

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **LANGDON PARK SCHOOL**

Poplar, East London

LEA area: Tower Hamlets

Unique reference number: 100966

Headteacher: Mr Chris Dunne

Reporting inspector: Dr David Benstock  
20243

Dates of inspection: 19<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2003

Inspection number: 249087

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: Community

Age range of pupils: 11-16 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Byron Street  
Poplar

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Peter Wright

Date of previous inspection: 21<sup>st</sup> April 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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20243	David Benstock	Registered inspector		The schools' results and pupils achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9619	Bob Miller	Lay inspector		Pupils attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Provision for traveller children
1085	John Laver	Team inspector	English	
17453	Clive Edney	Team inspector	Mathematics	
18076	Howard Dodd	Team inspector	Science	Assessment
20533	David Rogers	Team inspector	Art and design	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
19043	David Lewis	Team inspector	Design and technology	
14573	Hugh Wareing	Team inspector	Geography	
30427	Felicity Shuffle-Botham	Team inspector	History Citizenship	
15304	Reg Fletcher	Team inspector	Information and communication technology	
27058	Kathleen Cannon	Team inspector	Modern languages	
30128	Shirley Stanley	Team inspector	Music Religious education	

14446	Barry Simmons	Team inspector	Physical Education	
29742	Patricia Fyans	Team inspector	Science	
17917	Ira Fernando	Team inspector	English as an additional language Educational inclusion	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
1517	David Griffith	Team inspector	Special educational needs	

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Inspection Quality Division  
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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Langdon Park School is an 11-16 mixed, community comprehensive school, situated in Poplar, in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. The school serves the local population. The school's socio-economic circumstances overall are well below average. Pupils come from an area where the percentage of families having experience of higher education is below average and the percentage of pupils in overcrowded households is three times the national average. The school has 839 pupils on roll and is smaller than average size. Although the number on roll had been decreasing, it is now rising and in the current Year 7, the school is oversubscribed. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, seventy four percent, is high. The percentage of pupils with English as an additional language, fifty percent is higher than average and approximately three percent are at an early stage of language acquisition. It is a school with rich cultural diversity. Approximately two-fifths of the pupils have declared ethnic background as White British, about one-third are from Asian-Bangladeshi background, and most of the remainder from Black-African or Black-Caribbean heritage. A small proportion of pupils are of Chinese, Vietnamese or other heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, thirty percent, is above the national average, and that with statements is three times the national average. The overall attainment on entry is well below average. The curriculum is broad and balanced with a strong focus on development of literacy, and many opportunities for enhancement. The school participates in a number of national and local initiatives, including Excellence in Cities.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Langdon Park is a good and effective school. It gives good value for money. In the most recent end of Year 9 National Curriculum test results standards of attainment although well below the national average, were close to average when compared to similar schools, i.e. schools where the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is similar to this school. Pupil achievement is at least satisfactory from Year 7 through to Year 9. There has been an upward trend in attainment in recent years in-line with the national trend. Standards seen in school indicate continued, if not greater improvement in Year 7 to 9. In the GCSE examinations in 2002, overall performance was below the national average, but above average compared with similar schools. There has been significant improvement in attainment each year since last inspection, above the national trend. Standards seen in Year 10 and 11, whilst below average, represent good achievement in most subjects. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Considerable emphasis has been placed on improving literacy. The very good relationship between the pupils and their teachers leads to learning which is good. It provides a good range of learning opportunities through its taught curriculum and other activities although there are limited opportunities to study vocational courses in Years 10 and 11. Good provision is made to support the high numbers of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language. The school is well led and managed and receives good support from the governing body.

#### **What the school does well**

- Standards of attainment at GCSE level are improving at a rate above the national trend.
- It secures good relationships among pupils and between pupils and staff, which result in good attitudes to work and a community virtually free of oppressive behaviour.
- There is a strong commitment to inclusion, ensuring good teaching for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language.
- Good procedures for monitoring absence have secured improvement in attendance.
- Very good links with the community, partner primary schools and the further education college make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Leadership by the headteacher and senior team is visionary. Staff share a strong commitment to improvement, embracing new initiatives with enthusiasm.
- The school makes good provision for the majority of subjects and very good provision for modern foreign languages.

### What could be improved

- Attainment in National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 9.
- Use of ICT in teaching across all subjects of the curriculum, including computer controlled technology and data analysis in design and technology and science, to ensure compliance with National Curriculum requirements.
- Monitoring and development of teaching and learning within departments.
- Provision for higher attaining pupils including evaluation of the effect of curriculum and classroom organisation.
- Quality and cleanliness of accommodation for all subject areas.
- Provision for religious education to ensure full compliance with the Agreed syllabus in all years.

*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 in April 1997. Attainment in National Tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 9 has remained at a level well below national average, but the work of pupils seen during inspection suggests greater improvement. Attainment in GCSE examinations has significantly increased relative to national trends. Pupils' attitudes and self-confidence have improved. Six key issues were identified in 1997. Overall improvement on these has been good. The school has undertaken major initiatives to improve literacy, and teaching and learning methods, including the development of oracy skills. Attendance has improved, particularly this year, but unauthorised absence remains high. Attendance of a minority of white boys and girls remains low. Pupils are developing a greater sense of achievement especially in Years 10 and 11, where examination success provides motivation to others. Management structures have been changed and training undertaken to develop the skills of heads of department. The school continues to fail to meet statutory requirements in its provision of religious education and in providing for a daily act of collective worship.

### STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved at the end of Year 11 based on average point scores in GCSE examinations.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
GCSE examinations	E	E	D	B	well above average    A above average        B average                C below average        D well below average    E

GCSE results in 2002 were above average when compared with schools in a similar context but below when compared with all schools nationally. The percentage of pupils gaining five or more A\*- C grades at GCSE was well below national average, but above average for similar schools. Girls' attainment was higher than boys'. Achievement of all pupils from Year 9 - 11 was good. The school did not meet its target for the percentage of pupils gaining five or more A\*-C grades, but was close to its target for the average points score per pupil. Results in the GCSE examinations have improved steadily over the past five years.

Attainment in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 9 in 2003 in English, mathematics and science was well below the national average. Girls' attainment was higher than boys'. Attainment was close to average compared with schools in a similar context and very low compared with schools having a similar intake at age 11. There has been an upward trend in the test results in-line with the national



trend. Results in English and mathematics were slightly better than science. Standards seen in lessons during inspection however, show an improvement on those recorded in last year's tests. In other subjects, standards are below those expected nationally, with the exception of modern foreign languages, ICT and geography, where they are average. Achievement of all pupils is good from Year 7-9.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	<b>Good.</b> Pupils are increasingly confident about their achievements, which raises their motivation. Pupils cooperate very effectively with each other, concentrate well and show perseverance.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	<b>Good.</b> Most pupils behave well, are polite and friendly. They treat property with care. Occasional incidents of disruptive behaviour occur, usually associated with methods of teaching. The number of exclusions has decreased significantly.
Personal development and relationships	<b>Good.</b> The relationships between pupils are very good, and contribute to the good learning. The different ethnic groups work harmoniously together. Opportunities for moral and social development are good.
Attendance	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Attendance has improved overall, but a minority of pupils are frequently absent. Unauthorised absence is above average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 7-9	Years 10-11
Quality of teaching	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>

The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. Teaching is consistently good in English and mathematics and as a result pupils achieve well. In science, teaching observed in Year 10 is good but is less effective in Year 7-9, where expectations of pupils are not high enough and behaviour management difficult. Teaching is very good throughout in modern foreign languages, and in geography in Year 10. Teaching and learning are notably good in most subjects and are satisfactory in design and technology, art and design and citizenship. Planning is a strength in most subjects. Literacy development is also a very prominent feature, numeracy to a lesser extent. The use of ICT across the curriculum is a weakness, with some subjects making little contribution to the development of skills. Provision for higher attaining-pupils, gifted and talented, is good in most subjects. In some areas the match of work to the range of attainment in a group is not appropriate and the level of challenge not high enough. Very good relationships between teachers and pupils are promoted, and behaviour is, in the majority of lessons, managed well. There is some inconsistency in the use of assessment data and in the marking of pupils' work. Homework varies in quality across subjects. Good provision is made to support pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. The school is very aware of its commitment to provide for all pupils. At the time of inspection, no observation of lessons was possible in Year 11, where pupils were on study leave, or physical education in Year 10, as this area of the curriculum was suspended due to difficulties in staffing.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	<b>Good.</b> It meets the needs of all pupils throughout their time at the school (except ICT and religious education). Very good provision has been made to develop literacy skills. Very good links with the

	community and other schools are in place. Extra-curricular opportunities are good.
<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	<b>Good.</b> Pupils' needs are effectively identified and planned for. The Learning Support Centre has a positive impact on behaviour. Specialist teachers and teaching assistants contribute well to pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	<b>Good.</b> Very committed teachers have high level of expertise in this area. There are very good joint planning arrangements between specialist and subject teachers. The access to use of ICT is insufficient and resource material is limited for induction courses.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	<b>Good.</b> Provision for moral, social and cultural development is very strong in subjects. Less emphasis is placed on spiritual development. Satisfactory arrangements are made for personal, social and health education but time allocation is too little for a detailed programme.
How well the school cares for its pupils	<b>Good.</b> Good procedures are in place to support pupils' welfare and child protection arrangements are satisfactory. There are very good procedures for improving behaviour. The use of assessment data by departments is inconsistent.

Parents contribute insufficiently to pupils' learning, and have little impact on the work of the school. Statutory requirements for the teaching of ICT and religious education are not met. There is no daily act of collective worship. Physical education at the time of inspection was not provided for Year 10.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	<b>Good.</b> The headteacher and senior staff have a clear vision for improvement. Development plans have well-considered priorities. Performance management is successfully in place.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	<b>Satisfactory.</b> The majority of governors provide good support. Governors have a satisfactory knowledge of the strengths of the school and the challenges it faces. Some statutory responsibilities for the curriculum are not fulfilled.
The school's evaluation of its performance	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Good use is made of data from the LEA to compare performance with national and local expectations. There is insufficient monitoring and evaluation of teaching in departments.
The strategic use of resources	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Development priorities are supported well through financial planning. The school applies the principles of best value. Procedures for accounting for use of specific grants in SEN are unclear.

The match of teachers' experience, expertise and qualifications to the needs of the curriculum is good overall. Some recruitment difficulties have been experienced recently as is currently the situation for physical education. Accommodation is unsatisfactory with a lack of space, areas in need of refurbishment, poor heating and ventilation and generally poor fabric. Learning resources are adequate.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Teaching is good</li><li>• Child is making good progress in school</li><li>• School helps child to become mature</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The amount of work to do at home</li><li>• Range of activities outside lessons</li><li>• Behaviour of pupils in school</li></ul>

Twenty-seven parents returned questionnaires. The inspection team agrees with the positive views of these parents, and also the need for more consistency in the quality of homework set. The school does provide a good range of activities outside lessons. The behaviour of pupils seen during the inspection was good overall.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. When pupils entered the school in Year 7, in 2002, their results in the National Curriculum tests taken at the end of Year 6, indicated attainment was well below the national average in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Similarly, results in cognitive abilities tests (CATs), taken on entry to the school in 2002, show that verbal reasoning scores were low. Quantitative and non-verbal scores were a little higher but still significantly below average compared with participating schools. The profile of attainment on entry is similar for all years currently in the school. Pupils who left at the end of Year 11 in 2002 had shown lower performance than other year groups in the cognitive abilities tests.
2. In the National Curriculum tests for Year 9 in 2002, the overall performance of pupils in the core subjects was well below national average. However, compared with schools in similar circumstances and context, i.e. those with a similar percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, the attainment was much better and close to average. Overall, girls' attainment was higher than boys' in 2002, but the opposite was found in the previous year; fluctuations occur year-to-year with no significant variation overall. Results have improved over the past five years, broadly in-line with the national trend, apart from a dip that occurred, in all three core subjects, which in 2000, corresponded to the lower ability of the cohort of pupils in that particular year.
3. Based on test results in Year 9, compared with Year 6, pupils have remained well below average in overall attainment. The value-added measure, which indicates the progress made by pupils from the end of Year 6 to the end of Year 9 based on their average point scores, suggests that progress has been well below that made by pupils in similar schools. However, the comparison makes no allowance for the very large percentage of pupils with English as an additional language in this school.
4. Attainment in English at the end of Year 9 in 2002 was well below average compared with all schools nationally, but above average compared with similar schools. The percentage of pupils gaining at least a level 5 or a level 6, in both cases was well below the national average. The percentage gaining level 5 or greater was close to average when making the comparison with similar schools. In 2002, girls' performance was better than boys', which is in keeping with the national picture. Results in English have fluctuated from year to year, taking a dip in 2000 but overall results have improved in line with the national trend.
5. Attainment overall in mathematics, at the end of Year 9 in 2002, was well below average compared with all schools but close to average when compared with similar schools. The percentage of pupils gaining Level 5 or greater was well below national average and the percentage gaining Level 6 or greater was very low in comparison with all schools. Both measures were close to the average for similar schools.
6. Attainment in science at the end of Year 9 in 2002, was very low compared with all schools and below average in comparison with schools in a similar context. Attainment was very low compared with schools having a similar range of prior attainment on entry in Year 7. The percentage of pupils gaining Level 5 or higher was close to average and the percentage gaining Level 6 or higher was below compared

with similar schools. In 2002, girls' attainment was significantly better than boys' in science, more than in English or mathematics, although the opposite was true in the previous two years. Results have improved in-line with the national trend except for the dip in 2000.

7. The percentage of pupils who left the school at the end of Year 11 in 2002, having gained five or more A\* - C grades in the GCSE examinations, was well below the national average, but above the median average in schools with a similar context. The percentage gaining five or more pass grades, A\* - G, was close to the national average, and well above average compared with schools in a similar social context, and those with a similar prior attainment in Year 9. There was little difference in attainment between boys and girls in 2002. For the past four years the percentage of pupils gaining five or more grade A\* - C has remained well below average, but the percentage of pupils gaining five or more grade A\* - G has improved from being well below average in 1999 to being close to average in 2002. The school however, did not meet its target set for the percentage of pupils gaining five or more A\* - C grades.
8. The overall attainment as measured by the total average point score gained by pupils in Year 11 in 2002, was below average compared with all schools but above average compared with similar schools. Considering the best eight subjects only, the "capped point score" was well above the average of that in similar schools. Both measures were well above the average in schools with a similar range of prior attainment in Year 9. Girls' overall attainment was higher than boys' as found nationally.
9. The published value-added measure indicating progress from Year 9 to Year 11, based on the average point score per pupil was very high, within the top five per cent of the schools included in the survey. There has been a steady, sustained improvement year-on-year, in the average total point score over the past five years, and a significant increase from 2001 to 2002. The rate of improvement is appreciably above the national trend. The school almost met its target for total points per pupil in 2002 and pupils achieved well from Year 9 to Year 11.
10. Attainment in 2002 based on percentage of grades A\* - C at GCSE or GNVQ equivalent, in English and mathematics was well below average and in science it was below average, compared with all maintained schools. Compared with similar schools, it was close to average in mathematics, above average in English and well above average in science. Compared with schools with a similar prior attainment in Year 9, it was above average in mathematics, well above average in English and very high in science. Girls gained a higher percentage of grades A\* - C in English, and boys gained higher grades in mathematics and science.
11. In other subjects, attainment in 2002, was below or in some cases well below, national averages. The percentage of GCSE grades A\* - C or equivalent, was relatively higher in modern foreign languages, humanities and music. Results were lower in design and technology and physical education.
12. Standards of work seen in lessons in Years 7 to 9, during the inspection and in the analysis of pupils' written work, indicate an improvement in English, mathematics and science. Pupils are achieving well, although attainment is still below national expectations for the age of the pupils. This level of achievement is due to the good teaching and the impact of the application of new national strategies in Years 7 to 9. In non-core subjects, standards are broadly average in geography, ICT and modern foreign languages. They are below average in other subjects.

13. During the inspection, Year 11 pupils were on study leave for GCSE examinations. However, evidence from observation of lessons in Year 10 and from available written work of Year 11, showed that standards of attainment are below average, but in general, achievement from Year 9 is good. Achievement is good in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and also history. It is very good in geography, ICT and modern foreign languages. In other subjects it is satisfactory. There is some evidence of variation in the achievement of boys and girls. Written work of girls is often more carefully produced, whereas boys' work tends to be short and often unfinished. This is also the pattern with some higher-attaining pupils. There is some identified variation revealed by the school in its analysis of examination data in the performance of different ethnic minority groups. Inspection evidence shows notable lower achievement in some subjects by white boys and girls, compared with other ethnic groups. The highest achieving group in the borough are the Bangladeshis and the lowest achieving group are the White British and this pattern is reflected in the school. Standards vary between girls and boys, and between White and Bangladeshis pupils. In lessons the Bangladeshis girls are mostly on task but only a few of them volunteer oral responses. Some white girls do not actively participate well in lessons. The school feels that a number of white pupils continue to underachieve because of the variable level of support from parents, some of whom do not value education.
14. Standards of literacy are generally below national expectations, but pupils achieve well, given that many join the school with very low standards. By Year 11 a significant minority of pupils still lack confidence in sustained public speaking, read with limited fluency and write with frequent technical errors using a limited vocabulary. However, standards of literacy have risen, as the result of good teaching in many subjects.
15. Standards of numeracy are below expectation for the ages of pupils but progress in the development of numeracy skills is satisfactory overall. There are some good examples of the use of numeracy in subjects other than mathematics, that are contributing to the development of pupils' numerical skills. For example, in ICT, pupils work on databases and spreadsheets and make effective use of their knowledge of the order of operations and substitution into a formula.
16. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and make good progress over time. The majority of pupils with different levels of special educational needs gained five or more GCSE passes in 2002. Pupils with special educational needs generally achieve lower standards than their peers. On entry to the school some pupils have a reading age of six years or less. Extra support raises this by a few years for some pupils with the highest need. For all pupils with special educational needs, support in lessons and withdrawal groups improves reading ages to levels which significantly increase opportunities for learning. Pupils with special educational needs who enter school with low attainment in mathematics make good progress and most achieve a pass at GCSE. Pupils in the Learning Support Centre receive good support, which maintains their progress within the mainstream curriculum.
17. In lessons seen during the inspection pupils with special educational needs in Years 7 to 10 make the progress expected in all subjects. Achievement is higher than expected in English, history, physical education, modern foreign languages, ICT, geography and religious education. Good progress is made in design and technology when pupils are supported individually, and in mathematics in Years 10 and 11. Good learning and achievement are promoted by specialist teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils with special educational needs from ethnic minority backgrounds are integrated well and make the same progress as other pupils.

18. In Years 7 to 11 ten percent of pupils are identified as 'gifted and talented'. These pupils make good progress in most subjects and they benefit from the extension work and enrichment activities provided for them. Pupils make very good progress in modern foreign languages and geography, and make good progress in history, physical education, ICT, music, religious education, and science in Years 7 to 9.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

19. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good overall and have improved since the time of the last inspection. As they move through the school pupils become increasingly confident about expressing their ideas and views and the vast majority are keen to take a full and active part in lessons. A real strength of pupils' learning is the way in which they co-operate and work with others, in groups and in pairs. Pupils of all ages and abilities tackle new learning with good levels of confidence and enthusiasm and often they cannot wait to start practical activities. A very good example of this was seen during the inspection in a very good Year 10 drama lesson where pupils were extremely eager to try out how tempo creates mood and meaning. In most classes pupils settle quickly to work and are productive. Most show good levels of concentration and perseverance and this is an improvement since the last inspection. They listen well to one another and to adults, showing high levels of respect for the views of others.
20. Behaviour in and around the school is good overall and has improved since the last inspection. The number of pupils excluded has decreased significantly and most pupils respond to the high expectations set by the school. They understand the school rules and most teachers apply them consistently. The school functions as a racially harmonious and orderly community. Pupils of all ages work and play well together and any incidents of bullying or racial tension are rare. Pupils are polite and friendly to one another and are keen to share their work with adults and visitors. The vast majority of pupils show high levels of respect for their own property and that of the school and treat resources with care. Occasional incidents of disruptive behaviour that occur in Years 7, 8 and 9 are due, in the main, to inappropriate management strategies or lessons which do not capture their interest. This is having an adverse effect on developing the opportunities for pupils to become independent learners and upon their achievement. Most staff consistently follows the school's behaviour management policy.
21. Relationships amongst pupils and between staff and pupils are consistently very good and have been further strengthened since the time of the last inspection. Most teachers and support staff are excellent role models in the way in which they relate to one another and to the pupils. Teachers encourage pupils to work co-operatively and they do this well. Parents are pleased with the values the school promotes and agree that their children are becoming mature individuals.
22. Overall the attitudes of pupils with special educational needs are good. In lessons pupils with special educational needs show positive attitudes to learning. In discussions with the Educational Psychologist, in meetings with pastoral staff and in lessons there is a very good emphasis on raising pupils' self-esteem through using praise, improving basic skills and influencing peer group behaviour. Specialist teaching provides pupils with helpful routines, reinforces basic skills and makes links between lessons. Teachers continually challenge pupils in small groups to demonstrate their understanding of what they are reading, and they provide changes of activities to keep pupils' interest. Pupils show respect for each other, listen to their peers, and have a good knowledge of their own learning. These good habits are not always present where teachers have lower expectations of behaviour and concentration, and lack strategies to promote good behaviour and study skills. The Learning Support Centre

has a positive impact on pupil behaviour, reducing exclusions within and from the school and enabling reintegration. The attendance of all pupils on the special needs register is monitored through the pastoral system, subject teachers, teaching assistants, and the special needs coordinators and noted if there is a concern.

23. In the academic year 2001-2002, the attendance rate was well below the national median average, and the rate of unauthorised absence was well above the national median. However, from the continuous school records, and after vigilant efforts by the school to raise attendance, the rate of whole-school attendance is currently much closer to the national average. This is a significant improvement from last year, and at the time of the last inspection, when attendance was judged as being poor. Despite reminders from the school about the adverse impact on pupils' learning, the numbers of pupils who have unauthorised periods of absence remains high. Although attendance has improved since the last inspection one group, White British pupils, still causes concern. Attendance is excellent among the Bangladeshi pupils.
24. Last year a small number of pupils were excluded. Most exclusions are to the internal exclusion centre, which is more effective than external exclusions. The number of exclusions among the White and Bangladeshi boys is the same. Learning mentors work effectively with pupils in the Learning Support Centre. Home school workers contribute much in this area. During the current school year the number of exclusions has reduced again.
25. Punctuality to school is unsatisfactory. Around nine per cent of pupils attended school late during the inspection week. Most lessons start and finish on time, but late arrivals cause disruption.

#### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

26. The quality of teaching, and the learning by all pupils is good throughout the school. Teaching observed during the inspection was at least satisfactory in the majority of lessons; approximately four per cent were unsatisfactory. These were all in Years 7 – 9 and occurred mainly where teachers had chosen inappropriate work to maintain motivation and good behaviour of pupils. Overall, more than two-thirds of lessons were good and nearly one-third were very good or excellent. No lessons were observed in Year 11, as this group was on study leave, but written work was analysed and discussions were held with pupils during the week.
27. The effectiveness of the teaching on the learning is slightly better in Years 10 and 11 than in Years 7 to 9. This is partly due to a greater level of maturity shown by older pupils and also due to a greater focus on studies towards examination goals. Overall, good relationships are established in all year groups between teachers and pupils.
28. Teachers' planning is particularly strong and carried out with great care. All teachers are acutely aware of the low levels of literacy of pupils when they enter the school and that many pupils have special educational needs. They plan very carefully for the learning styles of different pupils and ensure that all ethnic groups fully participate. Groups are very well integrated. Work in most subjects is well-prepared and is aimed to match the level of attainment of pupils. This is done successfully in several subjects, for example, modern foreign languages. Where groups are set by ability, as in mathematics, ensuring appropriate work to match the attainment level is more successful. In a minority of lessons in science, English and history there is a need to



prepare work more effectively to match the attainment of pupils in groups in order to provide sufficient challenge.

29. Overall, teaching is very good for all year groups in modern foreign languages and learning is correspondingly successful in this subject area. Teaching is also very good in geography and it is consistently good in all other subjects in Years 10 and 11. In the few lessons of drama observed the teaching method showed very good features. For example, planning was meticulous and the sheer enthusiasm of the teachers had a significant impact on pupils' learning and enjoyment of the subject. Similarly, the quality of teaching of dance is very good. Teaching and learning are, at least satisfactory in other areas of the curriculum in Years 7 to 9. Where there are lower expectations set by teachers in design and technology, art and design and citizenship there is a negative impact on learning. Pupil management is not sufficiently effective to maintain good behaviour in a minority of lessons. Due to staff recruitment difficulties, teaching of physical education has been withdrawn in Year 10, which is currently an unsatisfactory situation. New appointments have been made to this department and teaching observed in Years 7 to 9 was at least satisfactory.
30. Overall, pupils are managed well and behaviour in class is mainly good. Pupils are interested and keen to learn. Only a minority of lessons are affected by disruptive behaviour. Good relationships contribute significantly to learning in most subject areas.
31. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this well to provide appropriate depth of learning. This is particularly evident in humanities, including geography and history, music and modern languages. There is clarity of explanation and many teachers use questioning techniques well to ensure full participation by more reluctant pupils. In many lessons there is good practice in oral work where the teacher asks a question in turn from every pupil. In these lessons all pupils have the opportunity to give a response, lessons are not dominated by responses from groups or individuals and the teacher can check that learning has taken place.
32. Assessment is used very well in some subjects such as English and geography to track the achievement of pupils and help with curriculum planning. However, there is inconsistency between subjects in the use of assessment and in the quality of marking of pupils' work. Assessment is not used effectively enough in design and technology and is underdeveloped in science, art and design, ICT, religious education, music and physical education. Procedures have not yet been established in the relatively new subject of citizenship. Where assessment is successful, pupils have a clear knowledge of their own strengths and areas to improve.
33. Homework also shows inconsistencies in the quality and regularity with which it is given. Homework is used well to extend learning and provide challenge for pupils of all abilities in English and humanities. In most other subjects it is satisfactory. Particularly, opportunities are missed in art and design and citizenship.
34. Teaching of literacy overall in the school has been a major focus for all departments. For example, there are literacy "catch-up" classes and reading recovery classes in English, and these are helping to raise standards. In modern foreign languages, good attention is paid to improving handwriting and the development of good speaking and listening skills are given high priorities. In mathematics, history and geography there is a coordinated approach to improving the quality of handwriting and spelling, as seen for example in Year 8 mathematics lessons when pupils were writing about shapes. In these subjects there is due attention paid to developing key vocabulary and concepts, as when Year 9 pupils studying twentieth century history learned to discuss the political

vocabulary of movements such as fascism; whilst in several subjects, including art, devices such as writing frames help lower-attainers develop a more coherent writing style. In some contexts there is still insufficient attention paid to improving literacy. Year 7 pupils in science were unable to write up their work in continuous prose. In design and technology there are insufficient writing opportunities and pupils produce poor written evaluations.

35. Some of the best practice of teaching literacy is evident in geography, where new vocabulary is introduced, defined and practised in context in most lessons, and pupils are also given good practice in writing extended answers. Pupils are also given opportunities for discussion, as in a Year 10 lesson about unemployment. However, owing to the lack of overall coordination and monitoring, this best practice, which results in improved standards and very good progress, is not spread across all subject areas or teachers.
36. The teaching of numeracy is satisfactory. The mathematics department actively teaches basic skills in accordance with the ideas promoted in the National Strategy for Year 7-9. Good data handling techniques to represent information are found in science and modern foreign languages. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of scale is effectively applied in geography, and art and design lessons. However, there is not yet a sufficiently well-coordinated approach to numeracy teaching across the curriculum.
37. Overall the teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs is good. In lessons seen, pupils are taught and learn well in English, mathematics, science, history, modern foreign languages, ICT, music, geography and religious education. Good teaching provides appropriate subject support, which is adapted to identify needs of individuals or groups requiring planned intervention. Teaching assistants focus on raising standards as well as access to learning. Where pupils' special educational needs are met well, teachers' planning uses appropriate curriculum materials both to access learning and to show pupils clearly the steps in learning and provides opportunities for practical activities and challenge. Lessons have a clear structure and which includes both questions and answers and tasks are matched to a range of pupil need in each class.
38. All members of staff have been circulated with data on pupils who require intervention. The general targets on individual education plans are monitored effectively by teaching assistants who complete regular and useful records on pupils' achievements, but some reports focus on difficulties rather than achievement of targets. All teaching assistants submit each term reports to key teachers to enable targets and individual education plans to be reviewed and changed to promote, and not just reflect, pupil progress.
39. Some subjects, English and mathematics in particular, do not work closely enough with the special needs department to provide national literacy and curriculum targets, which raise standards. The management of and reporting on pupils in classes with weaker teaching and learning does not take sufficient account of their special educational needs and provision of support, and pupils' exercise books contain incomplete and unmarked work. Most special educational needs pupils with learning difficulties and low attainment are withdrawn in teaching groups to the reading room, the learning support centre, or the careers advice centre for Years 10 and 11. In these groups teaching and learning is very good. In Year 7 the pilot of the Ruth Miskin Reading Project is having a significant impact on the reading ages of pupils. In Year 8 pupils are provided with individual support to meet their needs and this encourages pupils to take responsibility for their learning. There has been good improvement on the emphasis given to literacy

and language development for pupils with special educational needs since the last inspection when specific learning difficulties hindered progress.

40. Pupils who are identified as gifted and talented are given challenging work in class, which raises standards and provides pupils with a broader curriculum. Pupils are introduced to higher-level work. For example in history a pupil gained an A\* grade for the first time, and in geography pupils are entered early for GCSE in Year 9, and study at AS level in Years 10 and 11. In modern foreign languages, French, Bangladeshi and Spanish, extension work encourages original work and independent research. All subjects identify and provide for gifted and talented pupils but planning and practice is not yet consistent. Enrichment activities include talking to a Holocaust survivor in history. In music pupils work with session musicians, and in art and design pupils have worked with a visiting professional photographer. Pupils use the Internet for virtual field trips to other parts of the world.
41. The differentiated work and teaching methods used are effective in sustaining the interest of lower and middle ability pupils and develop their understanding. In most subjects work needs to be more academically challenging for the higher-attainers and more advanced learners of English.

## **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?**

### **Quality and range of curricular opportunities**

42. The quality and range of learning opportunities in the curriculum are good. Teacher's work hard to ensure there is good equality of access for all pupils and opportunity for additional areas for enrichment, for example through the wide range of extra-curricular activities available.
43. The school provides a curriculum that meets the aptitudes and interest of most of the pupils. There is enhancement to the curriculum in all years through drama, and in Year 7-8 through dance. Two languages, French and Spanish, are taught in a very popular and successful faculty. Bangladeshi is available for Year 9 onwards.
44. There is relatively little opportunity for vocational courses. Pupils' vocational education is augmented by the provision of a vocational ICT course in Years 10 and 11. As this is part of the compulsory core of their education, all pupils benefit from this. There is, however, only one other vocational course at present, which is a business studies course. This is offered within the option system and therefore not followed by all pupils.
45. In the Year 10 options, pupils are offered one free choice and there is a support group in each option column. There are four identified groups, three for pupils with special educational needs and one for pupils with English as an additional language, which ensures equality of access to the curriculum in Years 10 and 11.
46. Due partly to staff recruitment difficulties, pupils in Years 7 - 9 are offered a half-year course in design and technology and half-year in food technology. In Years 10 and 11 both subjects are offered. The current difficulties with staff recruitment have resulted in physical education not being available for Year 10, but a new head of department has been appointed. Senior managers review the curriculum each year to respond to changing needs.

47. Language development across the curriculum, which was a concern raised in the previous inspection, has been a major focus for the school. This has been addressed by introducing lessons for the teaching of literacy in Year 7 in small groups, and the 'Ruth Miskin' reading programme. Key words are introduced in most lessons and there are displays of 'word walls' in some subject areas. Joint planning in the core subjects and humanities, between subject teachers and teachers of English as an additional language, enables continuous evaluation and development. These activities contribute to language development and promote equality of access to the curriculum for many pupils.
48. Most classes are mixed ability, but some setting by ability has been introduced in mathematics in order to enable work to be more successfully matched to pupils' ability. In English and science, groups are mixed ability, which presents more difficulty for teachers to ensure pupils are appropriately challenged at all levels of attainment. In science, in Year 10, an identified group of pupils are given the opportunity to study the single award combined science with an ICT input, rather than the full double award syllabus.
49. Provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory. The programme is delivered through the school's 'religious, personal and social education' (RPSE) lessons in Years 7 to 9 and through the humanities GCSE course in Years 10 and 11. As a result time is very limited. Additional time is available through the tutors, but the quality and use of this time is dependent upon the tutor. There is no link between this time and modules being delivered in the timetabled lessons. For example, pupils in some groups were being surveyed about responses to bullying in school, but this was not being developed through their lesson. Sex education has been satisfactory. Science lessons in Year 9 have provided information about contraception and sexually transmitted diseases and some discussion about relationships and moral issues has been included in RPSE and other lessons.
50. Religious education is taught as part of the RPSE programme in two hours in Years 7 and 9 and in Year 8 in one hour. Although there is a discrete religious education component the overall time allocated is insufficient to deliver the agreed syllabus. In Year 10 religious education is offered as a part of the humanities course but no religious education module is currently taught in Year 11. The school intends to introduce religious education as an option at GCSE for the coming year.
51. Citizenship is not timetabled in Years 7 - 9, although elements are included in RPSE, assemblies and in tutorial periods at the end of each day. At present, there is a lack of continuity and development of skills. The citizenship components are also being established in the humanities course and in Year 10 within modules, which deal with topics such as political organisations, drugs, and weapons. There is a very positive focus on literacy, environmental issues and the world of work.
52. All pupils have the opportunity to take part in a residential experience and this provides very good opportunity for personal development. Older pupils are involved in supporting the personal development of younger pupils through the mentoring scheme. Extra-curricular tuition for a Year 7 class by Year 10 mentors demonstrated personal commitment by all taking part, and very good personal development of the Year 10 pupils. The emphasis on conflict resolution and the importance of awareness and respect for the feelings of others made by the school, is resulting in very good social development and a shared commitment to an inclusive community.

53. The school has had difficulties of recruitment in ICT and extending the network to all the school buildings has proved to be expensive. However, these two problems have now been to some extent resolved. A head of department has been appointed for a year and the network has been extended to all the school buildings. A set of small rooms with a few computers has been set up and pupils in Years 7 to 9 are using these with the aim of offering discrete ICT to small groups. Years 10 and 11 are offered two hours of ICT lessons per week. Reuters International has set up a suite with 15 computers. ICT is not used sufficiently by all subjects according to statutory requirements. As access to computers is difficult, pupils in some subjects find it difficult to use them in lessons.
54. Statutory requirements are not fully met in the following areas:-
- ICT requirements are not met for all years. ICT is not used at all in art and design, and not fully utilised in other subjects. Insufficient computer aided control occurs in design and technology.
  - Physical education is not currently provided in Year 10.
  - Religious education is not meeting the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus in Year 7-9 due to insufficient time allocation. It is not taught as part of the curriculum in Year 11.
  - There is no daily act of collective worship.
55. Extra-curricular opportunities are good. The school offers a good range of extra curricular activities that is available to all pupils. This extends the quality of their learning opportunities. There is a wide range of activities in art and drama with many visits to art galleries and theatres. The good range of team sports is well-supported by pupils who perform well in inter-form, local and national competitions. Good additional study facilities are available for all pupils during lunch times and at the end of the school day. Residential visits both in the United Kingdom and abroad enrich pupils learning. Pupils have access to computers at lunch times and after school, and many make good use of the school library. Resident artists raise awareness and expectation in a number of subjects. Opportunities for performance enhance standards in drama and music, as well as pupils' self-confidence and stage management skills, for example in the recent productions of 'Grease' and 'Fame'.
56. The school's provision for careers education is good. The programme is taught from Year 9 as part of the RPSE programme and the core humanities course in Years 10 and 11. It aims to ensure that pupils are well-informed about career opportunities to help them plan for their own futures. They benefit from inputs from interviews with senior managers, family evenings at the Connexions careers centre and a Higher/Further Education fair held in the community hall before making their Year 10 option choices. In Years 10 and 11 there are further review evenings with input from post-16 providers and a visit to Tower Hamlets College that includes opportunity to apply and be interviewed for post-16 courses. There are also visits to local and national universities to help promote further study at higher levels. Through elements such as Economic and Industrial Issues, the humanities course supports the preparation and follow up to the work experience that is provided for all pupils. Some pupils take the opportunity to support their language studies by accepting work experience placements in Europe. Opportunities are provided for pupils to improve their interview skills through links with local industries and business through work as mentors, partners and in conferences.
57. The school enjoys very good links with the community and uses these to enrich the education that it provides. Local business supports the Connexions centre and the family evenings provided to help with careers and option choices. Reading and maths partners are provided through the Education Business Partnership. This also provides

for links to local business for the business studies course. Good use is made of the Reuters computer suite. Along with this provision, Reuters is developing links to similarly equipped schools on each continent and providing further equipment to support video conferencing. Through City Brokerage pupils can volunteer to participate in visits to and the shadowing of people working in the City of London. As a community school the buildings are open for community use seven days a week. Through the Education Action Zone (EAZ), where the school works with five feeder primary schools, there is coherence in the school's work with community groups and links are well-developed to provide home / school partnerships, parental support and a home- school liaison officer. As this work is coordinated through the EAZ, work can be established in primary schools and support transfer to secondary. The school has links to the NHS, police and other local services to support the delivery of the RPSE programme.

58. The school has very good links with its partnership institutions. Its links with primary schools are very strong and go beyond the EAZ to all feeder primary schools. The school works with its local education authority on transfer at the age of 11 and once pupils are identified, staff that visit collect information about the pupils. These visits are carried out by special needs staff, learning mentors and motivator teachers. These are employed through the EAZ to develop and maintain primary links. The information collected is supplemented by parent / child interviews, when additional information can be collected. The school runs after school clubs for Year 6 pupils to introduce them to the school.
59. Good use is made of the 14 –19 strategic forum within the borough to support transfer to post-16 institutions. Many pupils transfer to the Tower Hamlets college, but those wishing to transfer to other institutions inside or beyond the borough are equally well supported. Transfer is supported by providing pupils with details of their accomplishments and ambitions through the careers element of the humanities programme. Pupils are prepared well for interviews through the careers programme with continued participation in excellence challenge activities, visits to institutions and universities, one-to-one interviews with personal adviser and attendance at conferences with employers.
60. Langdon Park School is a multi-ethnic community, which is culturally and linguistically rich in its diversity. It is the most culturally mixed school in the borough. An assistant head teacher is responsible for ensuring all pupils are included in the curricular provision. The school is in the process of developing an overarching inclusion policy that brings together all the relevant strands – special educational needs, gifted and talented pupils, English as an additional language, ethnicity, gender and linked teaching strategies in the school Improvement plan. The school has a written race equality policy and meets the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) code of practice. Race incident forms are in use.
61. The overall provision for all pupils with special educational needs is good. Nearly one-quarter of the pupils on roll have been reviewed for interventions through School Action and Action Plus and statements, as required by the new Code of Practice. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs, including statements, is nearly twice the national average. These include forty-nine pupils who have statements of special educational needs, a proportion which is three times the national average. The number of pupils makes considerable demands on the specialist staff who manage and support them well, since their needs present the school with particular challenges particularly a significant number of pupils enter the school with

very low reading and writing skills while a large number have emotional and behavioural needs.

62. The range of special needs of the present pupils include those affecting communication and interaction, learning difficulties, behaviour and emotional development, and sensory and medical needs. Support is provided through in-class support of teaching assistants and curriculum materials to match specific need, and use of withdrawal classes for literacy and behaviour. Adults currently provide extra reading in one-to-one sessions. There is insufficient attention at present to numeracy support to raise standards but this is planned for in the future.
63. The whole school responsibility for special educational needs is reflected well in the deployment of teaching assistants and provision by subjects. There is still a need for some subject teachers to consult with specialist teachers about methods and styles of teaching and to identify measurable targets linked to national levels and school targets. Subjects identify a member of staff who links formally with the special educational needs coordinator through meetings or informal contact. Formal reviews of individual education plans include evidence from subject teachers about achievement against targets which they have been involved in setting at reviews of pupils and which are then monitored in lessons. Teaching assistants provide good role models, relate well to pupils and play an important part in pupils' lives. Cultural development through learning and resources is satisfactory but there is insufficient explicit highlighting in display and management of learning of the cultural diversity of Britain and the richness of the cultural backgrounds of some of the pupils.
64. A minority of pupils are identified as gifted and talented and varying provision is made within departments. Pupils have taken part in summer schools in the borough and have been away for residential experience weekends in Norfolk. The school has taken advantage of workshops in English, media, art, drama, video and music. Year 11 pupils have been on visits to Universities, and pupils' staying-on rates have improved. Small numbers of pupils are also given good extra-curricular provision, with visits to theatres, workshops, after-school clubs and competitions.
65. The school has effective strategies for improving literacy. The provision for literacy development is good. A less satisfactory aspect of the provision is that there is no overall coordination or monitoring of literacy. Although there has been whole-school training for staff, some new teachers have not had this opportunity to develop their expertise. The responsibility for promoting literacy rests with faculties, and some carry out this function more effectively than others. The provision for literacy development in physical education and music is unsatisfactory, reflecting staffing problems in those areas. Provision is good in some subject areas such as English, modern foreign languages, mathematics and the humanities subjects.
66. The mathematics faculty has introduced the National Strategy for pupils in Years 7 – 9 and this is beginning to improve numerical skills. Whole staff training has also been delivered by the mathematics team who have liaised closely with colleagues in other subject areas on the development of numerical skills. There is however no school policy on numeracy and it is unclear who has responsibility for the coordination of the development of numerical skills across subjects.
67. Provision for ICT across the curriculum is satisfactory. Some departments make active use of computers but others very little. Of the core subjects, English and mathematics already make some use of the computers in their own departments and regularly schedule classes to make use of the available ICT Suites. Science, a

department split between two buildings across the site, is least able to make regular use of computers in its laboratories until its laboratories are sited together and fully networked, as part of the building programme. The modern languages department makes very good use in its teaching and learning of the older language-laboratory technology. ICT is well used, sometimes very well, in geography. In ICT discrete lessons teachers' use of laptops and digital projectors in the preparation and presentation of units of work, models good practice to their students.

68. Four areas of the curriculum are unsatisfactory in relation to their use of ICT: art and design, design and technology, music and RE. In the art department there are only two outdated computers and no access to *Photo Shot* or other suitable software on the school's curriculum servers. Design and technology currently has only one piece of computer-controlled equipment and no use is made of the ICT suites. However, a new set of computers is ready to be commissioned. In music, out-dated and dilapidated equipment frequently causes students to lose work they have laboured to create or perform. There is no provision for use of ICT in religious education.

### **Spiritual, moral social and cultural development**

69. There is no school policy for the teaching of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. However, most subjects make good and some very good contributions to these aspects of pupils' development.
70. Spiritual development is good. The school's positive ethos and the very good relationships throughout the school make good contributions to pupils' spiritual development. Whilst the school has made use of the most recent guidance documentation for this aspect and made this available to subject managers, opportunities for spiritual development are missed in some departments. There is good provision and practice for example in history and geography. Through questions raised on the impact of imagery portrayed in World War 1 poetry, pupils learn to reflect on feelings and emotions. In geography, pupils were helped to feel empathy with the different viewpoints arising from the group presentations on the rainforest study. In science, pupils expressed amazement in their lesson on lungs and respiration when they saw a sheep's lung being inflated by use of a rubber tube. There are also good opportunities provided through the personal and social education programme for pupils to discuss the impact that different religions have on attitudes. The school also celebrates a wide range of religious festivals throughout the year.
71. Moral development is stronger than spiritual development and provision overall is very good. In geography, pupils develop a very good understanding of right and wrong from the consideration of differing viewpoints. In mathematics, work on statistics involves pupils in the consideration of poverty in Third World countries and issues concerning the distribution of wealth. In their written work in English, pupils structure their arguments concerning issues connected with the treatment of animals. In modern foreign languages, mentors appointed in Year 10 assist in the welfare of pupils in Year 7. Studies in history engage pupils in the consideration of the moral implications of the American civil rights movement, in the morality of capital punishment, the use of propaganda and terror. Questions asked in Year 9, "Was it right to drop the atom bomb?" and "Should concentration camp guards be tried?" involve pupils in further discussion on moral issues. Also in Year 10 there are pupils who elect to undertake conflict resolution training in order to assist some pupils in Year 7 with their anger management. Through the personal and social education programme, there are opportunities for pupils to discuss sexism, racism, bullying and justice. Staff set a good moral example to pupils in the way they respect and respond to them.



72. Social education is a strength. Provision overall, within subjects and the wider school, is very good. Group and paired work in many subjects promote social skills, such as in geography where pupils work well, collaborating in gathering fieldwork data. In music, pupils learn to compose and perform together and to collaborate through work in both choir and rock groups. Pupils share equipment sensibly and clear away co-operatively, often helping each other as for example in ICT, in art and design and in history. Pupils, across the year groups, are taking responsibility for organising their own after-school team games in netball and mixed football. Pupils in Year 9 contribute to the weekly after school Secondary Club that arranges enjoyable and relevant learning experiences for Year 6 pupils who will be joining the school in September. The school organises residential experiences for pupils in Year 7 and for gifted and talented pupils in order to promote team building and provide additional learning activities. Through the modern foreign languages department, pupils gain social skills from trips to Spain, France and Sweden. Work experience in France is also arranged for senior pupils.
73. Cultural development is also very good. In modern foreign languages, pupils learn about the life and customs of French, Spanish and Bangladeshi peoples, and there are good displays to support learning. In ICT, there are very good links to the science museum and to local and international businesses. In religious education, pupils learn about the cultural traditions of six major religions, their sacred writings and sacred places. In geography, pupils study the multicultural aspects of their home region and the United Kingdom as a whole. As part of their art education, pupils visit London galleries and the study of other cultures forms part of their classwork. Multicultural awareness is promoted in English through the study of a range of literature, for example, Asian poetry. In physical education, pupils learn about dance routines from different parts of the world. In history, pupils compare Greek, Roman and Egyptian approaches to medicine and review patterns of immigration in England from Roman times. The International Women's Day assembly celebrates the achievement of famous women through history. The school also organises biannual achievement assemblies, which include activities in music, dance and physical education as an additional opportunity to celebrate pupil achievement in a multicultural school.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

### **Provision of care for pupils**

74. The school provides good levels of care for the pupils, as it did at the time of the last inspection. The school has satisfactory arrangements for child protection. The deputy head teacher is responsible for this aspect of the school's work and has been involved in training. However, there has been no recent involvement of the governors to ensure that they are fully up-to-date with the school's procedures. The school has satisfactory health and safety procedures. Both the school and the outside agency that employ the site managers are undertaking safety checks. The lines of communication between the two, however, are tenuous. Written risk assessments have yet to be established. A number of health and safety issues were raised with the school during the inspection.
75. Very good procedures are in place for monitoring attendance and promoting punctuality. The attendance policy highlights the need to continually reward good attendance. Unexplained absences are quickly followed up. These procedures are beginning to have a positive impact on attendance. There are good links with the educational social workers, who deal effectively with individual problems when they arise.

76. The school's behaviour policy, which has recently been revised, is very good and very effective. Positive features of pupils' behaviour are celebrated and rewarded almost on a daily basis. The vast majority of teachers and support staff are very effective in the way in which they use praise to promote and encourage good behaviour. There are well-understood routines in place for managing poor behaviour both in class and on the playground.
77. The school provides good levels of support and guidance for the pupils, largely through its spiritual, moral, social and cultural education that exists in subjects across the curriculum. Pupils are given very clear and consistent messages about the school's expectations in terms of behaviour, values and attitudes. Those pupils who have difficulty in complying are identified and supported. Targets are set for pupils, in consultation with the parents concerned, and these are monitored on a regular basis. Pupils have opportunities to evaluate their own work and progress and this helps in their personal development.
78. The school has an effective conflict resolution programme where Year 10 pupils are trained by a professional to mentor and care for Year 7 pupils. This leads to maintaining harmonious relationships, especially among the ethnic groups. There is a robust anti-bullying policy put into practice in the school.

### **Assessment**

79. The school has good general procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and arrangements are satisfactory or better in all subject areas. Teachers help pupils to measure their progress against national standards by setting individual target levels and grades. The English and humanities faculties set examples of very good practice where target grades are negotiated with individual pupils through discussions. This approach gives pupil's greater responsibility and hence greater motivation to meet the targets set.
80. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' progress are satisfactory overall. The humanities subjects make very good use of assessment, for example to identify and support both low and high attaining pupils. Teachers in most other subjects set short-term targets for pupils, for example during marking of day-to-day work, but targets are not monitored closely enough to ensure that pupils act on the advice received. Three times a year there are progress review days where information about pupils' performance in their various subjects is collected. However, when underachievement is revealed there is inconsistency between departments in how effectively this is addressed.
81. The use of assessment to help plan the curriculum is satisfactory with all subjects using assessment data to modify schemes of work and teaching patterns. The effectiveness of special educational needs provision in the school can be seen in the way constant monitoring and assessment reveals pupils who may have been misdiagnosed previously.
82. The school has recently reformed the assessment working party and a number of good initiatives have been implemented. The school has invested in a new CMIS computer system to further enhance the extent and quality of assessment data provided to all teachers. An important part of the school's teaching and learning strategy is a commitment by all teachers to adopt a diagnostic marking approach following the recommendations of the "Working Inside the Black Box" initiative. The school analyses

its assessment information by racial group, gender and ability and communicates the outcomes to the staff.

83. Assessment of pupils with special educational needs is good. The needs of pupils across a range of learning, behaviour, social, and medical needs are understood and identified appropriately. Annual reviews for pupils with statements of special educational needs are carried out very efficiently as required. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are provided for all pupils with special educational needs, but these vary in the quality of information they provide about the intended outcome of the intervention offered. Monitoring and recording in lessons is done well but the targets against which the assessments are made need to include more literacy, numeracy and curriculum targets as well as those reflecting access and quality of learning. The use of the school's technology for providing useful data on pupil progress, results of tests and predictions, is good and specialist administrative support is good. The varied sources of information on pupils with special educational needs should be collated further to provide a more useful profile of individual pupils, their needs, provision, progress, and reviews, in formats which allow analysis by year group, gender, ethnicity, need, behaviour and learning difficulty.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

84. Twenty-seven parents (3.2%) returned the parents' questionnaire and seven parents attended the pre-inspection meeting. Parents consider Langdon Park to be a satisfactory school. Overall, they are happy with what the school achieves and the progress their children make. A small number of parents are dissatisfied with the amount of work their child is expected to do at home and inspection findings are that homework arrangements are inconsistent across the school.
85. The appointment of a home-school liaison worker and learning mentors is going some way to developing partnerships with parents but has yet to significantly impact on the parents involvement on the work of the school and the contribution they are able to make to their children's education at home. These are areas that form part of the Poplar Partnership Education Action Zone Action Plan 2003.
86. The majority of parents are satisfied with the education the school provides and say that their children are enthusiastic about coming to school. Parents are pleased with the quality of teaching and feel comfortable about approaching the school with a problem or concern. Those parents for whom English is an additional language appreciate the provision the school makes when they need to converse in their mother tongue.
87. Over ninety percent of parents conscientiously attend consultation meetings each term and have signed the home-school agreement. Very few parents help out in class. Some parents provide good levels of additional support for their children at home but in some cases pupils are not well supported with homework tasks. Parents are very supportive of extra-curricular activities.
88. The school provides satisfactory levels of information for parents and this is an improvement on the previous inspection. Although most of the written information that parents receive is in English, parents are satisfied with this arrangement and know that they can approach the school for further information in their home language if this would be more helpful. A newsletter provides information about forthcoming events and the student planners give the opportunity for informal communication to take place between teachers and parents. Pupils progress review reports circulated each term

are satisfactory overall but do not always contain specific targets and what a pupil has to do to improve in each of the curriculum subjects. The school prospectus and the Governing Body annual report are comprehensive documents that meet statutory requirements.

89. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are consulted regularly and take part in regular and annual reviews. Parents' comments in annual reviews are positive about the contribution of the special educational needs provision in the school and the measurable impact on their child's performance and quality of life.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

90. The quality of leadership and management of the school overall is good. Teachers are very committed to improvement and the provision of an increasingly higher standard of education for the rich diversity of pupils from differing ethnic and social backgrounds.
91. The head teacher and his senior leadership team have formulated a very clear vision for raising achievement, strategies for improvement and future development of the school. They have good support from the staff of the school. Development plans are well considered and have clear agreed priorities that have emerged from extensive discussion within the school. Senior staff and especially the head teacher maintain a high profile and command a high level of respect from the pupils who recognise the efforts being made on their behalf. The school has put in place many features of best practice to promote equal opportunities and inclusion.
92. The work carried out within departments and around the school reflects the very clear school aims. For example, work on developing literacy has been promoted extensively in department plans. The school has been heavily involved in developing teaching and learning strategies and has been involved in innovative initiatives as part of a case study to evaluate the effectiveness of different teaching methods. Teachers have embraced these challenges with great enthusiasm.
93. Staff have clearly delegated responsibilities and senior staff share the day-to-day management effectively. Communication is very good and staff are kept fully aware of events. Heads of faculties plan effectively for the continuing development of their subjects in keeping with the school aims, and work well together on whole school initiatives. Leadership and management are good in most, and at least satisfactory, in all departments. The exception is in physical education where there has been some disruption due to staff recruitment difficulties. Leadership and management are very good in history and modern foreign languages.
94. Where departmental management is less successful, the degree of monitoring of the teaching and learning is not sufficiently rigorous and focussed on developing teachers' skills. Procedures for performance management are in place but the direct observation of teaching method is not clearly established. Monitoring through analysis of pupils' work and assessment results is effective, and in some subjects such as mathematics and history, the observation of teaching is regularly undertaken and evaluated well. It is notably less effective in science, music and religious education, although sharing of good practice is a commendable feature across the school.
95. The leadership and management of the special educational needs coordinators are good.

96. The new code of practice for special educational needs is fully in place. Arrangements for transferring relevant information from primary schools are very good. Available data is used well to identify pupils' needs on entry, and monitoring tests take place regularly and lead to effective action. Reviews are carried out as required and improve support for pupils, and pupils take a full part in this process. Annual reviews of pupils with statements of special educational needs are taking place in accordance with the code of practice, with parents and pupils attending. The school has very good links with the appropriate local authority services for specialist teaching and advice in school.
97. Non-teaching staff make a valuable contribution to management procedures in the school. Learning support assistants are deployed extensively to support pupils with special educational needs. Administrative staff have contributed to the improvements in attendance and very good support for welfare of pupils. There is an effective bursarial team to provide the support for financial management and control.
98. The governing body provides effective support for the school, and in particular responds actively to proposals in development plans. Financial matters are scrutinised and monitored closely. Governors are kept well-informed by the head teacher. The extent of proactive involvement by governors is increasing, but the contribution to initiating ideas and guiding the direction of the school is limited to a small but active core. Most governors have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and the challenges that are faced. There is a need to encourage wider involvement of all the governors. The governors have appointed a governor as their special educational needs representative in the school, who has yet to arrange a first meeting with the special educational needs coordinators since their appointment. The governors report annually to parents on their policy on special educational needs.
99. Financial planning and control are generally very good. The school has its own bursar who is assisted by a finance clerk. Overall spending is carefully monitored against income. Issues arising from the latest audit report have been fully addressed. The governors set a budget in the light of the school's priorities and monitor this through the finance committee. Development plans are clearly costed. Creativity and flexibility in managing different funding streams to give maximum impact in the delivery of the school's priorities is a strong feature of the financial management. The entry into a Private Funding Initiative (PFI) scheme has reduced some of the school's flexibility over a large proportion of its delegated budget. The school is responding to this new financial climate by intensifying its procedures for monitoring expenditure. However, the system for accounting for the use of additional funding for special educational needs does not provide a clear enough comparison of specific income with staffing and curricular need.
100. The school has sufficient teachers to meet the needs of the students and the demands of the curriculum, although there are current staff shortages in physical education, and have been recruitment difficulties in others. Most teachers are subject specialists and this is reflected in the good quality of teaching and learning. Performance management procedures for teaching staff are in place and used to highlight staff training needs. The school is committed to an ongoing in-service training programme for teachers and classroom assistants, and this is well managed and recorded. Additionally, staff may attend specific courses. All staff have participated in the government funded computer skills courses and literacy and numeracy training is up to date and satisfactory. Induction procedures for new or temporary staff are good, and very good for newly qualified teachers. The school has identified the need to extend its training programme to include administrative and other non-teaching staff.

101. Staffing for special educational needs includes the equivalent of eight and a half teaching assistants, a special educational needs coordinator post which is shared by two staff, a teacher in charge of the learning support centre and a teacher in charge of study support for Years 10 and 11. Teaching assistants are qualified and trained appropriately and used strategically to reflect funding and to support individuals.
102. The leadership and management of the provision for gifted and talented pupils are good. The local authority provides support through regular meetings and visits, reports from which recognise the school's good practice. Requests from subjects for funding match the budget provided. Responsibility for initiating and co-ordinating the work for gifted and talented pupils has now passed to subjects. Some but not all subjects use information on websites and opportunities for pupils. The training of all staff in both classroom methods and extra-curricular support for gifted and talented pupils has not yet taken place. Surveys of pupils are taking place to gain feedback about provision. The need to continue to work on the raising of pupils' expectations is demonstrated by reluctance by some gifted and talented pupils to take part in organised activities in or out of school.
103. Accommodation overall is unsatisfactory although it is at present being used as well as possible and a stimulating learning environment has been created in modern foreign languages, humanities, science and ICT. Classes, which use the old building and ICT rooms, are cramped and pupils have less than the recommended space in which to work. Music areas are small, the fabric is poor and the rooms lack ventilation. Ventilation is also poor in humanities, ICT, science and modern foreign languages. Pupils are disappointed that they do not have the use of lockers in school. There is a rolling building programme on site. The first of two phases is near completion and includes a gymnasium and a hall. Since the previous inspection the accommodation for science has improved and is now satisfactory. Accommodation for special educational needs is satisfactory. There is a learning support reading room with computers and resources and this is used throughout the day. Use of display is good. The learning support centre for behaviour has a separate room. The option support room for Year 10 and 11 pupils is isolated by a study centre, which acts a barrier between it and the rest of the special educational needs suite. The accessibility of the school building for wheelchairs is unsatisfactory and there are no lifts or disabled toilets.
104. There is wide variation in both the quantity and quality of resources available in different departments of the school. In English they are good with a good supply of books. Regular use is made of computers both in the department and in the school's ICT suites. Mathematics is well resourced in general and has some good software but there are problems with insufficient computers in the department and, like English, access to the school's network. Scientific resources are poorly organised to meet department needs and resources being separated across the site makes the difficulties in moving equipment around. Some computers are now available in science, however these are not yet networked. Resources for ICT and modern foreign languages are good.
105. Resources for art, citizenship, design technology, geography, history, music and PE are generally satisfactory, with some notable strengths and weaknesses. For example, some departments regularly make good use of ICT for the preparation of materials to support teaching and learning and the presentation of ideas using laptop computers and digital projectors. However, in art, design and technology and music departments, resources are in need of refurbishment and there is little evidence of the use of control

technology. Resources for religious education are unsatisfactory with little or no access to books or artefacts.

106. The study skills centre has recently benefited from the installation of the *Reuters Suite* — a state-of-the-art, networked suite of multimedia computers supplied by a generous grant from the UK headquarters of this international news agency. However, the adjacent library contrasts sharply with such up-to-date facilities. Its stock of books and other resources for learning is poor. The number of books is particularly low for a school of this size. Many are dated and in poor condition. Although there is a computerised catalogue of books, stock control and the monitoring of students' use of the resources is not possible. The school is aware of this serious deficiency in a key resource area and has plans to rectify the situation.
107. Literacy resources for pupils with special educational needs in the reading room are effectively supplemented by loan schemes. There is regular use by teachers of the specialist software already in the school, but the current voluntary use of Successmaker during lunch and after school by pupils does not provide a secure base for ensuring progress and disadvantages girls. Pupils would benefit from the availability of other programs to support basic skills, as well as more opportunity to use special educational needs websites on the Internet to support independent learning.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

108. In order to raise standards further, the headteacher, leadership team, senior staff and governing body should undertake to improve:

- (1) Attainment in National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 9 by:
  - Ensuring teachers make more extensive use of assessment data to set appropriate targets for pupils.
  - Raising the level of teachers' expectations of pupils of this age range.
  - Improving the awareness and confidence of pupils in their own achievements.(Paragraphs: 2, 4, 5, 6, 125, 133, 141)
- (2) Use of ICT in teaching across all subjects of the curriculum to ensure compliance with National Curriculum requirements by:
  - Ensuring computer control technology in design and technology and data analysis in science are embedded in schemes of work.
  - Improving the access that departments have to ICT resources.
  - Monitoring and mapping the use of ICT across the curriculum.(Paragraphs: 54, 67, 68, 138, 144, 176, 199, 208, 237)
- (3) Monitoring and development of teaching and learning within departments by:
  - Ensuring that where necessary appropriate guidance is provided for heads of department in lesson observation.
  - Providing a structure and time for a programme of regular observation and rigorous evaluation of teachers' skills by heads of department.(Paragraphs: 94, 131, 149, 169)
- (4) Provision for higher attaining pupils by:
  - Initiating an evaluation of the effect of the curriculum, classroom organisation and grouping has on achievement.
  - Ensuring work matches the ability of individual pupils in teaching groups.
  - Ensuring homework is used to extend and challenge pupils.(Paragraphs: 28, 41, 130, 155)
- (5) Quality and cleanliness of accommodation for all subject areas by:
  - Addressing the immediate needs of departments where it is identified that inadequate heating and ventilation is having a negative impact on pupils' progress.
  - Continue to develop the accommodation to maximise the quality of the environment for learning.(Paragraphs: 103, 158, 187, 222)
- (6) Provision for religious education:
  - Ensuring that schemes of work are in full compliance with the Agreed Syllabus in all years.
  - Ensuring religious education is taught to all year groups of the school.(Paragraphs: 232, 238)



## **SPECIFIED FEATURES**

### **English as an additional language (EAL)**

109. Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good.
110. Langdon Park School is a multi-ethnic community, which is culturally and linguistically rich in its diversity. 57.8 per cent of pupils on roll are from minority communities and 33 per cent of these are Bangladeshi pupils. Thirty-seven languages other than English are spoken among the school population. A telephone interpreting service (Language Line) is available for use by the staff. There is a Bengali Home School Liaison Officer. When there is a need for translation members of staff or pupils help.
111. The scale of the need for support is exemplified by the large number of pupils with English as an additional language in this school. The percentage of pupils for whom English is not believed to be their mother tongue is fifty percent and twenty-two percent are early stage English learners. There are also thirteen refugee pupils and two traveller pupils. Approximately half of the pupils in the school are considered to be EAL learners.
112. There are four teachers in the department funded through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) one of whom is the head of department line managed by the assistant head teacher (Inclusion). There are three distinct areas of support, the induction class for beginners, the support option for Years 10 and 11 and in-class support in the core subjects and the humanities and one Year 7 EAL / Literacy group. The pupils whose needs are highest are targeted for support. The homework club provides good supports pupils after school.
113. In view of the high number of EAL pupils, staffing overall is inadequate. This is compensated to some extent by training subject staff in using appropriate strategies. EAL and teachers of the English, mathematics and humanities do planning jointly and time is allocated on the timetable for material preparation. Resources are disseminated to subject staff. This is indeed a particular strength.
114. The attainment on entry of all pupils is well below average and their language development needs are wide and varied. The EAL department has adopted the QCA extended scales for assessing pupils, as it is easier to relate to National Curriculum levels. Support provision is made using the extended scales and Heads of Faculty identify needs twice yearly and bid for support.
115. In Years 7 to 9 pupils with English as an additional language make good progress, in-line with other pupils, due to the effective support they receive from the EAL department and although their standards are overall below average, their achievement is good. In Years 10 and 11 they continue to make good progress because support is provided in the option groups as well as in the core subjects.
116. The overall quality of teaching of pupils with EAL, is good. The teachers have a good knowledge of how language is acquired and they are very committed. Joint planning with subject teachers and the differentiated material produced benefit not only EAL pupils but quite often all pupils. The bilingual skills of EAL teachers are of considerable value in helping pupils to understand and participate in lessons. There is a well-resourced base with a welcoming atmosphere that provides a secure learning environment. Resource materials used in the Induction class and the EAL literacy

class need to be more secondary focused. Teaching is hampered by not having enough access to ICT in the EAL base.

117. Teaching for pupils with EAL is often very good in lessons where support teachers are present and in the specialist withdrawal lessons. The teachers have a secure knowledge of the methodology and theory of language development acquired through in-service training. They are specialist teachers facilitating learning effectively. They work with a great deal of commitment. Support teachers plan lessons jointly with subject teachers and produce differentiated work, which makes the lesson accessible for EAL pupils at different levels.
118. The pupils learn to work independently, show interest in their work and sustain concentration. A good example was in a Year 7 Science practical lesson on solutions where a differentiated work sheet was used for recording results. The EAL teacher focused attention on the targeted pupil and also moved around and worked with a variety of pupils. In addition, the strategies of using key words for an oral quiz and providing a list of words with simple definitions helped pupils to acquire new knowledge and skills and increase their understanding.
119. Another good example of best practice was when the Bengali speaking EAL teacher used bilingual skills to help access the maths and science curriculum to beginner English learners. In a Year 8 lesson on atoms and elements, differentiated work sheets with Bengali translations were provided for a beginner EAL pupil who was able to use his prior knowledge, which he understood in his own language, and then transfer to English and enhance his learning. In mathematics an EAL pupil had a similar experience as the teacher explained the concept in Bengali and she was able to grasp the intricacies of co-ordinates.
120. The Induction Class is a continuous feature on the timetable and all beginners spend five hours a week in a withdrawal situation concentrating on English language work. The aim is to help them join mainstream classes as soon as possible with in-class support. The length of time they spend in the induction class depends on need. The work is organised as individual tasks which focus on each pupil's level of language development and shared reading with the teacher and recall of information from the text with more competent readers contributed to their understanding. The 'whole group' tasks vary from spellings to review of the alphabet with early stage learners. Written work based on the books read by the pupils and structured grammar work is corrected with helpful comments so that pupils can understand their mistakes. The texts, used especially by older pupils who have been learning English for more than six months, are not demanding enough. The literacy lessons focus on phonic work and are based on a series of workbooks. The pupils are secure in the knowledge of the particular 'sound words'. Although the workbooks seem useful for phonic work, the content is undemanding and the format is too 'young' for secondary pupils.
121. The leadership and management of the EAL department are very good. The head of department, who has an EAL qualification, provides a clear lead in enriching the knowledge of the members of the department as well as the mainstream staff in developing strategies to access the curriculum to EAL pupils at different levels. The department has a well-thought-out development plan and staff is deployed according to the greatest need.

122. The assessment procedures and monitoring of the language development of EAL pupils is in place and the data is fed into the school's assessment system. This information is used for planning and target setting for pupils including GCSE/GNVQ grades. Progress is recorded regularly.

### **Provision for traveller children**

123. Provision for traveller children is good and encapsulated within the good provision for pupils with special educational needs. There are good support and guidance arrangements for the two traveller children currently in school. The pupils receive support for their special educational needs and English as an additional language, on a regular basis each week. Pastoral care provided for pupils is good and in-line with their individual education plans. There continues to be regular links with 'The Support for Learning Service', formerly known as 'The Traveller Support Service'.
124. Poor attendance is having an adverse effect on the progress made by the traveller pupils towards the academic targets contained within their respective education plans. Good progress has been made, however, in their personal development. They have settled well, made friends and learnt to be independent when needed.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	101
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	55

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	30	39	26	3	1	0
Percentage	2	30	38	26	3	1	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Y7 – Y11
Number of pupils on the school's roll	839
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	618

#### Special educational needs

	Y7 – Y11
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	49
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	252

#### English as an additional language

Number of pupils with English as an additional language	432
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#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	58
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	69

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.7
National comparative data	7.8

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	4.7
National comparative data	1.2

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
	2002	89	72	161

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	25	31	22
	Girls	42	33	33
	Total	68	64	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	42 (64)	40 (34)	34 (33)
	National	66 (64)	67 (66)	66 (66)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	6 (19)	17 (14)	7 (7)
	National	32 (31)	45 (43)	33 (34)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	43	31	34
	Girls	51	38	31
	Total	94	69	65
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	58 (52)	43 (39)	40 (39)
	National	67 (65)	70 (68)	67 (64)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	14 (21)	17 (12)	12 (19)
	National	32 (31)	44 (42)	34 (33)

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
	2002	77	73	150

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	19	67	74
	Girls	24	68	73
	Total	43	135	147
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	29 (27)	90 (86)	98 (91)
	National	50 (48)	91 (91)	96 (96)

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

GCSE results	GCSE point score
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Average point score per pupil	School	32.7 (29.3)
	National	39.8 (39.0)

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	38	89
	National		N/a

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
330	16	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
7	0	0
3	0	0
282	16	1
1	0	0
33	0	0
32	0	0
56	6	1
18	0	0
65	0	0
10	0	0

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

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y11**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	60.55
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	13.9

#### **Education support staff: Y7 – Y11**

Total number of education support staff	21
Total aggregate hours worked per week	573

#### **Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y11**

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	63
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#### **Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y11**

Key Stage 3	25
Key Stage 4	25

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2002-2003
	£
Total income	4,479,202
Total expenditure	4,401,018
Expenditure per pupil	5,245
Balance brought forward from previous year	70,966
Balance carried forward to next year	149,150

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	22
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	15

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	6

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	839
Number of questionnaires returned	27

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	22	0	15	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	30	4	7	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	26	15	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	41	19	4	0
The teaching is good.	48	41	4	4	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	33	7	4	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	22	11	0	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	22	4	7	0
The school works closely with parents.	59	30	0	11	0
The school is well led and managed.	59	26	4	4	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	70	19	4	7	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	48	26	7	4	15



## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **ENGLISH**

Overall, the quality of provision in English is **good**.

#### **Strengths**

- Good teaching leading to improved standards.
- Good leadership and management, which is effectively implementing initiatives to improve literacy.
- Good range of learning opportunities including visits and other activities that motivate pupils to do well.
- Very good assessment procedures, which are used effectively to measure progress and set appropriate work and targets.

#### **Areas for improvement**

- Match of work to pupils' attainment, particularly for higher-attainers.
- Management of behaviour in a minority of lessons in order to improve the progress of less cooperative and motivated pupils.
- Involvement of a minority of pupils, mainly girls, more actively in lessons.

125. The standards of pupils at the end of Year 9 in the 2002 national tests were well below national averages for those attaining Level 5 or above, although the results were better than for schools in a similar context. Girls did better than boys in attaining the higher levels, although boys did relatively better than girls overall in relation to national trends. Although the 2001 results were better, the 2002 results continued a longer-term trend of improvement. The GCSE results of pupils in Year 11 in English Language and Literature were well below the national average for those gaining an A\*- C grade, although these results were also better than for schools in a similar context. Girls did considerably better than boys in Literature. Results in English were better than in the other core subjects of mathematics and science.
126. The evidence of the inspection is that standards in all the key areas of English – speaking, listening, reading and writing – are below national expectations for pupils both in Year 9 and Year 11, although girls reach a higher standard than boys. Since pupils join the school with standards, which are well below national expectations, this represents good achievement for pupils of all levels of ability, including those with special educational needs and gifted and talented pupils. Pupils with English as an additional language also share in this good achievement. A minority of pupils, especially some white boys and girls, underachieve, partly due to a poor record of attendance.
127. By the end of Year 9, most pupils make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills, as they are given frequent opportunities to discuss with each other and answer questions in class, as was seen for example in Year 8 lessons involving the analysis of poems of mystery and imagination. However, a large minority of pupils have a limited vocabulary and limited command of Standard English. Pupils make good progress in developing reading skills, and some lower-attainers on the reading recovery scheme make very good progress in response to very good teaching. However, many pupils continue to read with limited fluency and expression, and have few strategies for decoding less familiar language. Most pupils make good progress in

developing writing skills in a range of contexts, covering areas such as creative and formal writing. They show a delight in the language of poetry, and a widening vocabulary, although lower-attainers make less progress in improving the accuracy of their punctuation, grammar and spelling. Higher-achievers develop the ability to write mature critical analyses of Shakespeare and classic works like *Great Expectations*. They also develop the ability to argue a point of view when writing about sensitive issues such as censorship.

128. Most pupils continue this good progress by the end of Year 11. They continue to gain confidence in discussion, as seen in a Year 10 lesson on the media when pupils considered different camera shots in the film *Moulin Rouge*. Particularly impressive is the considerable progress, which many older pupils make in writing effective coursework for the GCSE examination. Although lower-attainers write with less accuracy and a narrower range of language, most pupils learn to develop a range of analytical and evaluative skills: whether, for example, considering the contemporary and historical relevance of classic texts like *A Christmas Carol*, or analysing character and settings in a play like *An Inspector Calls*. Pupils show a pleasing ability to analyse presentational devices in Shakespeare and sometimes reach a high standard when discussing language and form in a range of texts, and when making a reasoned personal response. The best writing shows great coherence and control.
129. Overall the quality of teaching and learning is good, across all age ranges. The best teaching is characterised by good questioning used to assess and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding, good classroom management, good monitoring of pupil progress, and good subject knowledge particularly in addressing the needs of less literate pupils. A good example of this was a Year 8 lesson on the poem *The Listener*, in which the teacher carefully monitored pupils' learning and fed back on how they could improve aspects of their work. Objectives are explained very clearly to pupils. However, the most effective feature of the best teaching is the skilful use made of basic resources, allied to active methods, which involve and engage pupils, resulting in good learning by pupils of all levels of ability. Pupils enjoy these opportunities, and the good attitudes displayed are an important factor in the good learning, which takes place, particularly as pupils develop the confidence to debate and sustain an argument. For example, in a Year 9 lesson on poetry from different cultures, the teacher used a range of worksheets, recordings and discussion techniques which succeeded in engaging pupils and developing their ability to both enjoy and critically evaluate some demanding texts.
130. On the minority of occasions where the teaching is less effective, there is insufficient challenge for more competent pupils, who are given too much time for undemanding tasks and who therefore make less progress in learning new skills or knowledge than they are capable of achieving. For example, in a Year 8 poetry lesson, too long was spent on devising questions of the poem when higher-attainers were ready to move on to the more challenging and interesting task of trying to answer the questions and thereby develop their individual response to evocative poetry. Also, in a minority of lessons, the behaviour management of some challenging pupils is ineffective in keeping them focused on the work, and this results in restricted progress. Occasionally there is not enough attention given to involving some well-motivated but very passive learners, usually girls, so as to ensure any one group, usually boys, does not dominate discussion sessions.
131. Leadership and management in English are good. The head of faculty has been particularly effective in developing new strategies such as progress units and a reading recovery programme to develop the literacy skills of lower-achievers, and the benefits

are seen when these pupils rejoin mainstream classes. There is good liaison with local primary schools, and the transition units help to ease the path of new pupils into the school. There is a good range of visits and activities such as Shakespeare workshops, which pupils enjoy and which add to their understanding. The department benefits from good resources and a good range of specialist teachers. The use of information and communications technology has now been successfully incorporated into lesson planning. Moral, social and cultural provision is good: for example, the teacher in a Year 9 lesson made very good use of the pupils' own ethnic backgrounds when considering the issue of bilingualism in the poem *Presents from my aunt in Pakistan*. Teachers cooperate well in planning and in the use of resources. The monitoring of teaching is underdeveloped, and opportunities are sometimes missed to share the best teaching practice.

132. Standards at the end of Year 9 and 11 have improved since 1997, when they were well below expectations for pupils of all ages. The progress of lower-attainers and pupils with special educational needs is now much better, and better targets are set. The good teaching and good pupil attitudes have been maintained. Alongside this, there have been significant initiatives introduced, particularly strategies to improve literacy, and these are beginning to have positive results. Therefore there has been good improvement since the previous inspection.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Overall, the quality of provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Strengths**

- Attainment in GCSE examinations is rising each year at a rate above the national trend.
- Good teamwork and enthusiasm of teachers working within the department to support initiatives.
- Good teaching methods especially in the use of starter activities in lessons are improving numeracy and standards in general.
- Leadership and management are effective in planning and evaluating the work of the department.

### **Areas for improvement**

- Attainment in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 9.
- Frequency of procedures for monitoring pupils' progress.
- Use of ICT by pupils in their learning.

133. Pupils enter the school with results that are well below the national average. At the end of Year 9 attainment of the majority of pupils in national tests is well below the national average. The results are average for similar schools and are improving close to the rate found nationally. Results in mathematics are similar to those in English and higher than science. Achievement by the majority of pupils by the end of Year 9 is good. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and those with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. Boys and girls perform equally well.

134. By the end of Year 11, standards of attainment in GCSE examinations are well below the national average but are average for similar schools. There is an upward trend of improvement, which is higher than the rate of improvement in national results. Overall achievement is good, including pupils with special educational needs. White boys however, achieve less well than other students.

135. Standards of work seen on inspection both at Year 9 and Year 10 are below average. Year 11 pupils were taking GCSE examinations at the time of inspection and no Year 11 work was seen. Standards seen in lessons and through evidence of written work are higher than in test and examinations. A contributory factor is that the school has now introduced setting into the teaching of all years. Interactive whole class teaching has also replaced an individualised learning programme. Both of these factors are raising standards. The work seen indicates that pupils are achieving well in lessons and are able to use standard methods for solving problems. Their deeper understanding of the work is, however, not always secured and they have difficulty recalling and using knowledge at a later stage. Standards across all attainment targets and aspects of the subject are even.
136. The quality of learning in lessons is good. Pupils willingly participate in activities and are keen to answer questions. They work at a good pace and produce written work which is at least of a satisfactory standard. Generally attitudes to the subject are positive. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are supported well in lessons and are fully engaged in their learning.
137. The quality of teaching is good overall. In nearly half of lessons seen, teaching is good or very good, with no unsatisfactory teaching. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons carefully. In doing this they make good use of starter activities, which ensures good quality learning early in the lesson. For example, in a good lesson with Year 7 the teacher chose a starter activity to revise the names of two-dimensional shapes. Not only was this done in an interesting way to motivate pupils but also full advantage was taken to develop literacy skills during the activity. In planning lessons learning objectives are identified but these are not always shared with pupils and reviewed at the end of the lesson. Management of pupils in lessons is a strong feature of teaching. Teachers in the majority of lessons seen enjoy good relationship with their pupils and set high expectations for behaviour.
138. Teachers have good questioning techniques and use these well to develop pupils understanding of topics. However opportunities are frequently missed to ask pupils to explain answers and reflect on what they have learnt. There is some use of ICT in the teaching of the subject. This is, however, not well-developed and more use of computers particularly by students would improve learning further. In a high proportion of lessons seen, pupils completed exercises using a textbook during the main part of the lesson. While this is effective for practicing techniques more variety in activities and learning styles would help to motivate pupils and sustain interest in their learning.
139. The faculty consists of a team of specialist teachers who are very enthusiastic and committed. They support each other and work together as a team to raise standards. They benefit from good leadership provided by the head of faculty. He is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the work of the faculty and has a clear vision and educational direction. Planning and review of the work of the faculty is carried out well. The quality of teaching and learning is monitored both by lesson observation and the sampling of pupils' work. While procedures are in place for tracking pupils' progress this needs to be carried out more frequently. Good use, however, is made of assessment information in planning schemes of work and teaching strategies. The mathematics curriculum fulfils statutory requirements and schemes of work have recently been rewritten to take account of the National Strategy for pupils in Years 7 – 9.

140. Since the last inspection attainment has improved both at Year 9 and Year 11. Teacher assessment is now in-line with test results. The National Strategy for Pupils in Years 7 – 9 has been fully implemented. Whole-class interactive teaching has now effectively replaced the individualised scheme of work.

## SCIENCE

Overall, the quality of provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### Strengths

- The quality of teaching and learning in the majority of lessons is good.
- Relationships between pupils and teachers are good.
- The department has a good team of knowledgeable and enthusiastic teachers.

### Areas for improvement

- Achievement from Year 7 – 9, and attainment in National Tests at the end of Year 9.
- Behaviour of a minority of pupils in some lessons, resulting from teachers' expectations being too low on these occasions.
- Provision of technician support and storage of materials including hazardous chemicals.

141. Pupils' results in the 2002 national tests at the end of Year 9 were well below the national average. Results have improved over the last two years but are still below the standard achieved in similar schools. Over the last three years the teachers' own assessment of pupils' standards at the end of Year 9 has been too optimistic and significantly above the level obtained in the national tests.
142. In 2002, GCSE results were well below the national average but broadly in-line with the standard existing in similar schools. This was a significant improvement compared with the 2001 results. Pupils not entered for GCSE double award are entered instead for the single award. Results in the single award are also well below the national average. In 2002 some pupils also sat the GCSE Chemistry examination and the results were better than those for science double-award.
143. In work seen during the inspection, attainment in Year 9 is a little better than the standards found in the national tests but still below the national average. In lessons observed, pupils gain a sound knowledge of basic facts and the meaning of keywords such as respiration. Pupils enter the school with standards well below average but by Year 9 they can handle apparatus confidently. However, they find tasks that require a high demand of reading and writing skills more difficult.
144. Skills in numeracy and ICT are below national expectations. Pupils' experience of how ICT is applied in science is enhanced through the use of the computers in the department's ICT suite. These computers are old but are adequate for word processing, basic data-logging and analysing results. However, opportunities to use ICT are not sufficiently developed. From evidence in books and lessons, most pupils from Year 7 -9 improve their understanding of biology, chemistry and physics, as well as improving their practical skills. Pupils with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English make satisfactory progress consistent with other pupils in their groups. In lessons where there is group work, pupils naturally help and support each other and teachers are generally skilful in the way they intervene to offer appropriate help and guidance, particularly to the lower attaining pupils.

145. Standards in the work of pupils observed in Year 10 were below the expected national standard. Most pupils show a fair knowledge of fundamental concepts and some can apply this knowledge to understand topics such as the periodic table of elements and the function of different parts of the human eye. There were no Year 11 classes to be observed during the period of the inspection. Work analysed in pupils' books indicate satisfactory advances in all areas of science in Years 10 - 11. Standards of literacy are below national expectations but the wall displays of the keywords, related to the modules being taught at the time, help to improve pupils' spelling and comprehension of technical vocabulary. Standards observed in numeracy are also below national expectations. The department makes a good contribution to the pupils' social, moral and cultural development with activities such as those involving group work, coverage of sex education and the work of famous scientists.
146. With the exception of two lessons, which were judged unsatisfactory, in all other lessons teaching was judged to be good or very good. Most lessons start well with teachers checking and reinforcing the learning made last time; learning objectives are made clear to pupils and most teachers allow time at the end of the lesson to show pupils what they have learnt. Teachers have good subject knowledge and know how to capture the interest of the pupils. For example, in a Year 8 lesson on 'lungs and respiration' the pupils were fascinated by a teacher demonstration involving the inflation of sheep lungs as the teacher blew air down the windpipe using a length of rubber tubing. The interest of the pupils was high and allowed the teacher to successfully explain the difficult concepts associated with respiration and breathing. By the end of the lesson the level of understanding was high and the pupils had clearly enjoyed learning this piece of science.
147. Two unsatisfactory lessons were seen and these were typified by poor discipline and by low teacher expectations resulting in minimal new learning taking place. In some lessons there was insufficient provision for different work to ensure that all learners were sufficiently challenged, for instance the more able would finish the activity and do nothing whereas the less able frequently do not finish at all. The progress made by many pupils is hampered by difficulties with reading, writing and understanding scientific terms. The department makes good provision to improve these skills by using writing frames and emphasising key words and spelling but it is rare for pupils to be given opportunities to express their opinions and explanations in lessons. Questions asked in class normally require a single word answer and this suppresses the need to think and hence learn.
148. Pupils' attitudes to work in science are generally good and this plays an important part in their progress, which is good in Years 10 and 11. Relationships are also good, with pupils having no hesitation in asking questions and seeking help and guidance from the teacher. This creates a learning environment that is positive, productive and enjoyable for all concerned. They co-operate enthusiastically on practical tasks and, as a result, ideas are shared and skills, such as teamwork, are developed well.
149. Over the last year the science department has successfully dealt with severe staffing difficulties and the current acting head of department has made a good start at building a committed and unified team of science teachers. New schemes of work are being written and a good start has been made on a medium and long-term development plan. The system for monitoring the quality of teaching by the head of department is established but is not sufficiently rigorous to identify or develop teachers' skills. Potentially beneficial initiatives, such as the Neighbourhood Renewal Funded Science Achievement Project, are currently being implemented to raise standards. There is inadequate support for teachers provided by the science technicians. The arrangement

for storing equipment and chemicals lacks organisation. There has been little improvement since the last inspection on this safety aspect.

150. There has been a satisfactory improvement overall since the last inspection. Standards have risen at GCSE and significant improvements have been made in the use of assessment data to identify individual pupil targets and monitor their progress.

## ART AND DESIGN

Overall, the quality of provision in art and design is **satisfactory**.

### Strengths

- Teachers' planning is good.
- Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs.
- Standards in drawing skills are well-developed.
- Relationships and pupils' personal development within art and design are good.

### Areas for improvement

- Standards at the end of Year 9 and 11.
- Pace of learning and level of challenge in some lessons.
- Use of ICT by pupils and teachers to enhance the learning experience and to comply with National Curriculum requirements.
- Use of lesson reviews, which is inconsistent and ineffective.

151. By the end of Year 11 standards are below average. GCSE results in 2002 were well below national expectations for those achieving A\*-C grades. The proportion of pupils gaining A\*-G grades was in-line with national expectations. These results were an improvement on the previous year.
152. Achievement in work and classes seen is generally satisfactory in drawing, painting, printing and a variety of three-dimensional media including clay and papier maché. Pupils learn successfully how to construct armatures, to blend and use colour effectively and to develop different forms of printing. There is a strong emphasis on the development of drawing skills, which pupils use with increasing effectiveness in a variety of contexts and media as the result of good teaching. Processes of research and experimentation are being satisfactorily developed in Years 10 and 11, although pupils need to be more diverse in their investigation of ideas and media.
153. Written work on the study of famous artists is generally presented well but its subsequent impact on the development of practical work is underdeveloped. Throughout Years 10 and 11 pupils are encouraged and expected to develop their skills as independent learners and to pursue individuality of response. This is well illustrated well in Year 10 by the range of imaginative and strongly drawn studies of machinery, inspired by Leger and imaginatively extended into printmaking. Overall, there is a scarcity of high quality, well-finished work in Year 11.
154. Pupils enter the school in Year 7 with low levels of achievement. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 indicate that pupil attainment remains below national expectations. Standards overall in classes and work seen are below average. The new head of department is working hard and with great determination to raise skill levels in a range of drawing and painting competencies. Pupils learn to observe and record detail, to use pencil, chalk and charcoal to represent form and tone with increasing levels of success, and achievement overall is satisfactory. More can be

done to raise skill levels by a greater concentration on observation and recording work and a revised, more challenging homework programme to extend learning and practice opportunities. On occasions good teaching and organisation results in good learning. This was the case in a Year 7 class where a large-scale portraiture exercise using chalk and charcoal resulted in more successful outcomes for many pupils.

155. Progress in art for the majority of pupils is satisfactory, for some in Years 10 and 11 it is good. Pupils' with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are well integrated and make satisfactory progress. Provision for the higher-attainers, already an identified, additionally challenged group, could be more effective.
156. Whilst the department provides learning opportunities in a wide range of two- and three-dimensional media, including printmaking, textiles and photography, it does not fulfil statutory requirements concerning the provision of Information and Communication Technology.
157. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teaching in Years 7-9 is satisfactory overall and occasionally good. Teaching in Years 10 and 11 is good. Behaviour and attitudes of pupils are good when the teaching is stimulating. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen, although there are some classes where pace, teaching strategies and levels of expectation are not sufficiently challenging. Opportunities for reflection and the development of pupils' oracy skills could be used more consistently and effectively. The artistic richness of other cultures could make a stronger impact on pupils' learning outcomes, knowledge and understanding. Good learning outcomes are the result of challenging, sequenced tasks, building on prior attainment, good demonstrations and skills teaching and where a positive approach to work had been engendered in pupils over time. Procedures for assessment have been improved, are firmly established and regularly used to inform pupils of their standards and ways of improving their work. At all levels, many pupils enjoy art and respond positively to the work given.
158. The department has been affected by staff illness. The head of department has been absent due poor health, since December 2002. The acting head of department and a newly qualified colleague are enthusiastic and committed art and design specialists. They have successfully introduced a number of initiatives, which are already having a positive impact on learning outcomes. Management of the department is developing. Planning is thorough and effectively includes aspects of literacy, numeracy and citizenship. There are good opportunities for extra-curricular learning. Accommodation is inadequate. The partial walls that allow sounds to be amplified between the classes damage the learning environment. The ventilation fan, necessary to maintain reasonably acceptable working conditions, also causes a high level of disturbance.



## CITIZENSHIP

Overall, the quality of provision in citizenship is **satisfactory**.

### Strengths

- Good planning has led to the involvement of all curriculum areas in the promotion of citizenship.
- Work experience provides good opportunities for pupils to evaluate and research the world of work.
- All pupils are encouraged to develop the skills of conflict resolution.
- The local police provide expert advice and direction for pupils.

### Areas for improvement

- There is currently insufficient time to develop a good understanding of political and economic citizenship.
- Insufficient monitoring and training is resulting in inconsistency in delivery in Years 7 to 9.
- Progress is not yet assessed and recorded in Years 7 to 9 so there is insufficient monitoring of pupils' progress.
- While there are very good individual examples, there is insufficient opportunity for all pupils to become involved as active citizens.

159. Citizenship is taught in Years 7 to 9 as part of the course delivering religious education, personal and social education and citizenship. As such, the time for the study of political and economic awareness is restricted. Homework is not a strong feature and this limits opportunities further. As a result standards in work seen in the knowledge of citizenship are below average.
160. Citizenship is taught as part of the humanities GCSE course that is followed by all pupils in Years 10 and 11. Results in the humanities GCSE in 2002 are well below average for the higher grades, however the proportion gaining a pass grade was in-line with the national average. Girls achieved a higher proportion of higher grades than the boys. There is a steady upward trend in attainment.
161. Standards in work seen in Year 9 are below average. Pupils have a good understanding of human rights, and in their study of the civil rights movement in America and the power of the individual to bring about change. They consider moral issues and are encouraged to wrestle with such questions as whether the reasons for dropping the atomic bomb on Hiroshima justified its use. They identify the dangers of prejudice in their study of the Holocaust and through the case study of Anne Frank they demonstrate understanding. Pupils wrote with sensitivity about the feelings of people who suffer from discrimination and higher attaining pupils demonstrated great understanding of the struggle of Christy Brown to overcome peoples' perceptions of his limitations and to express himself. Pupils with lower levels of literacy are less willing to express themselves in writing. As a result they avoid starting or completing written work.
162. There has been no system in place this year to monitor and assess pupils' oral contributions and as a consequence these pupils have not been encouraged to develop their responses in order to demonstrate understanding. In geography and in design technology pupils are made aware of the need for sustainable and fair distribution of resources and good opportunities are provided to reflect on the need for fair trading practices. Pupils have a good understanding of the principles of conflict resolution. The

- residential experience undertaken by pupils in Year 7 is built upon and developed by the school and underpins their response to problems.
163. Schemes of work have been designed to ensure coverage of the citizenship syllabus next year, however at present there is insufficient opportunity for pupils in Years 7 to 9 to develop their understanding of the political system or the role of international agencies.
  164. Standards in Year 10 are below average. Lesson observation was not possible in Year 11, but evidence of written work was considered. Pupils have a sound understanding of the formation and function of the British system of government, and an overview of the work of the main political parties. They continue and develop work started in previous years on world trade and the exploitation of workers and resources. Higher attaining pupils demonstrate that they are able to evaluate the positive and negative impact of globalisation. Understanding of the role of trade unions is stereotypical and limited to crisis management.
  165. The humanities syllabus provides satisfactory opportunity for pupils to consider the knowledge and understanding aspect of citizenship, however the need to cover the exam syllabus is limiting opportunities for pupils to develop skills of enquiry and communication through debate and independent research. Individual opportunities exist, but there is a lack of on-going skills development. An example of a good opportunity is the work experience module that provides a good insight into the world of work. The surveys undertaken by pupils demonstrate understanding of different forms of research and provides opportunities for one to one interviews. Higher attaining pupils evaluate these well and recognise the advantages of different methods available.
  166. Very good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for the running of the school exist through the School Council. They felt their views were considered and that they made a difference. There are good opportunities for pupils to work with those in Year 6, providing leadership and communication experience. Pupils in Year 10 are trained as mentors for younger pupils and they are developing a high level of confidence and good negotiating skills. All pupils have the opportunity for residential experience, where the emphasis on team building and conflict resolution is contributing to the very harmonious relations between pupils from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds.
  167. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9 and good in the humanities GCSE course where targets are clearer. Teachers generally have high expectations and good relationships between staff and pupils ensure that they feel confident their responses will be treated with respect. In the best lessons pupils have a clear picture of their objectives and lessons are well-planned to ensure a variety of activities enable pupils to develop understanding through clear stages. Tasks and supporting materials are designed to meet the needs of the pupils and group work enables them to support each other. Where lessons are less successful, the objective has not been adequately considered and tasks are undertaken that do not support the development of understanding. Insufficient notice is taken of the requirements of pupils with special needs, resulting in insufficient progress by them.
  168. The quality of leadership is good. Management is satisfactory. All staff are aware of the importance of citizenship and their responsibility to support its development through their own curriculum areas. Organisation of the discrete citizenship modules has been clearly planned and assessment opportunities have been identified and designed. The present timetable arrangement that includes responsibility for the delivery of religious education and personal and social education, as well as citizenship in Years 7 to 9, is resulting in insufficient time spent on the delivery of citizenship.

169. The lack of monitoring of delivery is resulting in a lack of consistency in the pupils' experience. There is insufficient opportunity for exchange of good practice. Elements of citizenship, such as the work of the United Nations and the development of economic awareness are missing. Delivery of citizenship through other curriculum areas has been identified, but there is no means of assessing progress through those areas.
170. The school has very good links with the local constabulary and pupils benefit from the expert advice and first hand experience of the police. This enables them to have a very real understanding of the role of the citizen in supporting law and order. Links with other agencies and the subsequent benefits from their expertise however, are undeveloped. Some pupils have very good opportunities to become involved as active citizens, notably as peer mentors. There is no system at present to encourage and monitor the participation of all pupils in active citizenship.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Overall, the quality of provision in design and technology is **satisfactory**.

### Strengths

- The department has a firm commitment to raising standards.
- The quality of the curriculum and clear goals set by teachers in most lessons mean that students have a clear sense of direction.
- Well-conceived projects result in pupils becoming involved in their work, so that they strive to do their best.

### Areas for improvement

- Levels of attainment, which are currently below those in other subjects in the school.
- Management of a minority of pupils in Years 7 to 9, whose behaviour makes it difficult for the rest of the class to learn effectively.
- The use of short-term targets, shared with pupils, and the monitoring of progress.
- Control technology, which does not fulfil the requirements of the national curriculum

171. When pupils come into the school, their attainment is below average. They make satisfactory progress in Years 7 to 9, although attainment by the end of Year 9 is below national standards. In Years 10 and 11 progress remains satisfactory. In relation to standards on entry, pupils gain GCSE results, which are in-line with their prior attainment. However, their results in this subject are below those gained in other subjects in the school. Pupils' who have special educational needs, who have English as an additional language, or who are gifted and talented are supported well so that they progress comparably to other pupils. Achievement overall is therefore satisfactory.
172. Work seen in lessons and in the scrutiny of work reflects these standards. Throughout the school, pupils learn a good range of techniques in food technology, graphics and resistant materials and put them to good use in making artefacts in accordance with a design brief. Some pupils produce work of a very high quality, but most do not take as much care as they should to finish their projects as well as possible. Written work, for example when they evaluate their projects, often limits the quality of their work overall, and contributes to GCSE results which are lower than they could be.
173. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good and very good teaching. It is better in Year 10 than in Years 7 to 9. In the best lessons, clear explanations and

projects designed to fire the imagination mean that pupils worked diligently, striving for continuous improvement. This was seen, for example, in a Year 10 lesson on perspective drawing. Pupils were also seen working hard in a lesson where they were making mock-ups of their designs for a table lamp out of card and MDF. In discussion, these pupils showed that they had a good and improving understanding of the properties and limitations of the materials they were going to use to make the final version.

174. In food technology and resistant materials, support by the technicians made a considerable difference to the quality of learning. In another lesson, this time in food technology, Year 9 pupils were evaluating their recipes for a pasta sauce. The lesson was very well organised with excellent regard for hygiene and health and safety, so that all pupils could taste samples from all groups. Groups were well-organised with clearly defined roles for all pupils. A minority of pupils refused to co-operate, however, preferring to talk amongst themselves throughout the lesson, and causing considerable distraction to others.
175. Behaviour of younger pupils is not always managed well. In such lessons, a few pupils who pay little attention to what is going on can seriously disrupt the lesson and result in less satisfactory learning for all pupils. In contrast, pupils' attitudes in Year 10 were invariably good, and sometimes very good.
176. Leadership and management of the department is satisfactory. There is a commitment to raising attainment, and a clear sense of educational direction. Day-to-day running of the department, and the quality of schemes of work and resource materials, are good. However, the curriculum fails to comply with the requirements of the national curriculum in relation to control technology, and the new suite of computers in the graphics room is only just beginning to be used. Some pupils work on their projects outside lessons, but not enough is done to take pupils out of school to give them experience of modern design and the thinking behind it. They are not always sufficiently aware of short-term targets, and what they need to do to improve.
177. Workshop space is effectively used, though some rooms are cramped when all pupils are present. There are good displays on the walls, but there is an urgent need for areas where 3-dimensional work can be displayed, to celebrate success and high quality work, and to act as a stimulus to other pupils. Teachers are well-qualified and committed to a programme of improvement, but staffing difficulties over the last few years have prevented the department from making really good progress. Overall progress since the last inspection is, therefore, satisfactory.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

Overall, the quality of provision in geography is **good**.

### **Strengths**

- Standards are improving and overall achievement is good at all stages.
- Quality of teaching is good and leads to good learning.
- There is good leadership and management of the subject.

### **Areas for improvement**

- Standard of accommodation.
- Use of ICT by pupils in their learning, limited by access to resources.

178. Standards as shown by teacher assessment at the end of Year 9 in 2002 show improvement over previous years. Attainment at level 5 or above, was still below

national expectations, but not as far below as in previous years. This represents good progress overall from their being well below on entry to the school. Attainment at higher levels was above national averages in 2002, with girls' attainment being well above the boys' attainment. They were below national averages at both level 6 and level 7. These higher attaining pupils have made very good progress. Evidence from the inspection confirms this improvement. Pupils were seen in Year 8 working to meet assessment criteria for levels five and six. The proportion of pupils working at these levels shows further improvement toward attainment meeting national expectations at level 5 or above by the end of Year 9. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language also make good progress. Pupils whose special educational needs are supported by statements make very good progress. Curriculum time is low for the subject in Year 7 and 9. Although pupils make more progress in Year 8, overall their progress is good.

179. Geography is a popular option subject in Years 10 and 11, especially for pupils who have shown high attainment in Years 7 to 9. Results at GCSE for pupils aged 15 in 2002 were slightly below national expectations in terms of grades A\* - C. They were above expectations in terms of grades A\* or A, and in terms of grades A\*-G. Overall results were down on the last two years, but well above results for 1999 and previous. In terms of attainment at grades A\* - C, girls' performance was higher than the boys', and the difference is greater than is expected nationally. At the higher grades, attainment was above national expectations. Boys' attainment was slightly higher than the girls'. In 2002 there were also pupils in Year 10 who were early entries for the GCSE examination. Of these ninety-one percent were successful at grades A\* - C. These pupils are now following a course leading to AS qualification. As with in Years 7 to 9 attainment is improving and showing evidence of at least good progress. The policy of early entry to GCSE continues with pupils starting the GCSE course in Year 9. This policy helps with recruiting high attaining pupils to the course in Years 10 and 11.
180. Overall the teaching is good, in many of the lessons seen it was very good. There is very effective planning of lessons, teachers have high expectations of their pupils and make good use of assessment so that pupils know what they must do to improve. Work is assessed regularly, class work and homework is marked following the school policy to reward both effort and attainment. Each topic studied includes an enquiry-based assessment. This is marked to National Curriculum level, or GCSE grade, descriptors. The grade descriptors are shared with the pupils as academic targets and these are translated into language that matches the topic, so the pupils can understand what is expected of them to make improvement. Pupils showed an ability to work with number effectively and could extract data from graphs. Opportunities for numeracy development are provided in each topic and related to what teachers know of pupils numeracy use in other subjects. From the evidence seen, teaching was good overall, with some very good. The teachers display good subject knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the examination system. They explained this well to the pupils and provided good support for literacy development with focus on new vocabulary, definitions and using the vocabulary in context. Definitions of key words are provided in wall display and writing frames, appropriate to pupils' needs and topic requirements are provided.
181. Pupils' attitude to the subject is good and once in lessons and settled the majority are keen to work. Their punctuality to lessons, particularly after lunch break is not good and teachers need to display a consistently high expectation of all pupils to be punctual. Pupils' behaviour is good and they display a mature attitude to any pupils whose behaviour is disruptive. They do not allow this to interrupt their work. Teachers and support staff dealt with awkward behaviour and unwillingness to co-operate well, and in

such a way as to provide minimum disruption for all other pupils who continued to work productively.

182. The schemes of work cover the requirements of the national curriculum. ICT is used to support learning within the subject, although opportunities are limited by access to computer rooms. Teachers were seen preparing the use of a laptop computer linked to a projector to provide further stimuli for lessons. Pupils were also seen using the Internet to research the opinions of different pressure groups in preparing presentations about rainforest. This piece of work also demonstrated the development of pupil's spiritual awareness and morality, as they considered the rights and wrongs of these different viewpoints.
183. The subject also caters well for pupils' social with opportunities for collaborative learning, both in the classroom and in field studies, being taken regularly. The purpose of the collaborative tasks being clearly explained to encourage participation and the responsibility for delegation of tasks within the group being given to the pupils so they can learn about their own strengths and weaknesses to help their development. Teachers engage well with groups and individuals in discussion about what each needs to do to show improvement, and when opportunities to show this may arise again. The pupils' cultural development is catered for in studies that include the multicultural development of the home region, the cultures in other countries, those that are more economically developed and those that are less economically developed.
184. The department is led well and the subject leader has a clear vision of how to improve and provide the best geographical education for all pupils. This includes the identification of high attaining pupils and providing courses that lead to early entry to GCSE, and subsequent A/S level courses being completed by the end of Year 11. Extra-curricular time is devoted to help these developments and to ensure the completion of National Curriculum work in Year 9 in lesson time. The extra-curricular provision is not limited to the higher attaining pupils, but provides support for homework and access to ICT facilities to further support learning in geography. Good use is made of the local area and of the school site for developing field study skills and techniques. These skills are further developed and used to support learning in residential courses for GCSE.
185. The management of the subject falls within the humanities faculty and the head of humanities monitors the teaching of the subject, not the head of geography. Similarly department meetings have a humanities agenda. This means that the subject leader has to rely on informal meetings to ensure the smooth running of the subject and that non-specialist teachers have a good working knowledge of the requirements and assessment of the subject. Although non-specialists provide some teaching, the use of informal daily contact ensures they have good subject and assessment knowledge and the team of teachers providing geography courses provides a good match to subject requirements.
186. Learning resources are adequate. Textbooks and teacher-produced resources are good and support learning well. The number of supportive books in the library is limited, but good use is made of what is available, with resources being provided to lessons where appropriate. Access to ICT is limited by the availability of computer rooms within the normal timetable, however good use is made of ICT to support learning when it is available during lesson times. Teachers giving of their time to support pupils in this way ensure access for geography use during extra-curricular time.
187. Best use is made of the accommodation available with supportive wall display to

encourage geographical learning and to support literacy development. However, overall accommodation is unsatisfactory. The inability to control the temperature in rooms means that pupils and teachers have to work in rooms that are too hot or too cold, and if windows are opened for ventilation, the noise from traffic can disrupt learning. Noise ingress from adjacent classrooms is also a problem at times. Pupils can hear other teachers almost as clearly as they can hear their own. The level of noise and temperature hampering learning is not satisfactory. The fact that pupils cope is a measure of their attitudes.

188. Geography teachers contribute to the teaching of the humanities course in Years 10 and 11. This is a compulsory part of the core curriculum. Results at GCSE were below national expectations in 2002. The makes valuable contributions to pupils' vocational education and helps prepare for work experience.
189. The teaching of geographic components in humanities was sampled, as was the teaching by geography teachers. In these lessons, geographic knowledge was extended and pupils displayed a good understanding of place and location within the British Isles. They showed good understanding of human geography processes that affect patterns and distribution in a study of how unemployment changes through time. Pupils showed an ability to work with number effectively and could extract data from graphs, but many needed support with literacy in order to enable them to write an effective description and explanation of patterns and changes. From the evidence seen, teaching was good overall, with some very good. The teachers displayed good subject knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the examination system. They explained this well to the pupils and provided good support for literacy development. Teaching is monitored by the head of humanities and is supported by regular meetings of all humanities teachers.

## HISTORY

Overall, the quality of provision in history is **good**.

### Strengths

- Good teaching is resulting in good learning by the pupils.
- Teachers give good support for the development of literacy skills within history.
- High expectations of behaviour ensure a good working atmosphere.
- Very good leadership and management have led to very good improvement.

### Areas for improvement

- Opportunity for first hand investigation.
- The library, since it does not provide a good resource for pupils' independent research.
- Use of ICT as a learning tool, which is currently restricted by limited availability of access.
- The limited time allocation in Year 7 and 9, restricting the development of skills and the depth of investigation.

190. Standards at the end of Year 9 are below average. This is reflected in the teachers' own assessments of pupils in Year 9 in 2002. Standards have risen steadily since the last inspection. This represents good achievement in relation to pupils' standards on entry to the school. Girls' attainment is higher than the boys and their rate of improvement has been faster. There is no significant difference in the achievement of students from different ethnic backgrounds. The full range of pupils is represented in the highest and lowest levels of attainment.

191. Results in the GCSE exam in 2002 are below the national average for the higher grades A\*-C, but in-line with the average for grades A\*-G. Over the last three years results have been broadly average, with all pupils entered achieving a pass grade. This represents good achievement given their standards on entry. The number of pupils following the course is low and there is no pattern in the achievement of boys and girls. In 2002 boys performed better than the girls, in 2001 the reverse was true. The proportion of pupils achieving the highest grades A\*/A is rising.
192. Standards in Year 9 are below average. Pupils receive less than the recommended time for history in Year 9 and this is affecting the depth of study they can undertake in order to complete the required syllabus. Pupils study the First World War and through the good use of war poetry they develop understanding of the changing attitudes to war. They recognise the use of propaganda and show their understanding through posters. Higher attaining pupils compose their own speeches that encourage young men to join up. Teachers encourage pupils to reflect on the moral issues involved and to consider the views of the conscientious objectors of the time. Higher attaining pupils identify changing attitudes and are beginning to evaluate the reliability of evidence and the different views expressed. The good use of pupils' own writing enables them to demonstrate good understanding for example, of soldiers' motives and the conditions in which they lived in the trenches.
193. Higher attaining pupils achieve at least average standards and with good encouragement and questioning by teachers, they achieve levels above expectations, particularly in their oral work. The majority of pupils are less analytical in their written work and a significant minority are reluctant to develop their written responses as a consequence of lower levels of literacy. Lower attaining pupils are supported well through the provision of tasks and supportive material that meets their needs, however they do not readily analyse the information they use or make links between what they learn. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to make these links, for example between the Treaty of Versailles and the influence of Hitler in the 1930s. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress where visual materials supplement the information provided. Pupils support one another and this enables them to learn from each other.
194. Standards in Year 11 are below average, however a significant number of pupils are achieving higher levels of attainment in their oral work and in their coursework. They have a secure overview of Pre-war Germany, building on work from Year 9. They are beginning to make deductions and recognise differing views of events. For example when considering the effects of the Treaty of Versailles, higher attaining pupils recognise that the claims of the opponents of the Weimar government were sometimes exaggerated. They are developing their understanding of inference and beginning to make their own judgements. They are encouraged to support these with evidence. In their coursework they undertake research and select and organise material as evidence to respond to the questions posed. Their extended writing is organised well and presented using ICT.
195. Higher attaining pupils in Year 10 sum up their conclusions, for example about the success of the American Civil Rights movement. Most pupils however record the evidence, but do not evaluate its significance to the question. Pupils are developing their vocabulary and their understanding of the different ideologies of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Lower attaining pupils have a limited understanding, and do not recognise characteristics of the ideologies in the actions of governments. Pupils with English as an additional language make slower progress in understanding concepts through the need to translate the information provided. This results in lack of time to complete tasks and



move on to a higher level of analysis. Once the words are understood their progress is good.

196. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and as a result lessons take place in a positive working environment. Resources are well-prepared and designed to meet the needs of a range of learning needs. Relationships between pupils and their teachers are good, and pupils are encouraged to become involved. Lessons are well-planned to involve pupils actively in their work and to encourage them to analyse information provided. The use of pre-prepared cards enables pupils to spend time discussing and evaluating the significance of information in groups, rather than simply recording it. This develops their understanding and enables them to learn from each other. As a result progress is good.
197. Teachers are aware of the need to raise the levels of literacy of pupils, and good opportunities are provided for them to read aloud and consider the new vocabulary met. Teachers encourage pupils to develop their responses. A very good example was seen in a Year 9 class where they were encouraged to develop their responses through the use of connectives. As a result not only did their oral skills improve, but also their historical understanding.
198. The leadership and management of history are very good. There is a clear focus on learning and a determination to drive standards forward. Teaching is monitored and as a result teachers share good practice and the quality of marking and advice is good. The department's action plan demonstrates support for whole school targets whilst also developing the subject. The provision of textbooks for pupils use at home has been a priority, to support independent learning and the development of literacy skills.
199. Opportunities to use ICT have been designed and pupils respond well to them, however the limited access means that all groups do not have the same opportunities. The department is building up a stock of reference books for use by GCSE pupils, however the library itself is not developed in order to encourage research and independent learning in history. Opportunities for first hand investigation of history through visits or visitors are limited, but good links have begun with primary schools to develop a joint local history project. This will enable pupils to appreciate and explore the wealth of history that supports the area in which they live.
200. All the issues raised in the last report have been systematically addressed, and improvement since the last report is very good.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Overall, the quality of provision in information and communication technology is **good**.

### **Strengths**

- Standards in ICT are improving especially in Year 10 – 11.
- Detailed planning, preparation and presentation of discrete ICT lessons give good support for pupils' learning.
- Teachers express high expectation of pupil's commitment to the subject.
- Monitoring of the progress of pupils in the discrete ICT programme is carried out in detail.

### **Areas for improvement**

- Accommodation of the older networked suites.
- Access to network and Internet facilities from within all departments.
- Use of ICT by pupils across the curriculum, to comply with National Curriculum requirements.

201. Standards of attainment upon entry to Year 7 are well below average. Since the last inspection much has been done to raise standards. An ICT faculty has been established, a new head of faculty appointed two years ago and highly qualified and experienced staff deployed to meet the rigorous targets towards which the school is now making rapid progress.
202. Teacher assessments in the ICT department confirm the good progress made during pupils' three years in Years 7-9. At the end of Year 9, standards are below nationally expected levels but have risen from entry. There is an equally good improvement in the standards of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Higher attaining pupils and those who are gifted or talented do not reach high enough standards, as they are not rigorously challenged. Achievement of most pupils is good but there is a small group of white and Bangladeshi boys that achieve less than they might.
203. At the end of Year 11, when GCSE and GNVQ option groups in ICT were established after the last inspection, results were poor. In 2001, half of a small entry of twenty-two pupils in ICT, achieved A\*-C grades. In 2002, after changes of staffing and practice in the ICT department, these figures had been transformed. The number of pupils who were entered increased and in addition a group of pupils pursued the course after school. Of these nearly three-quarters gained A\*-C grades. Likewise, candidates in the GNVQ set all gained the equivalent of A\*-C grades. Such attainment is well above average when compared to national expectations and represents exceptionally good progress when compared to schools in similar circumstances. These results represent an unusual and exceptional transformation and improvement.
204. Teachers have a determined and shared commitment to raise, develop and sustain the highest quality of teaching and learning. This has been undertaken in the context of wide-ranging changes to this department's organisation, staffing, accommodation and resourcing. Teaching and learning are commonly good with some very good and outstanding features. Detailed schemes of work and well-differentiated lesson planning, preparation and presentation, using laptops and digital projectors, capture and sustain pupils' interest and commitment, which is not always easily won.
205. ICT is now established as a discrete subject in Years 7-9. Pupils are organised in mixed ability groups and follow a common programme for one hour per week. High standards are expected and steady, if not always rapid progress is supported well and challenged by the consistently high commitment of determined staff. Basic keyboarding skills are firmly established and reinforced in units of work that give pupils growing confidence. Pupils understand that ICT has an important contribution to make to their literacy, numeracy and general education. They comment positively upon their increasing achievements and growth in self-esteem.
206. In Years 10 and 11, increasing numbers of pupils follow a GCSE course or a GNVQ course combining ICT and business education. Since 2002, all Year 10 students have embarked upon a new *Applied ICT* GCSE course, effectively a vocational course for all, whilst there remains an additional option for an ICT and business education course. There is now, therefore, a well-established option for some pupils to gain a double qualification in ICT. Pupils' increasing skills, knowledge and understanding are rapidly increasing throughout Years 7 to 9, giving greater confidence to all who follow the GCSE courses.

207. The school has made good use of specific funding initiatives, including National Grid for Learning, voluntary contributions received from charitable funds and trusts, and grants from local and even international business corporations in the Docklands area. Notably, the *Reuters Suite*, is a networked group of state-of-the-art multimedia computers housed in the Study Centre and funded by a grant from the international news agency.
208. The school has had a double network installed: one to serve the purposes of school and departmental administration; and the other to serve curriculum needs and grant increasing access to students. The completion of the administrative network, which was to be commissioned in September 2003, has had to be put on hold pending the appointment of a new systems manager. Likewise, the curriculum network cannot be fully operational for the benefit of all curriculum areas until the present and planned and building programmes are completed in 2004. However, staff fully acknowledge its present inability to meet the requirements for ICT in the National Curriculum and remains highly committed to fulfilling the targets set. Most subjects are developing their use of ICT across the curriculum but the extent of use is inconsistent. Access to the facilities is difficult and prohibits departments making adequate contribution to ICT skills. Nevertheless, overall improvement in provision for ICT since the last inspection is exceptional.

## MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Overall, the quality of provision in modern languages is **very good**.

### French, Spanish and Bengali

#### Strengths

- The consistently high quality of teaching is reflected in the pupils' progress.
- The academic needs of higher and lower achieving pupils are met very well.
- Pupils with additional learning needs, including those with English as a second language are fully included in lessons.
- The subject contributes very well to the pupils' cultural development.
- The subject is very well managed.

#### Areas for improvement

- Access to ICT facilities, as the current level restricts the range of learning opportunities.
- Pupils' examination results in Bengali.

209. French and Spanish are taught to pupils in Years 7 to 9, with Bengali as an optional subject in Year 9. By the end of Year 9, the pupils' attainment is in-line with national averages in French and Spanish and slightly below average in Bengali. All three languages are taught through chosen options to pupils in Years 10 and 11 and lead to national accreditation through the General Certificate of Secondary Education examinations. In 2002, the examination results for French and Spanish were slightly above the national average for A\*-C grade passes, although A\*-C results in Bengali are below the national average.
210. The majority of new pupils have no previous experience of modern language studies. However, because of the high quality of teaching, they make very good progress. They understand everyday questions and phrases, and speak with a degree of fluency on a range of topics. They write their own lines for role play situations, and engage very well with their peers in simple discussions, such as ordering food or discussing what is or

is not on the menu. They use regular and irregular verbs accurately in their oral and written work and match adjectives to nouns correctly. By Year 9, higher achieving pupils use past, present and future tenses very well, such as when writing letters or short accounts of their accommodation following a trip abroad. The written work of Bengali pupils in Year 9 is beautifully presented, and covers a range of topics, which develop their knowledge of English landscapes as well as comparing the cultures of Bangladesh and Britain.

211. The number of pupils who elect to continue with languages in Years 10 and 11 is comparatively small. However, they make very good progress in developing their linguistic skills. Older pupils may complete a work experience in France and they prepare questions and answers to simulate formal job interviews. This is excellent and prepares them very well to be citizens in Europe as well as providing very good opportunities for their personal development. Bengali pupils are better in their oral work than in their written work, and this is reflected in their examination results. Several pupils entered for examinations but who fail to attend on the day also affect these results.
212. The quality of teaching is very good and sometimes excellent. Well-planned and balanced lessons are lively and fun, promoting the pupils' enthusiastic and positive responses. Pupils who have English as a second language learn on equal terms alongside their peers, because of the teachers' total use of the language being studied.
213. The needs of higher or lower achieving pupils are very well met through the provision of more challenging or simplified tasks. Additionally pupils may work in small groups with foreign language assistants or pupil teachers. Linked cassette tape recorders and video cameras record the pupils' comprehension and oral techniques, and allow teachers to monitor and assess the pupils' progress as well as enabling pupils to evaluate their own learning. Good use is made of overhead projectors to encourage vocabulary recognition and interactive participation.
214. In all years, basic literacy and numeracy skills are well promoted. For example, pupils estimate and convert from Euros into pounds sterling. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and work, and the very good relationships and good learning atmosphere ensure that these standards are met. The pupils' class work and homework is consistently marked with constructive comments, enabling staff to grade the pupils' progress against national attainment levels and make examination predictions.
215. The department is very well managed by the head of department and supported by a strong team of three language specialists. Subject documentation is well considered and thorough. Resources are good overall, but the lack of computer and Internet access limits the range of opportunities for independent research. Accommodation is satisfactory, although one classroom is not designated to modern languages. This lowers the subject profile and restricts the use of some language resources. Attractive wall displays celebrate the pupils' achievements and promote very good cultural awareness. The curriculum is further enriched by after school clubs for Bengali and holiday visits to France and Spain. Pupils having English as a second language may gain accreditation in their mother tongue, and the school provides a venue and sometimes tuition in a wide range of languages.
216. The department has made good improvement in successfully addressing the issues raised in the last inspection report.

## MUSIC

Overall, the quality of provision in music is **good**.

### Strengths

- Standards are rising in all years.
- The quality of teaching is overall good.
- The school provides peripatetic instrumental support for all pupils in lessons.

### Areas for improvement

- Standards are below average in all years.
- Assessment procedures are not yet fully in place.

217. Overall, standards achieved by pupils aged 14 in lessons and work seen, are below the national average. A small minority of pupils in Year 9 are working at above average levels in playing and performing. These students are supported in their learning by opportunities to play and perform in the choir and in groups. In GCSE classes there is a considerable range of attainment with students likely to achieve above average grades working alongside those who are predicted to achieve below or well below the national average. Results in the 2002 GCSE examinations were below average both nationally and compared to other subjects in the school. The current Year 11 GCSE group were on study leave during the inspection. Predicted grades indicate that there is likely to be an upward trend in the 2003 results and that almost all students have achieved their expected targets. In work and lessons seen in Year 10, standards are overall below average. However, the majority of pupils are working well in composition and performance and standards in these areas are rising.
218. Most pupils arrive at the school with a very limited knowledge of the elements of music and little or no experience in playing and performing. However, they make good progress in Years 7 to 9 and satisfactory progress in Years 10 and 11. Most pupils in Years 7 to 9 are enthusiastic and work well in lessons. However there is a significant minority of boys with both white and ethnic backgrounds who deliberately choose not to engage in the lesson and their constant chatter interrupts other pupils' learning as seen in two lessons. The enthusiasm of some pupils carries on outside the lessons into choir and instrumental group work for example, the rock bands. Together with the good quality of teaching, standards are beginning to rise in all years. There are now opportunities provided for pupils to engage in practical work, individually and in groups using keyboards, computers and percussion instruments. This provision enables pupils to develop according to their individual aptitude and ability with regular support and guidance from their teachers and peripatetic staff. In consequence, most pupils are gaining confidence in composing, playing and performing. The development of singing and ICT skills are built into schemes of work. However, pupils' voices are not always tuned up before singing, as heard in one Year 8 lesson.
219. Pupils in Year 10 are becoming confident performers. They are able to evaluate their work and the work of others. They play a wide range of instruments and a few are singing for their assessment. Overall they are making satisfactory progress with their compositions. A significant minority play and perform their own compositions in groups. They are able to improvise and internalise their musical ideas as seen in one Year 10 lesson.
220. Teaching and learning is good overall. Strengths lie in teachers' very good subject knowledge, relationships and management of students. Lesson planning meets the needs of students with learning difficulties and also the most able. There is some

inconsistency in the effectiveness of teaching methods as seen in one Year 8 lesson where poor teaching resulted in pupils making unsatisfactory progress. The pace in most lessons is purposeful and there is generally a good structure that contains a mix of explanation, instruction by the teacher and practical experience for the students. Teachers and peripatetic staff intervene at appropriate stages to identify correction and improvement, to encourage pupils to share their work and to enable individuals to perform to the rest of the class.

221. The recently appointed head of music has been in post for two terms and day-to-day management is good. Inspection evidence shows that programmes of work are being rewritten and assessment procedures are being developed. In lessons and work seen, pupils were unaware of their levels of attainment and targets for improvement. Resources are adequate overall. Pupils have equality of access to ICT for processing and composing but most of the equipment is outdated and unreliable. The frequent loss of pupils' work slows down their learning and has a negative effect on their confidence.
222. Accommodation in music is unsatisfactory; there is a shortage of space and the cramped conditions result in most lessons being too noisy for students to refine their work. Soundproofing is ineffective and the fabric in the area is very shabby. The school has plans to improve the accommodation but at present does not provide a positive learning environment for music pupils.
223. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. The range of extra curricular activities and take up is increasing. There is very good provision for instrumental tuition in all practical lessons. The profile of the subject is being successfully raised through the large numbers of students opting for the GCSE music course in Years 10 and 11.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Overall, the quality of provision in physical education is **unsatisfactory**.

### Strengths

- Good extra curricular opportunities are provided.
- The provision for dance is good.

### Areas for improvement

- Opportunity for Year 10 and 11 pupils to take a GCSE in dance.
- Standards of attainment in GCSE physical education.
- The time allocation for Year 9 pupils to cover the demands of the National Curriculum
- Entitlement for Year 10 pupils to take part in statutory 'core' physical education lessons.

224. In July 2002 17 pupils took the GCSE in physical education and the number gaining the higher A\*-C grades was well below the national average. There were many more boys than girls taking this examination, although there was no difference in their levels of attainment.
225. Pupils arrive at the school with varying levels of physical education skills and knowledge with many that are well below that expected of 11 year-olds. Good progress is made during Years 7,8 and 9 and by the time they are fourteen years old the majority of them are attaining levels that are in-line with those achieved nationally. Basic skills are being developed in a number of games and provide a sound platform for future developments. Significant progress is made in swimming. When they enter the school many pupils are unable to swim. Good use is made of the York Hall

swimming pools, and by the end of Year 7 there are very few pupils who are unable to demonstrate some swimming ability.

226. In dance pupils arrive with only limited experience in the activity, but quickly respond to the good quality teaching and by the end of Year 8 many pupils are able to demonstrate good patterns of movement and gesture, which are performed with much energy and an increasing amount of skill. A good example of this quality of work was observed in a Year 7 class when they were learning how to perform a Maori Haka. They became totally involved in the lesson, rehearsed the movements carefully, and then performed the dance with great zest and highly dramatic actions.
227. Because of staffing difficulties Year 10 pupils were not being taught physical education at the time of the inspection, and Year 11 pupils were on examination leave.
228. Pupils with special education needs are integrated well, are given much support, and reach satisfactory levels of attainment. Teaching is sensitive and there is no evidence of pupils with special educational needs being disadvantaged by the curriculum that is on offer. Talented pupils are encouraged to extend their skills within lessons and with outside clubs. The school has a justifiably high reputation for the performances of many of its school teams in inter-school competitions. Many of the school's pupils have represented Tower Hamlets in a range of sports and some have gone on to represent London. Some of the schools' pupils are members of the Tower Hamlets Gymnastic team, which has taken part in international competitions across Europe including the World Gymnastics competition in Berlin.
229. The curriculum, which meets the statutory requirements for pupils in Years 7,8, and 9, allows pupils to take part in a wide range of activities. However, because of staffing difficulties, the statutory requirement for all pupils in Year 10 to take part in physical education activities is not being met. It is also of considerable concern that pupils in Year 10 have not been given the opportunity to take a GCSE in the subject. The time allocation of one hour per week for pupils in Year 9 is below that recommended, and is inadequate for them to cover the requirements of the National curriculum. In order to widen the range of activities for Years 10 and 11 pupils the department might consider offering GCSE dance to this group of pupils. The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of lunchtime and after school activities, which are well supported by the pupils.
230. There have been some very significant staff changes in the department during the recent few years. At the time of the inspection a newly qualified teacher was covering the teaching of dance very effectively. Dance lessons are well prepared and content is well-matched to pupils' interest and level of attainment. The teacher has much enthusiasm for the subject and is able to pass this on to her pupils. The work of the rest of the department is being coordinated and taught by a supply teacher who has very limited teaching experience. She is very hard-working, prepares her lessons meticulously and in spite of being the only teacher in the department is having success with the majority of the pupils. Pupils are generally responding positively to the teacher's enthusiastic approach to the subject and their enjoyment of the lessons is very evident.
231. The on-site accommodation for the subject will be significantly improved when a new sports block, which will contain a dance studio and a very well-equipped fitness suite comes into use in the near future. The recently appointed head of department will take up his post in September 2003. These changes, in addition to the very enthusiastic and able teachers who are on the staff at the moment, give cause for much optimism for the future of this subject.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Overall, the quality of provision in religious education is **good**.

### Strengths

- Teaching is good overall with very good features.
- Standards in all years have improved.
- Department makes a valuable contribution towards the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.

### Areas for improvement

- Time allowed in all years to deliver the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus
- Level of resources and artefacts to enhance learning.
- Use and access to ICT in the subject.

232. Standards in religious education are generally below those expected by the Locally Agreed Syllabus in Years 7 to 11. The overall good quality of teaching motivates pupils and most achieve well.
233. In 2002 GCSE, two fifths of pupils obtained a grade A\*-C. Nearly all students gained a grade in the A\* - G range. These results show an upward trend since the previous inspection. There is no GCSE religious education course running at present. GCSE humanities pupils in Year 10 study a religious education module. In work seen standards were in-line with the expectations of the syllabus. There is no provision for religious education in Year 11.
234. By the end of Year 9, most pupils recognise that religious education involves knowledge and understanding about various aspects of world religions. Pupils are able to talk about religious issues well although there is often limited time on the timetable for discussion. They are knowledgeable about Buddhism and a few make valuable comments based on their own experiences of Buddhism, Islam and Christianity. Work seen as part of the Year 10 humanities course showed a thorough coverage of religious and moral issues as part of the GCSE syllabus.
235. The department makes a valuable contribution towards the development of pupils' literacy skills. For example, in work seen, they record facts, write their own thoughts, letters, diaries, leaflets and evaluations of their work. In Year 7 they make comparisons between special places for example a football ground and a Mosque. Pupils in Years 7 to- 9 discuss stereotyping with regard to ethnicity, gender, age and size.
236. The subject makes a very good contribution towards pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through a systematic study of Christianity and the major world religions. In most lessons, good opportunities are given for the discussion of beliefs and values and for reflection as seen in one Year 9 lesson on Buddhist enlightenment.
237. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Strengths lie in the range of well-planned learning activities that meet the needs of all pupils including those with special educational needs, the more able and those for whom English is an additional language. The good relationships in most lessons help to raise pupils' self-esteem and enable pupils to speak out and join in discussion with confidence. Pupils are very well managed in all lessons seen. Ongoing assessment in lessons and of work seen in Years 7 through to 11 is satisfactory overall. Pupils respond positively to teachers' high



expectations and the variety of learning opportunities that include whole class instruction and questioning work in small groups, discussions in pairs and research assignments using books. However, there is limited access to ICT in lessons.

238. The department lies within the humanities faculty. The head of department has been in post for two terms and day-to-day management is good. Schemes of work are being rewritten. Assessment procedures are being developed to include the introduction of levels of attainment for those in Years 7- 9. Since the previous report, the department has made good progress. Standards are rising and teaching and learning are good in Years 7 to 9. The behaviour and attitudes of pupils have improved. There remains insufficient time to deliver the requirements of the agreed syllabus. Resources, including ICT, are inadequate.