

INSPECTION REPORT

SAMUEL CODY SCHOOL

Farnborough

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116640

Headteacher: Mrs Anna Dawson

Reporting inspector: Dr D Alan Dobbins
27424

Dates of inspection: 9th – 12th September 2002

Inspection number: 249367

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community special
Age range of pupils:	11 – 16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Lynchford Road Farnborough Hampshire
Postcode:	GU14 6BJ
Telephone number:	(01252) 314720
Fax number:	(01252) 341869
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Councillor Nigel Baines
Date of previous inspection:	November 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
27424	D Alan Dobbins	Registered inspector	Music Physical education Religious education Educational inclusion Special educational needs	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9406	R Cottington	Lay inspector		How well does the school work in partnership with its parents?
3055	C Tombs	Team inspector	Science Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
10391	V du Plergny	Team inspector	Art English Modern foreign language	
13101	M Kell	Team inspector	Design and technology Information and communication technology Mathematics	How well does the school care for its pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The Samuel Cody School is part of the Hampshire Local Education Authority provision for pupils with moderate learning difficulties, although it is now admitting an increasing number of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties and some with autistic tendencies. It provides for 76 full-time pupils from age 11 to 16 years. Fifty-five pupils are boys and 21 are girls. The agreed maximum number of pupils is 70. All pupils have statements of special educational need. Pupils travel to and from the school by minibus or taxi, some from the neighbouring local authorities of Surrey, Bracknell Forest, Wokingham and Basingstoke. One pupil is Portuguese but is proficient in English. Ten pupils (13 per cent) are eligible for free school meals. This is a lower percentage than that seen in many similar schools. As a consequence of their learning difficulties, the attainment of most pupils on entry to the school is below that expected for their age. The headteacher and deputy headteacher were appointed after the last inspection in November 2000, when the school was judged to have serious weaknesses.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Samuel Cody is a good and improving school. Very good leadership and management by the newly appointed headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, other senior managers and all staff, good teaching and the very good relationships staff have with pupils help foster pupils' very good attitudes to their work. Most often, pupils behave well in lessons and work very hard at their learning. This results in the standards they are achieving and the progress they are making being good or better in most subjects and in their personal and social development and, for many subjects, better than at the time of the last inspection. Pupils in Year 11 achieve better grades in more subjects in nationally accredited examinations than do pupils in other equivalent schools. The cost per pupil is slightly higher than average for schools of this type. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and is very good or better in one lesson in four.
- The school promotes pupils' very good behaviour and their very good attitudes to learning.
- It promotes good standards in many subjects and in pupils' personal and social development.
- The relationships between pupils and all staff are very good.
- The links with parents are very good and they feel very well informed of the progress their children are making.

What could be improved

- The curriculum, by increasing weekly taught time in line with national recommendations; accreditation opportunities for pupils in Years 10 and 11; and the use made of the provision in other local schools and colleges.
- The quality of provision in music.
- The opportunities for the continued development of governors and for the professional development of the headteacher and senior managers.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the action plan prepared by the appropriate authority.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good improvement since the last inspection in November 2000. All but one of the key issues for action identified then have been met in full:

- leadership is now playing an active and direct role in monitoring the work of the school;
- governors are better informed of the quality of the work of the school;
- the senior management team is playing a full role in helping to make decisions;
- attendance is better;
- the curricula for information and communication technology, geography and history have improved. The delivery of the curriculum in music continues to require further improvement;

- the procedures for securing the health and safety of pupils have improved;
- the whole school system for recording pupils' personal and academic progress is beginning to work well;
- parents feel very well informed of the progress their children are making;
- a homework timetable has been constructed and homework, especially in English, mathematics and science is contributing to pupils' progress.

The standards pupils are achieving have improved in many subjects, including English, mathematics, geography and history for pupils in Years 7 to 9 and science, art, information and communication technology and French over all the school. Achievement in design and technology and religious education has been maintained at good levels. It remains satisfactory for physical education.

STANDARDS

The table summarises inspectors' judgements about how well pupils achieve in relation to their individual targets.

Progress in:	by Year 9	by Year 11	Key	
Speaking and listening	B	A	Very good	A
Reading	B	A	Good	B
Writing	C	B	Satisfactory	C
Mathematics	B*	B	Unsatisfactory	D
Personal, social and health education	B	B	Poor	E
Other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs**	B	B		

* Progress in lessons over the time of the inspection was satisfactory, but progress over the last year was good and compares favourably with similar schools in Hampshire. The judgement given in the table reflects progress over the previous academic year.

** IEPs are individual educational plans for pupils with special educational needs.

The school's statutory targets are appropriate. Pupils' individual targets, set at their annual review, represent good challenges for their work for the next year. Individual educational plans are beginning to provide good help in the planning of lessons, especially for the younger pupils. Targets in behaviour plans are providing good guidance for improving behaviour. Both make good contributions to all pupils achieving equivalent standards. The provision in English realises increasingly good progress as pupils move through the school. In mathematics, the standards achieved are good across the school. Pupils achieve very good standards in art and good standards in science, in all the elements of design and technology, geography, French and religious education. They achieve satisfactory standards in history, information and communication technology, music and physical education. At the end of Year 11, pupils' are achieving better grades over a greater number of subjects on the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) and the Certificate of Achievement (CoA) than is the case in many equivalent schools. The very good relationships between staff and pupils are helping promote good progress in the development of pupils' personal and social development.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils like school. They quickly accept their role as learners and try very hard in most lessons to produce their best work. They fully involve themselves in all the activities of the school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most of the time, pupils are courteous and respectful. They behave well in lessons, at break and lunch times. Only in a minority of lessons is there a need for teachers to remind pupils of their responsibility as learners.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The relationships between staff and pupils are very good and this contributes to pupils being friendly and very polite. They work hard to please.
Attendance	Satisfactory and improving.

The expectancy is that learning will occur to a high standard in an orderly, friendly and considerate environment. The new accommodation is contributing to the setting of high standards. The very good relationships staff have with pupils make pupils feel valued and respected. As a result pupils are confident as learners. In most lessons, their very good attitudes to their learning and behaviour results in them producing their best work. All staff are very good role models. The improving attendance is having a beneficial effect on the progress of a significant number of pupils.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 7 - 9	Years 10 - 11
Quality of teaching	Good	Good

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

Overall, the quality of teaching is good. In one lesson in four it is very good or better. Teaching in English has benefited from the implementation into lessons of the principles of the national strategy for literacy. The quality of teaching in mathematics is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9, where too many lessons are taught by teachers without specialist knowledge or training in the subject. Over these years, the principles of the national numeracy strategy have been implemented into lessons satisfactorily. The quality of teaching for pupils in Years 10 and 11 is good because lessons are taught predominantly by specialist teachers. In science, teaching is good, as it is in lessons in personal, social and health education and in the social skills programme. In the best lessons, such as those in art where teaching is frequently excellent, the contribution of the learning support assistants (LSAs) to pupils' learning is substantial. In too many lessons graded as satisfactory, inadequate pre-planning for and the poor deployment of LSAs results in them making too little a contribution to learning, even though they are competent and experienced. The targets in pupils' IEPs and behaviour plans are good and provide valuable support for teaching. Most subjects are well resourced with equipment that matches the specific needs of pupils. In most lessons, pupils work hard and enjoy doing so.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. All statutory requirements are met, but weekly taught time is less than recommended. Year 11 pupils are benefiting from being able to demonstrate the quality of their learning in an increasing number of nationally accredited awards, although this is not the case for all subjects. Little use is made of the provision in local schools and colleges to extend pupils' curricular experiences. The very good provision for extra-curricular activities benefits the learning of many pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good for pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. The very good procedures for promoting moral development are well supported by the very good relationships staff have with pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Well. Child protection procedures are known to all staff. Assessment information is beginning to be effective in guiding lesson planning, in judging success against targets in IEPs and behaviour plans and in judging the work of pupils against those in other equivalent schools, especially those in Hampshire. Provision, as it is outlined in pupils' statements of educational need, is met.

Parents have a very positive view of the school. They feel very well informed about their children's progress. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets pupils' learning needs satisfactorily well, although further improvement is easily possible.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. Since her appointment, the headteacher has managed the very good improvement in provision with considerable insight, energy and commitment. She has introduced a process of democratic decision making, which has been welcomed by staff and which functions very well. She is being very well supported by the deputy headteacher and all staff.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Well. Since the last inspection, the governing body has increased in size, experience and in the wisdom required to meet its role as 'critical friend'. Governors now have a better idea of their responsibilities to the school than was the case at the last inspection.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good procedures have been established since the last inspection for assessing the work of pupils and for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning. These are beginning to provide very good information that is being used well in improving provision and in comparing the quality of pupils' learning with that of pupils in equivalent schools. Procedures for judging the cost-effectiveness of decisions are also beginning to operate well.
The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of local facilities to support teaching and learning in many subjects, especially physical education. The finance officer, senior managers and the governing body regularly and effectively monitor the overall budget and allocations within the budget. Extra funds that are

	gained are spent appropriately.
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The school is well staffed. The good number of teachers and satisfactory number of LSAs, are sufficient to present in full all the required subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education and to meet the additional needs of pupils. The accommodation has much improved since the last inspection and is now very good. The very good improvement since the last inspection is testament to the quality of the support provided by Hampshire inspectors, as well as the very effective work of the headteacher, senior managers and governors. The further professional development of the headteacher and the senior managers will contribute to sustaining the commendable rate of improvement seen since that time. Good procedures ensure that the school's money is spent well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information they receive on the progress their children are making. • The close links they have with the school and the way in which the school helps with any problems and deals with suggestions. • That the school is well led and managed and the teaching is good. • That their children like school. 	

The judgements of the inspection team confirm the points that please parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. It is inappropriate to judge the attainment of pupils for whom this school caters against national expectations or averages. The report does, however, give examples of what pupils know, understand and can do. Judgements about progress and references to attainment and achievement take account of information contained in pupils' statements and annual reviews.
2. In English, the standards pupils achieve in Years 7 to 9 are good. For pupils in Years 10 and 11, they are very good. Pupils are making increasingly good progress as they move through the school. Generally, pupils speak confidently and they learn very quickly how to listen carefully. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 speak appropriately in a number of different situations, such as debate, the presentation of ideas and in their day-to-day relationships with teachers, LSAs, their peers and visitors. By the end of Year 9, most pupils read sufficiently well to discover information for themselves. Many enjoy reading and often read for pleasure. By the end of Year 11, they read well enough to gain information themselves from books, reference material and the Internet, in support of their learning in other subjects. Most pupils enter the school with skills in writing that are not as good as they are in speaking and listening or in reading. They learn to write by doing so for a variety of purposes. For example, younger pupils compile lists, short stories, bullet point ideas gained from brainstorming sessions and learn how to change a statement into an order. Alongside this, their command of punctuation increases, so that by the end of Year 9, for example the highest attaining pupils write a story set in a haunted house that elicits very well images of anxiety and fear. By this time, they have gained a good understanding of the purpose of narrative verse. They express their learning well when they write, for example of the 'Pied Piper of Hamelin'. They quickly and effectively plan the plot, characters and location of a piece of narrative writing for comedy, horror, romance or suspense. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 follow either the syllabus leading to the GCSE in English or the CoA. By the end of their time at school, pupils have considerable skills in English to gain good levels of success in the GCSE and CoA examinations. The results they achieve in English compare well with those of pupils in equivalent schools in the authority.
3. Pupils are achieving good standards in mathematics and are making good progress. They are developing a good knowledge of number and space, shape and measurement. They display their increasing understanding well when applying their learning in the other subjects, for example in handling and presenting data in lessons in science. By the end of Year 9, the highest attaining pupils manipulate positive and negative numbers and are developing confidence with sums involving the four basic processes. They name, and know, the features of many two and three-dimensional shapes and understand the concept of angles that they estimate and measure accurately. They apply their skills in number well when using the particular measurements for length, mass, temperature and capacity. The highest attaining pupils do this very well when solving tasks associated with real life situations, such as shopping and calculating the costs of meals from a menu. They explain information from data they have collected well by producing tally charts and frequency tables and by drawing bar and line graphs, for example when they identify the most popular colours of cars passing the school. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 undertake projects that promote investigative skills as they work towards externally accredited examinations. Activities such as comparing supermarket prices and examining the popularity of different football teams help extend their skills and knowledge in mathematics. By the end of Year 11, pupils are good at using mathematics to draw conclusions from their findings. They use modern technology well, including spreadsheets, and they confidently import graphics and display information as graphs and pie charts. By this time, the standards pupils are achieving in mathematics compare favourably with those in equivalent schools in the authority. This is shown in the good level of success gained on the GCSE and CoA examinations.
4. In science, pupils are achieving good standards and are making good progress over the full range of the subject. For example, by the end of Year 8, they know that temperature is a measure of

how hot things are and that this is measured using a thermometer according to the Celsius scale. The highest attaining pupils know some typical temperatures, including those for boiling water, room temperatures and those in refrigerators. By the end of Year 9, they have gained substantial knowledge of the human reproductive system. They know that children inherit characteristics from their parents and that the male sperm determines a baby's sex. They use and understand scientific names for parts of the human reproductive system, for example, 'chromosomes', 'genes', 'cells' and 'nuclei'. They recognise that living things grow and reproduce and that children will have some features of their parents. In Years 10 and 11, pupils follow the syllabus of the GCSE and CoA. In so doing, they learn about the solar system and are able to discuss the effects of the tilt of the earth. They use appropriate scientific language well, for example 'universe', 'galaxy', 'orbiting', 'gravity' and 'axis', in explaining their learning. They have a good knowledge of how physical properties can change through, for example recognising the effects of hydrochloric acid on marble chips. The highest attaining pupils in Year 11 take the GCSE examination in human biology and typically attain grades E and F. All pupils obtain pass, merit or distinction grades on the COA examination. Their results compare very favourably with those of pupils in equivalent schools in the authority and nationwide.

5. Pupils are achieving very good standards in art. They are achieving good standards in all the elements of design and technology, geography, French and religious education. They are achieving satisfactory standards in history, information and communication technology, music and physical education.
6. Since the last inspection, a year-on-year analysis shows that entries for the GCSE examination have increased from 15 in June of 2000 to 26 in June 2002. Also, over the same period, the average points score per pupil has increased from 1.25 to 4.10 points. More Samuel Cody pupils are being entered for more GCSE and CoA examinations than in most of the other equivalent Hampshire schools. The analysis of 'P' levels attained by pupils against those of other equivalent Hampshire schools shows that last year, on average, Samuel Cody pupils attained higher 'P' levels than the county average in speaking and listening and reading and, by the end of Year 9, in writing. They were higher in mathematics and very much higher in science. When compared with the attainment of pupils in equivalent schools nationally, more Samuel Cody pupils are gaining higher levels in the National Curriculum in English and, especially, in science.
7. Since the last inspection, the standards pupils are achieving have improved in many subjects. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 are doing better in speaking and listening, in reading and in mathematics. Standards have also improved in geography, history, information and communication technology and French from the unsatisfactory levels reported last time to being good for geography and French and satisfactory for information and communication technology and history. In science, standards have improved for pupils in all years from satisfactory to good and in art from satisfactory to very good. The standards achieved in design and technology and religious education have been maintained at good levels.
8. A key issue for action last time required an improvement in the quality of provision for information and communication technology, music, geography and history. This has already been achieved for information and communication technology, geography and history, but not so for music. In information and communication technology, the provision of very good resources, made available through the recent completion of the information and communication suite and the participation in relevant in-service training by teachers should quickly promote an increase in standards. The very recent appointment of a specialist teacher for physical education should also act to improve standards over all the areas of the subject.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils enjoy school, a judgement supported by parents and pupils alike. This is evident when they arrive at school and greet staff and friends with courtesy and enthusiasm. The main reasons pupils give for liking school include good teaching, the friendliness of all staff and the good range of activities available to them. Their level of involvement in activities is very high. For example, 40 per cent took part in a recent charity concert and 80 per cent regularly participate in the residential

trips.

10. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and throughout the daily life of the school is good. In 40 per cent of lessons pupils' attitudes to their learning are very good or better. In 77 per cent of lessons they are good or better and, in the remaining lessons, almost always satisfactory. In lessons, pupils routinely concentrate well, respond well to instructions and advice from teachers and LSAs and, most often, try hard at completing their work.
11. The high level of permanent exclusions, 17 at the time of the last inspection, has fallen to two over the past year. This reduction is to the credit of the improving quality of the provision and improvements in the procedures to manage pupils' behaviour.
12. Relationships throughout the school are very good. Pupils speak easily of the absence of bullying, the friendly atmosphere within the school and the help and support routinely and quickly given by staff. Pupils are confident about raising issues and bringing to notice any concerns they may have. They treat each other with respect and are aware that some pupils have different needs from themselves. During the inspection, no incidents of oppressive or unkind behaviour were seen, or incidents of racism or sexism. On the contrary, pupils showed high levels of courtesy and politeness to staff and visitors alike, for example by opening doors or offering help.
13. Significant inroads have been made in improving attendance. Nevertheless, attendance remains slightly below the national average. However, based on last years' figures, unauthorised absence is now below the national average for equivalent schools, but the level of authorised absence remains above that of equivalent schools. Over the period of the last year, two pupils who were persistent non-attenders at their previous schools were placed on roll by the local authority. They have continued to non-attend. If the absence records of these pupils were removed from the roll, the overall attendance level is about in line with national expectancies for equivalent schools.
14. Most pupils travel to school by contracted transport. They nearly always arrive on time. Once at school, they quickly settle into the start of the school day and move in an orderly and quiet fashion between lessons.
15. The improvement in attendance, a key issue from the last inspection, and the continuing improvement in pupils' behaviour are making an important contribution to the improving standards pupils are achieving and the better progress they are making.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching is good over all the school. There are no differences over the years or over the range of pupils' learning needs. At the time of the last inspection, the quality of teaching was excellent in four per cent of lessons, very good in seventeen per cent, good in forty-six per cent and satisfactory in twenty-seven per cent of lessons. It was unsatisfactory in six per cent of lessons. Now, in five per cent of lessons teaching is excellent. In 22 per cent it is very good, good in 42 per cent, satisfactory in 28 per cent and unsatisfactory in three per cent of lessons. The increased percentage of very good or better teaching and the slightly reduced percentage of unsatisfactory teaching represent a satisfactory improvement from the good quality reported last time.
17. In most lessons, teaching meets pupils' learning needs very well. This is especially so when the lessons are taught by teachers with a specialist knowledge or specialist training in the subject. Some lessons, especially in mathematics and information and communication technology, are taught by teachers without specialist knowledge. In these lessons, most often the quality of learning is no better than satisfactory because teachers' lack the awareness of appropriate teaching strategies and of how to best use resources to promote learning. When teachers have a very good knowledge of the subject they are teaching, for example in lessons in art, design and technology, physical education and religious education, tasks are presented in innovative and organised ways, so that the learning needs of all pupils are met. In these lessons, the quality of

pupils' learning is routinely good or better. For example, in a good lesson in physical education, the teacher's expert subject knowledge and his very good relationship with the pupils resulted in all pupils, including the minority of girls in the lesson, learning very quickly to spin pass a rugby ball at speed.

18. The principles of the national strategy for literacy are incorporated well into lesson planning in many subjects. They are contributing to the very good standards the oldest pupils, especially, are achieving in English. The equivalent principles for the mathematics strategy are not as well recognised in planning. Opportunities are too frequently missed to promote gains in mathematics in lessons in the other subjects.
19. Good planning is a characteristic of the good and better lessons. This often involves the pre-determined use of a good range of resources and of the time and skills of the LSAs. However, in many of the lessons judged as satisfactory LSAs were underused and contributed too little to pupils' learning. In the lessons judged to be unsatisfactory, because of inadequacies in planning, LSAs were not active, were assigned very limited responsibility and made no significant contribution to any aspect of the lesson, including pupils' learning. In a small number of subjects, such as science, art and design and technology, the quality of learning is being enhanced because of the good use teachers are making of the computers.
20. The behaviour of pupils is managed very well. Generally, lessons are orderly events because teachers and LSAs have good expectations for pupils' behaviour, as well as for their learning. When they need to, teachers are very good at reminding pupils of their responsibility as learners. When behaviour is not appropriate, teachers and LSAs act quickly and correctly, most often according to the pupil's behaviour support plan or the school's procedures. The learning of others in the lesson is rarely disrupted. In a small number of lessons, there is a need to remove a disruptive pupil into the company of the headteacher. This works well in minimising the effect of inappropriate behaviour on the others in the lesson, but at the same time denies the disruptive pupil access to learning.
21. The very good relationships between teachers, LSAs and pupils allows pupils to be confident as learners, to ask questions when they are not clear of the demands of their tasks and to engage easily in discussion. This was clear in a very good lesson in religious education on the meaning of symbols. The discussion, which was well led by the teacher, quickly made the link between symbols that were well known to pupils, such as those which reflected various international sport clothing companies and those which represented more abstract concepts to do with religion and belief.
22. The attainment of pupils is well recorded. Targets in IEPs and in behaviour plans are meaningful to pupils and teachers alike. They provide good guidance on the preferred strategies for teaching individual pupils and on how their behaviour can sometimes affect their learning. The procedures for homework are well thought through and are making a satisfactory contribution to the progress many pupils are making, especially in the core subjects.
23. The good quality of teaching motivates pupils to do well as learners. In 25 per cent of lessons learning is very good or better. In 42 per cent it is good and in almost all of the other lessons it is satisfactory. In most lessons, pupils make a considerable intellectual effort to learn. In lessons in physical education, they make a considerable physical effort, for example when they are learning the skills of football or rugby. Routinely, pupils are interested in their learning. Especially when teaching is good or better, they concentrate very well and take pride in producing their best work. Pupils are good at realising that if they work hard their efforts will be rewarded by gains in knowledge and skills.

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

24. The curriculum is satisfactory. It fully meets statutory requirements, although the weekly taught

- time is below that recommended. All pupils follow the National Curriculum and religious education. The curriculum is broad and balanced and includes a range of worthwhile learning opportunities, which match satisfactorily with the pupils' diverse social, intellectual, physical and personal needs. It appropriately emphasises the development of practical skills and gains in knowledge, skills and understanding in the important areas of communication, the application of number and the skills of information and communication technology. It is inclusive in its organisation and relevance, but includes no opportunities for pupils in Years 10 and 11 to show the full extent of their learning over the duration of their time at school in music, physical education and religious education. Too little use is made of the provision in other schools and colleges in helping meet the increasingly diverse needs of pupils.
25. The curriculum has considerably improved since the last inspection. Planning for information and communication technology, music, history and geography have been reviewed and improved so that they now meet the requirements of Curriculum 2000. The principles recommended within the national strategy for literacy are well used throughout the curriculum, those for the numeracy strategy less so. The presentation of information and communication technology as a discrete subject has made it easier to recognise the gains in skills and understanding pupils are making over the full range of the Key Stage 3 Programmes of Study. This also applies to the course content that pupils in Years 10 and 11 follow leading to the CoA examination. Supporting these developments has been the improvement in assessment procedures and in the analysis of the gains being made by pupils. The good assessment procedures now inform planning and more accurate target setting allows a better comparison of pupils learning with those in equivalent schools. In addition, the curriculum is better resourced and the effectiveness of delivery is better recognised through the monitoring of teachers' planning, pupils' work and attainment records, and through the observation of lessons.
 26. Lessons start and finish promptly, but weekly teaching time is less than the 25 hours recommended by the Department for Education and Skills. Especially for pupils in Years 10 and 11, who are following courses leading to external accreditation, this must have a deleterious effect on the standards they achieve, the progress they are making and the level of the award they gain.
 27. The range of nationally accredited examinations available to Year 11 pupils has increased considerably since the last inspection. These now include GCSE in English, mathematics, science and art; the CoA in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, design and technology, art, food studies and humanities, also Youth Award modules in horticulture and in independent study. Pupils learn music, religious education and physical education over the duration of their time at school, but have no way of demonstrating the extent of their learning.
 28. Teachers and LSAs know their pupils very well. The targets identified in IEPs and in behaviour plans provide detailed information, which teachers generally use well in meeting the needs of all pupils. Staff, through the in-service training programme provided by Hampshire inspectors, are broadening their skills in teaching the greater number of pupils who are entering school identified as having autistic spectrum tendencies. This is helping in meeting the needs of these pupils and in promoting progress that is equivalent to all other pupils in school. The increasing range of software and CD ROMS is beginning to be well used to meet the particular learning needs of pupils. Each is helping ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to all curricular provision.
 29. The programme for extra-curricular activities is very good. For example, at morning break-times choir, computer, quiet games and guitar clubs regularly meet. After school clubs include golf, soccer, basketball, cricket, 'Global Rock Challenge' and technology/science. Annual residential visits for each year group challenge pupils with a range of physical, social and cultural experiences at such venues as Privett, Tile Barn and St Donat's. In addition, most pupils take part in visits to Ghent, Amsterdam and Paris. Their experiences are further extended by regular theatre trips, presentations by artists who visit school, coaching in cricket and football, by qualified coaches from local clubs, and by inter-school sport fixtures and tournaments. Collectively, these have a significant impact on learning and make an important contribution to pupils' physical, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Homework, particularly in English, mathematics and science is now a regular feature. The standards many pupils achieve and the progress they are

making are helped by their regular completion of homework. However, this is not the case for all pupils.

30. Provision for pupils' personal, social, health and careers education, including sex education, drugs awareness and aspects of citizenship is good. It includes visits by personnel from the local health service who provide fortnightly counselling sessions on issues such as sex education and drug misuse. The discrete teaching programme is wide ranging and makes a very good contribution to pupils' positive attitudes to themselves and their work and to their increasing maturity, but the provision permeates all the work of the school. Especially meaningful in meeting pupils' individual needs or in exploring major issues, such as the destruction of the twin towers in New York, are the tutor groups and for a small number of pupils the social skills programme. The very good relationships between staff and pupils helps make informal times, such as break and meal times, the time spent in pursuing interests in the many clubs, and particularly the residential visits, powerful opportunities for developing pupils' personal and social skills.
31. Work related education, including career guidance, is good. Careers education, which begins for pupils in Year 7, is well supported by good links with the local careers service and Connexions. An officer from the service attends each Year 9 transition review and provides specific specialist support for pupils from that point onwards. Year 11 pupils take part in a one-week residential course, where they are visited by many employers, in which the key skills of interview technique, job hunting and decision-making, are actively promoted. Pupils' learn about work through the well-organised work experience programme. They are offered two weeks work experience in Year 10, with the option of another week in Year 11. For pupils in Year 11, local colleges organise taster days and arrange visits so that pupils can become familiar with the courses they offer. By the end of Year 11, pupils are well informed on future options and are confident about the decisions they have taken for their future. The school recently reaffirmed the Investor in Careers award.
32. The links with the community are very good. Visits to local places of interest, involvement in local projects and the regular use of community facilities add richness and relevance to the pupils' curricular experiences. For example, local businesses provide a wide variety of work experience placements for pupils. The links with Rushmore Borough Council, established through the chair of governors, are sufficiently strong for pupils to have visited the debating chamber and spoken in debate. Pupils following the horticulture module provide hanging baskets for display in the centre of Farnborough. Annually, they take part in the 'Rushmore in Bloom', 'Southern England in Bloom' and 'Britain in Bloom' initiatives. Pupils frequently win prizes because of the high quality of the finished baskets. The nearby army base is well used to provide sports opportunities and to support teaching and learning, especially in history through visits to the museum and the war cemetery. Pupils have adopted Naomi House Children's Hospice as the school's nominated charity. They visit annually to see the very caring way in which ill children are looked after. They have converted their thoughts into action, so much so that over the last two years, through many initiatives, they have raised nearly £1200.00 for the hospice.
33. Links with local schools are satisfactory, although a strong link exists with the secondary mainstream school that shares the same campus. Recently, after a combined bid with other local schools and the Samuel Cody School, the mainstream school was awarded specialist status in science and technology. Currently, one Year 9 pupil from that school attends Samuel Cody for lessons in mathematics and also takes part in theatre and residential visits. Good communication exists with other the local special schools, which has resulted in a number of joint in-service experiences. However, opportunities for pupils to extend their curricular experience by spending time in local mainstream schools and colleges are too limited. Following more closely the local authority's guidance on inclusion will contribute to the development of a curriculum with greater range and one that more easily meets the changing needs of pupils.
34. The provision for the spiritual development of the pupils is good. Staff are very good role models. Their industry and the obvious respect they show for pupils is helping pupils develop their own set of values, principles and beliefs which, for many, reflect those of the staff. Work in lessons also helps. For example, in lessons in art pupils are regularly in awe of the vision and ingenuity of famous artists. Their behaviour throughout the school clearly demonstrates the respect they have

for themselves and, through their pride in their new building and the care they take of resources, the seriousness with which they accept their role as learners.

35. The provision for moral development is very good. Through the high standards expected by the headteacher and the great majority of staff, the very supportive nature of the relationships between staff and pupils and, more pragmatically, the clear procedures which define acceptable behaviour, pupils quickly learn what is right and wrong and good or bad. By the end of Year 11, pupils have developed a secure moral framework within which most will operate with confidence.
36. The provision for the social development of the pupils is good. The expectancy that learning will occur to a high standard in an ordered, friendly and considerate environment guides pupils in recognising their responsibilities to others. This results in their acting maturely with their teachers, LSAs and visitors to the school, and showing respect to each other, even when their friends may be troubled. The social skills programme has been developed specifically to assist those pupils who find it particularly hard to accustom themselves to the needs and feelings of others. This is very successful in helping a small number of pupils learn to manage their own thoughts and feelings in appropriate ways, so that they may take an increasing part in school life and begin to understand the meaning of living in a community.
37. The provision for cultural development is good. Opportunities to explore the traditions and beliefs of different cultures are used well in lessons. This is especially so in lessons in art when aboriginal art, the art of North American Indians, Hindi body art and medieval religious art are studied, and in lessons in English, French and religious education. Pupils are given good opportunities to explore the rich flight culture of Farnborough, for example through visits to the Cody tree when they learn about the pioneer of flight their school is named after. The extra-curricular programme includes visits to theatres and museums and local artists visit the school to demonstrate their work. The visits to France, Belgium and Holland provide first hand experience of different European cultures. Each contributes to developing pupils' good level of cultural awareness.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. All the issues raised during the previous inspection have been addressed and the school now has good procedures in place to ensure pupils' care and well being. Child protection procedures are effective, detailed records are stored securely and all staff have received appropriate training. Regular health and safety checks maintain a safe environment for pupils and a committee of governors ensures that the school complies with all necessary safety requirements. The medical needs of pupils are met well. A member of the learning support staff is a qualified nurse and is on site throughout the day. The storage and dispensation of medicines are tightly controlled and appropriately conducted.
39. The procedures for recognising the gains pupils are making are good and have much improved since the last inspection. Assessment of academic and personal and social gains is co-ordinated well. Pupils' progress is well monitored and evaluated and this information is available to teachers to help in their lesson planning.
40. A range of very good procedures enables staff to monitor and support many aspects of personal development. Checklists for social skills and for lunchtime behaviour and lesson monitoring sheets all contribute information towards building a profile of pupils that can be analysed. From this, specific targets are agreed, for example to further develop pupils self-esteem, improve their confidence and communication skills, or to learn self-control and independence.
41. Academic performance is monitored closely through well-established procedures. New pupils are baseline assessed to enable lesson planning to quickly take account of their needs and for the scores gained to be used to judge the progress they make over their time at school. Two systems for recording pupils' attainments are used. A commercial scheme is used to recognise attainment in English, mathematics and science. An internally produced 'key expectations' recording sheet is used to establish attainment in the other subjects. Pupils' attainment is set against targets.

Those who are having difficulty in meeting targets are discussed, possible reasons identified and short-term strategies designed to meet the difficulties quickly enacted. As a result, teachers are able to use this assessment information effectively to plan future work that is specifically designed to meet the needs of individual pupils.

42. Both systems provide detailed records of pupils' attainment against national standards and they are completed at least termly for each subject. This information is collated, using a commercial software package. An impressive aspect of the school's overall assessment practice is the way in which these data are analysed and used to establish trends on a year-on-year basis and for benchmarking pupils' performance against equivalent Hampshire schools and those nationally. This is providing good information for governors in evaluating the effect of provision in each of the subjects.
43. The analysis does not include judging the effectiveness of teaching and learning when different teachers teach the same subject to different classes. For example, mathematics is being taught by a greater number of teachers than was the case in the past. The data already being collected will allow this and an analysis of the data will help ensure that the good achievement and the good progress recognised in the recent past will continue.
44. The school has developed a very effective behaviour management policy that is consistently implemented across the whole school. The procedures for promoting behaviour are very good and benefit from being regularly reviewed and evaluated. The key features include appropriate rewards and sanctions, a good staff knowledge of pupils' individual behavioural problems and the very good exchange of information between staff and parents. Outbursts of anger and spontaneous disruptive behaviour are dealt with very well, as are the periods of stress that pupils sometimes experience.
45. The induction programme for pupils ensures that they quickly feel part of the school and its routines and expectancies. This, and the good awareness by staff of pupils special needs, helps them feel safe and secure and be confident in their role as learners.
46. For pupils with particular behavioural problems, the one-to-one weekly tutorials work well in influencing behavioural change. They include the analysis of behaviour against the targets for last week and result in agreed targets for the coming week. Meeting the target results in appropriate reward; failure to meet the target results in further review and counselling when it is deemed necessary.
47. Since the last inspection, attendance has significantly improved. In part, this is as a result of improvements in the monitoring procedures. The attendance of each pupil is routinely analysed. Those who do not attend regularly are targeted for action. This will include prompt telephone calls to parents when they do not arrive at school, meetings with parents to develop strategies to improve attendance and visits to the home when appropriate. Parents of pupils who persistently do not attend are made aware, very clearly, of the real possibility of prosecution and also of how absence from school has a very significant effect on the standards their children are able to achieve and the progress they are able to make.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. Analysis of the parents' questionnaire, together with the views expressed at the parents' meeting, show that parents are extremely satisfied with the standards their children are achieving and the progress they are making. They are especially pleased with the greater involvement they are having in the life of the school than was the case at the time of the last inspection.
49. Since that time, many initiatives have been developed to involve parents in the education of their children. These include regular discussions with parents about their children's academic and personal development, open house meetings with staff and telephone discussions and consultations when there is a need to change children's targets. The recently revised annual progress report, developed in collaboration with parents, provides clear information on what children have been taught, the progress they are making and how this can be further enhanced. These reports, combined with the annual review of the statement of special education need,

provide a good focus for discussion with parents during meetings.

50. The quality of information supplied to parents is good. In addition to the annual reports, all school documents have been revised, updated and made more informative. This has resulted in documents that are now of good quality and of more use to parents.
51. Most parents live some distance from the school. Understandably, this means that they take little part in the daily life of the school. In other ways, however, parents take a keen and active interest in the work of the school, for example in agreeing new targets for IEPs or behaviour plans and, especially, in ensuring that their children regularly attend school. The involvement of parents in the life of the school is making a good contribution to the standards pupils achieve and the progress they are making and is greater than was the case at the last inspection.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The management of the headteacher is very good. She is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and the other senior staff. Since her recent appointment, by appropriately focusing on the key issues of the last inspection, the headteacher has provided a clear direction for the work of the school. She, the deputy headteacher, and all staff have worked very hard and successfully in meeting the requirements of most of the key issues. In this, they have gained very good support from inspectors of the Hampshire local authority. Because of the need to manage the considerable development required to improve the school's provision, she and her senior colleagues have denied themselves the opportunity of taking part in national and local training initiatives specifically designed for headteachers and senior managers. Extending their own professional vision and management skills, through participating in advanced training and the related visits, should result in an increased capacity to continue to develop the work of the school, that is already very good.
53. The very good improvement seen since the last inspection reflects the shared commitment of the great majority of staff to succeed. This is easily seen through the effort and energy that has been committed to the successful realisation of most of the key issues for action. Day-to-day it is seen through the high standards staff aspire to, which has helped ensure the smooth running of the school, despite the difficulties imposed over the last few terms by the considerable building programme.
54. The aims are precise and detailed. They are clearly identified in the improvement plan. Understandably, most are linked to the key issues for action of the last inspection. Others, which include aims for the non-teaching staff, reflect the attention to detail in the running of the school that is a characteristic of the headteacher,
55. In the short time since her appointment, she has delegated responsibilities well. Positions, roles and responsibilities have been established and the senior management structure was completed at the beginning of the current term (September 2002), with the appointment of a fourth member to the senior management team. The deputy headteacher very effectively discharges her duties. The team is young in its functioning, but the open and democratic approach of the headteacher has contributed to a positive management environment that is already more effective in promoting developments than was the case at the last inspection. In July 2002, the school was successfully re-assessed for the Investor in People Award.
56. The governing body fully meets its statutory responsibilities. Governors are committed to the success of the school. Since the last inspection, they have grown in number and, through good uptake of opportunities provided by the local authority's governor training division, in the collective knowledge required to meet their role and responsibilities. They are appropriately formed and have a sensible number of committees. These are beginning to work well in gaining information on the effectiveness of the school's work and in helping to make decisions that lead to further development. Since the last inspection, governors have provided very valuable help and advice, especially on issues relating to the building programme. The new chairperson is very well placed to guide the increasing impact of the governing body on the work of the school. However, in order to fully meet the role of 'critical friend' in a school that is improving rapidly, the governing body needs to continue to extend its skill, expertise and collective wisdom, by taking part in appropriate training opportunities.
57. The procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning are good. At least twice per year, more for some, teachers are formally observed. They receive a report, which identifies the strong elements in the lesson and those elements that require further development. They may also be seen by relevant outside specialists, such as the local authority's subject inspectors. Teachers' planning documents are regularly analysed by the headteacher, as is the work of pupils. Although these procedures have been recently established, they are already beginning to help identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching in subjects, as a first step for improving the quality of teaching and learning.
58. No appraisal system operated at the time of the last inspection. Since then procedures have been

created and they operate satisfactorily. The procedures themselves are good. The headteacher's targets were set, very recently. Those for teachers, which were set one year ago, include one target for the development of the skills to do with teaching and learning, one for the skills of behaviour management and a third for their own professional development. The principle of target setting is now accepted as a meaningful procedure to promote development, but the recent implementation of targets into the school's routines and procedures means that their effect on promoting development is only beginning.

59. Induction procedures for new staff are good and better than at the time of the last inspection. Each new appointment is assigned a mentor who is responsible for ensuring that specific training is provided, for example on the administrative system and matters to do with the classroom, such as registers, educational visits and pupils' records. The headteacher monitors the effectiveness of the induction process by formally meeting new staff four weeks after they start at school. Newly appointed teachers and LSAs quickly become effective in their roles
60. The school's statutory targets have been appropriately set. Since the last inspection, the special educational needs co-ordinator has led the improvement in the format of the IEPs and in the precision with which targets are written. Individual behaviour plans have been introduced for pupils who require extra support in improving their behaviour. The targets in both plans are working well in informing the planning of lessons and in improving behaviour. Information on gains against the targets is well presented at annual reviews and forms the basis for the establishment of new targets for the following year.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

61. The favourable pupil-teacher ratio allows a good match between the requirements of the curriculum and the needs of pupils. Teachers' good range of subject expertise is helping to improve standards because teachers with specialist knowledge or training are teaching more lessons in their subjects than was the case at the time of the last inspection. This is so for all subjects except mathematics and information and communication technology. Too many lessons in these subjects are taught by teachers with insufficient specialist knowledge. This limits the standards pupils achieve and the progress they are making. This is doubly disappointing because of the good progress made by pupils in mathematics in previous years when they were taught by teachers with a good knowledge of the subject and also because the new facilities for information and communication technology are now providing a very good foundation for promoting high quality teaching and learning.
62. The number of LSAs is appropriate. Generally, they are skilled and experienced. In some lessons, the good teamwork with the teacher results in them being very effective in their work. In these lessons, they make a very good contribution to pupils' progress. In too many other lessons, they are not used well because pre-planning is imprecise or doesn't take place at all. In these lessons, a powerful and expensive resource is not effectively used in supporting teaching and promoting learning.
63. In-service training opportunities are being well used, including the national training programme for increasing teachers' skills and knowledge in the use of computers in teaching. All teachers and nine LSAs have successfully completed the course. To meet the specific need of a minority of incoming pupils, the expertise of teachers has sensibly been extended through participation in the Hampshire local authority course for teaching pupils with autism (Providing Approaches to Autism for Teachers in Hampshire Schools).
64. Three days prior to the inspection, full possession was taken of new classrooms and of others that had been substantially refurbished. The loss of poor quality demountables, in lieu of a new science laboratory, information and communication technology suite, music and drama room and a library, substantially improves the quality of the accommodation. All elements of the Programmes of Study for each subject can now be taught, without restrictions, to pupils between Years 7 and 9. Similarly, the syllabi for subjects leading to examination for pupils in Years 10 and 11 can also be

taught in full. Additional facilities that are shared with the nearby secondary school, such as the sports hall and the good quality games field and outside play area contribute to the accommodation providing a very good base for teaching. The high standard of cleanliness that is maintained by the site manager throughout the school contributes to the setting of standards and is helping to provide a very good environment for learning.

65. Since the last inspection, the investment in resources to support teaching and learning has been considerable and has been made to good effect. In most subjects, the resources to support teaching and learning are good. Music, information and communication technology and religious education are very well resourced with a very good range of good quality equipment and artefacts. Geography and history have a satisfactory resource base and the other subjects are well resourced. Access to the curriculum, especially in science, art and design and technology, is being increasingly supported by computer use, including good and regular use of the Internet.

Efficiency

66. The school manages its finances very well. The finance officer, senior managers and the governing body regularly and effectively monitor the overall budget and allocations within the budget. Spending decisions are closely examined to ensure that allocations remain within agreed limits. The finance committee of the governing body receives monthly budget reports that are effectively scrutinised. Spending decisions undergo rigorous review so as to ensure that the principles of best value are applied. Budget holders are required to justify their purchasing requests, most often against their effect on pupil outcomes. The administrative officer has a very good awareness of issues to do with value for money and ensures that purchases are subjected to appropriate scrutiny. The very effective system of financial control ensures that the budget remains within limits and that expenditure is well justified.
67. Good use is made of development planning to drive financial allocations. The improvement plan is a high quality document that clearly sets out relevant priorities, includes targets and is well costed. Priorities are linked directly to improving standards and progress is regularly monitored. There is clear evidence that development planning has led directly to the improvements in the better standards pupils are achieving since the last inspection and their better level of attendance.
68. The refurbishment and alteration of the building has resulted in a very high standard of accommodation that provides a very good environment for teaching and learning. Overall, the school resources are well used, but there are exceptions. This is not always the case. In music, the very good range and quality of musical instruments is not being effectively used in promoting pupils' progress over the full range of the subject. In information and communication technology, the lack of teachers' specialist knowledge is limiting the full use of the very good range of hardware and software in promoting learning.
69. Since the last inspection, there has been a major improvement in the school's financial planning and use of resources.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

70. In order to raise the achievements of pupils further, the governing body and the headteacher should:
- extend the curricular provision by increasing:
 - weekly taught time in line with national recommendations (paragraphs 24 and 26);
 - accreditation opportunities for pupils in Years 10 and 11 (paragraphs 24 and 27); and
 - the use made of the provision in other local schools (paragraphs 24 and 33).
 - increase the quality of provision in music (paragraphs 27, 68, 121).

In conjunction with the local authority, the governing body should:

- continue to develop its expertise and knowledge so as to fully meet its role as 'critical friend'; (paragraph 56) and
- create opportunities, and provide support, for the headteacher and senior managers in the continuing development of their professional skills and experience (paragraph 52).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	64
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	3	14	27	18	2	0	0
Percentage	4.7	21.8	42.2	28.1	3.2	0.0	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 these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	76
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	10

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	12.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	2.3

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

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
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	76
Number of questionnaires returned	12

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	33	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	50	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	36	19	9	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	17	58	17	8	0
The teaching is good.	67	33	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	92	8	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	92	8	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	25	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	83	17	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	75	25	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	75	25	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	58	42	0	0	0

Other issues raised by parents

No other issues were raised by parents.

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

ENGLISH

71. The provision for English is good. The standards achieved by the younger pupils are good, and they improve as pupils move through the school so that the standards achieved and the progress made by pupils in Years 10 and 11 are very good.
72. The provision is improving. An increasing number of Year 11 pupils are sitting the GCSE examination and are gaining better results than achieved by pupils in previous years. By the end of Year 9, the percentage of pupils who are at National Curriculum Level 2 compares favourably with those in equivalent schools nationwide. Pupils who left Year 11 last year gained an impressive array of successes, in both the GCSE and CoA examinations. Year on year analysis compiled over the last three years shows a greater number of pupils being entered for the GCSE examination and a better average points score for each successive year. A comparison against equivalent schools in Hampshire shows that Samuel Cody pupils speak, listen and read better than the county average at all years and write better than the county average from Year 9 onwards. Considerable progress has been made in implementing the principles of the national strategy for literacy in lesson planning. These are having a good effect on the standards pupils are achieving and the progress they are making.
73. Most pupils enter school with poorly developed speaking and listening skills. They are encouraged to listen carefully, to ask and answer questions, read stories, poems and plays aloud and take part in role-play situations. The youngest pupils quickly become sufficiently confident to engage visitors in conversation. The very good relationships between staff and pupils help. Throughout the school, teachers are very good at providing opportunities for pupils to talk to a good range of purposes including, predicting and investigating, sharing ideas and opinions, reporting and describing events. By the end of Year 9, the highest attaining pupils speak clearly, fluently and accurately on topics that interest them, often using specialist terms that are appropriate to the topic. In discussion, their answers show that they have listened carefully. The lowest attaining pupils also speak fluently. They talk about matters of immediate interest and listen and respond to others appropriately. Their use of technical vocabulary is more limited and sometimes they have difficulty in fully explaining what they mean. By the end of Year 11, pupils are articulate in debate and show this by presenting their position cogently and precisely and by recognising the main and secondary points in support of their position, for example, when they debate the seriousness of different crimes. By this time, most pupils have learned to speak and listen appropriately in an increasing range of contexts. The lowest attaining pupils listen carefully, and respond acceptably well to what others say.
74. The reading skills of many pupils are poor on entry. By the end of Year 9, the highest attaining pupils read at levels just below their age and understand what they have read at a level closer to their age. They read a range of texts with confidence, accuracy and good intonation. They use their knowledge of the alphabet to locate books and find information. The lowest attaining pupils read at much lower levels. They recognise familiar words in a simple text. They have difficulty in using grammar and context clues to help in saying new words. The best readers in Years 10 and 11 have sufficient skills and interest in reading to be able to discover information for themselves and to enjoy reading for pleasure. They no longer require specific practice and consolidate their reading skills by using reading as a tool to help their learning in other subjects, in work related education and, increasingly, by using the Internet. By this time, the best readers are capable of reading most daily newspapers and magazines with good levels of understanding. The poorest readers read simple text with a lower level of accuracy and with a more limited understanding.
75. Pupils writing skills are most often poorer than their speaking, listening and reading skills when they enter school. Improving pupils' writing has been a recent whole school target. As a consequence, pupils are given many opportunities to write for a variety of reasons. For example, younger pupils compile lists, short stories, bullet point their ideas from brainstorming sessions and

learn how to change a statement into an order. Appropriate attention is paid to punctuation, spelling and handwriting so that pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding of these aspects steadily improve. By the end of Year 9, the best writers communicate in an interesting and lively way, using punctuation accurately to convey meaning. For example, they write a story set in a haunted house in a coherent way, which emphasises the spookiness of the situation. They understand the purpose of narrative verse and demonstrate this by writing very lucid accounts of the Pied Piper of Hamelin. By this time, the highest attaining pupils write quickly and effectively. For example, they plan the plot, characters and location of a piece of narrative well and this shows through in the quality of their final work. Through this, they come to an understanding of genre and choose whether they will write for comedy, horror, romance or suspense. They are able to do this because their writing skills are sufficient for them to have power over their own stories. In Years 10 and 11 pupils follow a syllabus leading to a nationally accredited award. Their writing tasks are now more complex, for example writing a critique of an episode of a favourite soap opera.

76. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers value the contribution of all of their pupils, and the pupils know this and respond very well by trying hard to produce their best work. Therefore, lessons are almost always conducted in an atmosphere of trust and interest and this contributes to the good and very good quality of learning that is most often seen. Each element of the skills of reading and writing is taught rigorously, sometimes as a lesson in itself, more often as a separate part of lessons. Information and communication technology is used well to support teaching and learning and better than at the time of the last inspection. Pupils confidently use word processing programmes and are good at formatting their work by changing font size and type, importing pictures and re-sizing to position. They make good use of justification and the spell checker in completing their final work. Older pupils have the same good level of understanding of desktop publishing programmes.
77. English is very well led. The curriculum is now very good. The procedures for assessment provide accurate records of pupils' attainment and this information is used well in lesson planning and in the setting of targets, sometimes in pupils' IEPs. The new library is light and airy and will be well stocked when all books have been transferred to it. It acts as a study area, as well as a library, is a pleasant place to be in and is a very good base within which pupils can gain the skills of investigative learning.
78. The role of drama needs to be clearly determined for pupils in Years 7 to 9. At the moment, lessons in drama are making too little a contribution to the curriculum in English, or to the therapeutic work of the school.

MATHEMATICS

79. The provision for mathematics is good. Pupils are achieving good standards and are making good progress. This represents satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. The standards they achieve compare favourably with similar schools in the authority and a good number of Year 11 pupils gain passes in the GCSE and CoA examinations. However, recent staff changes have resulted in teachers without specialist knowledge teaching many lessons in mathematics. This is likely to have a detrimental effect on the progress pupils will be making.
80. Effective whole school planning promotes a good and progressive approach to the development of mathematical skills. The curriculum is broad and balanced and is satisfactorily supported by the implementation of the principles of the national strategy for numeracy. As a consequence, pupils are developing a good knowledge of number and space, shape and measurement. They gain from being given regular opportunities to display and practise their skills, because lesson planning places a good emphasis on applying mathematics and using and handling data.
81. By the end of Year 9, the highest attaining pupils manipulate positive and negative numbers and are developing confidence with sums involving the four basic processes. They operate at Level 4 of the National Curriculum. For example, they name and know the features of many two and three-dimensional shapes, understand the concept of angles and accurately estimate and measure them. They know the vocabulary of measurement for length, mass, temperature and capacity and

use the appropriate units in their calculations. They apply their skills well in problem solving tasks associated with real life situations such as shopping and determining the cost of a meal from a menu. They show their ability to handle data by producing tally charts and frequency tables based on information, such as the colour of cars passing the school, and draw bar and line graphs from which they identify the most popular and least popular colours.

82. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 undertake projects that promote investigative skills as they work towards their examinations. Activities, such as comparing supermarket prices and recognising the popularity of different football teams, develop a number of mathematical skills. By the end of Year 11, pupils are good at using mathematics as a tool to help them find out. For example, when appropriate, they collect information, tally results, display data, make comparisons and draw conclusions from their calculations to answer a question. To do this they may use spreadsheets, import graphics and display information as graphs and pie charts when presenting their results.
83. Over the time of the inspection, the quality of teaching is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9 and good in Years 10 and 11. This is because many lessons for pupils in Years 7 to 9 are being taught by teachers with too little specialist knowledge of the strategies and approaches for teaching mathematics. When teaching is good, it is characterised by the good and better match of tasks to the needs and abilities of pupils. This allows all pupils to work with interest and understanding and to be fully involved over the entire lesson. Learning also benefits from the good involvement of the LSAs. As a result, pupils work hard and independently in producing their best work. They make good progress, as did the Year 11 pupils who gained a greater understanding of division through activities associated with sharing money. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and pupils' behaviour is managed very well. In many lessons for pupils in Years 7 to 9, learning is less effective. This is because lessons include features that restrict learning, such as the poor choice of tasks that are either too difficult to promote new learning or just rehearse previously learned skills. When this is the case, lesson time is not used well and, too often lessons are leisurely events with little challenge or enjoyment for pupils, especially for those who are best at mathematics.
84. The subject co-ordinator has been appointed recently and is still developing her role. This and the significant increase in the number of staff who teach mathematics is acting to jeopardise the good quality of learning pupils have demonstrated in the recent past. The development of numeracy skills is encouraged well in some subjects, such as in lessons in science when pupils read scales, for example for weight and temperature and meters, and in lessons in design and technology that consolidate their use of number, shape and measurement. However, in lessons in other subjects teachers miss many opportunities to develop pupils' mathematical skills. Nevertheless, the commitment to the planned use of mathematics in lessons in other subject is shown through, for example the Numeracy Days, which provide pupils with a variety of exciting and thought provoking puzzles. Resources to support teaching and learning are good.
85. The procedures for tracking pupils' progress and for evaluating whole school performance are very effective. The headteacher collects detailed individual assessment information and analyses it well in order to identify areas requiring further development and for setting targets. This information is transferred back to teachers and is used well by many in their lesson planning.

SCIENCE

86. Provision for science is good. Pupils achieve good standards and are making good progress. The standards achieved for pupils in Years 9 to 11 are well above the average of pupils in equivalent schools in Hampshire and nationwide. This is the result of teaching that is consistently good and occasionally very good. It is also because teachers present well managed investigative work in a way that captures pupils' interest and arouses their curiosity. The good progress applies equally to boys and girls and to pupils with different levels of need. It represents a good improvement in teaching and learning since the previous inspection.
87. On entry to the school, pupils' knowledge of science is often poor. They make good progress, because teaching is exciting and activities relevant. The new science laboratory and very good range and quality of equipment act to motivate pupils to do well. The new Year 7 intake is

introduced to the safety rules of working in a laboratory in a confident, friendly, authoritative manner, which sets high expectations for the quality of their work and behaviour. Open ended questioning, for example "Why are the plugs so special?" challenged pupils to think carefully before responding. They were encouraged to volunteer their own rules, for example "Don't play with the fire extinguishers." and their ideas were gathered on an electronic white-board and reinforced with an appropriate 'Safety in the Laboratory' worksheet. Pupils in Year 8 learned that temperature identifies how hot things are and that this is measured, using a thermometer and in Celsius scale. Good preparation and organisation ensured that a practical experiment, with bowls of hot, cold and tepid water was carried out efficiently and that pupils understood that heat is the transfer of energy from something hot to something cold. The highest attaining pupils used thermometers to measure temperature accurately and know some typical temperatures, for example boiling water and room and refrigerator temperatures. The lowest attaining pupils needed help in reading the thermometer, but described the sensation and change in temperature as they placed their hand in turn from one bowl to another. Literacy and numeracy skills are regularly reinforced through the accurate use of scientific vocabulary, such as, 'tepid', 'freezing', 'cool' and by requiring pupils to measure and record accurately.

88. Pupils in Year 9 learn that children inherit characteristics from their parents and that the sperm of the male determines the sex of a baby. They use and understand scientific names for parts of the human reproductive system, for example, chromosomes, genes, cells and nuclei. They make up family 'jigsaws', using key features like ears, nose, mouth and hairline. They place symbols of eggs and sperms in plastic dishes and accurately draw them out in pairs to get a boy or girl combination. The highest attaining pupils are working at National Curriculum Level 4, the lowest attaining pupils are working at National Curriculum Level 2. They recognise that living things grow and reproduce and that children will have some features of their parents.
89. Pupils in Year 10 learn about the solar system and discuss the effects of the tilt of the earth. Their understanding is enhanced because of the teacher's very good demonstration and explanation. The very good use of scientific language, 'universe', 'galaxy', 'orbiting', 'gravity' and 'axis' contributes to increasing their vocabulary and their capacity for accurate explanation. Pupils in Year 11, in an experiment to measure the effect of acid on marble chips, showed good, safe working practices and good practical skills. They were challenged to predict and then prove that increasing the surface area of the marble chips, by using smaller pieces, would increase the rate of reaction to hydrochloric acid. They did this well and were able to link the large size of surface area of many small chips to the faster rate of the reaction. The highest attaining pupils in Year 11 take the GCSE examination in human biology with the predicted grades being E and F. All pupils will most likely obtain the CoA passes at merit or distinction levels.
90. Teachers' very good knowledge of the subject and of how information and communication technology can support learning are important dimensions in the good and better quality of teaching seen in most lessons. The white-board is used very well and pupils are good at using the computer to present their findings, often through bar and pie charts. The teachers know the pupils well, understand the impact of their difficulties on learning and plan well to overcome these. The work of the LSA is also pre-planned and, as a consequence, makes an effective contribution to learning. Pupils are managed very well, easily, confidently and with good humour. The result is that pupils' want to do their best. Routinely, they are attentive and mature. They work well as individuals and collaboratively in small groups, when they work on experiments. Lessons are busy and purposeful and are characterised by pace, productivity and a commitment to learning.
91. Science has a high profile, earned through the organisation of events such as 'science week'. The most recent event involved pupils in the cross-curricular study of robotics, which culminated in a visit to the Science Museum and included a display of pupils' work in the local shopping centre. In the design and technology/science lunchtime club, pupils have produced a solar power car, which won the best-designed car in a County competition at Thruxton. A number of pupils are also taking part in the Launch Pad Learning Initiative, which includes being involved in on-line learning, with pupils from the mainstream school on the same campus, other local schools and schools from France and Germany.

92. A part-time specialist leads the subject with enthusiasm and energy. She is well supported by a non-specialist teacher and in some lessons by a very competent LSA. All elements of the Programme of Study for pupils between Years 7 and 9 are covered, as is the syllabus for the GCSE examination. Medium-term planning is very good, as are lesson plans. The procedures for assessing pupils' work result in good records that are helpful in planning for future lessons. Very good resources are carefully stored, organised and used well to enhance learning. Safety concerns, raised at the last inspection have been fully addressed. Lessons in science make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

ART AND DESIGN

93. The provision for art is very good. The standards pupils achieve are very good, as is the progress they are making. Pupils gain a rich, disciplined and thoroughly enjoyable experience of a wide range of art. Of those who left the school last year, the best at art attained at a level broadly in line with nationally accepted standards for pupils in mainstream schools. Most pupils enter school with a little knowledge of art and very few skills specific to the subject. From Year 7 onward, they learn very rapidly because they know precisely what is expected of them in terms of courteous and generous behaviour and the need to apply themselves very well to their tasks, in the certainty that they will enjoy their learning.
94. Pupils in Year 7 quickly learn to put paint to paper through the proper use of a palette knife. This basic skill is built upon and they rapidly become independent learners, who listen very carefully to the teacher, but who try out their own approach, using the skills they have gained. They are confident learners because they know they will be guided, corrected and supported in their work, whatever is the quality. For example, Year 11 pupils looked at a drawing of Salisbury Cathedral by Frank Auerbach, which they judged was the result of "him playing about, and was not a proper picture". They then produced portraits using light and shade that gave the essence of a face. They used Indian ink and home made brushes, twigs with cotton wool, a pine cone, a feather or a bit of old hair-comb and enjoyed the novelty of trying to control the medium and their drawing with these instruments. In so doing, their work became a record of their experience in understanding the approach of Auerbach. In lessons to all year groups, the approach is to learn about art and artists by doing. It is testament to the success of this approach that pupils rarely realise the full extent of their learning or of the knowledge and skills they have gained; nor do they always recognise the high quality of their end work.
95. The quality of teaching is very good and frequently excellent. It is characterised by the powerful combination of the teacher's considerable knowledge and skill, passion for the subject and a very strong commitment to pupils' learning. Experiences are provided and tasks are so devised that pupils have little choice other than to succeed in their learning. The LSAs make a very valuable and, often precise, contribution to learning because their involvement is pre-planned in great detail. They show as much enthusiasm for the subject as do the pupils and they take a very great delight in the high quality achievement of those they are closest to. Routinely, pupils' behaviour is exemplary. This is because it is expected that it will be so, but also because they are too busy enjoying their learning to misbehave.
96. The curriculum is very broad and balanced. It fully reflects the Programme of Study for pupils in Years 7 to 9 and prepares pupils in Years 10 and 11 very well for their GCSE examination. The work in ceramics is lively, well considered and increasingly well executed. The provision in art has improved considerably since the last inspection. It now includes the increased use of information and communication technology in supporting learning. Art is created through computers and the digital camera is regularly used for a wide variety of purposes, including photographing completed work for individual portfolios. Also, the assessment systems, in embryonic form during the last inspection, are now clear, valuable, and used well. The very good link with design and technology has resulted in the completion of a tile-topped coffee table of high quality of design and execution on display in the reception area.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

97. The good quality provision identified during the previous inspection has been maintained. Pupils achieve well in lessons in both food studies and when working with resistant materials. They are making good progress in both these areas. Over their time at school, pupils' learn sufficient knowledge and skills associated with the full range of the subject to gain a good level of success in the CoA examinations they take toward the end of Year 11. The food technology curriculum for pupils in Years 7 to 9 focuses on home economics, but this is appropriate to the needs of the pupils. For example, they are introduced to self-help skills, such as shopping and money management, and the meaning of symbols on textile labels. The curriculum, however, still retains an adequate emphasis on the skills of designing and making.
98. By the end of Year 9, the highest attaining pupils have a good understanding of designing according to a brief. They follow instructions well and have learned sufficient skills to produce good quality completed work. They apply these skills to resistant materials, such as wood, metal and plastic in producing, for example a wind propelled machine and model insects that are based on prior research. In Years 10 and 11, they develop higher order skills associated with procedures, processes and products as they work on the projects for their examination. For example, they produce flow charts to aid their planning, use books and the Internet to research information on design briefs, create their design and follow it through to completion. The highest attaining pupils learn to evaluate their work critically and are able to make suggestions for improvement. Pupils talk easily and confidently about the design briefs and the problems faced in constructing their work, such as clocks and CD racks, and the recipes they write and make.
99. Lessons result in pupils gaining skills in the use of information and communication technology. For example, pupils make good use of commercial products in establishing a good understanding of robots and aspects of control systems. They use computer-aided design and computer-aided manufacturing programs to make high quality products out of resistant materials, when they design and cut out clock faces. In textiles, they scan designs that are then forwarded to a remote sewing machine. Information and communication technology is also used well in handling and displaying data, for example in bar graphs and pie charts to show the choice of favourite biscuits.
100. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and high expectations for pupils' learning and for the quality of their completed work. They pay good regard to pupils' behaviour, especially as this applies to health and safety. They use a good mixture of teaching strategies, such as whole class and individual work, to develop pupils' skills and understanding. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning so that, even in Year 7, there are early signs of pupils working independently. Teacher's high expectations are also reflected in the quality of pupils' work, which is frequently produced to their best level. Basic numeracy skills are promoted well, for example when using balance scales in food technology or measuring an angle in resistant materials. The very good relationships between staff and pupils help make learning a safe and enjoyable experience. Pupils' learning is also promoted well through the use of local facilities, such as the visit to Singleton Museum that enabled pupils to see flour being milled, when they are learning about bread making in food studies.
101. Both strands of design and technology are managed well by co-ordinators who are experienced and have a good understanding of the subject and its future development. Good quality learning resources and good quality specialist accommodation provide good support for teaching and learning. Although for class sizes greater than eight the resistant materials workshop seems cramped for space, especially when older pupils are moving around.

GEOGRAPHY

102. Provision for geography, which is taught to pupils in Years 7 to 9 only, is good. Pupils achieve well and are making good progress in acquiring geographical knowledge, skills and understanding. This is the result of teaching that is consistently good, in part because of the teacher's enthusiasm and high expectations, the impact of a new co-ordinator and the good support provided by the local authority's inspector for geography. This represents a good improvement since the previous inspection when pupils' progress and teaching were judged to be unsatisfactory.

103. Pupils in Year 7 make good progress in understanding, "What is geography?" and its relevance to modern social, environmental, economic and political issues. Good reinforcement of literacy skills throughout, but particularly through the use of geographical vocabulary, such as, 'planet', 'earth', 'environment' and 'pollution', effectively extends pupils' vocabulary. The highest attaining pupils know that geography is concerned with the study of the earth's form, physical features, climate and population. By the end of Year 8, pupils have made good progress in understanding the importance of trees and forests. They learn how forests differ as a result of climate and location, but show only a little awareness of forest conservation and management. The highest attaining pupils know that trees breathe in carbon dioxide and give out oxygen and that their roots hold the soil together. They offer explanations and draw comparisons with places they know, which reflect their good level of knowledge. The lowest attaining pupils are aware that forests are an important natural and economic resource. By the end of Year 9, pupils know the primary characteristics of settlements. They make good progress in understanding what causes settlements to vary in size and that their locations tend to reflect the economic activities of the area. From pictures of settlements, pupils are good at predicting the main physical and human features and explaining reasonably well their judgements to the class. The lowest attaining pupils are familiar with different types of settlement, for example, a hamlet, village, town and city.
104. The good quality of teaching is characterised by good planning and organisation, with tasks that are well selected to match pupils' needs and abilities. This allows lessons to proceed with pace and challenge and results in pupils being stimulated to learn. Good use is made of a range of visual stimuli, for example posters, photo-cards, books and the large atlas, to support teaching points. Questions are used well to stimulate discussion, to cause pupils to think and to assess pupils' learning. The very good relationship between staff and pupils helps pupils be confident as learners. As a result, they are always ready to volunteer their ideas in support of their learning. The teacher is well travelled and in many lessons is able to add personal and telling detail to the visual resources being used, to further reinforce learning. Pupils enjoy lessons in geography. Most often they work hard, but, occasionally, they need to be reminded of their responsibilities as learners. Routinely, this is done well so that the learning of others in the lesson is not disrupted. Good plenary sessions review progress and help to consolidate learning. The quality of teaching and learning would be better again if LSAs were more effectively used. In too many lessons, they do not make the contribution to learning that they are capable of because their responsibilities in lessons are not pre-planned with sufficient detail.
105. Geography is led well by a non-specialist teacher, who in her short time in post, has developed a good deal of expertise and has begun to implement significant improvements. These include a new curriculum plan and assessment system, planned opportunities for the use of information and communication technology and an emphasis on field-based and other practical work. Resources are satisfactory and developing. Lessons make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, although this is not planned for in a formal way. Literacy skills and, to a lesser extent, numeracy skills are regularly reinforced. Teaching and learning in geography are made more difficult by the lack of a subject-based classroom.
106. Last year's highest attaining pupils attained Level 2 of the National Curriculum, levels that were below those attained by the highest attaining pupils in other subjects. The recent improvements in the provision in geography should help redress this situation in the future.

HISTORY

107. History is taught to pupils in Years 7 to 9. The standards they achieve are satisfactory and they are making satisfactory progress in acquiring the knowledge, skills and understanding of history. This represents a satisfactory improvement on the previous inspection when learning was judged to be unsatisfactory. There have been improvements, too, in curriculum planning and assessment and in the quantity and use of resources. Good support has been given to the teacher by the local authority inspector for the subject and by the senior management team. As a result, teaching is more effective because of better planning and higher expectations for learning.
108. Pupils in Year 7 learn about the colourful life and work of the man after whom the school is named.

Key words and historical terminology are regularly reinforced. Those in Year 8 know how to cross-reference a range of sources, noting similarities and differences between them. They are making satisfactory progress in acquiring these skills because the event, the execution of Charles I is exciting to them and because the lesson is well planned and prepared. Good questioning, for example, "Why do you think the scaffold is in black?" causes pupils to catch the mood of the occasion, notice other details and begin to think about the moral issues of execution. Through the use of good source material, for example, the confessions of Richard Brandon the executioner on his deathbed, pupils learn to show respect for and see the importance of historical evidence. By the end of Year 9, the highest attaining pupils are at Level 2 of the National Curriculum, which is below the levels achieved by the highest attaining pupils in other subjects.

109. Year 11 pupils follow a humanities course, which is accredited through the Entry Level (CofA) Examination. Pupils learn about the change in British industry in the 1920s. They make satisfactory progress in understanding why changes were necessary. They show some empathy with, for example, the dreadful working conditions of miners and contrast that with the cleaner and safe working environment of a car assembly line.
110. An enthusiastic teacher takes all the history lessons. She is extending her subject knowledge and is developing a greater range of management skills. Lessons are well planned with clear introductions that inform pupils of what is expected of them. Good use is made of photographs and questions to stimulate pupils' interest and encourage them to observe closely. Pupils are generally attentive and display good listening skills. Classroom learning is very well supported by well-planned visits to places of historical interest, including France and Belgium to see the battlefields of both world wars. Experiencing history at first hand helps pupils to place events and developments in an appropriate historical context and acts as a powerful tool to reinforce pupils' learning, as was the case when Year 7 pupils visited the Cody tree over the time of the inspection. However, in too many lessons the LSA is not used well and contributes little to pupils' learning. Information and communication technology is little used in supporting teaching and learning in history.
111. The scheme of work provides a better-balanced coverage of the National Curriculum Programme of Study than was the case at the time of the last inspection. The procedures for assessing pupils learning are also better. Resources are satisfactory in range and quantity. Generally, they are used well, although in many lessons there continues to be an over-reliance on worksheets, in favour of role-play or the use of videotaped material. Literacy skills are regularly reinforced and the subject makes a good, but not a well-planned contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
112. There is no classroom base for history, where displays and pupils' work can be mounted and referred to and where resources can be stored and organised.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

113. Good progress has been made in addressing many of the issues relating to information and communication technology raised by the last inspection. Overall, provision is now satisfactory. The school has invested heavily in providing very good quality learning resources and accommodation and developing the skills of teachers and LSAs. However, only in some lessons is learning good or better. Overall, the standard pupils achieve and the progress they are making are satisfactory. Pupils in Year 11 make sufficient progress to gain success in the CoA examination.
114. By the end of Year 9, the highest attaining pupils open and close programs and save and print their work independently. They handle and manipulate data and set up a class database containing information, such as their favourite television 'soaps' and favourite hobbies. They use a word processing program to produce a variety of documents and improve presentation by changing the font size, style and colour. They use the spell checker and are beginning to use desktop publishing programs. They add variety to their work by opening picture galleries and importing pictures into their document, as they did when developing a poster for a sponsored silence. They access the Internet and use a search engine to identify appropriate web sites before extracting

information from them, such as entering their address and printing off a map showing the location of their house. Pupils create spreadsheets by inputting data, changing the size of fonts and columns before displaying the information as block graphs. The highest attaining pupils also use formulae to input information. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 follow examination topics and extend their knowledge of computer hardware, such as input and output peripherals and their understanding of different applications. In particular, they develop their understanding of how information can be classified, organised and accessed. By the end of Year 11, the highest attaining pupils produce and alter complex spreadsheets and compile databases, creating datafiles, searching, amending and adding fields. Their skill in using graphics is also extended as they move and copy pictures and add text to them.

115. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge. Relationships with pupils are good. When teaching is good, pupils are managed effectively so that the teacher is able to combine dealing with the needs of individual pupils with overseeing the work of others. In most lessons, this is possible because pupils are provided with activities that are suitably challenging and build systematically on their prior learning. In these lessons, pupils have a good understanding of what they are required to do and the necessary skills to carry it out. As a result, they work with interest and perseverance. However, not all teaching is this effective. In the less effective lessons, time and resources are not used efficiently because lessons are not well planned and activities do not always match with pupils' previous knowledge or abilities. Too little learning occurs in these lessons. In addition, too much lesson time is taken up reminding pupils of their responsibilities as learners. This acts to slow the pace of learning for all pupils.
116. Currently, management of the subject is satisfactory. However, recent developments, including the availability of the very good new information and communication technology suite, suggest that provision for the subject has the potential to promote improved standards and progress. Medium term planning documents are good and work has begun on linking the use of computers to support teaching and learning in other subjects. Lessons in science and design and technology already provide very good opportunities for pupils to practise and refine their computer skills. A written code of conduct, endorsed by parents that explains the use of the Internet to support teaching and learning will shortly be available.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French

117. The provision for French is good. The standards pupils achieve and the progress they are making are good. The quality of the provision has significantly improved since the last inspection.
118. Pupils in Year 8 reminded themselves of work they did last term when they played the game of 'Voici la famille Simpson' and were amused by the idea that they can use well-known television characters within a French context. Pupils in Year 10, began preparing for the CoA examination by extending their vocabulary associated with 'Mes passé-temps, mes hobbies' and understood that they needed to differentiate between je joue and je vais, when they indicate that they are to go swimming, watch television, or play the piano. Once they were reminded of the pronunciation, they quickly took responsibility for their own learning, and were fully involved in the lesson. The highest attaining pupils are able to initiate conversations in French, with sufficient vocabulary, recognition of grammar and accent, that allow them to make simple points and be involved in simple debates.
119. Teaching is consistently very good in that it ensures that pupils learn quickly, effectively and enjoy doing so. As a result, the best speakers converse at Level 3 of the National Curriculum. The teacher has a good knowledge of the language and of the country, as well as a very good understanding of the needs of the pupils. As a result, she easily motivates pupils to learn. The contribution of LSAs is good. They are involved throughout lessons, for example when helping individual pupils complete worksheets or joining in card games with pupils or helping in pronunciation. The assessment of pupils' learning is done carefully and is accurately recorded.

The very good relationships between staff and pupils give pupils confidence to try and pronounce new words with the correct accent, which helps them to quickly develop their vocabulary. Mostly, they speak to the teacher in French, although some directions are given in English to ensure that lessons move briskly forward and that all pupils understand the purpose and requirements of succeeding tasks. Annually, the pupils in Years 7 and 8 role-play the workings of a French Café, to which all members of staff are invited. Written invitations are sent out, which are replied to, in French. This is very successful and enables pupils to demonstrate their learning by providing a French café-style menu and to converse in French in their version of bistro vocabulary.

120. The curriculum planning is very clear and ensures the coverage of a relatively large number of tasks and experiences. The policy and planning documents are very good. The good level of success in the CoA examination by pupils who left last year represents a good challenge to the Year 11 cohort of this year. The future plans to further develop pupils' experience of the French language and life style, are exciting. Lessons in French make a very good contribution to pupils' cultural knowledge. The school's visit to France provides an excellent opportunity for pupils to practise their language skills and to gain a first hand knowledge of French culture.

MUSIC

121. The provision for music is satisfactory. Since the last inspection, an appropriate scheme of work has been completed. Music is very well resourced. However, the very good range, quantity and quality of tuned and untuned percussion instruments and keyboards are not used effectively in promoting the highest of standards, because the quality of teaching, whilst generally satisfactory, does not always realise satisfactory progress in learning over the full range of the subject. As a result, by the end of Year 9, pupils have too little knowledge of music and of listening to and appraising music. Their performing and composing skills are better, but these are also limited. There are no examination opportunities through which the oldest pupils can demonstrate the extent of their learning in music over their time at school. The judgement expressed in the letter from the Attached Inspector (October 2001) outlining progress against the key issues of the last inspection continues to stand, namely that support and monitoring of teaching in music will be required to ensure effective delivery.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

122. The quality of provision is satisfactory. Resources are very good. Both the indoor accommodation of the gymnasium and sports hall and outdoor teaching areas are very good. Over the last year, mainly because lessons were taught by teachers without specialist knowledge or training, the standards achieved and the progress pupils made were satisfactory. There were no differences in the achievements of boys and girls. The appointment of an experienced teacher with specialist training, who started in September 2002, negates the need to have non-specialist teachers take lessons. The standards pupils achieve and the progress they make should quickly return to the good levels recognised in the first inspection in October 1996.
123. By the end of Year 9, the highest attaining pupils play games to Level 4 of the National Curriculum and attain the same level in athletics and outdoor activities. In gymnastics, they are at Level 3. In football, their skills are sufficient for them to pass, receive and dribble the ball well enough for games to be played at high levels of activity and with a good team structure. The lowest attaining pupils are more static in games, and when they receive the ball they move it on successfully, less frequently. In rugby, the highest attaining pupils are able to pass and catch the ball with sufficient skill to play competitive games of mini-rugby and to enjoy the freedom inherent in the activity. The lowest attaining pupils frequently stop when they receive the ball and rarely link well with their team mates. Pupils enjoy learning the skills of basketball and volleyball, which they transfer well into games. In gymnastics, the highest attaining pupils control their body weight well in jumps, balances and when performing a series of actions to a balanced finish. The lowest attaining pupils have difficulty in co-ordinating their movements sufficiently well to finish in a well balanced position. In the summer term, they practise orienteering and athletic events. Additional coaching from qualified coaches from local clubs supports the teaching of tennis and cricket. Records show that

in all of these activities the standards pupils are achieving and the progress they are making are satisfactory. For pupils in Years 10 and 11, the focus of the curriculum is to promote the importance of physical fitness and to prepare pupils for the leisure activities they can continue to enjoy after they have left school. This is done satisfactorily.

124. The recently appointed specialist teacher taught all the lessons observed over the time of the inspection. The quality of teaching is good and promotes good learning in lessons. Lessons are well planned and include all pupils in appropriately challenging activities, whatever is their ability level or their gender. Lessons are a good mix of skill training based on clear teaching points and mini games. For example, in a good lesson in rugby, pupils began learning the technique of spin passing by firstly passing in pairs. After completing more activities involving passing when moving, they practised their passing in a simulated three quarter line of four pupils in competition against other teams of four. Teaching the technique of spin passing in isolation resulted in pupils being able to employ their learning in a mini-game quickly and successfully. Pupils enjoy lessons. They dress appropriately and most delight in being active. They work hard at their learning so as to match the teachers' high expectations for them. Praise and encouragement are well used to sustain learning, even when pupils are physically tired. Routinely, behaviour is good. Lesson time is well used to promote skill gains through well-selected tasks that are most often linked with high levels of physical activity.
125. The newly appointed co-ordinator has had too little time to make a significant contribution to improving the quality of provision. An early development should be the introduction of an accredited award, so that Year 11 pupils are able to demonstrate the extent of their learning over their time at school. His appointment has removed all the limitations affecting the, potentially, very high quality of provision.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

126. The provision for religious education is good. The standards pupils achieve and the progress they are making are good. A well organised Locally Agreed Syllabus, 'Visions of Life', is supported by good medium and short-term planning. The good planning and good quality teaching help pupils to learn about the similarities and differences in the major religions and about abstract concepts such as belief, trust and symbolism that relate to their own lives.
127. By the end of Year 9, pupils have a good knowledge of Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism and of the Muslim and Jewish traditions. In this, the quality of teaching and learning is helped by the considerable increase in the range of resources such as artefacts, videotapes and CDs that have been purchased since the last inspection. For example, pupils know the names of the places of worship and of the principal religious figures for each of the major religions. They know why the places of worship of the major religions are architecturally different. They know the meaning of the primary symbols associated with the religions, such as the meaning of the cross in Christianity. By the end of Year 11, the highest attaining pupils have sufficient knowledge and understanding to make a good attempt at explaining the differences between belief and religion and how the concept of belief can fashion the life-styles of people, including influencing their dress and hair styles. They are able to discuss world issues sensibly and are good at recognising rights and moral positions. They do this well, even when they are discussing issues they have little direct experience of, such as the famine in Africa. The lowest attaining pupils continue to regard religious education as an academic subject that has little to do with their own lives. The highest attaining pupils have a good understanding of the meaning of concepts such as respect, trust and friendship and how these are relevant to their own lives.
128. The quality of teaching is good. The quality of learning is helped by the clear identification of learning objectives in lesson plans and the very good relationship that the teacher has with all pupils. Difficult abstract concepts are taught well. For example, skilful questioning in a lesson for older pupils resulted in pupils recognising the importance of symbols in reflecting complex issues and traditions. The link between the pupils' world, which is full of consumer related symbols, for example the Nike swish and the badge of the school, was very well made to symbols of religious significance. Taking pupils from their world into a more abstract world resulted in all pupils having

a good understanding of the importance of symbols and of symbolism in communication. Routinely, pupils behave well and, because they are interested in their learning, work hard to produce their best results. They speak confidently in whole class discussions and are always ready to debate a point of concern to them. Their participation in all aspects of lessons is good and this contributes to the good quality of learning that is routinely seen. Lesson time is used well and the learning needs of all pupils are equally met.

129. Since the last inspection, the co-ordinator has worked hard in extending the curriculum. This has been done well. The good standards identified then have been maintained over a broader and more challenging curriculum. Year 11 pupils take the Youth Award Scheme module in Beliefs and Values. They easily complete this. The extent of pupils' learning over their time at school is sufficient for them to gain success in more demanding nationally accredited examinations. Lessons in religious education make a very positive contribution to the spiritual, moral and cultural development of pupils.