

# INSPECTION REPORT

**DAVISON VC C OF E HIGH SCHOOL FOR  
GIRLS**

Worthing

LEA area: West Sussex

Unique reference number: 126093

Headteacher: Mrs D West

Reporting inspector: Keith Simmonds  
3238

Dates of inspection: 14<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> October 2002

Inspection number: 249258

Short inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Technology College
School category:	Church of England Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	12 - 16
Gender of pupils:	Female
School address:	Selborne Road Worthing West Sussex
Postcode:	BN11 2JX
Telephone number:	(01903) 233835
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs M Hayden
Date of previous inspection:	18 <sup>th</sup> – 22 <sup>nd</sup> March 1996

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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>4 - 7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL</b>	<b>8 - 16</b>
<b>WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>18 - 23</b>

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Davison Church of England High School is a voluntary controlled, 12-16 age range comprehensive church school for girls situated in the West Sussex town of Worthing. Most of its pupils are drawn from east Worthing where there are some areas of social and economic disadvantage. However, the backgrounds of many pupils are relatively advantaged. The school is about the same size as most other secondary schools with 999 pupils on roll, although it is larger than at the last inspection. The pupils are almost entirely from a white heritage background, although there is a small Muslim population through the parents' active choice of a girls' school. The number of pupils with English as an additional language is much lower than in most schools. The proportion of pupils eligible for free schools meals, at 5 per cent, is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, 10 per cent, is below average. The main needs catered for are emotional and behavioural difficulties and learning difficulties with reading and writing. The pupils' attainment on entry in Year 8 is overall above average.

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

Davison Church of England High School is an outstanding school, which achieves very high standards for its pupils. The teaching is very good. Pupils are mature, responsive and very interested in their learning. At all levels the school's leadership provides clear-sighted development matched to a rigorous evaluation of the current position. The school is very well organised and managed and gives good value for money.

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

- Pupils achieve very well and standards at the end of Year 9 and Year 11 are very high.
- Pupils enjoyment in and responsibility for their own learning.
- The positive impact upon pupils' achievement of the very high quality of teaching and learning in the school.
- The outstanding pastoral care of students and the very effective promotion of their personal development.
- The focus on pupil achievement and improvement of the school's outstanding leadership.
- The support of improvement and the pupils' learning through the outstanding staff development programme and the very effective use of accommodation.

#### **What could be improved**

- The match of the Year 10 and 11 curriculum and accreditation opportunities to the needs of all pupils.
- The clarity of communication to all parents on what their children are learning and the progress they make.

*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 March 1996. Since then the overall high quality of provision has been maintained and improvement has been very good. Standards are high and well above average by the end of Year 9 and Year 11. The introduction of AS-level courses, a year early in Year 11, is proving successful. Significant improvement has taken place in design and technology and music. The schools' 'Beacon and Technology' status is being very effectively used to develop the practice of contributory schools, as with the 'TechnoBus' outreach programme. The school's continued focus to teaching and learning and staff development has been very effective. The subject and pastoral leaders are very effective and have a positive impact upon the schools direction and improvement. Monitoring and evaluation of progress and performance are rigorous. Reporting to parents and the process of pupil tutor review meetings have been considerably improved. Minor weaknesses remain, but are known and being

acted upon. The new headteacher has a clear-sighted view of the schools 'needs and already, as with the review of the Key Stage 4 curriculum, is taking appropriate action to continue the schools success.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
GCSE examinations	A	A	A	A

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

At the age of 14 the pupils' results in the 2001 National Curriculum tests were well above average in English, mathematics and science. When compared with similar schools (based on free school meals data) the results for all three subjects are similarly well above average. Results in 2002 are equally strong and over a three-year period from 1999 to 2001, this position has been maintained. At entry, pupils' attainment is above average in English, mathematics and science. Literacy and numeracy skills are above average but those in information and communication technology (ICT) are for a significant group of pupils below expectation. The inspection found that the pupils achievement was well above average by the end of Year 9 in all subjects. The achievement for those pupils with special educational needs, English as an additional language and the gifted and talented is very good.

The school's overall GCSE results in 2001 (based on the average points score per pupil) were well above average. Similar results have been achieved in the 2002 examinations. Overall results have remained at this high level over a three-year period. When compared with similar schools (based on free school meals data) the GCSE results are well above average. A significant group of pupils successfully complete GCSE courses a year early in Year 10 and then complete AS courses in Year 11. The AS results are of a high standard, particularly in creative arts (textiles), dance and physical education. The proportion of pupils obtaining five or more A\*-C grades is well above average when compared nationally and with similar schools. The inspection showed that the achievement of pupils from all ethnic backgrounds and abilities and those with special educational needs and English as an additional language is very good throughout Years 10 and 11. The inspection confirmed that pupils' achievement is good or better in all subjects. A minor weakness exists in those pupils who achieve five A\*-G grades at GCSE, where the schools results are only in line with those nationally and those of similar schools. This reflects the more limited vocational course opportunities in Years 10 and 11.

Data is effectively used to set targets at a whole-school level and for individual pupils. 2001 targets were met, although those for 2002 were not fully achieved. Ambitious targets have been set for 2003.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school.	Outstanding. Pupils show enjoyment in their learning and pride in their school. They are enthusiastic in their learning, as in English and dance.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms.	Outstanding. Pupils behave well in and around the school and in lessons. There is a corporate expectation of how to behave and all strive to meet it.
Personal development and relationships.	Outstanding. Pupils are very mature and confident and, as with the tutoring in the Saturday 'Youth University', relationships are of the highest quality.

Attendance.	Satisfactory. In line with the national average. The school very effectively monitors and promotes attendance.
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## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 8 – 9	Years 10 – 11
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very good

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

The teaching is very good overall and it is of an exceptional quality in Years 10 and 11. Improvement in teaching, from that of the last inspection, has been effective in promoting further gains in learning throughout the school. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is also very good. Teaching has benefited from the outstanding staff development programme and the way in which all teachers reflect upon their practice. The quality of teaching in all years is a significant factor in the sustained and very good achievement of the pupils.

The teaching is very good in English, mathematics and science. The school has been successful in setting a culture of high expectation. Lessons and the pupils tasks, including those for pupils with special educational needs, are demanding and pupils expect them to be so. Pupils know what is expected of them and how to learn. The pupils work is made interesting and they enjoy working hard and actively participate in their learning. Where the teaching is only satisfactory, for example in a Year 9 science and Year 8 music lesson, there can be less opportunity for the pupils to work independently and questioning to reinforce and extend understanding can be less effective.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum.	Very good for Year 8 and 9, good for Year 10 and 11. Broad and very responsive to the needs of the pupils. Very effectively planned. The range and quality of extra-curricular activities is outstanding. Minor weaknesses, as in the vocational course range of Years 10 and 11 and the balance of accreditation opportunities for the most able, are recognised and being acted upon.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs.	Very good. The identification of needs and planning is thorough and very effective in all years. Pupils make good progress and achieve well.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language.	Very good. Although only a small number of pupils are involved, the provision is very well planned and effective in helping the pupils to make very good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.	Outstanding. Provision for social, cultural and moral development is outstanding and a strength of the school. Spiritual development is very good and well promoted through the ethos of the school. However, opportunities for reflection are occasionally missed in some subjects.
How well the school cares for its pupils.	Outstanding. Pupils are well known as individuals. Pastoral care and guidance are exceptionally effective and academic progress and personal development are very well monitored and co-ordinated.

The links with parents are very effective and they take pride, with their children, in being part of the



school. The curriculum is responsive, very well planned and matched, as with the Year 8 and 9 special needs provision and the Year 10 accelerated GCSE programme, to the needs of almost all pupils. Time is effectively used and the Key Stage 3 Strategy is being successfully implemented. Pupils benefit from the motivating Year 11 AS-level courses and high-quality experiences in many subjects. Literacy skills are very well developed. Those of numeracy are good but could be more effectively promoted in subjects other than mathematics.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff.	Outstanding. The headteacher and leadership team very ably and strategically lead the school. The leadership of subjects is highly effective.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities.	Very good. Governors are a significant strength of the school. They are very well informed, playing a full strategic role in its improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance.	The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and standards are exceptionally effective. The use of data and target setting to raise standards is well developed.
The strategic use of resources.	Very good. Financial planning is closely linked to improvement priorities. The principles of best value are well applied. Very effective use is made of ICT in evaluating performance and reducing workload.

Accommodation has been improved since the last inspection and is very good. Resources are very good overall and new technologies are well employed. The match of and deployment of all staff to the school's needs is a significant strength and improved since the last inspection. The headteacher has a strong strategic vision and with the senior staff team and governing body is skilfully continuing to move the school forward. The principles of best value are understood and well applied in the school's work.

## 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>• The achievement of their children.</li> <li>• The willingness of staff to discuss concerns.</li> <li>• That their children are expected to do well and work hard.</li> <li>• Their childrens personal development and understanding of citizenship.</li> <li>• The quality of the schools extra-curricular activities and community involvement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The information they receive from tutor review meetings.</li> <li>• The homework load for some children in Years 10 and 11.</li> <li>• The opportunities for vocational courses.</li> </ul>

Parents are very positive about the school and the inspection team agrees with the parent's view of the school. Overall, the inspection team agrees with those areas of concern raised by some parents. Where parents are unable to attend the pupil and tutor review meetings there is no formal report of the outcomes to parents. Overall homework is effective and well managed, however, for some pupils, particularly those taking GCSE and AS-level courses, the load can be excessive. This is recognised and forms part of the schools review of the Key Stage 4 curriculum.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

**Pupils achieve very well and standards at the end of Year 9 and Year 11 are very high.**

1. The pupils' attainment when they arrive at the school at the start of Year 8 is above average in English, mathematics and science. In the remaining subjects of the National Curriculum, attainment can vary from above, as in geography, to below average, as in modern foreign languages. Pupils literacy and numeracy skills are above average and show improvement over recent years. Skills in ICT are improving but for a significant group of pupils are below the expectation for their age, at entry to the school, with particular deficiencies in data handling and control. The pupils social skills and personal development are above average for their age.
2. At the age of 14 (at the end of Year 9), the performance of pupils was well above average in the national tests in English, mathematics and science. A significant number of pupils achieved the higher levels of the tests in all three subjects. This has been the pattern over the last three years. In comparison with similar schools (based on free school meals data), the results for English, mathematics and science are also well above average. Similar results have been achieved in 2002.
3. Since 1999, the GCSE results have been well above average. The 2001 results were well above average in respect of the pupils' average points score. When compared to similar schools nationally the pupils' points score is also well above average. In respect of the proportion of pupils attaining five or more passes at A\*-C (73 per cent) the results were well above average in comparison to all schools nationally and when compared to schools with similar intakes. For those pupils attaining five or more A\*-G (95 per cent) the results were in line with both the national and similar schools results. For most pupils, this represents very good achievement over Years 10 and 11, particularly those who take GCSE a year early in Year 10. Where the five A\*-G grade results are only in line with those nationally and for similar schools, the impact of the school's limited vocational curriculum can be seen upon the achievement of some pupils.
4. Examination of pupils work and what was seen in lessons showed that pupils' achievement over time is very good throughout the school. The subjects that performed best in GCSE in 2001 were history and physical education, although all subjects achieved results at least in line with the national average. Many pupils take GCSE a year early, in Year 10, and achieve high quality results. In 2002, a significant number of pupils sat AS level examinations a year early. This also accounted for the slight drop in the schools five A\*-C grades at GCSE in 2002. Overall results were very good. Two pupils in textiles scored marks which were in the top 5 nationally. There is no difference in the achievement of pupils from differing ethnic backgrounds. Pupils with English as an additional language also achieve well and usually meet their individual targets.
5. A significant factor in the schools continued achievement of high standards is its effect use of data to analyse performance and set targets at a whole-school and individual pupil level. The school met its GCSE targets for 2001. The agreed targets for 2003 are challenging but realistic goals for improvement. The planned move to an increased vocational option, in Year 10 and 11, should have a positive impact upon achievement for some pupils.
6. In English, standards are well above average in Years 8 and 9. In Years 10 and 11, when account is taken of the pupils' prior attainment, most achieve high standards. In all years, the pupils' progress over time is very good. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are a particular strength at entry and are further improved by the end of Year 9. By Year 10 many are confident public speakers and can talk or discuss very effectively. Pupils read widely and often. Shared reading texts are good and pupils in Year 9 respond positively to Shakespeare. Year 10 and 11 pupils cope very well with more challenging texts, such as Heaneys poem 'Mid-Term Break'. Writing skills are well taught and pupils are effectively supported in planning and drafting their ideas, as in Year 8 writing of monologues to show the other side of the story. Marking and good teacher

commentary are well used to improve spelling, punctuation and grammar. In GCSE coursework, the more able pupils produce a very good range of writing. Those with weaker skills are well supported, as in Year 11, where writing frames are well used to structure the response. Standards are high and the pupils' learning is well supported by effective teaching and very good subject leadership.

7. In mathematics, standards are well above average in all years. The pupils' progress over time is very good. In Year 8 the pupils' work builds well on their prior experience. Number and basic numeracy skills are well emphasised. Thinking and investigation skills are effectively developed. By Year 9 pattern recognition, linear sequence and angle properties are well known. Data handling is secure and most can produce charts and appropriate graphs. During Years 10 and 11, pupils build effectively on their prior knowledge, understanding and skills, as in a Year 10, able groups application of Pythagorean theorem to three-dimensional problems. The pupils achievement in mathematics is well supported by the effective teaching and good use of new technologies, as with the interactive whiteboards.
8. In science, standards are well above average. Over time pupils make very good progress in all years. By Year 9, pupils scientific knowledge and understanding and their ability to investigate are secure. All can effectively organise their experimental work and use a range of apparatus safely. During Year 10 and 11, pupils effectively develop their knowledge and understanding, as with a Year 10 lesson on cell functions, where pupils displayed good knowledge of cell parts and the differences between plant and animal cells. Similarly, an able group of Year 11 pupils responded well and made significant gains in their learning during a lesson on exothermic and endothermic reactions. Pupils effectively employ their very good literacy and numeracy skills in their GCSE coursework and when writing up experiments. The use of data and graphs to support the drawing of conclusions is good. Pupils achievement is well supported by the effective teaching and well-planned curriculum. However, some marking can lack clarity in saying what the pupil has achieved and needs to do next to improve.
9. In literacy there is a very good whole school approach, making use of the national Key Stage 3 Strategy. This has helped pupils to continue to build upon their above average attainment at entry to the school, and contributes to the overall high standards seen in literacy skills across the work of many subjects. Numeracy is effectively addressed within mathematics but too many opportunities to progress the pupils skills are missed in the other subjects of the curriculum. As a result, although pupils numeracy skills are above average, they do not make the same progress, over time, as with their literacy skills. Pupils' progress in their ICT skills is very good. Although at entry many have some weaknesses in data handling and control, almost all have reached the expectation for their age by the end of Year 9 and many are achieving above this. During Year 10 and 11, pupils effectively make use of their ICT skills across the subjects and continued progress is good. Effective teaching and a well-planned curriculum support achievement in ICT. However, the two- week cycle of lessons can limit the pace at which many pupils make gains in their learning.
10. In all other subjects, pupils achievement is at least good and often very good in all years. In art and physical education, the standards are very high. In dance, both the pupils achievement and overall standards are outstanding. Some very good work was also seen in drama. Across all subjects, the pupils achievements are very effectively supported by the very good teaching, the interesting and demanding tasks they are given to do, their own interest and enthusiasm and the usually effective information they receive on what they have achieved and what to do next to improve.
11. The pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make very good progress overall in respect to the national expectations. Many achieve a good range of five or more A\*-G grades at GCSE and some achieve A\*-C grades. This is largely due to the good specialist teaching, effective use of programmes such as the 'Bridging the Gap' group and the very effective opportunities for learning in most subjects. The pupils with statements of SEN make very good progress towards the targets specified in their statements and individual education plans. Many pupils who experience literacy difficulties follow specialist SEN programmes to develop their reading and writing skills and they

make very good progress in Year 8 and 9, developing improved fluency and accuracy. The pupils who have the greatest difficulties make more limited gains, but usually show at least good progress in relation to their previous attainment. Pupils make very good progress in Year 10 and 11 with basic skills, including ICT skills and personal development.

### **Pupils enjoyment in and responsibility for their own learning.**

12. The pupils attitudes to their learning and the school are very positive. They enjoy their lessons and work. This has a positive impact upon their progress and achievement. In the lessons seen during the inspection, the pupils attitudes and behaviour were never less than satisfactory in all years and in a significant majority of lessons were very good. As pupils move through the school, their enjoyment and approach to learning mature, so that by Year 11 they willingly take a considerable responsibility for their own learning. In the Year 11 lessons seen, the attitudes and behaviour of pupils were exceptional, with all lessons displaying a very good or outstanding pupil response.
13. Pupils are confident and keen to take responsibility in their work and wider life of the school. At entry in Year 8, many feel they already know the school, through taking part in the Youth University or through the exemplary induction process. They look forward to the challenge of being a Davison girl and meeting the schools tradition for high individual achievement and community service and personal responsibility. This is reflected in lessons, as in a Year 8 literacy skills group for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) where pupils responded well in discussion and were able to effectively co-operate in their task. Pupils also independently take responsibility for community and charity fundraising, as with the home visits with harvest festival parcels and the MacMillan lunchtime cake sale. Pupils are socially mature and can express their views well, as in a Year 11 drama lesson when pupils made sensitive and helpful comments to each other on the use of space and movement in their performances. Similarly, pupils showed respect for each others views and beliefs in a Year 10 religious education discussion on persecution.
14. As pupils move through the school, they are very well supported by the school's discipline and guidance systems, as with the very effective tutor support and peer mentoring, and their ability to understand the effect of their actions grows. Behaviour around the school is of a high quality. Pupils act sensibly in the corridors, canteen and the playground with little overt supervision. All teachers set high and consistent expectations of behaviour, which the pupils successfully meet. Routines are clear and consistent, as the greeting of visitors on entry to the classroom. This supports the pupils personal development and relationships, which has a positive impact upon their achievement. They enjoy taking responsibility and showing initiative, as with the physical education sports leaders programme and the prefect and form representative system. Here, pupils are respected by their peers for the responsibility they exercise on their behalf.

### **The positive impact upon pupils' achievement from the very high-quality of teaching and learning in the school.**

15. The quality of teaching and learning is a significant strength of the school and a key factor in the overall high standards which pupils achieve. It is very good in all years. In Year 10 and 11, it is of an exceptional quality and has a positive impact upon the well-above-average results which pupils achieve in GCSE and the very good AS results which are achieved a year early.
16. Since the last inspection the overall teaching has improved from good in Year 8 and 9 and very good in Year 10 and 11 to very good overall. This reflects the schools investment in an outstanding programme of continuous staff development, the achievement of a consistent culture of reflection upon practice and the effective use of Advanced Skills teachers. In all subjects, the teaching and pupils learning are at least good and in many, very good. It is very good in English, mathematics and science. In the lessons seen during the inspection, all teaching and the pupils learning was satisfactory or better. Just over nine out of every ten lessons were judged to be good or better and just over six out of every ten were judged to be very good or better. A significant amount of outstanding teaching and learning was seen, particularly in Year 11.

17. The quality of the pupils' learning is very good in all years and exceptional in Year 10 and 11. As pupils move through the school, they progress in their ability to work independently of their teachers. By Year 11, all pupils can effectively organise their work, carry out independent research and take responsibility for their own learning. All are active in their learning and very quickly become engaged in their tasks. This aspect of their learning is well supported by the very effective planning of lessons and the high quality of tasks given to the pupils. Pupils clearly find their learning interesting and enjoyable. They expect their lessons to be challenging and demanding and respond well to the high expectations placed on them by all their teachers.
18. In the best teaching (that is, in approximately three lessons in five), the key features are:
- very good knowledge of, and enthusiasm for, the subject;
  - very good access to interesting and demanding tasks;
  - very good relationships with all pupils and good management of their learning;
  - very good links with the pupils' previous learning;
  - high expectations of all pupils progress and achievement;
  - very good questioning which extends and "fixes" the pupils' learning;
  - very good demonstrations and explanations.
19. For example, in a very good design and technology lesson in Year 8, the pupils made very good progress in making decisions about the fabrics to use. The teacher captured the pupils' attention and interest from the very start by effectively using a wide range of resources and setting the task in a real design situation. In a Year 9 Spanish lesson, the teacher's excellent planning and very good use of ICT, through a PowerPoint presentation of new phrases in context, quickly got all the pupils engaged, including a small number who were initially reluctant. The teacher's high expectations of the pupils extended to their use of language, leading to many being able to articulate their learning at the end of the lesson. In a Year 11 dance lesson, focusing on evaluation of a personally choreographed sequence, the teacher engaged the pupils' interest very effectively using a music stimulus. Very good explanation and questioning together with the encouragement of the pupils own observations enabled all to contribute to a demanding discussion of each others performance. This was an outstanding lesson.
20. Where the teaching is only satisfactory, for example, in a Year 9 science and Year 8 music lesson, there can be less opportunity for the pupils to work independently, and questioning to reinforce and extend understanding can be less effective.
21. The teaching of literacy skills is very good in Years 8 and 9, both within English and across subjects, where, for example, there is good attention to key technical vocabulary. In history, geography and religious education, the teachers provide good help for the pupils in structuring their writing. The teaching of numeracy skills is very good in mathematics but they could be more effectively promoted in other subjects. ICT skills are well taught and by the end of Year 9, most pupils have made up the gaps evident at entry in Year 8. This is continued in Years 10 and 11 and by the start of Year 11 most pupils are independent in their use of ICT. Although pupils progress and achievement are above average, the fortnightly ICT timetable can limit the gains they make.
22. A strength in most of the teaching is the teachers' accurate assessment of the pupils' progress and informed feedback to them on where they are at, and how to improve. Minor weaknesses are evident in some marking and target setting for the most able, which can be too general and focused on effort rather than achievement. Homework is effectively used in all years, although there can be some overload of coursework assignments where pupils are following GCSE and AS-level courses.
23. The teaching of the pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is very good. The specialist programmes for the pupils with SEN are taught well. The teachers and the learning support assistants (LSAs) leading the lessons are knowledgeable about the pupils and use the IEPs effectively to set appropriate challenges. The teaching of the pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) is very good.

**The outstanding pastoral care of students and the very effective promotion of their personal development.**

24. This aspect of the school, a strength at the last inspection, is now outstanding. Links between academic and pastoral support, as with the monitoring of attendance in relation to achievement, are of an exceptional quality.
25. Pupils are valued and supported as individuals. They have confidence in the adults in the school and feel that they can easily turn to teaching and non-teaching staff for help and guidance. Tutors have very good relationships with their tutor groups and often provide effective individual support. The school provides very good and well-attended opportunities for 'out of school hours' learning, as with the Youth University on Saturday mornings, an outstanding range of extra-curricular activities and community work.
26. Innovative programmes, as with the Bridging the Gap group, support pupils with particular difficulties or who may be at risk of disaffection. They are given good opportunities for extended work experience and work-related learning. However, there are insufficient accredited vocational courses for them in Years 10 and 11.
27. The curriculum requirements of the pupils personal social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship are very effectively met through the schools innovative Global Citizenship programme. Pupils respond very well to the opportunities provided, developing very good social skills and a thorough understanding of a range of health issues. Sex education is well organised and sensitively handled. The programme also offers pupils an impressive range of cultural and moral experiences; work seen in relation to a recent whole school immersion day on the environment was of a very high quality. Pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also outstanding. In religious education, pupils are encouraged to reflect on important questions of meaning such as life after death and the existence of God. In art there are good opportunities for pupils to reflect on their learning, and in English, poetry, plays and novels are effectively used to help pupils consider their own beliefs, values and ideals. In a number of subject areas, opportunities to help pupils reflect on their feelings are occasionally missed. Issues connected with human rights are effectively explored in religious education and Global Citizenship. Important environmental issues are explored in design and technology and geography. All pupils have a very good understanding of right and wrong. In many subjects pupils have opportunities for paired and group work. In religious education and Global Citizenship, pupils consider a wide range of social issues such as family life, medical ethics and drug use and misuse. In modern foreign languages, pupils explore issues of justice and fairness in differing cultures. The school provides many opportunities through its outstanding extra-curricular activities for pupils to exercise responsibility and develop their social skills.
28. The school's approach to inclusion is clear and well understood. It makes effective and flexible provision for the individual, based on a secure knowledge of both pastoral and learning needs. Gifted and talented pupils are appropriately identified and their overall provision is very good. Talented pupils' needs are well met in dance, art, drama and music. The very small number of gifted pupils are known and very well supported in their specific subject learning. Similarly, although pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds make up a very small part of the pupil population, their needs are well understood and met. Overall these aspects of the school's work have benefited from the strategic leadership of the senior management team, and the positive working links between it, the special educational needs team and subject and pastoral leaders.
29. Provision for careers education and guidance is good. There is a well-structured programme from Year 8 through to Year 11. Particular strengths of the programme include the focus on work experience and the small group and individual interviews. Liaison with post-16 providers is very good and developing, as with the exploration of joint AS-level provision. Similarly, very good relations exist with the contributory middle schools, and pupil induction at Year 8 is exemplary. One Year 8 pupil remarked that she was confident in coming to the school because she already knew it through the Youth University and had made friends with her Year 11 Youth University

tutors.

30. In respect of pupils with special educational needs (SEN), the school uses an extensive range of tests to identify these pupils and to assess their needs. These assessments are used effectively to focus support for the pupil, especially in the specialist teaching programmes available. The school has developed very good processes for using assessment information to monitor the progress of pupils towards their individual education plan (IEP) targets. Where pupils have statements of SEN, they are up to date and actions identified in the statements are implemented appropriately. Additional staffing is used as specified and is effective. Pupils have access to a full curriculum, except during short periods of withdrawal for individual or small group programmes. The statutory requirements outlined in the statements of SEN are met. Annual reviews are held at the appropriate time and are based on effectively evaluated school assessment data. Pupils and parents are fully involved in this process. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are effectively identified and supported.
31. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good. Effective feedback is provided to pupils in terms of National Curriculum levels or GCSE grades. Pupils confirm that they have a good idea of their attainment and what they must do to improve. Good use of these procedures was noted in English, modern foreign languages, geography, history, art and physical education. Assessment information is very well used to guide curricular planning, and procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are very good. All staff have responsibility for analysing assessment information against progress charts so that underperforming pupils can easily be identified. Individual progress is regularly evaluated in the pupil and tutor review meetings. These procedures are supplemented by a very good central database, which includes detailed assessment data on all pupils and their targets, which is well disseminated to subjects and tutors.
32. Overall, the school's procedures to ensure the pupils' welfare, health and safety are very good. The school has appropriate procedures for child protection. It follows local guidelines and a senior teacher is the designated member of staff with responsibility for child protection and carries out her duties effectively. The school pays good attention to health and safety. The site manager conscientiously monitors and co-ordinates health and safety issues, including risk assessment. The school has drawn up a sound policy and has appropriate systems in place for fire drills, testing electrical equipment and reporting hazards. The school's provision for first aid is good. Pupils who are ill or injured receive appropriate care in a well-equipped medical room. Appropriate records are kept of accidents.
33. The monitoring and promotion of attendance are very good. The computerised registration is managed efficiently and allows staff to have up-to-date information on attendance at each lesson of the day. The innovative red, amber and green (RAG) attendance system allows pupils and parents to see the relationship between attendance and achievement. Pupils fully understand this system and appreciate the support they are given in their learning if their attendance is amber or red. Where pupils have poor attendance the school works closely with the families and other agencies. The school regularly reminds parents and pupils of the importance of attending school and is rigorous in not authorising any holiday absence during term-time in Year 11.
34. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are exemplary. The behaviour management policy is very detailed and gives staff effective strategies to manage behaviour. There is a strong emphasis on self-discipline and the responsibility of the individual. The high quality of behaviour throughout the school is a reflection of the effectiveness of the procedures and the way in which pupils take responsibility for their own actions. The procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good. The anti-bullying policy gives clear guidance on sanctions for the bully and support for the victim. Bullying is discussed in PSHE and citizenship lessons and pupils say that incidents are rare and dealt with effectively.
35. The school enjoys very good relations with a highly supportive parent body. Whilst they raise some concern over the communication of the outcomes from pupil and tutor reviews and some written report comments, they are concerned for and active in supporting their children's progress. This has a very positive impact upon the pupils' personal development and what they achieve.

### **The focus on pupil achievement and improvement of the school's outstanding leadership.**

36. The leadership of the school is outstanding. At all levels there is a focus on teaching and learning, which is a key factor in the high standards and very good achievement of the pupils. The recently retired and the new headteacher's strong strategic vision, innovation and commitment to the school and its community have been and continue to be very significant factors in the sustained and continued improvement of the schools high-quality provision. The very effective leadership team ably supports the headteacher in giving a clear and corporate lead to the schools work. All managers share a strong commitment to high standards and improvement.
37. The leadership team has been exceptionally effective in establishing a common understanding and purpose amongst all staff on the key priorities of the school, as in continued improvement in standards, the quality of teaching and learning, setting high pupil expectations and enjoyment in learning, promoting and improving attendance. In these areas there is a consistent application and commitment, as with the meeting of the schools aim to ensure that pupils enjoy learning, to the well set out systems of the school. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and the management of subjects and years displays a much higher consistency and effectiveness than in most secondary schools.
38. The governors are highly supportive of the school and play a full strategic role in setting its educational direction. They are very well informed by the headteacher and leadership team and have appropriate procedures and committees in place to ensure that they fully fulfil their role. Expertise is well used, as with the achievement of best value in the new art building project. All governors, but particularly the chair of governors and chairs of the committees, show a strong grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the priorities for improvement. They are appropriately questioning and challenging of the school's improvement, as with standards, the quality of teaching and learning and the maintenance of the Davison ethos' and high expectation of all who are a part the school. Statutory requirements are met and the governors have played a full role in ensuring the schools very good improvement since the last inspection.
39. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses and takes appropriate and well-prioritised action, as with the developing work on the Year 10 and 11 curriculum, to secure improvement. The leadership team is effective in innovating, as with the 'Bridging the Gap' programme and the cover assistant programme, to ensure that the school does its best for all its pupils. The school's aims and values are clear and understood by staff and pupils; in its work the school effectively demonstrates that it lives and meets them.
40. The concepts and processes of school self-evaluation are very well understood and effectively applied to the school's improvement. Planning for the future is set out in a thorough and rigorous school improvement plan (SIP). In setting appropriate priorities and targets, this plan recognises the need to be pragmatic in terms of the school's and pupils' needs. This is very well reflected in the schools approach to the Key Stage 3 Strategy, where implementation has been carefully considered against the school's already well-above-average performance. Procedures to monitor and evaluate this plan are very good. Precise success criteria allow improvement to be easily measured and shared with governors, staff and parents, as with the literacy development work. The priorities of this whole-school plan are very well reflected in subject improvement plans, which in all subjects are of a good, and often better, quality. Costs are well identified and accounted for when setting the budget.
41. The management of subjects is very good overall. It is not less than good in any area and is outstanding in dance and physical education. A very strong sense of common direction, very good teamwork and thorough curriculum planning are characteristic of the effective management. Monitoring and evaluation procedures are exceptionally effective, as is the consistent view of teaching and learning, in securing improvement and raising standards. Subject leaders feel well supported and challenged by the leadership team. Communication is seen as open and very good. Both the quality of subject management and the very effective working relationships with the leadership have a positive impact upon the pupils achievement. The issue, at the last inspection,



of the subject managers involvement has been very well addressed.

42. The school meets statutory requirements regarding the SEN Code of Practice. All documentation related to SEN is maintained well. Statements of SEN and IEPs are up to date, reviewed on time, and are fully and effectively implemented. The monitoring of the progress and teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. The focus of the provision for ensuring that pupils have access to their learning is a key feature in the high standards they achieve. The management of provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) is very good. Effective use is made of the local education authority support. Pupils make good progress and achieve well.
43. The school's financial planning is of a high quality. Spending is very closely linked to key educational priorities and the achievement of high standards, for example, the funding of the AS level courses, the Bridging the Gap group and the support of small classes for the less able pupils. Financial control is tight and the school benefits from the support of its very good financial and administrative team. The principles of "best value" are well understood by senior managers and governors. Appropriate comparisons are made with other schools and with the national picture. Good investigations of costs and potential benefits were made before the agreement of the building contract in art. There are good procedures for competition in the award of contracts.
44. The school makes very good use of specific grants and additional funding. It uses its funding for SEN appropriately and gets good value from the work of the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and learning support assistants. Funding from its Beacon and specialist technology status has been prudently used.

**The support of improvement and the pupils' learning through the outstanding staff development programme and the very effective use of accommodation.**

45. Since the last inspection, the school has been able to improve the experience and involvement of all staff. Teaching and non-teaching staff are very well qualified and very effectively deployed, for example, in the use of small groups for the less able pupils, to meet the needs of the school and all pupils. This has a positive impact upon what the pupils achieve.
46. The school works hard at, and is successful in, staff recruitment and retention. Most staff movement from the school is to promoted posts. The graduate teacher programme is being effectively used and there are good and effective working partnerships with initial teacher training institutions. Advanced Skills Teachers are being very successfully used both within the school and for outreach programmes, as in mathematics, as part of the schools Beacon status. Similarly, the schools work, as a specialist technology college, has provided a range of staff development opportunities, as with the TechnoBus outreach programme, which has not only benefited other schools, but enhanced the teachers skills for the benefit of pupils at Davison. Subject knowledge is strong, as reflected in the very good teaching, and there are many areas of outstanding strength, as in history and drama.
47. The school's induction and training arrangements for teaching and non-teaching staff are of an outstanding quality and ensure that teachers have exceptional opportunities to develop their skills. The performance management requirements for the appraisal of teaching staff are of similar quality and also implemented for all non-teaching staff. They are very well supported by senior staff and teacher mentors. The range and quality of the school's continuing staff development work are outstanding and have deservedly received national recognition. Through innovation, as with the Expert Trail and development programmes such as the cover assistant, the school has been successful in creating a culture of high staff expectation and reflection.
48. Subject accommodation has been improved since the last inspection and is very good. The facilities for English, music, drama, dance and special educational needs are of exceptional quality. All subject rooms are closely grouped and very effective satellite rooms for ICT are either directly connected to or immediately adjacent to most subject areas. Limitations exist in the modern foreign languages provision, where the external fabric of an old mobile unit requires

excessive maintenance and is unsatisfactory. The very good efforts of the subject team ensure that its internal classrooms remain effective learning environments.

49. Display is very effectively used to enhance the classrooms and corridor environment of the school. This is an example of the schools continuing reflection upon itself, supported by the development work from a teachers participation in the Expert Trail programme. Similarly, the external site is in good order and well maintained.
50. The range, quality and quantity of resources available to support the pupils learning are very good. The use of ICT and a range of new technologies, as with interactive whiteboards in mathematics and the recording studio in music, are well employed to enhance the pupils achievements. The library is well stocked with an appropriate range of book and magazine resources. ICT facilities, including 'broadband' Internet access, are very good. The school is well used by pupils, parents and community organisations, both in school and during out of school hours, as with Saturday mornings for the Youth University.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

### **The match of the Year 10 and 11 curriculum and accreditation opportunities to the needs of all pupils.**

51. Whilst the schools curriculum and its responsiveness to individual needs have been a significant factor in the schools overall success there are two areas of minor weakness which can impact upon some pupils achievement and learning. Currently, the curriculum for pupils in Years 10 and 11, unlike that of many similar schools, only offers a very limited range of vocational courses and accreditation opportunities. For some pupils, this can restrict their access to differing learning styles and limit their overall potential for achievement. Where courses are currently offered, as with the successful Bridging the Gap group, pupils respond well and achieve good results. The effect of this curriculum limitation is also seen in the schools performance at five A\*-G GCSE grades or their equivalent, where results are only in line with those nationally and for similar schools. This indicates, and was confirmed by the inspection teams observations, that some pupils would benefit from the learning styles and practical application of their skills associated with vocational courses.
52. Over time, the school has very successfully modified the Year 10 and 11 curriculum to meet a range of changing needs. This has been particularly evident in relation to the most able pupils, where early entry for GCSE in Year 10 and AS-level work in Year 11 have been introduced. However, these changes have also increased the workload upon individual pupils. For some, the pressures of a wide range of differing coursework requirements, both for GCSE and AS-level in Year 11 can be excessive. The inspection team agrees with the comments of some parents in respect of this aspect of the schools work.
53. In both these areas of weakness the school has recognised the problem and has begun to take action. Already members of the senior leadership have begun investigating a range of new provision. Prior to the inspection a very successful meeting of subject leaders also began to address both of these issues. The continuation of this good work should ensure that these minor weaknesses are rectified and that the school's overall very good curriculum provision is maintained.

### **The clarity of communication to all parents on what their children are learning and the progress they make.**

54. The only area of consistent concern raised by parents in their responses to the questionnaire and at the parents meeting was in respect of the school's annual written reports and the communication they received if they were unable to attend the regular pupil and tutor review meetings.

55. At the last inspection, this area of the schools work was a key issue for action. Whilst significant work has been done, and overall progress has been satisfactory, there remain some issues still to address in the consistency of written comments and individual pupil targets, in the annual reports. Whilst there are examples of very high-quality practice, written subject comments can too often give insufficient information about what the pupil has and has not achieved. Similarly the individual targets are too often related to effort rather than saying what specifically must be done next to improve further.
56. Since the last inspection the school has worked hard and successfully to improve the regularity and quality of pupil and tutor review meetings. In fact, many parents, in their responses, praised this aspect of the school. However, when parents are unable to attend these meetings the process by which they are informed of the outcomes is too informal; as a result some parents can be confused, which can lead to misunderstanding between the school and parents.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

57. The headteacher and governors should now:

Review the balance of the Year 10 and 11 curriculum to:

- ensure a more focused match between pupil needs and the range of accreditation opportunities;
- ensure that the work programme for the most able is manageable, whilst fully extending their opportunity to achieve.

*(Paragraphs: 3, 21, 24, 37, 48, 49, 50.)*

Improve the clarity and consistency of information to all parents in respect of the annual written reports and the termly pupil and tutor review meetings by:

- ensuring that the written report comments and strategies for improvement are consistent in saying what the pupil has achieved and what they must do next to improve further;
- ensuring that the written comments are subject-specific and not general learning commentaries;
- ensuring that parents who are unable to attend the pupil and tutor review meetings receive feedback from the school, and not only from their children.

*(Paragraphs: 33, 51, 52, 53.)*



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	Years 8 – 11	44
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils		18

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	5	24	11	4	0	0	0
Percentage	12	54	25	9	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting the percentages for Years 8 – 11 as each lesson represents more than two percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y8 – Y11
Number of pupils on the school's roll	1001
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	49

Special educational needs	Y8 – Y11
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	60

### English as an additional language

Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4
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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	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.9

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3

National comparative data	8.1
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National comparative data	1.1
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 (Year 9)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	0	217	217

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	N/a	N/a	N/a
	Girls	187	174	185
	Total	187	174	185
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	86 (84)	80 (73)	85 (71)
	National	64 (63)	66 (65)	66 (59)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	56 (50)	60 (56)	51 (36)
	National	31 (28)	43 (42)	34 (30)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	N/a	N/a	N/a
	Girls	193	186	193
	Total	193	186	193
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	89 (86)	86 (75)	89 (86)
	National	65 (64)	68 (66)	64 (62)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	64 (47)	58 (60)	57 (46)
	National	31 (31)	42 (39)	33 (29)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 (Year 11)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 4 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	N/a	211	211

GCSE results		5 or more grades A*-C	5 or more grades A*-G	1 or more grades A*-G
Numbers of pupils achieving the standard specified	Boys	N/a	N/a	N/a
	Girls	155	200	208
	Total	155	200	208
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	73 (65)	95 (93)	99 (99)
	National	48 (47)	91 (91)	96 (96)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	47.7
	National	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	0
	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
941	2	2
0	0	0
21	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
6	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
9	0	0
16	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: Y8 – Y11**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	66.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15

#### **Education support staff: Y8 – Y11**

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	181

#### **Deployment of teachers: Y8 – Y11**

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	66.8
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#### **Average teaching group size: Y8 – Y11**

Key Stage 3	24
Key Stage 4	21

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001-2002
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	£
Total income	2801234
Total expenditure	2777368
Expenditure per pupil	2958
Balance brought forward from previous year	108796
Balance carried forward to next year	132662



### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	36.4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	44.5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	3.62
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	655
Number of questionnaires returned	473

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	39	51	8	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	44	47	3	0	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	51	2	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	60	11	2	2
The teaching is good.	39	53	1	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	28	47	9	3	12
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	51	43	3	1	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70	28	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	28	52	10	2	9
The school is well led and managed.	49	42	10	2	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	49	2	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	64	33	1	1	1

### Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Not Applicable.

### Other issues raised by parents

Not Applicable.