

INSPECTION REPORT

Ellesmere Port Roman Catholic High School

Ellesmere Port

Cheshire LEA

Unique reference number: 111451

Headteacher: Mr Peter Lee

Reporting inspector: David Jones
8197

Dates of inspection: 11th –14th December 2000.

Inspection number: 223966

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

© Crown copyright 2001

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	11 - 18
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Capenhurst Lane Whitby South Wirral Merseyside
Postcode:	CH65 7AQ
Telephone number:	0151 355 2373
Fax number:	0151 356 9154
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs B Kavanagh
Date of previous inspection:	6 th – 10 th April 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
DAVID JONES	8197	Registered inspector
Ken Parsons	9756	Lay inspector
Chris Griffin	11508	Team inspector
Ray Woodhouse	22691	Team inspector
Andrew Bird	23528	Team inspector
Shirley Jeffray	12985	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

Quality Assurance Associates Ltd
Herringston Barn
Herringston
Dorchester
Dorset
DT2 9PU

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

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
 PART B: COMMENTARY	
 WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL	 11
 WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED	 14
 WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	 17
 PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	 18 - 22

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Ellesmere Port Catholic High School is an 11-18 voluntary aided mixed comprehensive school. The school serves a socio-economically mixed catchment area drawn from the industrial town of Ellesmere Port. The school is larger than average nationally with 1038 pupils on roll in September 2000 and on a rising trend. Less than 1% of pupils come from an ethnic minority and just over 14% are entitled to free school meals. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is just above average (19.6%), but only 1% of pupils have been awarded statements of special educational need and this figure is below the national average. Attainment on entry is in line with national expectations, the school is one of four secondary establishments locally in an Education Action Zone.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Standards of achievement in the 2000 national tests at age 14 were well above national expectations in English and mathematics and in line with expectations in science. These results are in line with the trend achieved over the last three years, with consistently high standards achieved in English.

The percentage of pupils attaining 5A*-C grades at GCSE is well above the national average as is the percentage of those pupils attaining either 5 or 1 A*-G grades. The average total point scored by pupils in all subjects at GCSE is well above the national average and has been so for the last five years. In the last three years boys results at Key Stage 3 and GCSE have improved significantly to match the high levels achieved by the girls, this a very positive development when compared to schools nationally. Attainment post 16 at GCE has been close to the national average for the last three years varying in line with pupil expectations.

The quality of teaching is good and often very good with particular strengths in the quality of staff subject knowledge and behaviour management. However there are weaknesses in the use of assessment to inform teaching and pupil's learning. The leadership of the headteacher is particularly effective, as is that of the pastoral teams in the lower school, upper school and sixth form. The reflection of the school's aims and values in the support, development and guidance given to pupils is very good. The senior management team links effectively with the chaplaincy. The school has benefited from the skills and experience of several long serving members of staff. However this stability can be seen to be inhibiting change management and the further enhancement of standards. The school gives very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The standards of achievement of middle and lower ability pupils are notable strengths.
- The effectiveness of the school's behaviour management procedures.
- The challenging teaching that helps a high proportion of pupils enjoy their experiences in English, modern foreign languages, geography, PSHE and history.
- The outstanding national sporting successes achieved by the school.
- The leadership of the head.

What could be improved

- Standards of attainment in science and mathematics to match outstanding achievements in English.
- The analysis and application of national data and the school's own information to further inform teaching and set challenging targets.
- Pupils' knowledge of how well they are doing and how they can improve through level related marking and target setting.
- The accommodation and resources for post 16 students, ICT, science and drama.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected at the end of April 1996. Good progress has been made against the majority of the Key Issues for action. The strong, fully costed School Development Plan now forms the heart of the school's decision-making process. Excellent progress has been made in raising the attainment of boys from levels that were already above those nationally to match that of the girls. Refinements in the pastoral structure as the school has grown, have maintained an atmosphere where academic and sporting success is consistently valued.

The management structure has been reviewed strengthening corporate decision-making but there is more work to be done on monitoring and evaluating both attainment and the curriculum. Some vocational courses have been recently introduced into the sixth form but these need to be broader based. However limitations in accommodation have prevented appropriate expansion of provision and inhibited the school's ability to improve standards in some of the courses offered. The school has continued to improve since the last inspection, existing strengths at GCSE have been maintained and in some cases improved, the attainment of boys shows noticeable gains and whole school planning is improving. However further progress by this well run and successful school is being hindered by significant accommodation limitations.

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
	1998	1999	2000	2000
GCSE examinations	A	C	B	A*
A-levels/AS-levels	C	A	D	

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

Results in the national tests at age 14 have been above the national average in English, mathematics and science for the last five years. Standards have been well above the national average in English for the last three years but closer to the national figure in science. During the inspection evidence seen in pupil's work confirmed these variations. The performance of boys in the national tests has risen to match the high levels attained by the girls.

Strong performances at GCSE have been maintained over the last four years, the school traditionally enters a significantly higher proportion of the cohort for examination in all GCSE subjects than is the case nationally. Some 55% of the pupils entered attained 5 A*-C grade at GCSE in 2000, a performance above the national average for the fifth year. The first results from the new modular science GCSE are a positive start. Some 98% of pupils obtained 5 A*-G grade passes and 99% of pupils obtained at least 1 A*-G grade. Pupils' work reviewed during the inspection shows the consistency of support and guidance given to middle and lower ability pupils and its notable impact upon standards. The school's achievement in these three key categories places it in the top 5% of schools nationally in similar contexts. Within this strong performance it should be noted that in 2000 the whole cohort of pupil's were entered for English GCSE and nearly 70% of pupils obtained A*-C grades. This year groups attainment on entry was in line with national expectations. In the English national tests at age 14 their performance was above average and this performance at GCSE was well above average.

Standards of achievement in the sixth form at GCE advanced level have been in line with expectations based on pupils' previous performance but cramped conditions and very limited individual study facilities have noticeably inhibited the ability of the staff to further improve performance at this level.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to the school and what it stands for are very good.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in classrooms and around the particularly cramped confines of some parts of the school is excellent.
Personal development and relationships	Very good relationships between pupils and between staff and pupils were clearly evident.
Attendance	Attendance is in line with the national average.

The Catholic ethos of the school stands out consistently. The links with the chaplaincy are good and this extends effectively into the personal and social education programme and the pastoral system at every level. Pupils are aware of the impact of their behaviour on others and have a very positive attitude to the school, a feature commented upon by 98% of parents who responded to the questionnaire. Teachers have good behaviour management skills and very good relationships with pupils who respond very well to challenging teaching and the high standards of behaviour expected of them.

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.

Teaching is consistently strong in English at all levels, always satisfactory and occasionally good or better in mathematics but more variable in science where inconsistent communication of learning objectives contributes to occasional unsatisfactory lessons. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are consistently developed in all subjects. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported at all levels. Lower and middle ability pupils are consistently supported and extended but higher ability pupils could be further extended in some lessons particularly if access to information technology facilities was better.

Teacher's subject knowledge and understanding is very good as is their understanding of the requirements of the GCSE course they are teaching. Staff behaviour management skills are good and pupils respond well to the high expectations staff have of them. Questioning is used to good effect in all subjects. Pupils enjoy their challenging experiences in English, modern foreign languages, geography, personal and social education and history. The school is making good use of its limited information technology facilities to introduce video distance learning facilities in psychology. The consistency of solid professionalism, which can produce teaching 95% satisfactory or better and 65% good or better in a demanding situation, is a strength of the school.

Where there is room for improvement in the teaching; a greater range of teaching methods needs to be employed particularly in Key Stage 3. Here learning objectives are not as well communicated as at GCSE and teachers make limited use of National Curriculum levels to set targets and help pupils understand what they have to do to improve. The school's very limited information technology resources are inhibiting standards in this key subject area and across the curriculum where they could be employed to access demanding contexts. The higher subject skills are not a sufficiently consistent feature of teaching in mathematics and science. Pupils' learning was satisfactory in 95% of lessons and was closely linked to the provision of challenging teaching. As more was required of them pupils responded well. The scrutiny of pupils' work showed that the link between teaching and learning was

stronger at GCSE, where teachers' marking consistently reflected the examination board's requirements. However staff written comments on how pupils could improve were less clear in the pupils' books for years 7 to 9.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of the curriculum is good in Key Stage 3 and at GCSE but there are no foundation level vocational courses. The curriculum is satisfactory post 16. The requirement to use information technology across the curriculum is being consistently hampered by limited facilities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The support available for pupils with special educational needs is good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' personal development is very good. The Catholic ethos reaches every aspect of pupil experience with strong moral, social and cultural developments.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The pastoral system organised in to lower school, upper school and sixth form teams is very good.

A wide range of extra curricular clubs and support groups is available to all pupils. The school has shown exceptional consistency in national level sport competitions in both basketball and netball for many years. In the limited amount of time available in a short inspection it is clear that the school is struggling to provide access to the statutory requirements for information and communication technology. The caring and supportive ethos, which is at the heart of the school's mission statement, is a feature of daily school life.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership of the head and senior pastoral staff is good. The best departmental management practices need to be shared if standards are to be maintained and enhanced.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body satisfactorily fulfils its responsibilities but weaknesses exist in the provision of the statutory regulations for information technology
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher has a very good overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Satisfactory procedures for the evaluation of the school's performance has been developed but better use should be made of target setting at all levels.
The strategic use of resources	Very good use is made of the limited resources available to the school.

The school's financial management and the way it approaches 'best value' decisions are good. The match of staffing expertise to the demands of the curriculum is good but accommodation is overcrowded and inhibiting standards in post 16 courses, science and information technology, in all year groups, with the schools limitations in the latter impacting on most subject areas. The new requirements of

performance management will require a review of the roles and job descriptions of the senior management team and middle managers.

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's Catholic ethos • The progress their child was making • The behaviour in the school • The school's high expectations of pupils • The maturity the school develops in pupils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance of homework demands in Key Stage 3 • Facilities for study at advanced level • Information technology resources • The working relationship with parents and the information provided to them

The inspection team agree with the parent's positive views. Insufficient time was available in a short inspection to provide a detailed analysis of the use of homework. Inspectors found clear evidence that the school's accommodation difficulties and the limited funds available for information technology are having a negative impact on the work of all departments. The school provides an appropriate level of information to parents but more could be done in this area.

PART B: COMMENTARY
WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The standards of achievement of middle and lower ability pupils.

1. Standards of achievement in the national tests at age 14 have been above the national average in English, mathematics and science for the last five years. Standards have been well above the national average in English for the last three years but closer to the national figure in science. The percentage of those pupils who achieve the national expected level 5 is consistently above average and noticeably lower numbers attain the lower levels showing clearly that below average ability pupils do well. The performance of boys in the national tests has risen to match the high levels attained by the girls and both are well above the national average. The schools strength in this area has helped large numbers of middle ability pupils.
2. Strong performances at GCSE have been maintained over the last four years, the school traditionally enters a significantly higher proportion of the cohort for examination in all GCSE subjects than is the case nationally. Some 55% of the pupils entered attained 5 A*-C grade at GCSE in 2000, a performance above the national average for the fifth year in a row.
3. Some 98% of pupils obtained 5 A*-G grade passes and 99% of pupils obtained at least 1 A*-G grade. The schools performance in these two areas has been well above the national average for four years. The schools achievements in these three key categories places it in the top 5% of schools nationally in similar contexts. Within this strong performance it should be noted that in 2000 the whole cohort of pupils were entered for English GCSE and nearly 70% of pupils obtained A*-C grades.
4. The quality of teacher's subject expertise and the motivation of the pupils to learn are the two key strengths seen in both lessons and in the scrutiny of pupil's work. The link between teaching and learning was stronger at GCSE and advanced level. Here teacher's good understanding of the examination boards requirements was consistently reflected in their marking and guidance provided, with written comments on how pupils could improve being much clearer and more analytical than those seen in the pupils' books for Years 7 to 9.

The effectiveness of the schools' behaviour management procedures.

5. The school is organised pastorally into three working units, lower school, upper school and the sixth form which work effectively. Staff are in evidence at key times of the day but their positive relationship with pupils is clear both in and out of the classroom. Effort and good behaviour are consistently praised but pupils plainly like coming to school, they are motivated and are confident they will succeed if they do as they are asked.
6. Teachers' management of pupil behaviour is firmly rooted in the strength of their subject knowledge, their understanding of the GCSE syllabi they teach and the quality of their questioning. Pupils respond very well to challenging teaching and the high standards of behaviour expected of them. Pupils are aware of the impact of their behaviour on others and have a very positive attitude to the school, a feature commented upon by 98% of parents who responded to the questionnaire.
7. Pupils' attitudes to the school and what it stands for are very good. Behaviour in classrooms and around the particularly cramped confines of some parts of the school is excellent both at lunchtime and when they move between lessons. Very good relationships between pupils and between staff and pupils were clearly evident, staff use their chance meetings with pupils very effectively, praising good behaviour and commenting on the quality of work they had just marked. Lower and middle ability pupils are consistently supported and extended, in many lessons observed teachers work hard to explain what is required and at GCSE how this relates to the examination course.

The challenging teaching that helps a high proportion of pupils enjoy their experiences in English, modern foreign languages, geography, PSHE and history.

8. Teaching is consistently strong in English at all levels. Modern foreign languages, geography and history are taught with imagination and clear objectives. In a history lesson pupils in Year 8 examined the symptoms of the black death in a role play situation. Personal and social education is meticulously planned, linking well with careers and strongly contributing to citizenship. Teachers' subject knowledge and understanding is very good as is their understanding of the requirements of the GCSE course they are teaching.
9. Questioning is used to good effect in all subjects, it is particularly effective at GCSE and advanced level where staff understanding of the examination course helps to maintain the focus and progression of the work. The consistency of solid professionalism, which can produce teaching 95% satisfactory or better and 65% good or better in a demanding situation, is a strength of the school.
10. Pupils' learning was good in 95% of lessons and was closely linked to the provision of challenging teaching. As more was required of them pupils responded well. In an advanced level geography lesson the pupils were asked to analyse where the advanced level fieldwork on fluvial process they had completed could be matched to the mark scheme supplied by the examination board. This therefore required pupils to prioritise the information they had and identify the gaps in their own knowledge. In a PSHE lesson pupils completed a curriculum vitae questionnaire before moving into mock interview role-play where they took turns to note the strengths and weaknesses of one another's performance. A skilfully conducted plenary session helped prepare pupils for their forthcoming work experience.

The outstanding national sporting successes achieved by the school.

11. In the last 25 years the school has produced 23 international basketball players and won 4 National Championships. In the same period the school has represented the County in the national finals of association football.
12. Outstanding successes this year have included: the Year 9 girls netball team who won the Cheshire, North West Region and National Schools competitions. The Year 13 girls were finalists in the National Schools competition. The Year 9 boy's basketball team won the Cheshire, North West Region and English Schools Championship going on to become British Champions.
13. This level of sporting success is dependent on the talents of pupils, these are developed and supported through such events as the Gifted and Talented Summer Schools run for netball and basketball. The efforts made to run this provision are illustrative of the consistent hard work of a team of dedicated and talented teachers who live for the sporting achievements they bring to the school.

The leadership of the head.

14. The headteacher has a very good overview of the schools' strengths and weaknesses. Good progress has been made against the majority of the Key Issues for action given in the last inspection. The strong, fully costed School Development Plan now forms the heart of the school's decision making process.
15. Excellent progress has been made in raising the attainment of boys from levels that were already above those nationally to match the higher levels consistently achieved by the girls. Refinements in the pastoral structure as the school has grown have maintained an atmosphere where academic and sporting success is consistently valued.

16. The management structure has been reviewed strengthening corporate decision-making. Satisfactory procedures for the evaluation of the school's performance has been developed but better use should be made of target setting at all levels.
17. Carefully thought out small steps have been taken to enhance areas where the schools existing strengths could be enhanced. This is illustrated by the review of the pastoral structure that has developed the caring and supportive ethos, which is at the heart of the schools mission statement, into a feature of daily school life. In the same way the school has made very good use of its own limited funds to rationalise the most difficult accommodation issues.
18. Very good use is made of the limited resources available to the school. However further progress by this well run and successful school is being hindered by significant accommodation and resources limitations beyond the school's control.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Standards of attainment in science and mathematics to match those in English.

19. The English department has been one of the most successful in the school for many years. At Key Stage 3 the performance of all pupils has been above average for the last four years and that of boys has been well above average. Middle ability pupils and those below the medium have consistently achieved the national norm level 5. In the 2000 tests over 70% of pupils achieved level 5 with appropriate numbers achieving level 6 and 7. The whole cohort of pupils were entered for GCSE in 2000 and 69% attained an A*-C grade pass, placing the department's efforts in the top 5% nationally. Advanced level results show a consistent value added on prior attainment.
20. High standards are achieved in the English department because: pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject, teachers place considerable emphasis on developing the individuals abilities and the departments day to day marking is some of the best in the school. Teachers have very good subject knowledge, notably so of the required texts and the examination board requirements. Staff have particular strengths in developing pupils individual skills, they are enthused, challenged and motivated.
21. The same pupils are not so successful in mathematics. Standards of achievement for all pupils in the standard assessment tests at Key Stage 3 have been above average for the last four years and as in English the performance of boys has been well above average. Although 53% of pupils achieved an A*-C pass grade (above the national average) the progress made from attainment in the national test at age 14 is only satisfactory. Attainment at advanced level is in line with pupils' individual expectations.
22. Teachers' knowledge and understanding is very good, there is a strong work ethic in the department and relationships with pupils are good. However the number of pupils achieving the highest grade at both GCSE and Key Stage 3 are insufficient given the average level of prior attainment. Pupils would benefit from being more actively involved in learning and discussing mathematics. Pupils' personal development needs to be improved through increased practical and investigative work. The range of teaching methods used is narrow and often didactic, focusing more on process and less on conceptual development and understanding. Annotated marking is very limited and neither aids nor informs pupil's learning. Subject leadership and management has addressed the majority of the issues highlighted in the last report however the department's inability to provide appropriate challenge for higher attaining pupils is rooted in its resistance to change.
23. The issue is more problematic in science. Attainment is in line with or above national expectations on entry. By the end of Year 9 it remains broadly in line with national averages with nearly half the year group reaching Level 5 (the national expectation) but with very few reaching the higher levels. Attainment at GCSE is in line with national averages with close to 48% of pupils obtaining an A*-C grade in one of the various science subjects but the progress they have made from the standard achieved in the national tests at age 14 profile is below expectations. However the school has introduced modular science for all pupils and the first module results show a positive start has been made.
24. As pupils enter at or above national expectations the progress achieved is not as good as expected. There are only six laboratories but 8 are needed as 20% of lessons are taught in ordinary classrooms. Teachers' subject knowledge is a strong feature, with some of the best teaching seen in the school found in the department. However planning is for content not for learning objectives. Limitations in departmental leadership and management have resulted in departmental weaknesses in: tracking pupils, insufficient target setting in Years 7 -9 and at GCSE mean that assessment information is not consistently or appropriately used in curriculum planning. There is no formal monitoring of teaching within the department and during the

inspection 15% of lessons observed in the subject were unsatisfactory. Development planning is not linked to the school development plan.

25. The many strengths of the English department have produced results above those achieved in mathematics and science for some years. Given the positive attitudes of pupils there would appear to be every opportunity to improve standards in mathematics and science to the same levels as those achieved in English.

The analysis and application of national data and the schools' own information, to further inform teaching and set challenging targets.

26. As a matter of whole school policy and practice the school needs to develop the analysis and application of national data as a basis for systematic comparison with the school's own information. Good work has been initiated using GCSE subject regression analysis. This can be extended to individual teaching groups in order to provide challenging targets, particularly for able and gifted pupils.
27. The systematic use of standard assessment data and the Cheshire 10 plus scores from feeder primary schools will provide a secure information baseline. The senior management team's early work on this area needs to be developed to enable the school to measure progress in Key Stage 3. This information database can therefore be used to further inform teaching and set level targets in all subjects.

Pupils' knowledge of how well they are doing and how they can improve through level related marking and target setting.

28. Evidence from the evaluation of pupils' work and from pupil interviews clearly shows that pupils are not always clear about what they have to do to improve. They consistently reply 'work harder' but have no understanding about what they need to do to raise the standard of their work in relation to a particular topic or subject.
29. The good work of the Teaching and Learning group needs to be further developed to provide a clear, level related marking system for Key Stage 3 that uses formative plain English guidance statements to inform pupils and parents. Teacher's oral feedback to pupils in GCSE classes is very good, being derived from their often exceptional understanding of the examination board requirements. Some of the best marking reflects this but many pupils would benefit from written comment linked to GCSE target setting.

The accommodation and resources for post 16 students, ICT, science and drama.

30. This successful school has outgrown the capacity of its original buildings. Despite considerable efforts on the part of the governing body and the senior management the school has been unable to secure any significant expansion of the premises. The limitations in accommodation are impacting on the work of talented staff in a number of departments and notably the school's ability to maintain and improve its above average examination results.
31. The sixth form area has neither a quiet study nor an information technology facility. The current weaknesses in library facilities are to be improved in the 2001 refurbishment programme but these will not be extensive enough to provide post 16 students with the facilities for research and independent study that are important to the attainment of consistent success at advanced level.
32. The science department has benefited from some small-scale laboratory refurbishment but none of the rooms have been re-equipped to modern standards although two new laboratories will be provided by conversion of existing accommodation by September 2001. There is a notable lack of information technology facilities that are important if staff are to provide higher levels of challenge for all pupils.

33. The school has two very cramped information technology suites. There is insufficient teaching space for all pupils to have all of their information communication technology lessons in rooms with computer access. Some pupils in Key Stage 3 have half of their lessons in old mobile classrooms without equipment. No subject area has access to the information technology suites as they are in constant use for the timetabled lessons. All departments are struggling to access the information and communication technology developments in their subject statutory orders.

34. The lack of space for drama requires lessons to be taught next to one another in the main hall space, inhibiting pupil's learning opportunities and standards of attainment despite the best efforts of talented staff.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- In order to further improve this effective and successful school the governing body and senior management team should look to replicate the best practice of the school's most efficient departments across the school.
- Raise the standards of attainment in science and mathematics to match those achieved by the same pupils in English.
- As a matter of whole school policy and practice develop the analysis and application of national data as a basis for systematic comparison with the school's own information, to further inform teaching and set challenging targets in all subjects.
- Improve pupils' knowledge of how well they are doing and how they can improve through the use of level related marking and target setting in all subjects.
- Review the most urgent accommodation and resources issues which are having a negative effect on standards (post 16 students, ICT, science and drama) and seek funding to address them via, the Local Education Authority standards fund grant, the Diocesan authorities, the Education Action Zone and the DfEE.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	73
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	17	42	32	5	N/A	N/A

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	856	82
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	134	N/A

Special educational needs

	Y 7– Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	10	N/A
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	187	N/A

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	N/A

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	26
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	18

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.2%
National comparative data	5.9%

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5%
National comparative data	0.4%

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	97	80	177

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	61	72	69
	Girls	68	58	52
	Total	129	130	121
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	73 (76)	74 (76)	69 (59)
	National	63 (63)	65 (62)	59 (55)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	32 (30)	42 (39)	22 (19)
	National	28 (28)	42 (38)	30 (23)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	63	66	71
	Girls	71	62	61
	Total	134	128	132
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	77 (80)	73 (73)	75 (62)
	National	64 (64)	66 (64)	62 (60)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	50 (33)	42 (41)	23 (25)
	National	31 (31)	39 (37)	29 (28)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4

Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	69	77	146

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	35	70	70
	Girls	45	73	75
	Total	80	143	145
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	55 (49)	98 (99)	99 (100)
	National	47.4 (46.6)	90.6 (90.9)	95.6 (95.8)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score	School	54.8 (47.4)

per pupil	National	47.4 (46.6)
-----------	----------	-------------

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	14	100%
	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	21	31	52

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	14.1	14.5	14.4 (19.1)	1	N/A	1 (2.2)
National	17.7	18.6	18.2 (17.9)	2.2	2.9	2.7 (2.2)

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

International Baccalaureate		Number	% success rate
Number entered for the International Baccalaureate Diploma and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all they studied	School	N/A	N/A
	National		76.5

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	4
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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	4	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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	63
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y7 – Y13

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	199.5

Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y13

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	80%
---	-----

Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y11

Key Stage 3	26
Key Stage 4	22

Financial information

Financial year	1999
----------------	------

	£
Total income	2,130,573
Total expenditure	2,152,995
Expenditure per pupil	2383
Balance brought forward from previous year	86,612
Balance carried forward to next year	64,190

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	925
Number of questionnaires returned	421

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	38	53	6	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	45	50	4	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	44	51	4	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	52	14	3	1
The teaching is good.	41	50	6	1	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	30	52	15	3	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	41	43	10	4	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	33	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	29	47	18	4	2
The school is well led and managed.	35	50	5	5	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	42	50	4	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	38	46	9	2	5

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

The overwhelming number of responses received both to the questionnaire and in the parents meeting were positive. Notable was the very strong support for: the quality of teaching, the progress pupils were making, their child's positive view of the school, the expectations it has of pupils and how the school is lead and managed. Parents expressed the view that they would appreciate more information on their child's progress and some concerns about the imbalance of homework in Key Stage 3.