

INSPECTION REPORT

**Sanders Draper School
Hornchurch**

LEA area : London Borough of Havering

School Register Number : 102341

Headteacher : Mr B Rogers

Reporting inspector : Mr P Gannon

Dates of inspection : 2-6 December 1996

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

Information about the school

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Type of school : | Comprehensive |
| Type of control : | County |
| Age range of pupils : | 11-16 |
| Gender of pupils : | Mixed |
| School address : | Suttons Lane Hornchurch Essex RM12 6RT |
| Telephone number : | 01708 443068 |
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| Appropriate authority : | Governing body |
| Name of chair of governors : | Mr R Lee |

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Main findings

Educational standards achieved by pupils in the school

1. Sanders Draper School is a good school. It provides well for the pupils who attend it. The educational standards achieved by the pupils are generally in accord with what is nationally expected.

2. Over the past five years, examination results have been rising. In the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) in 1995, pupils reached standards in English, mathematics and science which were in line with national expectations in English and science and rather lower in mathematics. Results in art and design technology and information systems were well above the average; in French they were well below. The 1996 results are at similar levels, though there has been a drop in English and drama.

3. In the National Curriculum tests taken at the end of Year 9 (end of Key Stage 3) in the three core subjects, pupils are meeting national expectations in English and science, but are doing less well in mathematics.

Quality of education provided

4. The quality of teaching is generally good. Only ten per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory and strengths far outweigh weaknesses. In the teaching of French, there are some serious weaknesses. There is some unsatisfactory teaching in English. Teachers' planning is good. The methods used, the use of resources for learning, the ways in which pupils are managed and controlled - all these are often good and rarely less than satisfactory. In general, teachers make good use of assessment techniques and processes in their day-to-day teaching, though some departments do not consistently implement the school's assessment policies.

5. The curriculum provided by the school complies with the requirements of the National Curriculum, except that there is insufficient religious education (RE) in Key Stage 4, not enough use of information technology (IT) across the whole curriculum and the allocation of time to music at Key Stage 3 is hardly enough to meet National Curriculum needs.

6. Pupils make good progress and most of them enjoy their school life. The school has a good policy for meeting the needs of different ranges of ability, including the most able. The hearing impaired unit is well managed and its pupils are enabled to have full access to the school's curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make satisfactory and sometimes good progress, though the coordination of provision for SEN across the whole school is unsatisfactory.

Spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of pupils

7. In general, the school provides appropriately for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Spiritual development is least satisfactory, for two reasons: there is inadequate provision of RE in Years 10 and 11 and the school does not meet the statutory requirement to hold a daily act of collective worship for all pupils. However, the moral development of pupils is good. They are taught to know right from wrong, they abide by the school's code of conduct - which they helped to compile - and their good behaviour and discipline reflect the school's good provision in this area of education. As for social development, it is very good indeed. Pupils are given and take responsibility; they are confident, polite and helpful to visitors; many of them participate in the rich array of extracurricular activities on offer.

8. The school is outward-looking and is active in the local community and beyond. The pupils' cultural development is much enriched by the very good artistic, dramatic and musical experiences in the curriculum, and in the many associated activities outside school, including residential trips and visits to places of cultural and historical importance.

The efficiency of the school

9. The school is well run. There is a very effective governing body, which exercises its statutory responsibilities except in ensuring that there is a daily act of collective worship, that there is adequate provision for RE in Years 10 and 11 and that they publish statutory details concerning SEN in their annual reports. Governors are fully involved in the life of the school; they properly maintain firm oversight of the school's budget and resources, and delegate responsibility, effectively supervised, for leadership and management to the Headteacher and his senior management team. The school gives good value for money.

10. The Headteacher and his team are able and experienced and provide very good leadership, holding a clear vision of the school's future and using its income and resources well. There are good consultative procedures and a comprehensive set of whole-school policies. These policies are not all consistently implemented by all the staff: this is particularly so in relation to policies regarding SEN and IT across the whole curriculum. The senior management team monitors and evaluates curricular developments and the teaching in the school, which are judged in relation to the clearly expressed aims of the school as set out in the well compiled development plan.

11. Some areas of management need attention. In particular, the leadership and management as well as the quality of teaching in the modern foreign languages department need urgently to be improved.

12. The school is committed to raising pupils' achievements. It is a civilised and harmonious community, with a good ethos, and an institution in which both pupils and parents take justifiable pride.

Key issues for action

13. In order to improve its already satisfactory educational standards, the school and its governing body should take the following measures:

< ensure, through the agency of the senior management team, that there is more consistent and better coordination and implementation of all whole-school policies, especially in relation to:

- IT across the whole curriculum, and
- assessment policies;

< ensure that leadership, management and teaching in the modern foreign languages are improved;

< ensure that provision for pupils with special educational needs, other than those
pupils in the hearing impaired unit, is more efficiently and effectively managed
and coordinated;

< ensure that all statutory responsibilities of the governing body are met, especially
in relation to providing for a daily act of collective worship, determining
adequate provision for information technology and religious education in Years 10
and 11, and in providing more time for National Curriculum requirements to be
met in respect of music in Years 7-9.

Introduction

Characteristics of the school

14. The school is an 11-16 mixed comprehensive school with 764 pupils on roll, situated in the southern part of the London Borough of Havering. The area's housing is mainly owner-occupied and there is relatively little social disadvantage. Two pupils come from homes where English is not the first language; approximately 13 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals; 125 pupils are entered on the school's register of special needs.

15. The school was originally built in 1938 and occupies a large site shared with a primary school. There have been several additions to the original buildings over the years, particularly since the school was designated a mixed comprehensive in 1975. The school now has 8 pupils in 12 place Unit for the hearing impaired. The unit uses British Sign Language and the school successfully encourages both staff and pupils in the main school to learn signing.

16. The ability of pupils who enter the school in Year 7 comprises the full range to be expected in a comprehensive school.

Key Indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 3¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3
for latest reporting year:

| Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|------|------|-------|-------|
| 1995 | 75 | 64 | 139 |

| National Curriculum Test Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Number of pupils at NC Level 5 or above | Boys | 30 | 38 | 44 |
| | Girls | 36 | 27 | 28 |
| | Total | 66 | 65 | 72 |
| Percentage at NC Level 5 or above | School | 47.5 | 46.8 | 51.8 |
| | National | | | |
| Percentage at NC Level 6 or above | School | 14.4 | 25.9 | 12.2 |
| | National | | | |

| Teacher Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|-------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Number of pupils at NC Level 5 or above | Boys | 25 | 47 | 43 |
| | Girls | 39 | 31 | 32 |
| | Total | 64 | 78 | 75 |

¹

Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

| | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------|----|----|----|
| Percentage at NC Level 5 or above | School | 46 | 56 | 54 |
| | National | 62 | 61 | 59 |
| Percentage at NC Level 6 or above | School | 20 | 32 | 21 |
| | National | 32 | 34 | 28 |

Attainment at Key Stage 4²

Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year:

| Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|------|------|-------|-------|
| 1995 | 76 | 60 | 136 |

| GCSE Results | | 5 or more grades A* to C | 5 or more grades A* to G | 1 or more grades A* to G |
|---|----------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Number of pupils achieving standard specified | Boys | 32 | 66 | 69 |
| | Girls | 32 | 58 | 58 |
| | Total | 64 | 124 | 127 |
| Percentage achieving standard specified | School | 47 | 91.2 | 93.4 |
| | National | | | |

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year :

| | | % |
|----------------------|---------------------------|-----|
| Authorised Absence | School | 7.2 |
| | National comparative data | 8.3 |
| Unauthorised Absence | School | 0.5 |
| | National comparative data | 1.1 |

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year :

| | Number |
|--------------|--------|
| Fixed period | 98 |
| Permanent | 2 |

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

| | % |
|---------------------|----|
| Very good or better | 19 |

| | |
|------------------------|----|
| Satisfactory or better | 90 |
| Less than satisfactory | 10 |

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school

Attainment and progress

17. Attainment in the National Curriculum tests for 14 year olds in English and science was in line with national expectations in 1995, but in mathematics attainment was lower. In all three core subjects, there were smaller proportions reaching level 6 or above than the average in similar schools nationally. There was no significant change in the mathematics and science results in 1996, but the English results were not as good as in the previous year.

18. By the end of Key Stage 3, attainment in English and science is average and progress is satisfactory. In mathematics, the attainment and progress of the most able and the middle ability pupils are below average but pupils of lower ability make satisfactory progress.

19. The GCSE results have been steadily improving over the last five years and the percentage of pupils obtaining five or more grades *A-C is a little above the national average. The average GCSE point score per pupil has been rising at a faster rate than the national trend. The high rate of entry for GCSE is a strength of the school; virtually all pupils are entered for both English and English literature, for mathematics and for double science. In 1995, the school's GCSE results were significantly above the national averages in English, drama, art, design and technology and information systems, broadly in line with national expectations in science and geography and well below average in history, mathematics, and French. In 1996, the results were similar, except in history, where there was a significant improvement, and English and drama, where the standard has dropped.

20. More generally, pupils' attainment is satisfactory in most subjects. It is good in art, design and technology and information systems. It is unsatisfactory in French and in RE at Key Stage 4.

21. Girls' attainment overall, as measured by the average GCSE point score per pupil, has been much higher than that of boys at age 16 over the last five years. In general, the progress of boys has not been as good as that of girls. In the 1996 GCSE examinations, boys attained significantly higher standards than girls in mathematics and geography and significantly lower in English, French, art and information systems.

22. Pupils achieve sound standards of literacy, making good progress as they move through the school. Their work in most subjects contributes to the encouragement and extension of reading and a gradual widening of their vocabulary. The use of discussion provides good practice in speaking and listening, but is too limited in some subjects. Pupils are articulate and listen well, but their use of more formal or extended speech and argument is less well developed. Regular practice in writing for a range of purposes in all appropriate subjects results in satisfactory writing achievement across the curriculum.

23. Pupils are generally numerate. They make satisfactory progress in acquiring mathematical skills, including number, algebra, geometry and handling data. They can use and apply mathematical techniques in different subjects of the curriculum.

24. Information technology is well taught, but pupils' use of IT is very variable since departments vary in the use made of computers and in the expertise possessed by different members of the staff. Though pupils' computer literacy is generally good, the school needs to improve the coordination of IT across the curriculum, especially at Key Stage 4.

25. Pupils enter the school with very different levels of prior attainment, as is typical of comprehensive schools nationally. Most pupils make satisfactory or good progress in all their subjects. The school has adopted measures to raise attainment and improve progress with some success. There is careful evaluation of results for each subject and, in some departments, for each teacher. Improved analysis of the progress of individual pupils, including analysis of pupils' attainment relative to their attainment on entry, would improve target setting and sharpen the focus of mentoring.

Attitudes, behaviour, and personal development

26. The school's motto is "Positive achievement for all", and it strives to live up to it by encouraging all pupils to develop both their academic and their social strengths. Pupils respond to this by being generally keen to answer questions, listening attentively and working well in groups. They are willing to take responsibility for their own learning and often work purposefully and with determination. They sustain their concentration and when teaching is stimulating they are enthusiastic. They are able to use resources sensibly and complete tasks set them. Achievements are celebrated and work is well displayed. These attitudes have done much to raise standards in recent years.

27. Behaviour is generally very good. Pupils sign a contract on accepting a place in the school and the code of conduct is displayed in classrooms and homework diaries. Around the school, pupils are friendly, welcoming and courteous. In classrooms, teachers do not have to waste time gaining order. They have high expectations of good behaviour, dress, and manners, and this encourages a good response. Staff treat pupils with respect and pupils respond with increasing maturity. Bullying, when it occurs (which is infrequently), is handled effectively. There is no evidence of racial disharmony. Pupils are helpful to those from the hearing impaired unit and many learn to "sign". In general, then, the school functions as an orderly and caring community. The fairly high rate of fixed-term exclusions is a result of the school's carefully applied and well monitored exclusion policy in pursuit of its aim to maintain its good ethos.

28. The personal and social education (PSE) programme is well thought out, with an input from heads of year. Although in Years 10 and 11 it is overcrowded, it is generally well taught. There are outstanding opportunities in the school for developing personal responsibility and initiative, with many pupils being given particular responsibilities from Year 7 onwards. Pupils man the reception desk, show visitors round the school, raise funds for charities and the school, take productions out to primary schools, do social work in the vicinity and become mentors, prefects and sports captains. The school's aim is to produce socially responsible and mature individuals and in this aim it is largely succeeding.

Attendance

29. Attendance levels are generally good. A relatively high rate of absence is recorded in Year 10. This is partly due to the entry into that year of pupils from other schools who are not so well versed in the Sanders Draper ethos. Punctuality is encouraged and lessons begin promptly. Lateness is followed by appropriate sanctions. Registers are computerised and they comply with statutory requirements. They are taken efficiently at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions and are monitored weekly by the education welfare officer and the heads of year. The education welfare officer keeps excellent records of her involvement with pupils, including an attendance record for each individual pupil. She offers comprehensive support to the school and liaises with external agencies. The senior management conducts spot checks to counter "internal truancy" - that is, pupils absenting themselves after registration. There is little evidence of that occurring. The good levels of attendance have a positive effect on the standards achieved in the school.

Quality of education provided

Teaching

30. The quality of teaching throughout the school is generally good and, though there are weaknesses in some subjects, there is some teaching which is excellent. The strengths are many. Teachers plan their work well, have very good relationships with their pupils, exercise good control in class and, for the most part, use the assessment techniques they have established to make modifications to syllabuses, teaching materials and future planning. Most teachers give good, clear instructions to pupils. Most have good expertise in their own subjects. Some particularly good teaching is going on in art, history, music, drama and RE.

31. There are weaknesses, however. In the modern foreign languages department there is generally a low level of expertise, planning is poor and management is weak. There is also some weak teaching in English. In many subjects, some lessons, especially in Years 10 and 11, make too few demands of pupils, particularly those of high ability.

32. Teaching methods embrace a good blend of whole-class teaching and work in pairs or groups. Assessment of pupils' work is generally satisfactory, but not all departments have yet successfully developed their own systems in line with school policy. This is the subject of a review currently being undertaken by all departments. Good use of resources by most teachers is helping to raise standards.

33. Pupils with special educational needs are helped in their learning by teachers' use of different materials and teaching methods. This was especially so in some mathematics and science lessons.

34. Staff work extremely hard, giving many hours to extra classes at lunchtimes or after school, to revision classes and to the many extracurricular activities they provide for pupils.

35. Overall, there are high standards of teaching in the school.

The curriculum and assessment

36. The curriculum is broad and balanced in almost all respects. Teaching time matches the nationally recommended figure. The recent change to a six-period day has allowed more time for some arts subjects, though music is not yet allocated enough teaching time to meet National Curriculum requirements. The time for religious education is adequate in Year 7-9, but in Years 10 and 11 statutory requirements are not being met. In mathematics, limited time in Year 10 is having an adverse effect on standards.

37. At Key Stage 3, all subjects of the National Curriculum are taught, with religious education, drama and PSE. French is the only modern foreign language offered at both key stages, though the school is considering reintroducing a second language. Curricular planning is good in most subjects. Pupils are taught mainly in mixed ability groups, with some banding in science from Year 9 and some setting in mathematics and French.

38. At Key Stage 4, the compulsory core subjects include English literature and a number of choices within technology. A range of options is offered, with subjects grouped to ensure that choices give all pupils continuing breadth and balance in their programmes. The Key Stage 4 curriculum will be broadened further next year by the addition of physical education and RE as GCSE subjects. In Years 10 and 11, the PSE programme is overstretched; careers, health, sex education and RE are included, and RE is not being given adequate time.

39. The use of IT is uneven and in some subjects poor. More staff need training if the good provision is to be fully used within the curriculum. The library provides good curricular support and is well used.

40. The needs of pupils from the hearing impaired unit are well met. They are effectively integrated into mainstream classes and given good access to the curriculum. The opportunity for teachers and other pupils to learn signing is an aid to this integration. Support for pupils with special educational needs in general is haphazard in some aspects of its organisation, with insufficient liaison between class and support teachers in the planning and assessing of work. The complementary studies course offered as an option in Years 10 and 11 is not well organised enough to meet the needs of the statemented pupils for whom it is designed.

41. The school has set up a system for identifying and supporting pupils of above average ability, with a coordinator and some imaginative departmental provision.

42. The curriculum is enhanced by a wide selection of extracurricular activities, including sports, art, music, drama and IT. There are also drama productions in which the drama and English departments sometimes collaborate with music, as in a very successful recent production of "South Pacific". Field trips and visits include residential experience in England and abroad.

43. The assessment coordinator and senior management team have done some good work in establishing an assessment policy and framework within which departments can develop systems related to the needs of their individual subjects. These systems vary greatly across departments. While some have developed excellent practices, others have not yet made sufficient progress. The coordinator has asked all departments to produce assessment action plans by February 1997.

44. There were some noticeable differences between teachers' assessments and test results in some of the Key Stage 3 national tests, but all departments are now much more aware of National Curriculum levels of attainment and are beginning to use departmental portfolios to standardise their assessments. Staff are encouraged to take in-service training in assessment and there is good Local Education Authority provision for support and meetings for co-ordinators. Departments are required to evaluate their examination results and some ask each teachers to contribute written comments for this purpose.

45. Assessment practice is well monitored by the senior management team. Each team member works regularly with one department and is familiar with its working and assessment practices. In addition, termly reviews are made of the work of two departments; pupils' books and folders are taken in and an evaluation made of the quality of assessment and marking. This is a thorough and effective system, which ensures that practice in six departments is closely examined each year.

46. The quality of marking varies within and across departments, but much good marking of work is done, with constructive comments showing how pupils can improve their own work. At its best, marking establishes a dialogue between teacher and pupil and this is well used by some teachers.

47. The continuing assessment of pupils with special educational needs is not uniformly good and there is need for more understanding of the new statutory Code of Practice by all members of staff, and more effective liaison between class and support teachers.

48. The school meets the statutory requirements for recording and reporting. In Years 7 and 9, two reports go out to parents, with supporting meetings which give parents good information about their children's progress in these years, as well as information about option choices in Year 10. Annual reports go to parents in all other years and all pupils on leaving the school take with them their national Record of Achievement.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

49. Pupils have many good personal qualities. They are mostly friendly, polite and supportive of each other. The school successfully encourages values of respect for others and individual responsibility.

50. Provision for spiritual development is unsatisfactory in that not enough opportunities are planned for pupils to reflect deeply and make personal response. They have useful time in assemblies once a week to consider themes of value. These are based broadly on Christian traditions. An appropriate series of thoughts for the week is being introduced. Pupils gain insight into different beliefs in RE, though only at Key Stage 3. Self-expression is encouraged well in drama, art and music. In many subjects, pupils have good chances to explore aspects of life and human experience.

51. A sense of moral responsibility is promoted throughout school life. Pupils are effectively learning right from wrong through the positive behaviour code, to which they contributed. There is consistent emphasis on taking responsibility for actions and considering consequences for others. Values such as honesty, fairness and respect for truth are fostered through English literature, art and RE. Deeper appreciation of moral issues such as conflict and human rights is well developed in history. In geography, pupils explore relative arguments for conservation and development. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of complex moral dilemmas need to be strengthened by provision of RE at Key Stage 4.

52. Provision for social development is very good. Relationships between pupils and with staff are generally harmonious. Adults in the school largely set a positive example. They are friendly and approachable. Opportunities for pupils to take responsibility are a real strength. The school council discusses serious issues, giving pupils a taste of democracy and a chance to contribute to decisions. Pupils acting as receptionists welcome visitors efficiently. A sense of citizenship is well fostered for many pupils of all ages by involvement with the local community. Most subjects encourage cooperation in group work. The PSE programme contains appropriate themes including health, careers, relationships and study skills.

53. Opportunities for cultural development are satisfactory but variable. Pupils gain some awareness of their cultural heritage as well as an aesthetic appreciation through art and music. Understanding of European influences is fostered through study of French and visits abroad. The different cultures of India, Africa and South America are explored in subjects such as art and geography. There is considerable scope in most subjects for strengthening pupils' understanding of a culturally diverse society. Individual interests are well fostered through a very good range of extra activities and visits.

54. The school needs to continue to develop arrangements for assembly and thought for the day in order to ensure full compliance with statutory requirements for collective worship.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

55. The support and guidance available to pupils are strengths of the school. Form tutors and heads of year move up the school with each year group and are the first to provide support. There is a good link with all support services through the education welfare officer, who is an essential part of the school team. Pupils begin the day in tutor groups and the first point of contact with home is through the homework diary, checked by form tutors. Heads of year monitor registers closely and get in touch with support services when necessary; they also have academic links with pupils through heads of departments and individual subject teachers. The PSE programme is flexible enough for heads of year to be able to insert topics of immediate import or relevance, such as bullying. In PSE lessons, tutors also cover pastoral matters.

56. The more able children, for whom there is a coordinator, are catered for with a wealth of extracurricular activities, though more could be done in lessons to stretch them. The support for hearing impaired pupils is very good. Provision for those with other special educational needs, though not as well coordinated as it might be, is also generally good.

57. The school has a variety of policies, rewards and sanctions to deal with attendance, punctuality, bullying and behaviour. These are applied consistently by the staff and are understood and valued by parents and pupils. The documentation for exclusions is well kept and the actual policy carefully applied. Exclusion is used as the ultimate sanction in implementing the behaviour policy and is automatic for some offences. This is known to pupils and parents alike.

58. The school has excellent child protection policies. The designated member of staff is knowledgeable and well trained and has established all necessary contacts with the police, the education welfare officer and social services, making the school secure in this respect. There are plenty of first aiders and ancillary medical specialists on call if needed.

59. There is an up-to-date health and safety policy and a member of staff in charge. Individual departments are responsible for their own safety and this arrangement is generally satisfactory. Relevant checks of electrical equipment and fire hazards are carried out, though the local authority no longer carries out annual checks. Although the rear gates are locked during the day and the front ones manned at lunchtimes, the school site is large and difficult to make secure. On one day of the inspection, vehicles were seen driving through the play areas at breaktime. The rear of the main building is badly in need of repair and is at present not secure, but the school has this matter in hand. Apart from that, the school site is well maintained, bright and clean. Pupils should be encouraged to pick up their own litter after break.

Partnership with parents and the community

60. The school asks every parent, in an individual interview at the beginning of Year 7, to sign a contract supporting the school's ethos. The parents are then kept well informed of their children's progress. Those with children who have special educational needs are involved in both the planning and review stages of the individual education plans. Two parents' evenings are held for those with children in Year 7; these parents also receive one full report and a short one during the year. Parents, including parent governors, are enthusiastic about being kept abreast of school developments through newsletters, exhibitions of work, and homework diaries. They are involved in school life as much as is possible in a secondary school. Links are good with individual form tutors and parents feel able to complain when they think it necessary. Several are involved as mentors and interviewers with work experience and drama productions, as well as with home reading schemes. The parent teacher association hosts successful functions and supplements school funds considerably. With contributions to career advice or the PSE programme, parents are able to enrich the curriculum and the general life of the school.

61. The catchment area of the school is wide and the community it serves is difficult to define. What the school has successfully done is attract a great deal of rental income; a youth centre, an adult education centre, a new joint venture with the Midland Bank and increasing use of the school premises for weddings, dances and sports fixtures.

62. The school has excelled at fostering links with its contributing primary schools, with staff going out to the schools and Years 5 and 6 coming in for science or design and technology activities, or drama and music productions. Numerous and adventurous visits are made - to New York, to a French water sports centre, for pony-trekking in Wales, the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme and skiing, as well as foreign exchanges and local and London-based visits to support the curriculum. Careers advice is well thought out, with added support from the Borough and all Year 10 pupils doing work experience, which is monitored. Many pupils go on to local sixth form colleges. Pupils in Year 7 work with the elderly in the neighbourhood, and copies of school newsletters are delivered to local businesses. Fund raising takes place regularly and the school has good relations with the local press.

63. In all, the school has established clear lines of communication with parents, local businesses and the community at large. It values parental contributions and is, by its wide and rich contacts, broadening the horizons of its pupils and giving them a taste of many wider experiences outside their normal curriculum.

The management and efficiency of the school

Leadership and management

64. The school as a whole benefits from strong and able leadership. The governing body is well run, with a suitable committee structure. It complies with statutory requirements except in three respects: it does not ensure that there is a daily act of collective worship; it does not ensure that there is enough curricular time for RE at Key Stage 4; it does not publish adequate information about special educational needs in its annual reports. Governors delegate oversight of the curriculum to the Headteacher and, in turn, receive from the school, through the governing body curriculum committee, the information needed for them to carry out their duties.

65. The senior management team consists of the Headteacher, two deputy headteachers, and two senior teachers. They constitute an effective and competent team, which engages in good consultative procedures within the school.

66. The management and leadership of departments are generally good, but there are some weaknesses. The modern foreign languages department is poorly led and managed, the coordination of special educational needs throughout the school is not as effective as it should be and, though the teaching of IT is good, the coordination of IT across the school is not.

67. There is a good strategic development plan, which covers the next three years. It is comprehensive, sets priorities, costs the action to be taken and identifies goals to be reached. The aims, policies and values of the school are well documented and policies are, for the most part, effectively implemented.

68. The ethos of the school is good. The school's aims and code of conduct are prominently displayed in classrooms and in pupils' homework diaries. The pastoral support is good and equal curricular opportunities exist throughout the school for both boys and girls.

69. Pupils with special educational needs are generally well catered for, as are the pupils from the hearing impaired unit.

70. The school runs smoothly, has an efficient administrative, clerical and maintenance staff, and is a civilised and harmonious institution.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

71. The school has sufficient qualified teachers to meet the curriculum needs of an 11 - 16 school with a hearing impaired unit. In most subjects there is a good match of specialist qualifications and experience to provide for National Curriculum and GCSE requirements. There is, however, some lack of specialist expertise in modern foreign languages and mathematics which affects the standards achieved.

72. The school makes provision for the induction of all new teachers with weekly meetings which help them to become familiar with policies and operating procedures. Newly qualified teachers (NQTs) are given additional guidance and support in their first year. This includes both general induction to the school and some specialist subject guidance which recent NQTs have found particularly helpful.

73. The school appraisal programme is now starting its second two-year cycle. The procedures adopted follow the London Borough of Havering guidelines which meet national requirements. A small number of teachers has not yet been appraised in the first cycle.

74. Staff professional development is accorded high priority by the school. In particular, encouragement is given to training which assists implementation of the school development plan, addresses targets from teachers' appraisal statements and which involves the improvement of teaching and learning. Recent inservice training on differentiated learning has had a beneficial effect on teaching. Some teachers need further training on the use of IT in the classroom.

75. The accommodation for teaching is generally good. The specialist areas for drama and physical education are particularly valuable and all subject teaching areas are based together, mainly in new or recently refurbished areas. A weakness is the lack of adequately sound-proofed music practice rooms. The school is addressing the need to replace fire doors and windows on the outer wall of the science rooms.

76. All parts of the school are accessible to pupils with physical disabilities. Hearing impaired pupils are able to participate in lessons in all parts of the school.

77. Learning resources are generally satisfactory and are good in some areas. The school has three networked computer rooms, each containing 24 new computer stations with printers and internet connections. A recently added computer design room is a valuable asset in the technology area. However, some subject areas are at a very early stage in developing computer assisted learning.

78. The learning resources centre provides a valuable focal point for information and research. It is well used by pupils and teachers, sometimes with whole class groups, throughout the school day including breaks. The book collection is adequate for the school's size but is stronger in fiction than non-fiction. The Centre is able to provide book boxes to support classroom learning which draw on both school resources and those of the Havering education library. Book resources within subject departments are adequate to meet curricular needs.

The efficiency of the school

79. Arrangements for controlling the school's finances are very good. The governing body has a finance committee, through which it exercises responsible supervision of the school's income and expenditure. It controls the budget well, while delegating responsibility to the Headteacher, who is ably assisted by a deputy headteacher with responsibility for financial control, and a bursar. Arrangements could be improved by involving the bursar earlier when outside contractors are being used.

80. Last year, there was a budget surplus of seven per cent and this year is likely to see the same. Prudent control and use of carry-over funds protect the school against rising costs and unforeseen contingencies. School funds are boosted by a skilful marketing policy which attracts considerable sums from letting charges.

81. Staffing of the school is generally well managed. Deployment of staff to appropriate functions is, on the whole, good, though there are some weaknesses. There are not enough properly qualified teachers for modern foreign languages or mathematics, and provision for pupils with special educational needs when they are withdrawn too long from normal classes, as they sometimes are, is occasionally inappropriate. There are some deficiencies in accommodation and resources which have been mentioned earlier and the school is aware of them.

82. The administration of the school is good. People on the administrative, clerical and maintenance staff are hardworking and competent. In relation to available resources and the educational standards achieved, the school is giving good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

English, mathematics and science

English

83. Attainment by the majority of pupils meets national expectations. In 1995, the results in national tests at the end of Year 9 were above the national averages and in GCSE English examinations they were also higher than those in similar schools nationally. In 1996 the results were less good, dropping below the national figures recorded for the previous year at ages 14 and 16. However, standards of work seen currently show that a majority of pupils are capable of reaching satisfactory levels.

84. The department rightly enters all the year group for the English literature as well as the English GCSE examination, and gives every pupil the opportunity to obtain two English certificates. The good literature results endorse this policy.

85. Competence in speaking and listening could be improved by extending the range of oral activities. Pupils talk to one another effectively in group work and answer questions in class but they need more opportunity to talk more extensively, both informally and formally, in discussion, argument and debate. They also need to read aloud more and to take part in performances of scenes from the plays they are studying.

86. Reading competence is well established and the department has a good system of library induction. The regular practice of silent reading at the start of each English lesson successfully promotes the reading habit, but not enough is being done to assess pupils' reading choices and extend their range, which is often very narrow. Reading times and library periods are not being regularly used to introduce pupils to an increasingly challenging selection of books. There are few books to be seen in classrooms and poems read by pupils are usually on photocopied sheets rather than in anthologies which encourage further exploration.

87. Pupils are given regular practice in writing and there is some good work in all years. They are asked to write for a range of purposes. Folders of work are kept from year to year so that progress can be monitored and some useful forms have been designed to help pupils understand how to plan and monitor their own work. A good deal of time is spent on writing in lessons, sometimes at the expense of the discussion and teaching which should often precede written work. There is too much use of worksheets, many from commercial schemes of work. Very little use is made of IT or word-processing for drafting and presenting work, and some of the work on display in classrooms would have benefited from more attention to finish and presentation.

88. Progress made by pupils is generally satisfactory. Girls make better progress than boys, as they do nationally. Pupils with hearing impairment are well integrated and make good progress. The withdrawal of pupils with special needs from English lessons would benefit from more liaison and joint planning. Pupils of higher ability would make more rapid progress if the content and pace of some lessons demanded more of all pupils.

89. Pupils' attitudes to work are generally good. They come to lessons ready to work and to cooperate with teachers and one another. Given interesting material and approaches in lessons, they show enthusiasm and they would respond to more varied and demanding work in many lessons.

90. Teachers have good relations with pupils and English lessons are calm and orderly. Some lessons lack sufficient interest and variety because the teacher's role is limited to the setting of tasks and supervising of writing and does not include the interactive teaching which challenges pupils to think, argue and work creatively. Teachers' own command of their subject is not always sufficiently full or well reviewed to enable them to take pupils beyond the prepared material. In the best lessons seen, work had been carefully prepared for a particular class and was related to what had been done previously. There was lively interaction and pupils were keen to take part. In less successful lessons, work focused too much on the prepared printed material and not enough effort had gone into finding ways of extending pupils' knowledge, understanding or thought.

91. English is taught by a group of committed and experienced staff, several of whom have major responsibilities elsewhere in the school. Departmental administration is efficient and records are carefully kept. Links with drama and the library are useful. The English department assists with drama productions and should now consider making a more regular contribution to extracurricular activities.

Mathematics

92. The standards attained in mathematics are weaker than in most other subjects in the school. The results in the National Curriculum tests for 14 year olds are similar for 1995 and 1996 and are below the national expectation. The GCSE results are not as good as those obtained nationally in similar schools and there has been no significant change over the last three years. The attainment in examinations of the pupils of lower ability and of those with learning difficulties has been satisfactory and the progress of those pupils in Key Stage 3 is good, but currently the progress of some of these pupils at Key Stage 4 is poor. Pupils can use and apply mathematics as needed in other subjects. Some pupils develop good verbal reasoning and communication skills, but those capabilities need to be more consistently encouraged. Skills in the use of computers in learning and doing mathematics are poor.

93. Pupils make satisfactory progress in most lessons, learning new concepts and practising examples to consolidate their learning, but there is a significant minority of pupils who are underachieving and making slow progress. In the best lessons, pupils know what they have to do to succeed, they use their initiative, take some responsibility for their own learning and enjoy their work. They are keen to answer questions, developing their verbal reasoning and oral skills, and they learn to listen and learn from each other. Pupils would benefit from more opportunities for investigative learning, for posing questions and solving problems and for using computers regularly as tools in learning mathematics. Relationships among pupils are good and most show consideration and respect for others. In most classes pupils behave well, but the behaviour of some of the older boys is very immature and inhibits their own learning and that of others.

94. Teaching is good or outstandingly good in roughly 60 per cent of the lessons, it is satisfactory in 30 per cent and less than satisfactory in under ten per cent. The best lessons are characterised by clear objectives and high expectations, careful planning to include a variety of activities, skilful questioning which prompts pupils to think for themselves and good relationships deriving from the teacher's class management and concern for the pupils. In the weaker lessons, some of these elements are missing. Expectations, both of behaviour and attainment, are too low, the pace is slow and poor use of time results in too little being achieved. Teachers are aware of the need to set a brisk pace in all lessons and to extend the range of mathematical learning for all pupils, and measures are being taken to achieve it.

95. The curriculum and the assessment procedures meet the statutory requirements. There has been careful analysis and evaluation of the reasons for underachievement in the subject and these have informed curricular planning and departmental development. The department is efficiently managed; all the teachers are keenly aware of the need to raise standards and they work very hard to do so. Lunchtime and after school 'drop-in' sessions and revision classes are held. All pupils have equal opportunities for achievement in mathematics and the needs of individual pupils are met through the setting procedures and support in class. The department should continue the development of assessment criteria and the compilation and refinement of departmental documentation, extending it to include material on resources and activities and incorporating the progression of IT skills. Programmes of study and assessment procedures should be reviewed and, starting from the learning objectives and mathematical content to be covered, guidelines should be written for teaching methods and selection of the most suitable resources.

Science

96. Attainment in science is mostly at or above what is expected nationally. In the GCSE examinations in 1995, the percentage of pupils gaining A*-C grades was close to the national average. In 1996, the percentage of A*-C grades was similar to that in 1995. It is creditable that the school enters almost all students for GCSE science. The proportion of Year 9 students attaining Level 5 and above in the standardised tests in 1995 was not significantly different from the national average. Attainment is equal in each of the Attainment Targets 2-4 of the National Curriculum for science - biology, chemistry and physics. Pupils' work on scientific investigations in Key Stage 4 is better overall than expected, with a high proportion of pupils able to attain at or above the highest levels expected for their age. An impressive feature of the attainment is the considerable amount of good quality work in pupils' exercise books and assessment folders.

97. The progress made by pupils of all abilities is, throughout the school, mostly good or very good. For example, a less able group in Key Stage 4 predicted what would happen in an experiment but were also able to provide good scientific reasons for their ideas, so that the attainment reached the level expected nationally for that type of work. A more able Key Stage 4 group extended their scientific reasons by making quantitative predictions about the trends in their results: this took them to levels beyond those usually expected. Younger pupils quickly learn to use scientific terms and methods well. Generally good progress is made by pupils with special educational needs.

98. The response of pupils to the work at Key Stage 4 is almost always good. This impressive response includes good behaviour, attentiveness and a willingness to complete considerable amounts of hard work and to participate well in discussions. Additionally, a key strength is that pupils can think well - for example, in the way they handle abstract ideas and then apply them. Usually such ideas are expressed with clarity and in detail. At Key Stage 4, pupils can work independently and with maturity. Pupils' responses to science in KS3 vary from very good to sound. Almost all pupils are attentive, present work well, persist with tasks and are amenable to the lead set by the teachers. The best are beginning to show the good characteristics of Key Stage 4 pupils.

99. Most teaching is good, some is sound and some is very good. No unsatisfactory or poor teaching was seen. The strengths are shared by all staff and include good planning of content so that lessons are varied and interesting. Teachers expect that pupils will complete a lot of work. They often give different work, adapted well to the differing abilities of the pupils. Useful homework is set and enforced. Marking varies from good to excellent and pupils are making better progress and attaining more as a result. The good responses of pupils stem in part from the successful teaching.

100. Science is organised and provided for as required, almost always well. The banding arrangements are benefitting progress and attainment. The department is well led. For example, staff have developed a policy and practices for assessment that tell pupils about their attainment in relation to national standards in ways that pupils understand and respond to well.

Other subjects or courses

Design and technology

101. GCSE examination results are consistently well above what is nationally expected. Pupils' attainment is satisfactory to very good throughout the school. They are confident in the process of designing and making. Pupils are familiar and competent with working across the range of materials as recommended by the National Curriculum, including components, food, graphics, metal, wood, plastics and textiles. They are taught the valuable transferable skills of research, investigation, analysis and team work to help them to attain good results in their work and relate the problems they solve to everyday life. All pupils have good theoretical bases for their practical work and all have a desire to produce quality results in safe working conditions. Time constraints at Key Stage 3 prevent coherent treatment of some materials. Pupils are aware of working to criteria for success and regularly develop their own brief as a response to a human need.

102. At Key Stage 3, the introduction of the amended statements of National Curriculum levels are proving to be very effective. It enables pupils to understand their own strengths and weaknesses and gives them the confidence to target their future needs. At Key Stage 4, the variability of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding is considerable. Pupils with special educational needs attain good results in design and technology and display impressive powers of concentration. Their individual education plans are used within the department planning with good results, as shown in the Year 8 graphics session. A small minority of pupils is satisfied with mediocre standards of work, but most strive to reach their full potential.

103. Pupils are full of enthusiasm, as seen in the Year 8 lessons on food technology; behaviour is generally good across the department. Pupils show perseverance and the drive to design, make and evaluate useful products that meet a need. Their techniques and manipulation of tools develop in sophistication. Pupils work collaboratively or in some cases in teams, with natural leaders emerging and with the realisation that teams are made of people with a wide range of skills, ideas and beliefs. Pupils are courteous and trustworthy. They use resources with a concern for the environment.

104. The quality of teaching is satisfactory to very good, with some outstanding teaching and classroom management. The department is a strong team with a wide range of industrial and commercial expertise in their personal backgrounds. This includes the technician, whose engineering experience and organisation, together with the advice of the staff team, has transformed the procedures, storage and tool care of the department. These features make a very positive contribution to the pupils' learning. A lively and variable range of teaching styles is employed by most teachers, which sets challenges to pupils during the 100 minute lessons. Monitoring of teaching across the department is informal, which gives little opportunity to identify and to share the good practice or monitor pupils' exposure to varied teaching styles. However, expectations are high. Teacher' demonstrations and the use of the visual aids and exemplar work are good quality experiences for pupils. Pupils are constantly urged to improve on their last performance when appropriate. Assessment is very good. Pupils at Key Stage 3 in particular have achieved continuity and progress in work through their design sheets. Behaviour in the department is very good and pupils are totally engaged in their learning.

105. Departmental management is dynamic, and the Headteacher and deputy headteacher of the department provide very good role models for staff development, while engaging the whole department in decision-making. There are two points which the department and the school should consider: circulation difficulties can mean the work carried out by the technician often interferes with the classroom activity, as there is no appropriate workshop area for the larger maintenance work; IT is not fully used in some areas and teachers need to develop their IT skills.

Information technology

106. Results in the GCSE examinations are very good. Pupils have access to a double award of business studies and information systems in GCSE examinations and the results are above the national average. The school has moved to a curricular plan which offers IT as a specialist subject within the technology programme at Key Stage 3 and the option of business studies and information systems at Key Stage 4. In order to meet National Curriculum requirements, the school must also make provision for coherent IT across the curriculum and an IT entitlement for all pupils at Key Stage 4. At present, the school meets National Curriculum requirements at Key Stage 3 but not at Key Stage 4, where the option allows for some pupils to avoid IT.

107. At Key Stage 3, pupils' attainment in IT is satisfactory to good. They gain good generic skills from their concentrated IT input. The numerous lunch time and after school clubs give pupils increased access to the use of the computer and the chance to apply the skills they acquire in their separate IT lessons. The very positive experiences of those lessons are not repeated in other subjects, although some subjects, such as mathematics, science and design and technology (and, to a lesser extent, history and English) have made a commitment to pupils' application of their IT skills. Pupils can communicate, retrieve and analyse information; they are able to create, explore and develop visual images to enhance their design; and there are opportunities for modelling and measuring. There are plans to strengthen the role of control in design & technology and competence skills generally. All these skills need to be applied in subjects to test the quality of pupils' understanding. The take-up of information systems is a clear indication of the importance of the subject to pupils and parents. At Key Stage 4, the examination syllabus requires more practical applications of skill. Pupils understand the limitations of computers and their positive and negative influences on our society.

108. Pupils are very enthusiastic about their IT. Their motivation contributes to their success in discrete IT. Some pupils find the 100 minute periods of concentration on the screen difficult. Lessons were most successful where the style of teaching broke up the concentration into shorter slots. Relationships in the department are good; pupils behave well and respond positively to the dedication of the teaching and technical staff. They make good progress. However, not enough attention is given to the brightest pupils, who would benefit from more challenging work.

109. The quality of teaching ranges from at least satisfactory to very good. Departmental documentation is excellent. Some teachers of IT are highly competent; they plan their work well, they use a suitable variety of teaching methods and they sensibly vary the tasks set to pupils in accord with the pupils' different abilities. They use the available resources well and provide pupils with a good foundation in the skills necessary to use computers competently. As a counterbalance to the variability of staff expertise, some teachers are working towards a Royal Society of Arts accreditation.

110. Some good curricular links with the community have been introduced in respect of IT. These include contact with the Midland Bank, the Young Enterprise initiative (with its sights set on a European target) and local links. These activities need to continue and strengthen. The leasing of new equipment, highlighted by the governors and the senior management team, has given a boost to the school's technology programme. The initial difficulties with the installation are gradually being resolved.

Modern foreign languages

111. At Key Stage 3, pupils' attainments in the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing are generally sound. Listening skills are noticeably better developed in those classes where teachers make extensive use of French. Many pupils are able to respond to questions without hesitation and with good intonation. Writing skills are underdeveloped, although most of the work produced by pupils is reasonably accurate, with few gross errors. As yet, pupils have very little opportunity to use IT to help their language learning. At Key Stage 4, the majority of pupils in Year 10 are still operating at Key Stage 3 levels. Many have little understanding of pattern or structure; recall of previously learnt material is unsure; basic dictionary skills have not yet been acquired. Most pupils with SEN make satisfactory progress, but the more abler pupils in top sets are not being given demanding enough work. GCSE results in French are both well below the national average and below those obtained in all other subjects in the school. These results were obtained by half the year group, who chose French when it was still an optional subject at Key Stage 4. With the whole year group now studying French, to meet the new National Curriculum requirements, results will inevitably deteriorate unless new strategies are devised and implemented.

112. The majority of pupils at Key Stage 3 are docile and cooperative. Many, especially boys, are confident speakers and in most lessons pupils listen attentively, particularly to recorded material. They display commendable perseverance, even when set an inappropriate task. Serious application is evident in some Year 11 classes, but generally pupils are less and less well motivated as they move up through the school. In Year 10, even in higher attaining sets, there are many who lack confidence and do not enjoy studying French.

113. Teaching was satisfactory in about half of the lessons inspected. It is occasionally good, but about 40 per cent of the teaching is unsatisfactory. In satisfactory lessons, teachers make good use of varied resources and suitable material is presented enthusiastically, with frequent changes of task. All the teachers have effective classroom management skills. Weaker teaching is characterised by one or more of the following: insufficient use of French, both as a medium of instruction and for routine classroom interaction; an inflexible teaching style offering little opportunity for pupils to take the initiative; unclear instructions; inappropriate tasks; pedestrian presentation and a lack of stimulus and challenge. Inappropriately qualified staff are unable to offer the rigorous teaching needed at Key Stage 4 to ensure good examination results.

114. Resources are managed efficiently, but leadership of the department is generally poor and lacks vision. The grading of pupils' work is inadequate and procedures are not yet in place to comply with the imminent National Curriculum requirement for assessment at the end of Key Stage 3. The department's development plan contains no strategies for improving examination results. A thorough review of the management and the teaching of foreign languages throughout the school is urgently required.

History

115. Pupils' attainments in history are in line with national expectations at both key stages. At Key Stage 3, pupils are developing sound historical skills and an understanding of time and place. They are also using and applying source material with confidence. Oral and listening skills, in particular, are being fostered in order to boost pupils' achievement. The overall standard of writing at this stage is very varied, however, and the more abler pupils would benefit from being required to extend their writing skills. The sound basis for development provided at Key Stage 3 is built upon successfully at Key Stage 4, where recent results in the GCSE examinations have shown rising levels of achievement in history. At this stage, pupils are becoming competent and confident in the development of broader historical skills and detailed analysis of sources. Some pupils, however, particularly those with learning difficulties, are experiencing problems with more sophisticated concepts at GCSE level.

116. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils are always satisfactory and often very good. They show enthusiasm for history at all levels and are particularly responsive at Key Stage 3, where they readily engage in a variety of learning techniques, including investigative work, class discussion and group work. They are unfailingly courteous, willing to cooperate with one another and are impressive in their spoken responses. The presentation of their work needs to be improved, however, and attention should be given to the needs of pupils with differing abilities in mixed ability groups.

117. The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better throughout and promotes sound standards. The department is experienced, committed and enthusiastically led. All lessons are planned well and very efficiently organised. Class control is excellent at all levels and relationships between staff and pupils are relaxed but purposeful. The use of praise and humour during lessons is particularly commendable. All teachers are in full command of their subject and National Curriculum programmes of study are taken fully into account. The curriculum is rich and varied, but would benefit from a more systematic use of information technology and a more rigorous and consistent marking policy.

118. The history department has clear aims and objectives, backed up with thorough documentation. Assessment procedures are very good; they include the use of target setting to monitor pupils' progress. Accommodation is good and the somewhat limited resources are managed well. There is a wide range of visits, including a trip to the battlefields of Northern Europe as well as to sites of local historical interest. Overall, this is a strong and efficient department with a clear and commendable vision of its future development.

Geography

119. Attainment in geography is in line with national expectations for most pupils. At Key Stage 3, pupils receive sound guidance in developing geographical skills, including using and interpreting maps of different scales. By the end of Year 9, they are able to undertake extended studies which require them to identify geographical questions, seek evidence, draw conclusions and present findings. Some of the most successful work is based on first-hand evidence from field trips and pupils' own research. Pupils' achievement in GCSE has been slightly better than the national level of performance in the last three years. Over half the candidates entered have been awarded grade A* - C in each year since 1994. Coursework completed and in progress indicates that the current Key Stage 4 pupils are achieving satisfactory standards.

120. Pupils enter the school with considerably different levels of skills and knowledge but make good progress in Year 7 with the map work course. From the early stage of Key Stage 3 progression is sound and often good through a course designed to lead to good performance in GCSE. Pupils with SEN make sound progress although very little learning support is given in geography lessons.

121. Behaviour in lessons is good. Pupils work independently on the whole but are confident in working collaboratively when this is required. More enthusiasm for the subject is seen at Key Stage 3 than in the examination groups where oral contributions to lessons are usually brief. Nevertheless, most pupils at Key Stage 4 take their studies seriously and present their coursework well.

122. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and is often good. The focus on the GCSE course by an experienced, appropriately qualified team helps to ensure good standards. Teachers have high expectations of pupils, a detailed knowledge of their learning needs and assess progress very thoroughly. Although the planning of schemes of work is done carefully, there needs to be more rigorous planning of individual lessons, to focus more clearly on learning objectives and on the full use of the fifty minutes available.

123. The organisation and management of the department is good. There are clear policies in place, a commitment to high achievement for pupils and good procedures for assessment and recording. Resources are stored and used efficiently. The department has rightly identified as development priorities the need to bring IT more centrally into the geography curriculum and the need to extend field work opportunities, particularly for Year 10 pupils.

Art

124. Attainment is at least in line with what is expected nationally and the majority of pupils are above average at both key stages. The GCSE results have been considerably above the national average for the past two years in both art and design and art and technology. Standards overall are improving and the number of pupils taking the examination is increasing.

125. At both key stages, knowledge and understanding of art concepts and art appreciation is developing well. Understanding of lesson aims and objectives is good and studies of artists' work and art movements past and present make a positive contribution to pupils' attainment. Pupils work with confidence in both two-dimensional and three-dimensional media. Their work is original and expressive; their strong commitment to the subject is reflected in the excellent response to elaborate homework projects, such as the designing and making of advent calendars. They understand the art elements and use line, tone, pattern, shape, colour and texture very well. Their understanding of spatial concepts is evident in their clay sculptures. All pupils are proficient at investigating and making and progression through the key stage is good.

126. Pupils use their observations of the natural and made environment, in a variety of ways and in a wide range of media. Their compositions are imaginative and original, yet often based on compositional techniques used by well known artists. Standards are relatively higher at Key Stage 3, where there is greater evidence of research, experimentation with image-making techniques and the exploration of a wider range of media.

127. The visual experience provided is rich and colourful, the environment inspirational, with all resources to hand, enabling pupils to freely extend their knowledge, understanding and skills, regardless of their prior attainment. Project related homework aids progression and continuity and progress in lessons is good.

128. At both key stages, pupils' behaviour is very good. They work together extremely well and are courteous and cooperative. Interest, motivation and enthusiasm are good and pupils show initiative in the use of the department's materials and resources through well established working procedures. They are attentive to the lesson introductions and are capable of sustained effort and independent progress. They all enjoy the practical, creative nature of their work and take pride in achieving good presentation and finish. Pupils have good relations with teachers and their peers, showing co-operation and respect in all matters.

129. The quality of teaching is largely very good or good and is never less than satisfactory. Overall, the art and design teaching promotes high educational standards and contributes effectively and successfully to pupils' attainment and progress. Command of the subject is high and subject links with the technology department through staff interests are a valuable asset. Management and control of pupils is especially good. Expectations are high, and original and innovative ideas and projects enrich the curriculum. After-school and lunch time opportunities also enhance the curriculum; staff give their own time generously in the interests of their pupils. Lesson structure is a positive feature of the best lessons with well documented lesson planning. Varied teaching strategies maintain pupils' interest and pace and rigour are appropriate.

130. The integration of practical work and contextual studies is weighted towards the practical and further work with the use of slides, videos and other audiovisual aids is desirable. Lesson aims and objectives are clearly stated and question and answer sessions are used well in the best lessons to gauge understanding and reinforce learning. Assessment during lessons is a positive feature of most lessons and successfully advances pupils' knowledge and understanding of the subject and awareness of standards.

131. There is a broad and balanced art and design curriculum, with good opportunities. At Key Stage 3 the National Curriculum is being delivered, but the IT element is currently insufficiently promoted. However, all pupils have the opportunity to use computer aided design in their technology lessons, at lunch time and during extracurricular activities. The unavailability of computers restricts achievable standards in design and presentation. The 'Artists in school' programme enriches the curriculum, encouraging many individual styles and strong colour work.

132. Management of the department is extremely good; there is a positive ethos and subject promotion and provision is particularly good. The department's aims reflect the school's aims. The excellent displays of pupils' work and the framed pictures around the school provide an exciting 'shop window' of the school's successes and promote high standards.

Music

133. Standards of achievement in both key stages are in line with or above national expectations and rapidly improving. GCSE music is being taken by the current Year 11 for the first time. Whilst standards of instrumental playing in this group are not very high, there is much enthusiasm for practical music making. The current Year 10 group contains some able instrumentalists who cope well with aspects of theory and who are beginning to compose with some confidence. At Key Stage 3, a worryingly high number of pupils arrive in Year 7 without sufficient previous experience of music. By Year 9, however, pupils' ability has considerably improved. There is no discernible difference in attainment between boys and girls or between different ethnic groups. The progress of all abilities in classes is good as a result of learning materials that suitably match their needs.

134. With the exception of a very small minority of older pupils, standards of behaviour are very good. Pupils attend carefully to what is being taught, participate enthusiastically in practical music making and show respect to each other, to teachers and to visitors. Many pupils were particularly friendly and helpful when being asked questions about their work and progress. A large number voluntarily attend extracurricular activities at lunchtime and become involved in regular performances. There is a respect for the premises and its equipment and there are no signs of graffiti. Timekeeping is generally good.

135. Standards of teaching are often very good and never less than good. Lessons have pace and a variety of appropriate activities which take place on a range of instruments. Humour is used well to emphasize important teaching elements and to control behaviour. The teacher often sets ambitious targets for pupils which challenge all from the most to the least able. A great deal of the teachers own time is spent in organizing extracurricular activities and preparing for concerts. The new enthusiasm, energy and commitment shown to teaching, which resulted from a new appointment two years ago, has resulted in dramatically improved standards of pupil attainment.

136. Assessment is generally well used to promote learning, though there are too few opportunities for pupils to evaluate each other's composing and performing work. At present, pupils do not have enough time in lessons at Key Stage 3 to complete the National Curriculum. Classes suffer an unacceptable level of sound in the main teaching room, as there are no practice areas where they can play and compose undisturbed. There is too little storage space for the large number of instruments in frequent use and lack of suitable sound proofing causes sound to travel to surrounding classes. All music making has to stop when public examinations are being sat in the hall because of the disturbance caused by instruments and singing. This restricts pupils' progress for a significant length of time in the summer term. The lack of suitable sound proofing also inconveniences visiting instrumental lessons which take place in the room adjacent to the main teaching room. Resources for learning, whilst generally satisfactory, do not include sufficient computers or suitable software and MIDI equipment to enhance the teaching of GCSE.

Drama

137. Drama is taught to all pupils in Key Stage 3 and is a popular option choice for GCSE in Key Stage 4. Attainment is satisfactory to good at Key Stage 3 and good at Key Stage 4. In 1995, the GCSE results were very good indeed and well above the national averages, with 82 per cent of entrants achieving A*-C grades. In 1996, both the entry and the success rate dropped and the GCSE results were below the national average. This year, numbers have risen again and promising work is being achieved by pupils preparing for the 1997 examination.

138. Pupils in all years show that they are learning the techniques of drama well and applying them effectively. Using speech and movement, they improvise scenes and situations into which they can enter imaginatively. They cooperate well in pairs and groups and gradually extend their use of language and their understanding of motivation and behaviour. They are able to reflect on their own work and that of others and the process of evaluation is an effective part of their learning. At Key Stage 4, they prepare carefully for the practical examination and increasingly focus on theatre skills and presentation.

139. Pupils enjoy their work in drama and come to lessons ready to cooperate and experiment. While they enjoy the freedom of movement offered in the drama studio, they also appreciate its disciplines. A feature of the best drama lessons is the control and precision seen in both the teaching and the learning, as well as the immediacy of pupils' responses. The collaborative work which is the basis of most drama fosters awareness of other people, and sometimes of their values and beliefs, and is valuable in pupils' social development. The emphasis on enquiry into and analysis of action and behaviour in many drama situations also contributes to their intellectual development and awareness.

140. Drama is taught by a team of three teachers who are also members of the English department. The link between the two departments is valuable. Schemes of work are carefully planned, mainly by the head of department, and used flexibly in relation to the needs and abilities of the various classes. Teaching is consistently good at Key Stage 4 and satisfactory to good at Key Stage 3, where sometimes lack of experience leads to some uncertainty in control and timing.

141. Drama makes a valuable contribution to the school's extracurricular activities with productions of plays and musicals, recently in successful collaboration with the music department. It is contributing to the self-confidence and personal development of pupils and to the skills they need in other areas of the curriculum.

Physical education

142. At both key stages, the levels of attainment of most pupils are in line with national expectations and for some pupils their knowledge, understanding and performance exceed the levels expected. Pupils are developing their skills and understanding in a variety of practical contexts and groupings. In games activities, pupils have an emerging knowledge of rules and conventions and they are developing appropriate skills to enable them to compete successfully. Some Key Stage 3 pupils show good gymnastic skills and they are beginning to construct good quality sequences. There is a need, however, for pupils to be more involved in the planning and evaluation of their work. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated and are given much support and encouragement, both by the teaching staff and their fellow pupils, and they reach a very satisfactory level of attainment. Teams take part in inter-school competitions and do well. A number of pupils have been selected to take part in representative teams and some have gone on to gain national honours.

143. The progress of pupils is never less than satisfactory and in the majority of lessons it is good. Pupils can usually recall the learning of previous lessons and are able to build on previously learned skills. The support and encouragement that pupils give to one another is a significant factor in the progress that they make. There is evidence of low attaining pupils working effectively and benefiting from the good match of their work to their learning needs.

144. In all aspects of their work pupils are highly motivated and have a positive attitude towards the subject. Behaviour and discipline are good. The quality of relationships among pupils and between them and their teachers is good and their response to the task set and to the general activities of the lesson is very positive. Pupils display great enthusiasm for the subject and derive much pleasure from taking part.

145. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and in the majority of lessons it is good. Teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic and enthuse their pupils with well planned and purposeful activities. Lessons are conducted at a pace that is vigorous and demanding. The quality of teaching has a positive impact on the attainment of the pupils and their enjoyment of the subject.

146. The physical education curriculum is broad and balanced and covers the requirements of the National Curriculum. The Key Stage 4 programme is enriched and extended by the use of local leisure facilities, which enable the pupils to take part in a wide variety of activities, including skating, skiing and horse riding. The arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' achievements are generally effective, but there is a need to develop this process so that it may be used to promote higher standards and influence future planning. The physical education programme is on offer to all pupils. Teachers give very freely of their time to provide a range of extracurricular activities, which are enthusiastically taken up by large numbers of pupils. There is opportunity for pupils to take part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, ski-ing trips abroad and many other activities related to physical education.

147. The accommodation for the subject is good. The large sports hall, well equipped gymnasium, fitness room, on-site playing fields and netball courts have a very positive impact on the level of attainment achieved by the pupils. If the school gets the all-weather playing area it is anxious to obtain, the staff would be in a position to enhance the range of activities on offer to the pupils. The school library has a good selection of books related to physical education. The school is very well equipped with physical education equipment. The time allocation for the subject for is good and is sufficient for the needs of the National Curriculum to be met, although the fifty minute lessons for Key Stage 3 pupils is too short for practical lessons.

148. The department is very well led and managed. There is comprehensive and high quality documentation. The department handbook gives clear and helpful guidance concerning the aims, methodology and lesson organisation. The staff who teach physical education work well together, support each other and show a very strong commitment to the pupils.

Religious education

149. Attainment of pupils in Years 7 and 8 meets national expectations but that of the majority of pupils in Year 9 is below average. Younger pupils recognise special features of Christianity and other major world faiths. They have secure knowledge of different symbols, founders and tenets of faith such as the five pillars of wisdom in Islam. Year 7 pupils interpret Christian parables sensitively, appreciating varying human feelings as well as understanding concepts such as forgiveness. Year 9 have basic awareness of some of the ways in which religion affects life but most pupils are not exploring deeper aspects of faith. Many boys and some girls show negative attitudes to religion and do not value the beliefs of others.

150. Progress in lessons at Key Stage 3 is mostly either good or very good, especially in Years 7 and 8. Nearly all gain deeper awareness of religious ideas. Hearing impaired pupils receive effective support in class and make good progress in understanding. Some higher attaining pupils consolidate their knowledge by asking searching questions. Progress in Year 9 is more variable, generally slower and unsatisfactory for a significant number of pupils. Most become further informed on matters such as different religious dietary rules, but many do not develop positive attitudes of respect as a result.

151. Attitudes to learning are nearly always at least good except in Year 9. Pupils are mostly keen to answer questions, offer ideas and join in activities. Some ask interested questions, especially in Year 8. There are instances where boys are more confident orally than girls. Response is excellent on occasions in Year 7, where pupils think carefully, drawing effectively on language and dramatic skills to interpret parables in thoroughly enjoyable role play activity. The weakest feature of response is the undercurrent of indifference (and sometimes scorn) running through some Year 9 lessons.

152. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and is mostly good or very good. Strengths lie in secure subject expertise and effective relationships with pupils. Lessons are well planned and contain appropriate activity to stimulate thinking and ensure understanding. The best lessons stretch pupils of different abilities by focusing sharply on deeper meaning whilst drawing out their individual ideas. There is good use of homework and pupils' work is marked regularly. A greater range of measures to improve pupils' attitudes in Year 9 needs to be devised. There is scope for considerable development in the use of IT.

153. The religious education department was established in 1995 and is well led and managed. The school follows the Havering Agreed Syllabus and provides reasonable time at Key Stage 3. Statutory requirements are not currently met at Key Stage 4, although optional GCSE RE will be offered from September 1997. The school needs to review its plans and increase provision in order to ensure full compliance with statutory requirements for all pupils at Key Stage 4.

Hearing impaired unit

154. The school's hearing impaired unit (HIU) has provision for 12 pupils. There are currently eight pupils on roll, with hearing losses ranging from moderate to profound. All pupils have statements of special educational need. There are three teachers, one of whom is full-time, and three communicators.

155. The standards of attainment of the HIU pupils are in line with attainment of the rest of the school. Overall, they make mostly good progress over the full range of subjects. The gains are in both knowledge and understanding. In addition, they make very good progress in relation to the targets in their individual education plans which relate to hearing losses. Attendance and punctuality are good or very good. The response of hearing impaired pupils to their schooling is very good or excellent. The pupils behave very well, and work hard.

156. The teaching provided for HIU pupils has many strengths. Support in lessons is deployed shrewdly and gives sufficient support over the full range of subjects. The support ensures that pupils are well aware of the points being covered yet, creditably, provides sufficient scope for independent thinking. The communicators liaise well with subject staff. Support teachers use a wide range of effective strategies to support learning. They have shared these strategies well with other teachers and with the governors. Mainstream teachers, except in French, are able to integrate HIU pupils effectively so that standards and progress are maintained. HIU teaching staff withdraw some of their pupils from mainstream French and they then provide individual or small group teaching. The impact of this withdrawal leads to useful learning but with wide variation in the progress and attainment, from limited to good. However, a key aim for the unit is that HIU pupils have access to all that other pupils are offered. This is achieved.

157. Pupils are fully integrated into and benefit substantially from all aspects of the curriculum and life of the school. Much is done to lead staff and pupils to understand about hearing loss - for example, in assemblies, training events and a signing club. The school community is a better place for having the unit, because its members relate so well to the unit's pupils. The unit secures the provision required by the statements of SEN. Assessment is thorough and meets the statutory requirements. The system for monitoring and evaluation includes some sound features but does not sum up strengths and weaknesses clearly enough. The unit is well managed and has satisfactory arrangements for planning future developments.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

Summary of inspection evidence

158. The inspection team consisted of 13 inspectors, who spent a combined total of 48 days in the school. During the week of the inspection, 166 lessons were seen: these covered all full-time teachers, most part-time teachers, all year groups and all subjects. The hearing impaired unit was also inspected. Registration sessions, assemblies and a variety of extracurricular activities were inspected. The large amount of documentation helpfully provided by the school was read and analysed before and during the inspection. Over 30 planned discussions were held with members of staff and many *ad hoc* meetings were also held. All available written work from a sample of pupils from each year, and representing the range of pupils' abilities, was scrutinised. A meeting with the Chair of Governors was held, and governing body agenda and minutes were read. Before the inspection, the Registered Inspector and the lay inspector held a meeting attended by 23 parents. There were 163 responses to a questionnaire to all parents; these were analysed and used to inform relevant aspects of the inspection.

Data and indicators

PUPIL DATA

| | Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent) | Number of pupils with statements of SEN | Number of pupils on schools' register of SEN | Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals |
|----------|---|---|--|---|
| Y7 - Y11 | 765 | 44 | 132 | 106 |

TEACHERS AND CLASSES

Qualified teachers (YR - Y13)

| | |
|---|-------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent) | 45.14 |
|---|-------|

| | |
|--|-------|
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 16.95 |
|--|-------|

Education support staff (Y7 - Y11)

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 16 |
| Total aggregate hours worked each week | 364 |

| | |
|--|----|
| Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes: | 73 |
| Average teaching group size: KS3 | 24 |
| KS4 | 22 |
| | |

FINANCIAL DATA

| | |
|-----------------|-----------|
| Financial year: | 1995/1996 |
|-----------------|-----------|

| | |
|--|---------|
| | , |
| Total Income | 1855712 |
| Total Expenditure | 1850283 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2493.64 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 127154 |

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--------|
| Balance carried forward to next year | 132583 |
|--------------------------------------|--------|

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

650

Number of questionnaires returned:

162

Percentage return rate:

25

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

| | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|----------------|-------|---------|----------------|-------------------|
| I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school | 23 | 61 | 11 | 5 ^e | 0 |
| I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren) | 44 | 46 | 4 | 4 | 2 |
| The school handles complaints from parents well | 25 | 56 | 11 | 4 | 3 |
| The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught | 19 | 62 | 11 | 7 | 1 |
| The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress | 23 | 57 | 11 | 8 | 1 |
| The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work | 37 | 58 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons | 31 | 57 | 7 | 4 | 1 |
| I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home | 29 | 61 | 6 | 3 | 1 |
| The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren) | 34 | 57 | 7 | 1 | 1 |
| The school achieves high standards of good behaviour | 30 | 61 | 7 | 1 | 1 |
| My child(ren) like(s) school | 42 | 51 | 5 | 1 | 1 |

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