupils encounter the dilemma facing the parents and surgeons in respect of a recent operation to separate conjoined twins. Teachers are effective in raising awareness of the moral and social decisions made in these contexts, and their impact on humanity.
- 28 The extensive programme of field trips promotes very good social and moral development. For example, in physical education, challenging outdoor activities allow pupils to explore leadership and responsibility issues. Team spirit is very positive and well promoted. Work related experiences are planned, and encompass appropriate social skills development in the wider community. The school's council

and the prefect system contribute to the school as a social community; the school is also positively involved in supporting the local community. A good example is the current support for the local refuge group.

Pupils' attitudes are a strength. They have very good relationships, behave very well and respond to teachers with both interest and enthusiasm

- 29 Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are proud of their school and of their achievements. They frequently demonstrate very positive attitudes to their work and are very keen to succeed. For example, in most mathematics lessons observed, pupils were very focused on the tasks set, clearly enjoying the challenge and able to measure their success. Pupils in all year groups are attentive and work conscientiously, concentrating hard. They join enthusiastically in discussions. Many are highly motivated and respond really well to good teaching. For example, in the range of technology lessons observed, pupils were enthusiastic and interested. They work very well together in groups and cooperate effectively in practical sessions in science and in physical education lessons. Most sixth form pupils are highly motivated, enthusiastic and good, independent learners. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated and have very good attitudes to learning. A small minority of pupils are less enthusiastic about their learning and find it more difficult to concentrate and stay on task but this is usually linked to weaker teaching.
- 30 Behaviour is very good and parents are very satisfied with the current standard. The very good behaviour in lessons contributes significantly to the positive learning environment observed in the majority of lessons. Pupils move around the school very sensibly and arrive for lessons on time. They all wear school uniform and their appearance is smart. Pupils respond well to the very clear code of conduct and rewards policy and have a very good understanding of what is expected and how to behave in lessons. Pupils are very friendly and helpful. They are confident, courteous and trustworthy as evidenced by their very good behaviour during break-times when they have open access to the school. There is very little litter and the school is well cared for. Exclusions have reduced considerably over the last two years.
- 31 Relationships are very good and a strength of the school. Pupils support one another very positively and this is a feature of many lessons, for example in mathematics, science, physical education, drama and also in assemblies where pupils spontaneously applaud success. There is an excellent rapport between pupils and adults in lessons and extra-curricular activities; staff provide excellent role models. Pupils show tolerance and respect for others' views. For example, in a Year 9 religious education lesson, pupils had an excellent rapport with the teacher and thoroughly enjoyed learning about Buddhism. Many pupils show initiative and take responsibility through charity work and school events. During a recent musical performance a tenth of the school were involved. Pupils respond well to targets set in lessons, especially in physical education and drama. Even younger pupils take responsibility for their learning, for example Year 7 pupils brought in their own folders in textiles. Sixth form pupils demonstrate maturity and independence and willingly take on a range of responsibilities.

The school provides very good support for pupils and monitors their welfare carefully. Pupils are well known by all their teachers.

- 32 The school has effective systems in place to ensure that pupils are known well and are effectively supported. Form tutors normally stay with a form throughout the school, providing good continuity and heads of year are well regarded by pupils and

parents. Parents are very satisfied with the high level of care, support and guidance provided by the school.

- 33 Pupils feel well known by staff and feel able to go to staff with concerns. Parents confirm that issues are dealt with promptly and effectively. The very good relationships between adults and pupils are mutually supportive. The school provides a safe working environment and is keen to improve standards. For example, a sandwich bar has been successfully established to provide better eating facilities away from the learning areas. Pupils are well supervised and feel secure. There are effective arrangements in place to deal with child protection issues.
- 34 Behaviour management procedures are very good and understood well; staff work very effectively at promoting positive behaviour and raising self esteem through praise and the awards scheme. Attendance is monitored effectively and the new "First Day Response" system is working well. This provides a contact between the school and parents on the first day of absence. Unauthorised absence levels have been considerably reduced and are well below the national average figure.
- 35 Pupils and staff value the mentoring system for Years 10 and 11. Whilst there is effective academic monitoring through subject areas, target setting is new and written information to parents is not yet sufficient.
- 36 Induction arrangements are very thorough and good support is provided for pupils leaving school. Appropriate arrangements are made for those pupils in Years 10 and 11 who find the constraints of full-time school difficult. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported in all aspects of school life.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Annual reports to parents need to give more information on attainment and progress.

- 37 The school makes appropriate arrangements for staff to meet with parents to discuss pupils' progress, and provides good opportunities to discuss concerns. For example, the headteacher holds a regular open surgery and parents indicate that heads of year and form tutors are readily accessible and helpful. The school has responded positively to concerns about the management and timings of consultation evenings. Attendance by parents is good. During the inspection it was observed that few pupils accompany their parents. However, although the written reports are encouraging and contain some helpful pastoral information, they do not report clearly on the attainment and progress of pupils in all subjects. They do not provide clear information on strengths and weaknesses and they do not provide sufficient guidance to enable parents to support their children in making progress.

Improve the provision of homework, particularly in Years 7, 8 and 9.

- 38 Although subjects do have an allocation of time for homework within the two week timetable, there is no fixed and regular pattern for the setting of homework in years 7, 8 and 9. This leads to pupils and their parents being uncertain about what is required and when it should be set. Homework diaries show a very different and inconsistent record for individual pupils even within the same teaching group.
- 39 When homework is set, teachers do not always encourage or expect pupils to record it in their diaries at the end of the lesson. At times, the expectation for the length or complexity of the homework is not made clear. Inspection of a sample of pupils' work

shows that homeworks are not always clearly identified. There is little evidence, in some cases, that the homework has been checked, marked or acknowledged.

- 40 This issue was identified at the parents' meeting, as parents wished to be supportive of their child's learning, but found it difficult to find out what was expected. The school should seek to improve this situation and ensure that homework is used to further promote pupils' learning and progress.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 41 In order to improve further the school should.

Improve the annual reports to parents by:-

- ensuring all subjects report clearly on the attainment and progress of each pupil;
- making clear reference to subject content rather than using statements of a general nature;
- keeping parents informed well in the period between reports.
(Ref paragraph 37)

Improve the provision of homework, particularly in Years 7, 8 and 9 by:-

- establishing a regular subject based timetable;
- checking that pupils complete their homework diaries when homework is set;
- monitoring that homework is set which will move pupils' learning forward;
- making sure that homework is marked or checked regularly.
(Ref paragraphs 17,38,39,40)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

76

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

21

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
11%	28%	38%	19%	3%	1%	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	835	132
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	62	0

Special educational needs	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	17	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	218	4

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	44

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	44
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.5
National comparative data	7.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.01
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	1999	76	82	158

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	52	60	43
	Girls	70	61	55
	Total	122	121	98
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	77(66)	77(73)	62 (61)
	National	63 (65)	62 (60)	55(56)
Percentage of pupils	School	34(36)	44(44)	26(20)

at NC level 6 or above	National	28(35)	38(36)	23 (27)
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Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	42	59	38
	Girls	68	62	51
	Total	110	121]	89
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	70(74)	77(76)	56(57)
	National	64(61)	64(62)	60(61)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	36(34)	50(46)	23(15)
	National	31(30)	37(37)	28 (30)

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
	1999	81	90	171

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	25	78	81
	Girls	45	88	88
	Total	70	166	169
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	41(42)	97(96)	99(98)
	National	46.6 (44.6)	91(89.6)	95.8 (96.2)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	38(38)
	National	38(36.8)

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

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

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
	1999	28	40	68

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	9.2	14.5	12.4 (12.1)	0	0	0 (2)
National	17.7	18.1	17.9 (17.6)	2.8	2.8	2.8 (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	0
	National	N/A

International Baccalaureate		Number	% success rate
Number entered for the International Baccalaureate Diploma and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all they studied	School	0	N/A
	National		N/A

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	6
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	947
Any other minority ethnic group	11

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	53	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 – Y13

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	58
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16.7 : 1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y7 – Y13

Total number of education support staff	18
Total aggregate hours worked per week	391

Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y13

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	77.2
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Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y11

Key Stage 2	N/A
Key Stage 3	24.9
Key Stage 4	22.8

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	2216058
Total expenditure	2213484
Expenditure per pupil	2353
Balance brought forward from previous year	49154
Balance carried forward to next year	51728

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

967

Number of questionnaires returned

183

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	37	55	4	4	1
My child is making good progress in school.	38	57	4	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	23	59	6	4	8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	16	57	15	10	2
The teaching is good.	21	70	2	2	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	19	54	19	7	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	41	49	7	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	45	1	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	24	44	21	4	7
The school is well led and managed.	37	51	3	2	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	32	58	5	2	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	13	44	17	7	19