

INSPECTION REPORT

TRINITY SCHOOL

Aspley, Nottingham

LEA area: Nottingham

Unique reference number: 122895

Headteacher: Mr Bernard Bonner

Reporting inspector: Mr Joseph Fitzpatrick
19874

Dates of inspection: 20 November – 22 November 2000

Inspection number: 223886

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 - 18
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr C E Hickey JP
Date of previous inspection:	22 January 1996

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is an average sized, Catholic comprehensive school for boys and girls aged 11 – 18. There are 931 pupils on roll, including a Sixth Form of 222. The school has a fully comprehensive intake of pupils and the overall attainment of pupils on entry is close to average. There are few pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average and the proportion with statements of special educational needs is well below average. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals (13.5 per cent) is close to the national average. The areas from which the majority of pupils come are generally below average in social and economic terms. Along with other schools in Nottingham, the school is taking part in the recently started Excellence in the City project.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school which has maintained high standards over many years. Teaching is generally good and there is a significant proportion that is very good or excellent. The headteacher has an exceptionally clear vision of the kind of school he wants and the school continually strives to improve the quality of education it provides. The school is popular and oversubscribed; it enjoys the confidence of parents and the enthusiastic support of the governing body. Pupils' achievements outstrip the mediocre standard of the accommodation, which is located on two sites. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Good standards of teaching enable the school to achieve and sustain high standards across the curriculum
- Every pupil learns a musical instrument and an exceptionally large number of pupils are enthusiastically involved in high quality musical activities
- Teachers are dedicated and committed and willing to work additional hours to help pupils do well
- The headteacher, ably assisted by other senior teachers, provides outstanding leadership and a clear sense of direction
- The school provides very well for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils
- Pupils are well cared for and their personal development and academic progress are carefully monitored
- The school has a strong ethos, rooted in Christian values, which is conducive to a general pursuit of excellence

What could be improved

- The coordination of the elements of information and communications technology delivered through the various subjects is not sufficiently rigorous
- The collection of books in the upper school library is too small and the library is not used sufficiently as a resource by pupils in Key Stage 4
- There are shortcomings in the management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs
- Formal procedures for Child Protection are not yet fully in place

- Several matters related to health and safety were drawn to the attention of the school

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 sound progress on most of the weaknesses identified in 1996. For example:

- a broad range of teaching and learning approaches is now employed;
- monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is more systematic and rigorous;
- the standards achieved in physical education are higher;
- traffic calming measures have reduced the hazard presented by the road separating the lower and the upper school sites; however, the road continues to constitute a safety hazard to pupils crossing from one site to the other.

However, insufficient progress has been made in improving the following weaknesses identified in 1996:

- the management of provision for special educational needs;
- ensuring that formal procedures for Child Protection are fully in place.

Pupils' overall standards of attainment in GCSE and A Level examinations are considerably higher than the high standards being achieved at the time of the last inspection. There has been improvement in the quality of teaching, and the monitoring and evaluation of standards and of teaching have also improved. The school has the quality of leadership and management to continue to make good progress in the future.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 16 year olds based on the average point scores in GCSE.

Performance in:	compared with				Key	
	all schools			similar schools		
	1998	1999	2000	2000		
GCSE examinations	A*	A*	A*	A*	Very high	A*
A levels	B	B	A	A	well above average	A
					above average	B
					average	C
					below average	D
					well below average	E

The school's results in the national tests for 14 year olds were very high in each of the years 1997-2000. In each of English, mathematics and science, pupils achieved results that placed them in the top five per cent nationally. Results in 2000 were very close to those in 1999 in English; in mathematics and science results in 2000 were considerably higher. In

both years, a significantly high proportion of pupils achieved the higher level 6. The school has sustained very high results in the core subjects for many years. Standards have risen over the years, broadly in line with the national trend. By the end of Year 9, the standards of attainment across the curriculum are generally high. Pupils of all levels of ability, including those with identified special educational needs, make good progress throughout Years 7 – 9.

In the GCSE examinations for 1999, the proportion of pupils achieving five or more grades A* - C was well above the national average; in music 100 per cent of pupils achieved grades A* - C and in almost all subjects – including the core subjects of English, mathematics and science - the school's results were significantly higher than the national average. Only in art and in information and communications technology (ICT) were results lower than the national average. In 2000, results in ICT were higher than the national average; while results in art remained below the national average, inspection evidence indicates that, following the recent appointment of a new head of department, standards of art work in the school are rising. In 2000, the average points score per pupil was very high both in comparison with results achieved in all schools and in schools with a similar intake. Pupils of all levels of ability make good progress in Key Stage 4. Girls generally perform better than boys but no more than is the case nationally; in several subjects boys achieved better results than girls in both 1999 and 2000. Both boys and girls in the school achieve at a higher level than boys and girls nationally.

In the 1999 A level examinations, the average points score for pupils entered for two or more A levels was considerably higher than the national average; in 2000 it rose even higher. Of the 18 subjects taken in A Level examinations in 2000, the school exceeded national averages in 17. A study of the value added between GCSE and A level has shown that significantly more pupils overachieve than underachieve and that most pupils make good progress in the sixth form.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very positive. Most pupils are keen to come to school and take part in a wide range of activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils listen well in class and pay attention. They are generally polite and courteous around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. A harmonious and caring school. Pupils respect others' opinions and are sensitive to others' needs.
Attendance	Good. Better than the national average.

Most pupils appreciate the quality of the education they receive. They are positive about the school and have good relationships with each other and their teachers. They show their appreciation by their good manners and good standards of attendance and punctuality.

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.

In all but one of the 66 lessons seen teaching was satisfactory or better. The majority of lessons were good and there was a significant amount of teaching that was very good or excellent. In well-taught lessons pupils made good progress by a good work rate, clear explanations, conscientious execution of tasks and good discipline. The one unsatisfactory lesson was characterised by a failure to match work in a mixed ability class to the needs of pupils of different levels of ability; in particular the least able pupils were unable to cope with the work presented and had difficulty in understanding what they needed to do. But the general quality of teaching was good and lessons were pitched at an appropriate level for the pupils involved. Teaching in English, mathematics and science is good overall. Good quality teaching helps most pupils achieve a good command of language, numeracy and information technology skills.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	A good range of courses. There is good planning in most subjects. There is good quality careers advice and a very broad range of extracurricular activities, particularly in music and sports.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils are appropriately assessed and identified and the teaching of these pupils is generally good. However, the individual education plans are not sufficiently tailored to the needs of individuals and the monitoring and recording of the progress of the pupils involved is not sufficiently detailed and rigorous.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils are carefully assessed and receive appropriate support. These pupils are well integrated into lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. Pupils are well known and feel confident and secure. The personal and social education programme and the many opportunities for extracurricular activities contribute to the personal development of the pupils. The single sex grouping of some pupils for music and physical education is beneficial. Pupils pray on a daily basis and regularly take part in religious liturgies. There are many opportunities for reflection on moral and ethical issues in subject teaching. The social development of pupils is enhanced by visits and trips. There are elements of multi-cultural education in music, geography and religious education.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The general quality of care and guidance is good. The academic progress of individual pupils is carefully tracked. Pupils feel secure and valued. Formal procedures for Child Protection are not yet fully in place.

The school's curriculum is broad and balanced and fully complies with the requirements of the National Curriculum. All pupils take religious education and all are entered for the GCSE

examination in religious studies. Every pupil learns to play a musical instrument and almost all continue to take music in Key Stage 4; in addition to participation in a wide range of musical performances, there is good coverage of the National Curriculum in music lessons. Teachers of mathematics put on additional “booster classes” after school in Years 9 and 10, and GCSE music is taught after school. There is an exceptionally wide range of extracurricular activities, especially in music and sport, and a good level of take-up by pupils. There are good links with parents and the Parent Teachers Association makes a generous contribution to school funds. There are some areas of health and safety the school needs to attend to and the road separating the two sites remains a hazard.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher has a clear vision of the kind of school he wants and has communicated this to the staff. He is very ably supported by the two deputies and other senior staff and the teaching force is unified and committed. There are good management systems in place designed to drive up standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The Governing Body has a strong commitment to the school and encourages improving standards. Governors exercise appropriate financial control and monitoring of the curriculum but they have yet to set targets for the headteacher under Performance Management.
The school’s evaluation of its performance	There is careful monitoring of standards. Data are gathered systematically and analysed, and appropriate feedback is given to heads of faculty and heads of departments with a view to informing future planning and development.
The strategic use of resources	Educational priorities are well supported through careful financial planning and management.

There is a strong aspiration throughout the school, shared by the governing body, to keep on improving the quality of education. There is satisfactory staff coverage of subjects, but the school’s strong commitment to music means that there is more non-specialist teaching in Key Stage 3 than is usual. Technician support in some subjects is inadequate and some teachers undertake tasks normally done by support staff. The general fabric of the two older buildings is poor and, though the buildings are clean, the standard of internal decoration is just about adequate. There is an attractive and well equipped sixth form block, a recent replacement for the previous building that was destroyed by fire. The location of the school on two sites requires pupils to move in large numbers between upper and lower school; the movement of pupils is well managed and pupils normally exercise appropriate vigilance. Management embraces the principles of “best value”.

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 expects pupils to work hard and to achieve high standards •Pupils make good progress •The school provides a good “all round” education •There are excellent musical performances and the school does well in inter-school sporting competitions •There is a good “Catholic ethos” and pupils pray regularly and take part in liturgies •There is a good flow of information and reports on pupils are informative and of good quality •The school promotes high standards of discipline • Teachers are hard-working and committed and are willing to work additional hours to help pupils do well 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A very small number felt they could be better informed about how well their child was getting on

Inspectors support the positive views the parents express. Teachers expect pupils to work hard and do their best; the school generally achieves high standards. Standards of discipline are good and pupils make good progress. However, inspectors support the view of the majority of parents that the school keeps parents well informed of their child’s progress by means of interim and end of year reports as well as parents’ evenings; parents receive a calendar of forthcoming events and there is a regular well produced newsletter. Overall, parents enthusiastically support the school and appreciate what it achieves for their children.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Good standards of teaching enable the school to achieve and sustain high standards across the curriculum.

1 Of the 66 lessons observed, the great majority were good or better. Lessons are almost always well planned and prepared, with resources to hand; objectives and learning outcomes are clear. Teachers give clear instructions and explanations and challenge pupils to make thoughtful replies. Good use is made of a range of teaching approaches: whole class discussion, involving good quality question and answer sessions; the use of group and paired work; demonstrations by the teacher or selected pupils; presentations by pupils; and writing activities. The last inspection report recommended an extension of teaching approaches and that has certainly taken place; there has also been an increased use since the last inspection of investigation and independent inquiry in several subjects; however, the underuse of the upper school library by pupils in Key Stage 4 means that there remains room for improvement in this area in the case of some pupils. Pupils usually listen well, stay on task and work at a good pace. Some teachers enter key words on the board, refer to them regularly during the lesson and revisit them at the end in order to sum up and reinforce learning points. Many good lessons are carefully staged, unfolding in carefully managed and timed stages, and pupils are involved by being required to carry out an appropriate sequence of activities. Teachers make good use of praise to recognise and reward good quality work and effort by individual pupils. Reading materials and activities are usually well matched to the needs of the pupils involved: this is made easier by the setting of pupils by ability from Christmas in Year 7 onwards. Teachers make good use of day-to-day assessment in order to meet the needs of individual pupils. Homework is regularly given and taken in; it is thoroughly marked and there are comments showing pupils how to improve; homework diaries are regularly checked by form tutors, and parents - who sign them to indicate that work has been completed - find that they are a useful means of communication between school and home.

2 More able pupils are stretched: in one excellent lesson in design and technology, for example, the pupils were required to design and construct a hat, taking account of the properties of the materials they worked with; they used computers in the design and construction phases of their work and carried out evaluations of the finished products and of the processes involved, including the need to alter plans and modify designs. In an excellent lesson in mathematics, the teacher's very good subject knowledge, combined with a good sense of humour, motivated Year 7 pupils to work hard and achieve good understanding, building methodically on what they had learned in Key Stage 2. The work of lower attainers is often assisted by supportive worksheets and structured activities. For example, in one good English lesson involving lower attaining pupils, the teacher provided the pupils with a worksheet to guide their writing: this acted as a prompt to the pupils and also circumscribed the writing activity in such a way that it was easy for them to know what to do. Teachers are generally good at breaking up activities to more precise and manageable tasks in order to help lower attaining pupils cope and achieve success. Pupils with statements and others on the register of special educational needs frequently receive well targeted support from special needs teachers on a one-to-one basis and this helps them cope with the work being done by the class and to make good progress. However, in the one lesson that was deemed unsatisfactory, the teacher failed to match work to the needs of the least able pupils who had difficulty in understanding what they were supposed to be doing. But the generally good quality of the teaching helps pupils to make good progress and contributes strongly to the high standards they achieve.

3 The school has sustained its high standards over many years. The previous inspection report, in 1996, noted how the school's GCSE results were significantly above national averages in terms of the proportion of pupils achieving grades A* - C. Since then the school has consistently achieved well above national averages in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science in national tests at the end of Key Stage 3, in GCSE examinations and in A level examinations. Scrutiny of the average points score per pupil achieved in GCSE examinations reveals a remarkably consistent and high level of attainment: in 1998 the average points score was 45.8, in 1999 48.15, in 2000 47.4. Such consistently high levels of attainment – which go back to well before 1998 - reflect consistently good quality teaching and sustained management efforts to drive up standards and to keep pupils' expectations at a high level. Heads of department are selected with great care and they are expected to take responsibility for the standard of work attained in their subject. In recent years, governors and senior managers have been able to select new heads of department for subjects where results compared unfavourably with results in other subjects; they have gone about this task with great seriousness and thoroughness in order to ensure that pupils taking these subjects can have the same expectations of high quality teaching as pupils taking other subjects. Each year, test and examination data are gathered carefully and subjected to detailed analysis and the lessons learned from this analysis are fed back to heads of faculty and heads of department. One of the deputies, equipped with the results of data analysis, also interviews each head of faculty and head of department every year and indicates the proportion of pupils who did best in their subject and the proportion who did worst in their subject. This acts as an objective indicator of how well subjects are performing and has led at times to marked improvements in teaching quality.

4 Newly qualified teachers receive good support from heads of department and senior management and the school operates a good programme of induction for new staff. Teachers take up in-service courses to help them improve their expertise and there are firm plans for all teachers to undertake courses in ICT in order to improve their skills in teaching this subject; this should help the school achieve a more consistent standard in the teaching of elements of this subject through the various subjects of the curriculum. It will then need to map what is taught where and to what standard in order to achieve a satisfactory level of coordination. In any subject, teachers deemed to require support are given opportunities to observe teaching in their subject both in the school and in other schools, where practice is good. The school also makes use of the services of Local Education Authority advisers and inspectors to provide expert assessment and advice. Within a system of support and guidance, governors and senior managers hold heads of department and, indeed, all teachers to account. These management procedures are crucial to the school's consistently good achievement of high standards over time.

Every pupil learns a musical instrument and an exceptionally large number of pupils are enthusiastically involved in high quality musical activities

5 A distinguishing feature of the school is that every pupil learns a musical instrument. A large number of peripatetic teachers visit the school to tutor pupils in the playing of various musical instruments, most of which are provided by the school. There is a programme of withdrawal from lessons of individual pupils to receive instrumental tuition, designed to ensure that pupils are not regularly withdrawn from the same subject. In addition, the school has numerous bands, such as a large marching band, a jazz band and others, which pupils join, spending many hours after school in practising and preparing for public performances. The emphasis on music does not detract from pupils' performance in other subjects but is part of the school's general quest for excellence; it helps pupils to realise what can be achieved through dedication and hard work and, as such, raises their expectations as well as their self-esteem. There is a large school choir, of which some teachers and parents are

members, and the choir and the various bands take part in local community events and celebrations in the city of Nottingham. In addition to this strong emphasis on public performance, which contributes to parents' and pupils' pride in their school, there is an appropriate emphasis in lessons on the requirements of the National Curriculum; classroom or curriculum music is in no way neglected but rather is strengthened by instrumental tuition and participation in public performances. There is an extremely high take-up of music in Key Stage 4, so that almost all pupils take music throughout the entire period of compulsory schooling; this is comparatively rare. As a result of this, however, there are time-tabling constraints which require that GCSE music is taught after school. Results in GCSE examinations are very good and the fact that the course is taught so successfully after school is a tribute to the dedication of the staff and pupils involved. Music makes a strong contribution to the corporate life of the school and to the spiritual, social and cultural development of the pupils.

Teachers are dedicated and committed and willing to work additional hours to help pupils do well

6 The dedication and commitment of the teachers of music has already been commented on. In addition, teachers of mathematics take classes in Years 9 and 10 for booster lessons after school and other lessons out of school are put on as occasion demands. A large number of teachers contribute to the various elements that make up the Duke of Edinburgh Awards, which involves them working with pupils, mainly from Year 10 and the sixth form, at lunchtimes and weekends. They also give up their own free time to help with the Young Enterprise project in the sixth form and with the outdoor pursuits weekend for sixth formers in the autumn term. Parents commented positively on the dedication and commitment of staff who are willing to put themselves out to help pupils succeed. There is also a rich programme of extracurricular activities in sport, supervised and arranged by teachers with some support from parents and other adults. It is this element of dedication and commitment, which is hard to quantify, which has made it possible for the school to help pupils to achieve so highly over a sustained period of time.

The headteacher, ably assisted by other senior teachers, provides outstanding leadership and a clear sense of direction

7 The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. He has an exceptionally clear vision of the kind of school he wants and has successfully imparted this to governors, teachers and parents; it incorporates an ambition for high standards of attainment together with an enriching and rewarding educational experience for every pupil. He has been resolute in withstanding criticism of the school's strong emphasis on music and in maintaining and promoting the Christian values embedded in the school's mission statement. A highly visible and enthusiastic presence around the school, the headteacher has a good knowledge of individual pupils and is involved in tracking and monitoring their progress. He is ably assisted by two deputies, who carry much of the administrative burden of the school, and by a team of senior managers who are unusual in their degree of commitment to the school's mission and the welfare of pupils. The senior management team has good systems for managing departments and groups of pupils – for example, interviewing heads of department in order to apprise them of how well their department is performing and interviewing pupils in Year 11 in order to help them set and achieve their targets in GCSE examinations. The school gathers data carefully and carries out useful analyses as a means of evaluating its own performance and of setting new and challenging targets; the results are discussed in detail by the senior managers and by members of the governing body.

8 There is a good sense of teamwork throughout the school and teachers, senior managers and governors work cooperatively together. Governors are kept up to date with

curriculum and other developments and have a sound grasp of the school's success in public examinations: for example, the most recent governors' report to parents (November 2000) comments on newspaper analyses of GCSE results placing Trinity well within the top 300 comprehensive schools in the country. Governors share teachers', pupils' and parents' pride in the school's past achievements. But the headteacher has also imparted to them and others the need to move on and to strive for continued improvement. The school's development and improvement plan is a detailed and manageable document which is designed to create the circumstances which enable teachers to do their work effectively. In a number of very practical ways it points the way forward and shows how improvements can be made.

The school provides very well for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

9 The first strand in the school development plan concerns the spiritual development of the pupils and the spirituality of the school. There is a strong emphasis on regular opportunities for prayer as well as on school liturgies, which are the responsibility of a designated liturgy team, comprising pupils as well as teachers. School prayers are displayed in most classrooms. The religious education department works closely with teachers responsible for the pastoral curriculum to ensure that the programme of personal and social development delivered through form periods attends to spiritual as well as moral, social and cultural issues. Close links are fostered with neighbouring parishes and priests and other visitors are made welcome and invited to make contributions to the spiritual and moral education of pupils. Parents join in the celebration of the school's achievements in the Mass held at the Cathedral at the end of the school year. All pupils in the sixth form attend the sixth form assembly held on Tuesday mornings; they also take part in the group discussions of religious and moral issues that spring from the assemblies and show a good sense of responsibility and good powers of reasoning when discussing the important issues that arise.

10 Moral issues are covered in many areas of the curriculum; for example, sixth form pupils studying for GNVQ in ICT made presentations on the ethical issues arising from the development of information and communications technology, such as the right to privacy, intellectual property, and so forth. Environmental issues are well covered in science, geography and religious education. Pupils show a good level of moral awareness in their discussions in class and their opinions are sought on a wide range of matters affecting school life. Their respect for other people's views, sensitivity to others' needs and their charity work on behalf of CAFOD reflect well on the excellent provision made for their moral development.

11 The many opportunities for pupils to take part in group activities, both in class and in extracurricular activities in music and sport, contribute to the pupils' social development. Pupils work well together in lessons and have well developed habits of listening to others and attending to what the teacher is saying in lessons. Occasional visits to places of interest outside school and fieldwork trips in history and geography also contribute to the development of their social skills. The overall provision made for the social development of pupils is very good.

12 The strong emphasis on music makes a powerful contribution to the cultural development of pupils. Most leave school with a well developed ability to appreciate good quality music and musicianship. The English curriculum is centred on literature and much of the language work covered arises from the pupils' reading of novels and poems. Religious education introduces pupils to faiths other than Christianity and to the customs and beliefs of people from non-European cultures. Most of the music curriculum is British or European in

character but there are opportunities, such as gospel singing, for pupils to encounter cultures different from their own. The provision made for pupils' cultural development is good.

Pupils are well cared for and their personal development and academic progress are carefully monitored.

13 The careful gathering and analysis of test and examination data means that senior managers and heads of departments have good knowledge of the academic progress made by individual pupils as well as by groups of pupils. The school has well developed systems for tracking the progress of individual pupils. Interim and end of year reports to parents on the progress and standards achieved by their child are detailed and informative and also indicate precisely how well the pupil is achieving; they also set pupils individual targets to aim at over the next year. Pupils' achievements and attitudes to the life and work of the school are well known by a range of staff. Pupils are relaxed and confident and show a high degree of trust in their teachers; although they say that incidents of bullying are very rare, they also say that they would report any incidents to their form tutor or a member of staff. Pupils who were asked said they enjoyed learning a musical instrument and some were extremely enthusiastic about taking part in musical performances. The broad range of the curriculum and the many opportunities for extracurricular activities contribute to the very good provision made for the personal development of pupils. In addition, form tutors and heads of year build up very detailed knowledge of individual pupils and there is a well constructed and delivered programme of personal and social education which takes place during form periods on Tuesday mornings. Parents expressed satisfaction at the school's willingness to provide them with opportunities to discuss their child's progress and personal development.

The school has a strong ethos, rooted in Christian values, which is conducive to a general pursuit of excellence

14 The strong emphasis placed by the school on its Catholic-Christian values is evident in the fact that the promotion and development of these is the first priority in the current school development plan. Under four headings – liturgy, charity, prayer, and chaplaincy and parish links – the plan sets out a variety of practical ways in which each can be improved as well as the success criteria against which improvement can be measured. It is also evident in the ten per cent of the time-table the school devotes to religious education and the fact that all pupils take the GCSE examination in religious studies and that a growing number of the sixth formers take the A level examination in the subject. The strong religious character of the school presents pupils and staff with high ideals and a powerful motivating force to do well. The school successfully imparts to pupils the idea that the pursuit of excellence is part and parcel of the spiritual life of the school and a natural ingredient of their own spiritual natures. The school successfully blends down-to-earth practical measures for improvement with high ideals and religious values. In the final analysis, its success is due to the implementation of good practical approaches to teaching and school management within a strong framework of Christian values and ideals.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The coordination of the elements of information and communications technology delivered through the various subjects is not sufficiently rigorous

15 There has been recent significant improvement in the standards achieved in the GCSE examination in ICT – from a position of being below the national average in 1999 the school's results improved to being above the national average in 2000. There is also

evidence that the teaching of the subject has improved under a new head of department and with the addition of a new teacher, both with good levels of expertise in this rapidly developing subject. However, the GCSE course is largely delivered by teachers who are specialists in the subject. Pupils who are not taking the GCSE course follow a course in which the various elements of the subjects are delivered through a variety of other subjects. Partly on account of constraints of time and partly on account of the varying levels of expertise of non-specialist staff, some of whom are due to undergo in-service training in ICT in the next term, the school is not yet in a position to ensure that the quality of the course undertaken in this way provides pupils with a consistently good educational experience. There is no guarantee as yet that pupils' experience of ICT is of a sufficiently high standard. The need for such a guarantee is underlined by the fact that the school is about to receive delivery of a large number of new computers which will be made available to departments throughout the school. Clearly the school will need to ensure that its investment is resulting in improved teaching and learning in ICT and for that to happen there will have to be better coordination of the subject than has been possible up till now.

The collection of books in the upper school library is too small and the library is not used sufficiently as a resource by pupils in Key Stage 4

16 The acting librarian, who works part-time in the school and has other duties to perform, has no accurate and up-to-date figures regarding the number of books in the upper school library. However, a cursory examination of the library is sufficient to indicate that the library is smaller than other libraries of this kind, notwithstanding the collection of fiction, non-fiction and reference books held in the lower school library. In addition, although there are no figures indicating the borrowing rate from the upper school library, an inspection of the card system indicates that there is relatively little borrowing by pupils in Years 10 and 11 and that most use of the library is by sixth formers preparing for A level examinations. A key issue in the last inspection report was the provision of more opportunities for pupils to engage in independent research and enquiry using a range of resources. The underuse of the library by pupils in Key Stage 4 suggests that this requirement is not yet being fully met. Key Stage 4 pupils do read fiction, both in English lessons and in the slot of time set aside for whole school silent reading on Wednesday mornings. But they are still not making sufficient use of a valuable school resource to learn the skills of research and independent enquiry.

There are shortcomings in the management of provision for pupils with special educational needs

17 Inspection evidence suggests that pupils on the register of special educational needs are making good progress. This is due in part to the smaller classes the school creates for the least able pupils in each year and in part to the teaching approaches adopted by class teachers who are generally skilful in matching work and materials to pupils' needs. It is also due to the regular one-to-one support designated special needs pupils receive from the special needs support staff during lessons. However, the individual education plans of a range of such pupils are not sufficiently varied and tailored to their specific needs; and there are shortcomings in the diagnosis and recording of the specific difficulties of these pupils and in monitoring and recording the progress they make. The management of this area of the school's provision was an issue in the previous inspection report and has not yet been fully addressed.

Formal procedures for Child Protection are not yet fully in place.

18 This was another issue in the last inspection report which has not yet been fully addressed. The school has adopted the Local Education Authority's policy on Child Protection but has not yet appropriated the policy and made it its own. There is a designated

teacher for Child Protection but no other teachers in the school have received formal training in this area and most are unaware that this was an issue raised in the last inspection report. For these reasons, the school appears ill equipped to look out for and recognise issues of Child Protection, should they arise, and it is notable that the designated teacher was unaware of a child in the school deemed to be at risk. The school needs to familiarise itself with DfEE Circular 10/95 and to draw up and implement its own policy in the light of its requirements.

Several matters related to health and safety were drawn to the attention of the school

19 An issue raised in the last inspection report which the school has repeatedly sought to address but over which it has limited control is the safety hazard presented by the road separating the two sites. The school has frequently asked for measures of various kinds to be introduced in order to secure the health and safety of the pupils and staff who have to cross the road, sometimes several times a day. Since the last inspection “sleeping policemen” have been built in order to reduce the speed of cars using the road. While this is a positive development, it does not take away the risk presented by the road to pupils and staff. It would appear that because the arrangements made by the school appear to be successful and no pupil has yet been injured on the road, the local authority takes the view that the road does not constitute a sufficient risk for further measures to be introduced. But there can be no doubting the fact, given the number of pupils and staff who cross the road on a daily basis and the speed of travel of some cars on the road, that this road continues to present a serious hazard to staff and pupils.

20 The extractor fan in one of the design and technology workshops was not working with full effectiveness during the inspection and needs to be serviced. Other features, such as the untidy state of the store room in science, also constitute a risk to health and safety. Insufficient technician support in subjects like science and design and technology means that teachers in these subjects are hard pressed to ensure that all aspects of equipment and storage which bear on health and safety have been fully addressed.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

21 The school should now:

- (i) Ensure more rigorous coordination of the elements of ICT delivered through the various subjects so that there is a measurable guarantee that pupils are receiving consistently high quality teaching
- (ii) Develop the upper school library further and ensure that it is regularly used as a resource in Key Stage 4 for the development of the skills of independent research and enquiry
- (iii) Take steps to improve the management of provision for special educational needs so that individual education plans are more precisely shaped to meet the diagnosed needs of the pupils concerned and that closer monitoring is made of their progress and better records kept;
- (iv) Draw up its own policy on Child Protection based on DfEE Circular 10/95, making sure to comply with all of its requirements; arrange for the designated teacher to receive up-to-date training and, if possible, for some senior members of staff to be trained in Child Protection and for all staff to be made sensitive to this issue;
- (v) Address the various health and safety matters drawn to its attention, in so far as this is possible, and ensure that health and safety issues are prioritised in the new school development plan.

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	16

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	21	53	21	2	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	709	222
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	126	

Special educational needs

	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	46	2

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	19

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	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	2000
	%
School data	6.2
National comparative data	7.4

Unauthorised absence

	2000
	%
School data	0.23
National comparative data	1.00

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	64	77

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	49	57	51
	Girls	67	62	57
	Total	116	119	108
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	82	84	77
	National	63(63)	62(62)	55(55)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	44(49)	58(54)	
	National	28 (28)	38(38)	23 (23)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	52	53	50
	Girls	69	60	52
	Total	121	113	102
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	86	80	72
	National	64 (64)	64 (64)	60 (60)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	49	53	50
	National	31 (31)	37 (37)	28 (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	67	65	132

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	36	66	67
	Girls	45	65	65
	Total	81	131	132
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	61 (66)	99.2 (99)	100 (100)
	National	49.2 (46.6)	88.9 (90.9)	95.3 (95.8)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	46.4 (48)
	National	38.9 (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		N/a
	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
	2000	32	38	70

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	24.1	21.7	22.8	(1.9)	(3.1)	(2.3)
National	(17.7)	(18.1)	(17.9)	(2.7)	(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	13	85
	National		[]

International Bacculaureate		Number	% success rate
Number entered for the International Bacculaureate Diploma and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all they studied	School	0	N/a
	National		82.5

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	58
Black – African heritage	19
Black – other	18
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	11
White	814
Any other minority ethnic group	10

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	4	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	10	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y13 1999

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	61.21
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15.2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y7 – Y13

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	176

Deployment of teachers: Y[] – Y[]

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	78.4
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Average teaching group size: Y[] – Y[]

Key Stage 2	N/a
Key Stage 3	22.2
Key Stage 4	20

Financial information

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	2568710
Total expenditure	2469721
Expenditure per pupil	2739
Balance brought forward from previous year	46213
Balance carried forward to next year	145202

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	931
Number of questionnaires returned	332

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	34	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	70	28	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	64	32	1	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	47	48	4	1	0
The teaching is good.	69	30	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	41	7	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	23	2	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	88	12	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	51	39	6	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	76	20	1	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	69	28	1	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	76	20	1	0	2

Summary of parents' and carers' responses:

They enthusiastically support the school and appreciate what it achieves for their children.