

INSPECTION REPORT

THE ANGMERING SCHOOL

Station Road, Angmering

LEA area: West Sussex

Unique reference number: 126081

Headteacher: Mr R Eves

Reporting inspector: Ian Stuart
19298

Dates of inspection: 29 January – 2 February 2001

Inspection number: 185592

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Comprehensive

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 11 - 18

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Station Road
Angmering
West Sussex

Postcode: BN16 4HH

Telephone number: 01903 772351

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs A Prior

Date of previous inspection: 9 – 13 October 1995

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
19298	I Stuart	Registered inspector		What sort of school is it? ; The school's results and achievements; How well are the pupils taught? ; How well is the school led and managed?
9770	J Baker	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school care for its pupils? ; How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
11508	C Griffin	Team inspector	English; English as an additional language	
12885	J Hunt	Team inspector	Mathematics	
22691	R Woodhouse	Team inspector	Science	
10385	K Hopkins	Team inspector	Design & technology	The adequacy of accommodation
31765	I Hume	Team inspector	Information and communication technology	
31690	B Smith	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages	Assessment and monitoring of pupils' academic performance
7465	R Brent	Team inspector	History	The adequacy of learning resources
1752	R Jones	Team inspector	Geography	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? The adequacy of staffing resources
3731	B Robson	Team inspector	Special educational needs	
18638	C Shaw	Team inspector	Art & design	

30128	S Stanley	Team inspector	Music; Religious education; Equal opportunities	How well the school cultivates pupils' personal development
25748	R Moyle	Team inspector	Physical education	

The inspection contractor was:

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	12
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?	16
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	21
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	22
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	23
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	26
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	27
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	33

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The Angmering School is a large comprehensive community school of 1313 boys and girls aged 11-19 with 200 students in the sixth form. It is located within the urban coastal area of Sussex; the area served by the school contains a wide range of social and economic circumstances. The school has a special support facility, the Lavinia Norfolk Centre, that ensures the full inclusion of 65 pupils with a wide range of physical and/or sensory impairment. In addition, the school includes a further 32 pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs. In total, the school has 366 pupils with special educational needs, which is well above the national average. Many of the pupils with special educational needs come from areas further away from the school than most pupils. Most pupils at the school are white; only 20 pupils come from ethnic minority groups. The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is also low; those eligible for free school meals are broadly in line with the national average. The attainments of pupils on entry cover a wide range, but, overall, are broadly average. The school has very strong links with its community, and is now a specialist sports college, with additional resources to enable it to develop teaching and learning in physical education in the school and its community.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The Angmering School is a very good school, with some outstanding features. It is totally committed to the education of all pupils, whatever their circumstances, and everyone is an equally valued member of its community. By the time pupils leave the school, they do so with results that are, overall, above the levels that would be expected from their attainments on entry. An impressive feature of the school is the consistently good teaching. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection; well over 80 per cent is good or better, with a significant amount that is very good and excellent. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and management, ably supported by other senior staff. The school, including post-16 provision, provides good value for money. There is a very strong shared commitment to improvement, so there is an excellent capacity for the school to become even more effective.

What the school does well

- The leadership and management provided by the headteacher and other staff with management responsibility are excellent
- Teaching is consistently good, with much which is very good and excellent.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent.
- Provision for the pupils' social development is excellent within a tolerant, inclusive community.
- Opportunities for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities are excellent.
- There is a shared culture of school improvement at all levels, including governors, which is ensuring continuing improvements to teaching and the raising of standards.

What could be improved

- There are some inconsistencies in the assessing and marking of the pupils' work.
- Although very much improved and with realistic plans for the future, the experiences of pupils in information and communication technology (ICT) are variable, and assessment of ICT is not yet satisfactory.
- In some subjects, there could be more challenge for the high attainers.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the last inspection in October 1995, the school has made good progress from an already strong position. The quality of teaching has improved further, with no unsatisfactory teaching seen during the inspection. The strengths identified at the time of the last inspection, including standards in the core subjects, have been maintained; in some areas, they have been improved further. The inclusive nature of the school, embracing all pupils whatever their circumstances, is outstanding and is a model of

excellent practice. The school has successfully tackled most of the key issues from the last inspection, though it still does not provide a daily act of collective worship for all pupils, nor religious education in the sixth form. There have been notable improvements in ICT, and there are ambitious plans for future developments, particularly at Key Stage 4. The sixth form has developed successfully since the last inspection, and now offers a very good curriculum within the financial resources allocated to the school for sixth form provision. The way the school plans, reviews and evaluates all aspects of its work is now a notable strength, and its educational priorities are supported by excellent financial planning. Although more accommodation will soon be needed to meet the school's expansion, it is coming towards the end of the present building programme, which has caused significant disruption; however, all health and safety issues from the previous report have been dealt with.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 16 and 18 year olds based on average point scores in GCSE and A-level/AS-level examinations.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
GCSE examinations	D	C	B	C
A-levels/AS-levels	D	B	C	

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

By the end of Key Stage 3, the overall average points score of boys and girls in the national tests have been above average over the period 1998 to 2000, with the trend broadly in line with the national trend. In 2000, the overall average points score in the core subjects is above the national average, though close to the national average in mathematics. The results show achievements above what would be expected from their Key Stage 2 test scores in 1997. At the end of Key Stage 4, the overall average GCSE/GNVQ points score obtained by pupils has been close to the national average in recent years, with a trend that is below the national trend, mainly because of the effect of the unusually low results in 1998. In 2000, the average GCSE/GNVQ points score is above the national average, representing sound achievement when compared with the pupils' Key Stage 3 results in 1998. A notable feature of the 2000 GCSE results across almost all subjects is the large number of A* and A grades, which is well above the national average. Results at Key Stage 3 and GCSE are average when compared with similar schools, but, because of the many unusual circumstances of some pupils, 'similar schools' comparisons need to be treated cautiously. A-level results in recent years, including 2000, have been close to the national average. The school's targets are realistically demanding, and reflect the school's confidence to raise standards further. In most subjects, standards in work seen are above average, particularly at Key Stage 4, and well above average in art & design and ICT. In nearly all cases, pupils are achieving well in relation to their prior attainments.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Most pupils enjoy school, and are interested and involved in its many activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good overall. With some occasional exceptions, pupils are very well behaved in lessons and around the school, including breaks and lunchtime.
Personal development and	Very good. Pupils show a very high level of understanding and respect

relationships	for the needs of others, and work very well together.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance rates are broadly in line with the national average.

Only a very small minority of pupils, usually boys, display negative attitudes on occasions. The positive attitudes, very good behaviour and personal relationships are great strengths of the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 11-14 years	aged 14-16 years	aged over 16 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

Teaching is at least satisfactory in all lessons. It is good or better in over 83 per cent of lessons, and very good or better in nearly 40 per cent; these proportions are higher than that found nationally. Teaching is good in nearly all subjects, including English, mathematics and science, with art and ICT being particularly strong. Some teaching of pupils with special educational needs is outstanding. Some excellent teaching was seen in English, drama, modern foreign languages, art, design & technology, ICT, physical education, mathematics, health & social care, and government & politics. Particular strengths in the teaching are the teachers' knowledge and understanding, their planning and varied teaching methods, their high expectations, and their management of pupils. As a result, the quality of the pupils' learning is good, and often better. However, day to day marking is not always consistent across the school, and the pupils' understanding of their attainments and what they need to do to get better is variable. It is very good in some subjects, but less so in others. Targets are sometimes too descriptive and general, and do not focus sharply enough on criteria for improvement particular to each subject. In such circumstances, there is potential for even higher achievement. Similarly, whilst the needs of all pupils are generally well catered for, sometimes higher attainers are not stretched as much as they could be. The teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is good, contributing significantly to the pupils' achievements; the development of literacy using key words, 'buzz' words, and techniques for teaching better writing skills is particularly strong.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. There is a wide range of learning opportunities appropriate for all pupils, with a commendable degree of flexibility to meet individual needs.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Excellent. The management of the very wide provision is outstanding, ensuring that appropriate support is provided both within the Lavinia Norfolk Centre and throughout the school
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good for the small number of pupils involved.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Provision for the pupils' social development is excellent.

How well the school cares for its pupils	Child protection and welfare provisions are very good, as is pastoral support. The monitoring of pupils' personal development is very good; monitoring of their academic performance is good, though more variable.
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There is a very good partnership with parents, who, overall, are very positive about the school. The breadth, balance and relevance of the whole curriculum are very good, and provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent. There is excellent equality of opportunities, and excellent links with primary schools. No religious education is taught in the sixth form, in breach of statutory requirements.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent. The outstanding quality of leadership and management at senior level ensures very clear educational direction to the school's work and to its high achievements.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. Governors have an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and a very good strategic vision of its future needs.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the school's performance at whole school level; at other levels they are developing well, though more uneven in quality.
The strategic use of resources	Excellent financial planning and control ensure the best strategic use of resources, including special funding and other grants.

There are sufficient experienced and well-qualified teachers to cover the full range of subjects, backed up by very positive contributions by support staff of all types. Learning resources are good, and have been improved recently, particularly the provision of computers. Some accommodation, including new and refurbished buildings, is very good; overall, accommodation is satisfactory. The very thorough financial administration ensures that the principles of best value are very well applied.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school's approachability when problems arise, and its concern for all pupils The school's high expectations of work and behaviour The good teaching and range of activities outside lessons The good leadership and management The good progress pupils make 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some aspects about information about how pupils are getting on and links with parents The amount of homework set

Inspectors agree with the parents' assessments of the school's strengths. Most parents were very supportive of the school in their responses. Whilst there are some instances where the pupils' planners are not used as effectively as they might be, the inspectors believe that the overall quality of information available to parents is excellent; the prospectus, key stage guides, and governors' reports are first rate, and individual reports for each pupil to parents are of a very high standard. The amount and quality of homework set are generally good, though there is variability, particularly in providing challenging extension work for high attainers in some subjects; some Key Stage 4 pupils and post-16 students

report that their workload for homework is unevenly spread, with a need for greater liaison over deadlines between subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The school has detailed information about the standards of most pupils when they enter the school. For Years 7 to 10, Key Stage 2 test data are available, though, particularly for Years 9 and 10, there are significant numbers of pupils for whom there is no information. However, the school makes extensive use of information it gathers itself from cognitive ability tests (CATs), and this information is available for nearly all pupils and for all years. An analysis of all the available information indicates that standards on entry are broadly average for both boys and girls. This description, however, disguises many unusual features about the pupils' attainments. In particular, the very large number of pupils with statements of special educational needs (97) covers a very wide range of circumstances, including physical and/or sensory impairment. Some of these pupils have a variety of learning difficulties as well. In addition, the school's reputation for successfully integrating pupils with special educational needs has led to the admission of a higher than normal number of other pupils with significant special educational needs. Whilst the achievements of many of these pupils are commendably high, the actual attainments of some of them are limited through medical circumstances and/or learning difficulties. At GCSE, in particular, some are unable to take the full range of subjects, and others need an additional year before they are ready to take any subjects. These factors need to be taken into account when comparing this school with 'similar' schools. Within this context, and with overall standards broadly average on entry, Years 7 to 9 were somewhat stronger on entry compared with Years 10 and 11; however, the boys' reading scores were slightly below average, whilst the girls' reading scores were slightly above average.
2. By the end of Key Stage 3, the overall average points score of boys and girls in the national tests have been above average over the period 1998 to 2000, with the trend broadly in line with the national trend. Over this period, results in English have been higher than science, which, in turn, have been higher than mathematics, which are still below the national average, despite significant improvements over a five year period. In 2000, the average points score for all core subjects is above the national average, though performance in mathematics was close to the national average. Results in the core subjects are close to the average for similar schools, though above in English. In relation to the pupils' 1997 Key Stage 2 tests, the 2000 results at Key Stage 3 show achievements that are above average in terms of educational value added, especially at Level 5, where, in English, they are well above. However, in terms of average points, results in mathematics show average added value, largely because the numbers achieving Level 6 is below average.
3. At the end of Key Stage 4, the overall average GCSE/GNVQ points score obtained by pupils has been close to the national average over the past five years, with a trend that is below the national trend, mainly because of the effect of the unusually low results in 1998 from boys and, particularly for this year only, girls. The gap between the results of boys and girls in recent years, including 2000, is somewhat larger than that found nationally, indicating some underachievement by some boys. In 2000, the average GCSE/GNVQ points score is above the national average, indicating sound achievement compared with similar schools and when compared with Key Stage 3 test results in 1998. Overall improvement since Year 9 is above average in English, showing good achievement, with the girls' results well above the national average. There is similar good achievement in science with above average improvement since Year 9 and much improved results in the last two years. Achievement in mathematics is less than English and science, but results are above the national average. A notable feature of the 2000 GCSE results across almost all subjects is the large number of A* and A grades, which is well above the national average; in history, for example, over one third of the grades are A* or A, and, in drama one half are A* or A. In 2000, results are significantly above average in art & design, combined information & communication technology, combined science (double award), French and German. In comparison with their results in the other subjects they took, pupils did particularly well in design & technology and German. A-level results in recent years, including 2000, have been close to the national average. Numbers taking some subjects in some years have been small, making statistical analysis unreliable.

However, information available in the school indicates that most students obtain results at A-level at least in line with what would be expected from their results at GCSE.

4. In work seen during the inspection, standards in English are above average at the end of both key stages, and in the sixth form. In Key Stage 3, standards of speaking and listening are well above average, with reading above average. Most pupils speak fluently, use standard English as appropriate and communicate their meaning with clarity. Higher attaining pupils in Year 9 are well above average, writing very detailed analytical essays. Middle attainers achieve average standards; their work is basically accurate but lacks the variety of vocabulary and a deliberate attempt to engage the reader's interest of higher attaining pupils. At Key Stage 4, there is a discrepancy between the better quality of their redrafted course work and their response in examinations; this lowers the attainment of some middle attaining boys in particular. Some pupils with special educational needs achieve average and above average standards in their English work, with many making good use of computers to enhance and redraft their work, as do pupils of all attainments. At A-level, students have accurate writing skills and use a good range of vocabulary. In Year 12 students are making a positive start to their course and discussing with enthusiasm, intelligence and insight.
5. Standards of literacy on entry are broadly average according to results in national tests and assessments carried out by the school. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school and leave with higher standards than suggested by their standards on entry. The overall standard of reading is above average. Most pupils read fluently and can identify relevant information from the texts they are given to read whether from books or from web sites. The school's library skills programme for Year 7 pupils effectively supports the development of reading. Only a few pupils are significantly below average for their ages in reading because of weaknesses in word recognition, fluency and comprehension. Standards of writing are above average overall. Only a few pupils are significantly below average because of inaccurate spelling and punctuation. Most pupils structure their written work well, using paragraphs, introducing their work and helping the reader follow their explanations and accounts through good use of connecting phrases and words. This reflects the effective emphasis teachers place on teaching coherent writing skills.
6. Standards of work seen in mathematics are at nationally expected levels at the end of Key Stage 3. At Key Stage 4 they are above expected levels, whilst those at the end of the sixth form are average. This indicates sound achievement at Key Stage 3, good achievement at Key Stage 4 and satisfactory achievement in the sixth form. This reflects results in tests and examinations; at Key Stage 3, because, at times, activities do not sufficiently take into account the different abilities of pupils, their achievements are not as high as they might be. During Key Stages 3 and 4, the pupils' skills are progressively developed, for example, in number, algebra, trigonometry and geometry. They become increasingly confident in using and applying mathematics in a variety of situations and in handling data.
7. The pupils' standards of numeracy on entry to the school are at the national average. As pupils move through the school, they make good progress; when they reach the end of Key Stage 4, their numeracy skills are above average. Particularly during Key Stage 3, pupils develop a range of number skills as part of the mathematics curriculum. Mental arithmetic exercises form part of mathematics lessons during this key stage and pupils are able to make appropriate use of calculators. Pupils, as part of the mathematics curriculum, also develop increasing confidence in handling problems involving money and measures, in methods of gathering numerical information and its presentation in graphs, charts and tables. Little use is made of numeracy in some subjects; however, in a range of others, pupils are able to work confidently with numbers. Pupils also show good levels of spatial awareness, for example, in aspects of the design and technology work. Only in work with special needs pupils and science do the lower attaining pupils have difficulty with aspects of the work involving numbers.
8. The standard of work seen during the inspection in science is in line with results in both Key Stages 3 and 4, and is above the national average. In the sixth form, standards are higher than suggested by recent A-level results, and are now in line with national averages. This is most noticeable in Year 12, where the numbers of students taking A-level sciences have shown a significant increase;

however, sometimes teachers do not engage all students in challenging activities throughout each lesson. Overall achievement in both Key Stages 3 and 4 is good; pupils make good progress both in lessons, and in the level of work in their books. The standard of numeracy displayed by pupils in science is good, and there are frequent opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills. The use of ICT is well integrated into the curriculum of each year group in the school, and pupils show good achievement in using computers for their research work.

9. In information and communication technology, at the end of Key Stages 3 and 4, standards of work seen during the inspection are well above average. Pupils achieve very well and constantly develop their skills. In the Year 7 specialist lessons, they all show the ability to work independently at a Level 4 task to communicate information using modern commercial word processing software, and are thoroughly familiar with databases, spreadsheets and graphics at the expected level. Most pupils take a specialist course in ICT at Key Stage 4, but not all do so. The standards of those who don't are more variable, but are at least average. However, in some cases, there is high achievement such as science lessons where laptop computers are used to provide a wide range of interactive experiences. In English, the pupils' achievements at Key Stages 3 and 4 is enhanced by good planning by teachers, which gives good opportunities to successfully use a range of techniques in coursework and projects.
10. In other subjects, standards in drama are above average at Key Stage 3 and well above at Key Stage 4. In Year 9, pupils are already preparing scripted performances, and using skills to develop character through voice projection, movement and gesture; such qualities are extended further among older pupils. In art & design, standards are well above average at Key Stages 3 and 4, reflecting the very good teaching, and representing very good achievement. The pupils' drawing skills and ability to represent complex forms in a variety of media are very well developed. In design & technology, by the end of Key Stage 3, overall standards are in line with the national average in all material areas, with a significant minority of pupils attaining well above average. By the end of Key Stage 4, overall standards in work seen are above average; a significant proportion attain well above average in textiles and particularly so in graphics in Year 10. In geography, standards are above average; through both key stages and in the sixth form, all pupils and students achieve well reflecting continuous good progress in their work, though their knowledge is at times unbalanced owing to more emphasis on human geography at the expense of physical geography in extended studies. In history, at the end of Key Stage 3, standards in work seen during the inspection are above the average level for 14 year olds; standards at the end of Key Stage 4 are at the average, whilst those at the end of the sixth form are above average. At all levels, however, pupils achieve well, making generally good progress in their work.
11. In modern foreign languages, in the early stages of Key Stage 3, the standards observed are not always comparable to those seen nationally and the language structures are sometimes quite limited. This appears to be the result of the equal status given to both French and German and the slightly reduced time given to each compared to other schools. However, at the end of Key Stage 3, the standards are generally in line with expectations. At the end of Key Stage 4, standards in both French and German are above average. Standards in music at the end of Key Stage 3 are broadly average, with no significant difference between boys and girls. A large number of pupils are supported in their learning by additional instrumental lessons and extra-curricular performing opportunities provided by the school, and this enables them to achieve higher standards. Standards at the end of Key Stage 4 are above average overall. Standards in performance are also above average with examples of one third of pupils working towards advanced levels. Standards in work seen in physical education at the end of Key Stages 3 and 4, and at the end of the sixth form, are above average; pupils, including those with special educational needs and the gifted and talented, make good progress and achieve well. In religious education, by the end of Key Stage 3, standards are in line with those set out in the local agreed syllabus; standards in the Year 10 GCSE short course are above average overall, but no judgement can be made about standards in Year 11, as no element of religious education was being taught within the PSRVE (personal, social, religious, vocational education) course during the inspection. Standards in work seen during the inspection in vocational subjects at the end of both Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form are above average across the wide variety of subjects taught. In some cases, particularly in the range of A-level social science courses, many students are achieving very well.

12. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in all subjects at all key stages. At Key Stage 3, those who have difficulty reading and writing improve their skills in literacy lessons. By the end of Key Stage 4, some achieve lower grades at GCSE than predicted, but this is usually because of illness, which slows their progress.
13. Pupils for whom English is an additional language comprise a very small proportion of the school. None of them is at the initial stage of learning English. Although the school does not evaluate their progress in relation to other pupils, they are well known to the teachers. A teacher fulfils day-to-day responsibilities for the progress of these pupils, reporting to one of the headship team. The standards of English of these pupils enable them to learn effectively and independently in lessons. They are well settled into the school community, participating in a range of sporting and cultural activities.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. The pupils' attitudes to school are very good. The vast majority likes school and takes part very enthusiastically in all aspects of school life, including extra-curricular activities, especially sport and music. Their attitudes to learning are very good overall and sometimes excellent; this has a major impact on their learning. There is, however, a very small minority who do not have good attitudes to learning and this is detrimental to their progress. Nearly all pupils are interested, enthusiastic and take a pride in their work, with good examples seen in all areas of the curriculum.
15. Behaviour is very good overall in lessons and around the school, including breaks and lunchtime. Sometimes, it is excellent in lessons where pupils are highly motivated. Occasionally, the behaviour of a few pupils in lessons is unsatisfactory; usually, however, very good behaviour management strategies by teachers ensure that these pupils do not disrupt the learning of others. Nonetheless, sometimes learning can be unsatisfactory if concentration is lacking as was the case in a Key Stage 4 science lesson with a significant number of boys caused difficulties. By contrast, a group of similar attainment worked very hard to understand difficult principles, and made good progress. No signs of bullying or aggressive behaviour were seen throughout the inspection; the atmosphere in the dining hall at break and lunch time is very civilized. The number of fixed term exclusions is in line with the national average for schools of similar size, but the number of permanent exclusions is very low.
16. The pupils' personal development is very good, maturing as they progress through the school. They take considerable responsibility for their own learning through setting their own targets and carrying out self-evaluation in all subjects. They willingly take on school responsibilities such as representing their tutor group on the School Forum; sixth formers help younger pupils with literacy and at the "Interact" youth group.
17. Relationships between pupils are very good. They play harmoniously together and even games of football, which are very competitive, are played in good spirit. Pupils work very well together in lessons when involved in group activities. This is particularly noticeable in physical education and science lessons where pupils co-operate very well in group work, for example, in evaluation of performance. Relationships between pupils and staff are also very good with staff giving a very positive lead by trusting pupils to behave well and take appropriate responsibility for their own education. For example, as part of their careers education, pupils are expected to make the initial contact in arranging their work experience placement. At breaks and lunch times, pupils have considerable freedom; they are trusted, and do not abuse that trust.
18. Pupils have an excellent awareness of the needs of others and how they can help them. The Lavinia Norfolk Centre (LNC) has a very significant impact on developing this awareness and understanding. During a discussion with Year 11 pupils, they commented that one of the best things about the school is the way that pupils with multiple difficulties are so well integrated into the school, which makes everyone aware of the difficulties of others - a comment indicating a maturity and understanding beyond their years.

19. Pupils with special educational needs themselves have very positive attitudes to school. They concentrate well and persevere even when they find work difficult. They have very good relationships with teachers and support staff. The sensitivity shown by all pupils to each others' needs helps to ensure that all pupils on the special needs register, including those with physical disabilities, are fully included in all aspects of the curriculum. Many pupils make the most of opportunities to increase their autonomy and independence. For example, a group of pupils with physical disabilities organised a residential tour to play wheelchair hockey against other schools and organisations.
20. Attendance is satisfactory and broadly in line with the national average with unauthorised absence below the national average. These factors contribute positively to standards achieved. Registration is carried out in accordance with statutory requirements and attendance is checked at every lesson using a recently installed computer system which is a significant deterrent to internal truancy.
21. Since the last inspection the already good attitudes to learning and behaviour have improved and are now very good. The very good relationships throughout the school have been maintained. Attendance has improved since the last inspection and data for the current year indicates even further improvement.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

22. Teaching is judged to be good throughout the school, and it is the consistency of the teaching that is a real strength. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection; in over 83 per cent of lessons seen, teaching was good or better, and, in almost 40 per cent of lessons, it was very good or excellent. This is considerably above the proportions seen nationally and an improvement from the previous inspection in the school. As a result of the good teaching, together with the pupils' very good attitudes in the majority of lessons, learning is also good, leading, in turn, to rising standards for all groups of pupils. Teaching is judged to be good overall in nearly all areas of the curriculum; in art and ICT, it is very good, whilst that judgement is also made for modern foreign languages at Key Stage 4, and in design & technology and history in the sixth form. Teaching is also very good in sixth form vocational courses and A-level social science courses, with some that is outstanding. Teaching is judged to be excellent in modern foreign languages in the sixth form. Some teaching of pupils with special educational needs is also outstanding. There have been heroic efforts recently by teachers in design & technology to maintain standards during the building operations, which have left them and the pupils without specialist accommodation for many months.
23. The teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach is a real strength in nearly all lessons. Their confidence in their subject results in learning that promotes good understanding of concepts by pupils. Similarly, the teachers' commitment to their subject leads to good learning. For example, in drama, the high standards result from very good teaching that enthuses and inspires the pupils on the one hand and improves their skills on the other. The teachers' planning is another strength in most lessons. As a result, they have high expectations of the pupils, who, in turn know what is required of them and rise to the challenges presented. In English, for example, the best lessons carefully build up challenge through a series of activities that asks more and more searching questions, such as the Year 11 lesson looking at the theme of relationships in Carol Ann Duffy's poetry. Pupils left this lesson with their understanding of the poet enhanced in a lively and systematic way. In another Year 11 lesson the teacher's challenging questions about attitudes to accent and dialect inspired the pupils to challenge the assumptions they make about how people speak.
24. The teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is good overall. In science, teachers provide key word lists and refer to them extensively; they also test the pupils' spelling of the key words. In design & technology, pupils are required to use technical vocabulary at all times; a 'buzzword' approach is used in design & technology and art. The importance of reading is stressed through a Year 7 library skills course; subjects, especially English and humanities, make good and frequent use of the library for research by pupils, promoting their independent learning skills. In addition to books, pupils also research texts on web sites and CD-ROMs. The use of writing frames in history is a model of good practice, resulting in well organised and coherent writing. Good teaching of literacy skills is also made in geography, design technology, religious education and physical

education. Spelling and punctuation are corrected across these subjects. The teaching of numeracy skills is less systematic; however, because relevant skills are well taught in mathematics, pupils confidently apply these skills when teachers in other subjects require them to do so. Indeed, teachers make good use of numeracy in science, design and technology, ICT, business studies, economics and geography.

25. Most teachers use a variety of suitable teaching and learning approaches to ensure that pupils maintain interest, apply themselves conscientiously and that the pace of learning is good. For example, in an excellent Year 9 art lesson, which began late due to rescheduling, the teacher continually adjusted the level of pace and challenge to suit the needs of the pupils. At the same time she conveyed the knowledge and understanding needed to reach high levels of attainment. Even pupils who sought to take advantage of the disrupted lesson saw that resistance was useless and produced good drawings. Occasionally, however, some teachers do not allow sufficient time for pupils to understand and absorb ideas before moving on, especially in mixed ability classes. Somewhat less successful lessons sometimes do not challenge the highest attainers sufficiently; this was seen in some mathematics lessons and, occasionally, in modern foreign languages. Whilst, generally, homework set by teachers is appropriate and extends and develops the pupils' learning, some is routine and does not sufficiently challenge or interest pupils, with opportunities for genuine research sometimes missed.
26. The quality of day to day marking is sometimes inconsistent. Whilst many teachers mark work very thoroughly with very good indications of how pupils can improve their standards, in other cases marking is too infrequent; in one science class, for example, this resulted in pupils taking less pride in their work with a consequent adverse effect on their learning. In some other subjects, there are variations in the way some teachers mark and record work; where it is less conscientiously done, pupils are less sure of what they have done well or not so well, and, therefore, are less confident about their subsequent learning. The use of assessment to help learning is relatively underdeveloped in some subjects, though it is stronger in Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. However, there are examples of good practice. For example, a major strength of history teachers is their skilful use of assessment to help pupils learn. This was seen when Year 9 pupils studied the same previously written Key Stage 3 assignment on the Coal Mines Commission of 1842 before individually picking out its qualities and deficiencies and assigning it a level; they then got to work to produce their own draft.
27. The teachers' management of pupils is very good, and this contributes significantly to their learning, enabling them to concentrate and work productively during lessons. Occasionally, however, if the lesson is led too much by the teacher, it inhibits the pupils' independent learning, despite their very good behaviour, keen interest and positive attitudes which promote good learning.
28. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. In mainstream classes teachers use their knowledge of the pupils' needs effectively. They plan challenging work but also provide sufficient support to allow all pupils to succeed. For example, in English, history and design & technology, teachers provide writing frames to help pupils structure their writing. In physical education they group pupils carefully and use a wide variety of modified equipment such as low pressure tennis balls, short-handled rackets and smaller netballs. Teachers and learning support assistants work together very well. Assistants are clear about their role. They support individual pupils when necessary but work flexibly to help pupils with a range of needs in many lessons. For example, in science, an assistant prompted pupils to listen more carefully and to keep working. However, she also carried out an experiment for a pupil with physical disabilities so that the pupil could record the results and draw conclusions.
29. Teachers from the faculty of learning support and development teach some lessons of English, French, mathematics and literacy to small groups of pupils with special educational needs. They challenge and interest pupils in lessons by planning a variety of activities that they base on an accurate assessment of the pupils' needs. They adapt resources and teaching methods skilfully to ensure that pupils with sensory and physical disabilities learn well. For example, they ensure that hearing-impaired pupils are watching and able to lip read before giving instructions. They use praise very effectively to increase the pupils' confidence whenever possible. Very occasionally, the

teachers' expectations are too high and they plan work that pupils find difficult to understand in spite of the teachers' clear explanations.

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

30. The quality and range of the learning opportunities provided for pupils and students at the school are very good. The statutory requirements of the subjects of the National Curriculum are fully met, but the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus in religious education are not met in the sixth form. The breadth and balance of the curriculum throughout the school are also very good. The teaching time allocation to each subject is broadly in line with national norms, except for modern foreign languages at Key Stage 3, which has an above average time allocation reflecting the school's decision to currently offer most pupils the opportunity of studying two modern foreign languages at Key Stage 3. However, each language gets less time than in most schools where only one language is taught.
31. At Key Stage 3, pupils study all subjects of the National Curriculum together with religious education, drama, and personal, social & health education. All Year 7 pupils are taught information and communication technology as a separate subject. At Key Stage 4, the curriculum contains all statutory subjects and includes religious education and personal, social & health education. There is, in addition, a good range of options that include vocational pathways provided by GNVQ programmes. The number of subjects on offer enriches and broadens the pupils' choices and experiences. The sixth form curriculum offers a good range of A-level, AS level, and GNVQ courses in three vocational areas, that provide opportunities for students, whatever their prior attainments, to build on their achievements at Key Stage 4.
32. Curriculum planning across the school is very good. The policy group and the curriculum committee of the governing body are proactive in reviewing the need for curricular change, taking note of parental views and reviewing the balance between statutory and non statutory provision at each key stage. The outcome of this is a school curriculum that provides very good continuity and progression. The school fulfils its claim that all pupils and students follow the full entitlement curriculum, unless there is a better alternative for them. There is a commendable degree of flexibility in the arrangements that are made, including regular reviews to ensure that it continues to meet the interests, aptitude and needs of all pupils. Indeed, the school is fully committed to educational inclusion. Its provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent. Many pupils have multiple needs, but a range of support is available to ensure that they are able to participate as fully as possible in all areas of the curriculum. They have individual timetables to meet their requirements, ranging from extra support in lessons to supported study, individual and small group tuition. The organisation of these timetables is a complex task but it allows specific needs to be met very effectively. For example, hydrotherapy and physiotherapy are provided for pupils with physical disabilities. A course in the social use of language helps some pupils develop their social and communication skills. Other pupils benefit from small group tuition in literacy, mathematics, French and English. High quality counselling is available for pupils with social and emotional difficulties. However, care is taken to minimise the effect of any withdrawal on the pupils' experience of different subjects. For example, evening games and sports activities compensate for the loss of physical education from the curriculum for some pupils with physical disabilities. This impressive support allows pupils with special needs to follow appropriate courses towards GCSE, GNVQ and A-level at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. The school meets all of the requirements for pupils with special educational needs that are outlined in their statements.
33. Overall, the school's strategies for effectively developing the pupils' literacy skills are very good. The school has correctly identified literacy as a priority. A steering group, comprising members from each faculty and led by an experienced and knowledgeable teacher, develops and monitors policy and practice. Very good progress has been made in helping pupils use appropriate subject vocabulary as well as more general vocabulary to help them show their understanding. In addition, teachers help the pupils organise their writing through techniques such as the use of writing frames. In some subjects such as history and geography the provision is outstanding. As a result pupils produce written accounts, discussions and explanations that are clear, coherent and logically

organised. The steering group monitors each subject's plans for developing literacy but monitoring the impact in lessons is less well established. For lower attainers literacy support is provided in small groups. The steering group is looking to progress further. It has formed a wide ranging development plan, used outside expertise for support and is introducing new initiatives such as the National Literacy Strategy into its planning.

34. The school's strategies for developing the numeracy skills of pupils are good. Developing these skills forms an important aspect of the mathematics curriculum, particularly during Years 7 and 8. As a consequence of this, pupils gain increasing confidence in using and applying number across a range of subjects and in a variety of contexts. Although the school has not developed a common approach to the development of number work across the curriculum, its importance is recognized in a number of ways. Extra staffing is provided in several classes containing pupils with limited numeracy skills. Several mathematics teachers have visited local primary schools to assess numeracy levels of pupils on entry to the school, and to attempt to ensure continuity in terms of development. Several teachers have attended national training courses, and all members of the mathematics staff have undertaken staff development associated with numeracy.
35. The provision for personal, social and health education is very good and makes a significant contribution to the pupils' personal development, as well as preparing them well for life beyond school. The curriculum is broad and balanced and includes citizenship, community service, study skills, health education and careers education. This is well delivered by specialist staff and by the form tutors, and through the general curriculum, as well as talks from visiting speakers such as the police liaison officer. The overall quality of the provision results in good learning by the pupils. The school also makes very good provision for the pupils' careers and work related education through the personal and social education curriculum. The programme starts with a general introduction to the world of work in Year 7 and progresses appropriately through the other years to ensure that pupils are well equipped to face the decisions they need to make, such as GCSE options in Year 9 and post-16 choices in Year 11. The careers library is well stocked with a wide range of publications which provide valuable help with the pupils' decision making. The careers officer provides very good support where needed, including being available at lunchtimes for informal discussions with pupils.
36. The school has excellent links with schools, colleges and initial teacher training institutions. The school maintains particularly strong curricular links with its family group of schools. Strong induction procedures are in place for easing the transfer of pupils from smaller primary schools to this large secondary school at the end of Year 6. The primary schools are appreciative of the excellent links with the school, as is the case with one primary school where the school sports day is completely organised and managed by older students from the Angmering School. These cross phase links have been strengthened with the attainment of Sports College status from September 2000. This development has funded the provision of teaching support in physical education and sport in primary schools by a member of staff based in the secondary school. The school has also developed productive links with special schools with joint professional development and the provision of access to the specialist learning resources at the school. The school's involvement with initial teacher training has led to strong links with providers of higher education. This is particularly strong in the science department, which has developed close links with the University of Sussex.
37. In 1998, the school was awarded the Chartermark, which recognised the very good links that have been established with the local community. There are strong links with local industry and commerce through work experience, GNVQ courses and the Education Business Partnership. Sixth form students also participate in accredited work in the community.
38. The school offers its pupils an excellent range of extra curricular activities. A Youth Project based at the school attracts over 300 pupils per week and offers a range of sporting activities together with dance, rock band tuition and babysitting guidance. The achievement of sports college status has enabled the school to extend its very good extra curricular sporting activities beyond the school and into the community. There are three choirs, a rock band and over 200 pupils enjoy peripatetic music tuition. Drama visits to the theatre are regularly arranged and pupils have the opportunity to tend small animals and discover the skills of bee-keeping at the school's environmental centre. In

addition, there is a computer club, an art club and revision courses to help older pupils prepare for GCSE examinations. Most of these activities are very well attended.

39. Equality of opportunity is excellent for all pupils in the school. The school is fully inclusive and is proud of this area of their work. It puts into practice its mission statement which says that the school is 'working together to recognise the value and realise the potential of each pupil'. The full inclusion of pupils with the range of disability and impairment represented at the school keeps equality in the forefront of what is done. Good practice is to be found in physical education; all groups, including disabled pupils and boys and girls, are given equal opportunity to access the curriculum and the many extra curricular activities, which the department provides. Gifted and talented pupils are identified in some subjects. Overall, the school has made very good progress in its curriculum provision since the last inspection, and is considering plans to develop the curriculum further.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

40. The overall provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is very good. Many subjects have policies and include provision in their lesson plans; however, there is no whole school policy. This means that some opportunities to develop these aspects of the pupils' development, particularly their spiritual and cultural development, are missed. Not all teachers and subject areas are sufficiently aware of the need to develop the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, including aspects of multi-cultural education, and the multi-cultural nature of Britain today.
41. The school seeks to cultivate spiritual development in a number of ways and overall provision is good. A carefully planned programme of assemblies provides a range of opportunities for pupils to reflect on matters of spiritual and moral value. Assemblies are also used to set a positive atmosphere in which praise is used to encourage and reward work. Personal, social and health education lessons also make a valuable contribution. Assemblies are not normally acts of collective worship, nor is there provision for collective worship on other days of the week. Consequently, the school is in breach of the requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship for all its pupils. Pupils are given opportunities for spiritual reflection in some subject areas. For example, tutor groups visit the Lavinia Norfolk Centre to reflect on what it is like to be disabled. In dance, pupils are able to express their inner feelings through movement; in a Year 7 science lesson, pupils were given the opportunity to reflect on the rate of growth of a fertilized human egg.
42. Provision for the pupils' moral development remains a strong feature of the school, and is very good. The code of conduct and the classroom covenant are discussed with parents and pupils. Moral issues are discussed in subject areas; for example, in geography pupils discuss issues of birth control in developing countries. In English as part of a study on 'Lord of the Flies', Year 11 pupils are discussing the moral issues life and death and behaviour in extreme situations.
43. The quality of provision for the pupils' social development is excellent. There are opportunities in all subjects for pupils to work in groups for research and discussion. A large number of pupils take part in extra-curricular activities. These pupils work collaboratively in groups and in teams especially science, music and physical education. There are a large number of trips every term, which enrich the pupils' learning. Pupils take part in local field trips, and visit the theatre and art galleries. There are German and French exchange trips, including a French exchange for deaf pupils.
44. The provision for the pupils' cultural development is good, especially in religious education, music and design and technology where there are displays of work from Japanese, Chinese and Italian designers. In modern foreign languages pupils study the food and tourist industries of other cultures. They compile authentic web site material to assist their investigations.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

45. This is a very caring school, which provides very good educational and personal support and guidance for its pupils, as well as having very good arrangements to ensure the pupils' welfare,

health and safety. These arrangements include very good procedures for child protection, promoting good behaviour and eliminating bullying, promoting regular attendance, health and safety and very good promotion of healthy and safe living.

46. The very good personal support and guidance that pupils receive make a significant contribution to their personal development. Form tutors are the first point of contact for pupils and they normally stay with their tutor group for five years. Tutors therefore know their pupils very well, are sensitive to their needs and thus able to provide very good personal support and guidance. Further support is provided by Year Team Leaders as necessary. The very good relationships between pupils and staff gives pupils confidence to raise any concerns they may have knowing that they will be dealt with sympathetically.
47. The pupils' personal development is very well monitored through the personal & social education programme. The pupils' self-evaluation of their personal development in their reports encourages a mature assessment of their strengths and weaknesses. Also, Challenge 21 log books include very good monitoring of personal development.
48. The school monitors and supports the welfare of pupils on the special needs register extremely well. Excellent liaison with a range of agencies, such as the careers service and health authority ensures that students benefit from further advice and support. However, the health authority is unable to provide some pupils with the speech therapy to which they are entitled. Arrangements for the checking of hearing aids and other audiological equipment are very efficient and students are helped to do this for themselves whenever possible.
49. Procedures for identifying and assessing pupils' special educational needs are thorough and efficient. For example, the special needs co-ordinator attends the annual reviews of Year 6 pupils in primary schools who intend to come to the school the following year. Individual education plans (IEPs) provide very good guidelines for teachers about how to support pupils. As a result, all teachers are very aware of the pupils' needs and use the information when planning their lessons. Teachers also write targets for pupils on their IEPs. The quality of these varies. Some are precise and helpful, but others are not sufficiently specific to allow pupils or their teachers to review their progress. The faculty for learning support and development gathers a lot of information about the attainment of pupils on the special needs register but does not analyse sufficiently the progress they are making.
50. Child protection procedures are very good. The member of staff responsible for child protection has considerable expertise in this area and all staff is fully aware of the procedures and their importance. The school has excellent relationships with other agencies.
51. Procedures for promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good. The existing policy provides clear guidance on promoting good behaviour and a clear statement in the sanctions procedure. The school puts great emphasis on promoting good behaviour; the aim of the recently formed governing body discipline committee is to develop strategies to prevent problems arising. Pupils are made fully aware of the standards of behaviour expected throughout the pupil planner, and the support of parents is sought through the home/school agreement.
52. Procedures for monitoring and promoting regular attendance are very good. Attendance is carefully monitored using a computerized system and absence is followed up appropriately, with very good support provided by the education welfare officer. Ensuring regular attendance and punctuality are part of the home/school agreement, and there is clear guidance on attendance procedures in the school's prospectus. Attendance at lessons is also recorded electrically and this enables staff to track the pupils' whereabouts.
53. Procedures for ensuring a safe working environment are very good and include regular inspections with particular emphasis on the impact of the current building programme. Risk assessments have been carried out in all relevant departments including science, physical education and design technology and all routine testing is up to date.

54. First aid and medical care arrangements are excellent. The considerable expertise within the Lavinia Norfolk Centre is used for the benefit of the whole school. The pupils' personal safety, personal hygiene and general well-being is promoted very well through the personal and social education programme which is taught in specific personal and social education lessons, and through the curriculum.
55. The monitoring of the pupils' academic performance is good overall. Statutory requirements for the assessment and recording of pupils, academic performance are being met in all subjects with the exception currently of some aspects of ICT. In most departments, the quality of marking is good and there is regular assessment, for example at the ends of units of work. Good records are maintained in most subject areas, with assessment in Key Stage 3 linked to National Curriculum levels. At Key Stage 4, there is a good awareness of the GCSE criteria, which is used to inform formative assessment. Pupil knowledge of the criteria is reflected in both self-assessment and pupils' awareness of their own grade targets. There are, however, some subject areas such as mathematics and science, where there are inconsistencies in both marking and record keeping.
56. Procedures to monitor and support the pupils' academic progress are good. Pupil planners are a key part of this provision. The planners record the pupils' agreed targets in each subject, together with how they are going to be achieved; their progress against these targets is reviewed at appropriate times throughout the year. There is a clearly understood school target setting procedure, initiated every autumn. The process involves all teachers at both tutor and subject level, who negotiate target priorities with pupils. These targets are passed on to parents at well attended consultation evenings and monitored subsequently by parents and tutors. Records are kept of the pupils' progress via pupil files, kept up-to-date in the tutor base. The files include reports, letters to parents, credits and examples of work. Although target-setting is a regular feature of most subject areas, there is inconsistency in the quality and awareness of targets, particularly in Key Stage 3. In humanities, the practice is exemplary, with targets clearly linked to National Curriculum levels and pupils aware of the standards expected. In physical education, there is a well-developed target-setting model, clearly indicating targets for improvement, across the ability range. In other areas, the quality of targets is variable; they are less focused and not linked clearly to National Curriculum descriptors. There is an enormous amount of data available to teachers, which is accessible and retrievable; however, in the process of setting targets there is inconsistent use of data and variable account taken of the pupils' prior attainment.
57. The use of assessment data to guide curricular planning is good. There are examples of good practice in English, art & design, design technology, modern foreign languages and science. For example, in English at Key Stage 4, there has been more focus on aspects of examination preparation as a result of the analysis of marks; in modern foreign languages, a change of curriculum in Key Stage 3 in order to raise standards is planned for September 2001 as a result of analyzing data and identifying weaknesses in the present arrangements.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

58. There is a very good partnership with parents, which is a strength in supporting the pupils' successful learning. Overall, parents are very satisfied with all aspects of the school; some have reservations about the provision of homework, information on their children's progress and about how well the school works with parents. Nearly all parents consider that their children are making good progress, would feel comfortable about approaching the school with problems and feel that the school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best. The vast majority also feels that the school is well led and managed, and are very satisfied with the range of activities provided outside lessons. The inspection team fully endorses these positive views. The inspection team considers that the provision of homework is good overall, though, in some instances, it is not sufficiently challenging. It believes that information to parents, both about the pupils' progress and about other important matters, is excellent, and that, overall, the school does work closely with parents.
59. Parents are very well informed about the school through the prospectus, the governors' annual report and very good weekly newsletters. They are very well informed about the curriculum through the

Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4 and sixth form curriculum guides. Consultation evenings are held in the autumn term to discuss the pupils' targets and these are reviewed at further consultation evenings later in the year. In addition, the excellent reports to parents give them an enormous amount of information about their children's academic progress and personal development, including their child's self-evaluation in these areas. The school provides very thorough information to parents of pupils with special educational needs about their children's progress. Parents of children with statements are fully involved in their annual reviews.

60. Parents are kept fully in the picture about what their children are doing each week through the pupil planner, which includes homework expectation as well as details of homework set. This enables parents to support their children with their work, which, together with the generally good use of homework throughout the school, makes a very positive contribution to the children's learning.
61. Parents support the school through the parent teachers' association, which raises valuable funds for the school as well as helping in many other ways. Their support for the school is also demonstrated through very good attendance at school events, and is endorsed through the home/school agreement. Very good links with parents through the parent teachers' association and governors provide a valuable source of the views of parents which are taken into account in the school's planning.
62. Since the last inspection, the partnership with parents, including, home-school agreements, has grown even stronger; it is now very good which is having a very positive impact on the pupils' education.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

Leadership and management

63. The overall quality of the leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and key staff is excellent. There is clear educational direction by the headteacher, but also a very strong shared commitment to improvement; consequently, there is an excellent capacity for the school to become even more effective. The culture within the school encourages thinking about educational issues, and there is a consultation structure that allows participation at all levels. The shared sense of purpose was noticeable at a meeting of the policy group during the inspection; membership of this group covers a wide range of interests within the school. The quality of the leadership and this shared sense of purpose are reflected in the awards to the school of Investors in People status, and the Chartermark. Good delegation ensures that staff with management responsibilities are able to contribute very effectively to the work of the school. The aims of the school are explicit, relationships are very good, and the commitment to equality of opportunity is outstanding.
64. Leadership and management of the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs are excellent. The special educational needs co-ordinator has a clear vision for including all pupils fully in every area of the curriculum. A team of committed teachers and support staff share this vision and put it into practice very effectively. The special educational needs policy has been revised since the last inspection. It meets the requirements of the Code of Practice but criteria for evaluating the success of the policy are in need of further development.
65. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching are very thorough. Teaching and learning are at the heart of the school improvement plan, and it is intended that the school's performance management policy will lead further steps for improvement. For example, a conscious decision has been made to fund additional time for heads of faculty to lead a 'coaching' model for monitoring teaching and sharing good practice. Whilst it is too early to judge the effectiveness of this initiative, it is indicative of the creative thinking of the school's management, its commitment to improvement, and its taking action to support its identified targets and priorities. Indeed, the school's priorities for development are very good, and are prepared after a wide ranging process of consultation that includes all staff and governors.

66. The school benefits from having a strong and supportive governing body. The governors are very good in fulfilling their responsibilities as critical friends; they have an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and have a very good strategic vision of its future needs, for example, for accommodation. The governors' committee structure, with appropriate terms of reference and sequencing of meetings, ensures that the governing body works efficiently and effectively.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

67. There are sufficient experienced and well-qualified teachers to cover the full range of subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. There is an adequate number of technical support staff to meet the needs of all subject areas, with the exception of science where there are insufficient technical staff to service the current demands of this subject area. Administrative, clerical and premises staff contribute most positively to the work of the school. The learning opportunities of pupils with special educational needs are significantly enhanced by the high quality support offered by well-deployed learning support assistants. Induction procedures for student teachers, newly qualified teachers and other staff are excellent, and are further enhanced by a well-managed and comprehensive programme of professional development. Systems of teacher monitoring linked to professional development are very well developed.

68. Overall, the standard of accommodation is satisfactory and meets the requirements of most subjects, with the exception of science and music where there are insufficient specialist rooms. Currently some art lessons are taught in temporary rooms but new accommodation is soon to be commissioned. The school has an adequate number of general purpose classrooms; most subjects are taught in rooms that are closely grouped and benefit from the positive effect this has on departmental organisation. The best features of accommodation include : the new art, design and technology block; a new dual-purpose hall for assemblies and dining arrangements; the physical education facilities and the provision of a state of the art fitness centre to complement the greatly improved provision in the Lavinia Norfolk Centre. Other specialist accommodation such as the information & communication technology suites, the school library and sports hall are generally spacious and provide comfortable learning environments. The good quality of material and display in corridors and classrooms, mostly of the pupils' work, promotes learning and effectively celebrates their achievements. The school enjoys well-maintained playing fields, but, because of the increased level of building, there is a shortage of hard play areas for the pupil's recreation time. This is compensated in part by an open school policy where pupils can use most of the indoor areas at break and lunch times and is a very good feature of the school's provision for its pupils. The cleaning of the school's premises is very good and is well monitored by the very efficient and effective work of the site-manager; litter, graffiti and vandalism are rarely problems. As a result of the clean and pleasant conditions, a positive learning environment has been established. Facilities for the disabled are excellent with unlimited access for wheel chair bound pupils to all parts of the school. A lift enables wheelchair access to the second floor with plans for the installation of a second lift to complement this provision. Specialist toilet facilities are plentiful, although the age and condition of the main school toilet block causes difficulties for the cleaning staff in maintaining them to the school's exacting high standards. The community generates extra funds for school improvements through evening and weekend use of school facilities.

69. Since the last inspection, the school has made good progress in improving its accommodation, and has resolved most of the issues reported. There are carefully prioritised plans for improving accommodation through rebuilding and refurbishment to meet the needs of the growing population, as and when funding becomes available. Much has been achieved since the last report through the effective fund raising and careful planning of the governing body's premises committee.

70. Resources are good, with some shortfalls in science and a lack of computers in some subject areas. There are very good systems to ensure that the allocation of money to subjects is both equitable and effective and this helps the progress of standards of learning.

Efficiency

71. Financial management, both at strategic and day-to-day levels, is excellent, and is related to the school's educational priorities. Surpluses have been carefully built up for investment in priority areas, and there are long term plans in areas such as accommodation. Technology is very well used to support financial projections and day-to-day administration. As a result, spending is highly focused to ensure best value. The principles of best value are rigorously applied where it is within the school's ability to do so; at times, the governors are frustrated when they are unable to scrutinize expenditure in areas outside the school's control. The amount of specific grant available to the school, because of its special facilities with the Lavinia Norfolk Centre and as a sports college, is large; all is used entirely appropriately.
72. Because of the very large provision for pupils with special educational needs, the number of teachers and support staff is high in relation to the number of pupils. However, the proportion of the total budget spent on teachers is broadly average compared with all schools. The additional staffing does, however, give the school more flexibility in the deployment of teachers; this is done very effectively so that, for example, some teachers, who teach mainly pupils with special educational needs, also teach in other areas, and there is more scope for flexible re-deployment within the school to meet changing or unforeseen circumstances. Spending on learning resources is, at present, above average, but this has been a deliberate decision, within longer term financial planning, to fund developments in ICT and other resources. Other exceptional spending is clearly related to priorities set by the school; for example, investment in electronic registration and a system planned to link it with recording and reporting assessments reflects the school's priorities for improving attendance and reporting progress to parents.
73. Overall, the school has a higher than average income; however, when specific additional funding for special educational needs, and for the sports college for activities not directly for present pupils during the school day, is taken out, the income is broadly average. Pupils leave the school with results that are above average overall, and better than would be expected from their attainments when they arrive at the school. The learning environment in terms of relationships is very good, and the personal development of pupils is very good. Teaching is consistently good, and the leadership and management of the school are excellent. The school is an excellent example of a tolerant, inclusive community. The school is judged to give good value for money, and it has the capacity and the potential to improve its effectiveness still further.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

Elements of all these issues are already contained in the current school improvement plan. The numbers in brackets after each issue refer to the relevant paragraphs in the report.

- (1) Improve the consistency in assessing and marking of the pupils' work by:
 - a) monitoring more closely at subject level the quality of marking between different classes;
 - b) developing a more common approach to assessment and marking between the different subjects;
 - c) drawing on existing good practice in some subjects identified in this report, and developing further the use of subject specific criteria to assess the pupils' work, and the subsequent use of targets for improvement which are also specific to the subject.

(26, 55, 56, 83, 92, 99)

- (2) Implement as soon as possible the plans for the further development of ICT by:
 - a) ensuring that the experiences of all pupils in Years 8 and 9 are as good as those experienced in Year 7;
 - b) ensuring that future schemes for Key Stage 4 give all pupils high quality opportunities in ICT;
 - c) securing assessment arrangements for ICT that meet all requirements.

(9, 55, 114, 136, 127)

- (3) Challenge all pupils, and especially high attainers, to achieve to their maximum potential in all situations by:
 - a) identifying in all schemes of work, including homework, demanding and interesting extension activities to stretch higher attainers;
 - b) drawing on existing good practice in many subject areas identified in this report, and sharing strategies and methods that successfully cater for all pupils, whatever their prior attainment.

(6, 25, 58, 91, 97, 99)

In addition, the school should consider whether, within its overall educational objectives, it is able to move more closely towards complying with the statutory requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship for all pupils, and to providing a course in religious education in the sixth form.

(30, 41, 148)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	181
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	80

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
9	30	44	17	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils on the school's roll	1113	200
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	128	

Special educational needs

	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	76	20
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	336	30

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	6

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	22
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	33

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	91.2
National comparative data	91.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
National comparative data	1.0

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	2000	102	120	222

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	70	73	73
	Girls	103	85	79
	Total	173	158	152
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	78(71)	71 (62)	69 (58)
	National	63 (63)	65 (62)	59 (55)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	29 (32)	32 (32)	33 (19)
	National	28 (28)	42 (38)	30 (23)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	61	75	78
	Girls	94	91	84
	Total	155	166	164
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	70 (56)	75 (66)	74 (73)
	National	64 (64)	66 (64)	62 (60)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	28 (26)	36 (41)	33 (37)
	National	31 (31)	39 (37)	29 (28)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year	2000	89	110	199

GCSE results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A*-G	1 or more grades A*-G
Numbers of pupils achieving the standard specified	Boys	35	70	84
	Girls	70	102	105
	Total	105	180	105
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	53 (48)	91 (91)	95 (97)
	National	47 (47)	91 (91)	95 (96)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	40.1 (38.1)
	National	38.4 (38.0)

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

Vocational qualifications	Number	% success rate
Number studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all those they studied	School	
	National	

Attainment at the end of the sixth form

Number of students aged 16, 17 and 18 on roll in January of the latest reporting year who were entered for GCE A-level or AS-level examinations	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	16	37	53

Average A/AS points score per candidate	For candidates entered for 2 or more A-levels or equivalent			For candidates entered for fewer than 2 A-levels or equivalent		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
School	15.3	17.4	16.6 (17.0)	6.7	2.9	3.4 (5.3)
National	n/a	n/a	18.2 (17.9)	n/a	n/a	2.7 (2.8)

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

Vocational qualifications		Number	% success rate
Number in their final year of studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all those they studied	School	21	100
	National		87

International Baccalaureate		Number	% success rate
Number entered for the International Baccalaureate Diploma and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all they studied	School	0	n/a
	National		n/a

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	3
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	3
White	1302
Any other minority ethnic group	0

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	1	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	32	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y13**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	89.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	14.6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y7 – Y13

Total number of education support staff	20.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	197

Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y13

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	72.8
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Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y13

Key Stage 3	21.6
Key Stage 4	19.5

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	3531573
Total expenditure	3517249
Expenditure per pupil	2842
Balance brought forward from previous year	62677
Balance carried forward to next year	77010

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	1313
Number of questionnaires returned	406

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	29	57	11	2	1
My child is making good progress in school.	36	55	5	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	19	58	14	3	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	55	17	4	2
The teaching is good.	27	59	7	1	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	31	46	19	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	55	39	5	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	43	4	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	27	51	19	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	36	51	4	2	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	32	54	7	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	45	43	6	1	4

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

53 parents sent written comments, most of which explained in more detail the reasons for their responses. The balance of comments was very positive; those with concerns nearly always gave praise as well. Concerns expressed in writing mainly related to some poor behaviour disrupting learning, the low level of some homework, and the state of the toilets. The main areas of praise were the caring relationships, the approachability of the school, and the quality of leadership.

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

ENGLISH

74. Standards on entry are broadly average according to results in national tests and assessments carried out by the school. Pupils achieve well as they move through the school and leave with higher standards than suggested by their standards on entry because of very good teaching.
75. In the 2000 national tests at the end of Key Stage 3, the average points score achieved is above the average for 14 year olds. It is also above the average for similar schools. Results have improved consistently since 1996 and have been above the national average for each of the last four years. Girls consistently do better than boys. The number of pupils that reach the expected Level 5 or higher is well above the average for all schools and similar schools. The proportion reaching the higher Level 6 or higher is above the national average and in line with the average for similar schools. The proportion reaching above average levels is twice the figure achieved by the same pupils in their tests at the end of primary school so indicating good achievement.
76. In the 2000 GCSE English examination the proportion of pupils who passed at C or higher is above the national average and broadly average for similar schools. The proportion passing at the highest grades of A/A* is twice the national figure. The proportion passing at A*-G is in line with the national average as were overall standards based on the average points score. Girls did better than boys by a wider margin than the national average. Overall standards maintained those achieved in 1999. Pupils do as well in English as in most of their other subjects and achieve results in line with those suggested by their previous attainment at the end of Key Stage 3.
77. In the 2000 GCSE English literature examination the average grade obtained by pupils is half a grade higher than the national average, even though the school enters more pupils for this examination than most schools. Results are higher than the pupils' previous results had indicated.
78. In the Sixth Form results in the 2000 A-level English examination are above the national average and represent an improvement on the results in 1999. All students passed at grades A-E.
79. In work seen during the inspection, standards at the end of Key Stage 3 are above average for 14 year olds. Standards of speaking and listening are well above average. Most pupils speak fluently, use standard English as appropriate and communicate their meaning with clarity. Even younger pupils show high standards. One Year 7 boy, during a discussion on corporal punishment, referred to children with deliberate irony and originality as 'the new ethnic majority'. Standards of reading are above average. Higher attaining pupils in Year 9 are well above average, writing very detailed analytical essays comparing the themes and use of language in poetry from the First World War. Middle attainers do not include the same detail and insight, but their responses to such tasks achieve average standards because they clearly understand the salient messages of the pieces. The standard of writing of higher attaining pupils is well above average and occasionally very high. Middle attainers achieve average standards. Their work is basically accurate but lacks the variety of vocabulary and a deliberate attempt to engage the reader's interest of higher attaining pupils. Lower attaining pupils, including some with special educational needs, achieve standards that are below and occasionally well below average. When reading, some lack fluency. Their writing contains more spelling and punctuation errors. Some have difficulty with letter formation. The presentation of some of these pupils, usually boys, is also below average and hinders effective redrafting to improve the accuracy and expression of the writing. Some pupils with special educational needs achieve average and above average standards. Many make good use of computers to enhance and redraft their work, as do pupils of all attainments.
80. At the end of Key Stage 4 standards are above average for 16 year olds. Overall standards of speaking and listening are above average and reflect the well structured group and pair tasks that feature in many lessons. The reading standards of the higher attainers are very high. These pupils write with great perception to show how Miller creates dramatic tension in 'The Crucible'. Overall

reading and writing standards are above average. The highest attainers write technically flawless English in their course work achieving very high standards. Middle attainers straddle the grade C/D range. Those at D make errors in punctuation and their written expression is not always appropriate.

81. For pupils at all levels there is also a discrepancy between the better quality of their redrafted course work and their response in examinations. This lowers the attainment of some middle attaining boys in particular. The department has analysed examination performances to identify where improvements are needed and has rightly adjusted the timing and content of its Year 11 teaching as a result. It is too soon to evaluate the outcome of this approach but it is a good illustration of the self evaluative style of the department and of its determination to raise standards further. Lower attaining pupils, including some with special educational needs, achieve standard that are below and occasionally well below average. Some of the lowest attainers do not enter GCSE but achieve success on their Certificate of Achievement course. As at Key Stage 3, frequent spelling and punctuation errors undermine their standards. Overall pupils achieve well as they move through the school. The biggest gains are in the pupils' ability to write more thoughtful, well planned and organised work. Careful planning of writing - and then sticking to the plan - are clear strengths and have a positive impact on overall standards.
82. In the sixth form standards are above average. Overall, students have accurate writing skills and use a good range of vocabulary. The higher attaining students are skilled at linking comments about an author's use of language to the themes of a text. One student demonstrated this very well when discussing how Fitzgerald's use of colour gave insights into the values of characters in 'The Great Gatsby'. In Year 12 students are making a positive start to their course and discussed the character of Enobarbus with enthusiasm, intelligence and insight.
83. Teaching and learning are good overall and very good in Key Stage 4. Pupils have positive attitudes to English and behave well. They work hard and, at Key Stage 4, produce lengthy course work, taking their work seriously. Much of this results from lively teaching which stimulates and sustains their interest. Because teachers know their subjects well, especially literature, pupils learn effectively how to analyse a text and how to write about it in a structured way. The teachers' planning is very good and results in methods that keep the pupils busy and facing new challenges. The best lessons carefully build up challenge through a series of activities that asks more and more searching questions, such as the Year 11 lesson looking at the theme of relationships in Carol Ann Duffy's poetry. Pupils left this lesson with their understanding of the poet enhanced in a lively and systematic way. In another Year 11 lesson the teacher's challenging questions about attitudes to accent and dialect inspired the pupils to challenge the assumptions they make about how people speak. The brisk pace of lessons means that there are rarely any discipline problems. Pupils with special educational needs are well known to the teachers, as is the nature of their need. Good liaison with support staff and good use of resources such as writing frames help these pupils to achieve as well as other pupils. Homework is set regularly and reinforces learning.
84. Most marking is good but occasionally some comments – both positive and negative – are too vague to be helpful. Frequent use of GCSE grades and related criteria in Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form means the pupils are well informed about how they are doing and what they could achieve. This is not as well established at Key Stage 3, although some teachers are beginning to use these methods. Teachers keep records of the pupils' previous achievements but more use needs to be made of them to set short, medium and long term targets. Occasionally the pace of some lessons dropped and pupils did not do as much as they could have.
85. This is a very good department, which has made a good response to the last inspection. It is very well led and managed and is very much a 'thinking department', keeping its performance under review, monitoring its teaching and learning and seeking how to improve. Its radical implementation at Key Stage 3 of the methods of the recent National Literacy Strategy illustrates its open mindedness. As well as the head of department's strong leadership, there is a shared commitment to succeed and very good support and direction provided by staff with responsibilities within the department. Many pupils use ICT and provision is clearly planned. However, limited access means the provision can be uneven.

Media Studies

86. Media studies is a successful sixth form course. A popular option, the results in the 2000 A-level examination are above the national average based on average points score. This maintained the above average standards achieved since the previous inspection. These results represent good achievement for the students given their results at GCSE. During the inspection the students' enjoyment of the course was evident as they clearly responded to very good and informed teaching. The work is challenging and develops the students' critical and creative skills. The enthusiasm and subject expertise of the teaching staff have a positive impact on standards.

Drama

87. Very good teaching helps the pupils to achieve high standards and make very good progress. In the 2000 GCSE drama examination, the proportion passing at C or higher is in line with the national average but the proportion passing at A*/A (50 per cent) is nearly three times the national average: an exceptional achievement. The standards of work achieved by the current Year 11 match these high standards. In the 2000 A-level examination results are average, but are above average in the current Year 13 group. In Year 9, standards are above average for 14 year olds. The high standards result from very good teaching that enthuses and inspires the pupils on the one hand and improves their skills on the other. In Year 9, pupils are already preparing scripted performances, and using analytical skills to prepare, not only how to develop character through voice projection, but also through movement and gesture. These qualities are extended further among older pupils. A key strength is the expertise of the teachers and their commitment. They have devised a challenging curriculum. In lessons they not only devise a fast paced series of activities, but use their own performance skills to exemplify the range of roles the pupils could emulate. Drama also makes, through productions and theatre visits, a full and enriching contribution to the pupils' personal, social and cultural development.

Literacy

88. Pupils receive many opportunities to develop their skills of literacy in a range of subjects. There are many examples of good practice. In science teachers provide key word lists and refer to them extensively. They also test pupils' spelling of the key words. In history, lesson planning explicitly identifies the new words that pupils are going to learn such as 'Aryan' and 'autarky' in Year 10. Geography teachers provide glossaries and stress the importance of their use in written and oral work. In design & technology pupils are required to use technical vocabulary at all times. A 'buzzword' approach is used in design & technology and art & design. In physical education pupils and teachers use subject vocabulary such as 'motor sensory' frequently and use displays and lists to support this process. Only in mathematics does the emphasis on this aspect of the subject lack consistency.

89. The importance of reading is stressed through a Year 7 library skills course. Subjects, especially English and humanities, use the library frequently for research. In addition to books, pupils also research texts on web sites and CD-ROMs. In the sixth form, AS English students have set up a web site for researching and sharing insights on their set text: 'Snow Falling on Cedars'. Although sustained reading was seen frequently in English, drama, history and geography, there was less evidence of a systematic approach to teaching different reading and study methods such as skimming and scanning.

90. Science teaching makes a good contribution to the development of the pupils' writing. Year 8 pupils explored and applied their knowledge of the solar system to produce travel brochures. The use of writing frames in history is a model of good practice, resulting in well organised and coherent writing. Good provision is also made in geography, design technology, religious education and physical education. Spelling and punctuation are corrected across these subjects.

MATHEMATICS

91. Standards achieved at the end of Key Stage 3 are at the national average when comparing the average points score to all schools. In 2000 the proportion of students gaining level 5 or above in the end of Key Stage 3 National Curriculum tests is above the national average; however the proportion of students reaching level 6 or above in these tests is below the national average. When compared to similar schools, the average points score in 2000 is below the national average. Key Stage 3 results in mathematics in recent years have risen and remained more or less in line with the national average for all schools. At Key Stage 4, results for the GCSE in 2000 are above the national average. The percentage of students gaining a grade in the range A* to G is also above the national average during this year. GCSE results have risen steadily over the last three years, though, prior to this, they had steadily fallen after reaching a peak in 1994 which was substantially above the national average. A-level results over recent years have been around national average levels, though, in some years, only a few students have been involved. In 2000, for example, of the seven entries, six obtained pass grades including one grade A. Standards in mathematics of pupils entering the school are in line with national average levels. Therefore, achievement of the majority of students during Key Stage 3 is satisfactory, good during Key Stage 4 and satisfactory during the sixth form. The girls' results, particularly for the GCSE, tend to be better than those of the boys but the difference is not significant. Although overall standards achieved by the majority of students in mathematics are at least satisfactory and good at Key Stage 4, they are lower than those achieved in English and science. The pupils' results in mathematics tend to be somewhat lower than in their other subjects.
92. At the end of Key Stage 3, standards of work seen during the inspection are at nationally expected levels. At Key Stage 4 they are above expected levels, whilst those at the end of the sixth form are average. This confirms that the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress in their work during Key Stage 3, good progress at Key Stage 4 and satisfactory progress in the sixth form. During Key Stages 3 and 4, the pupils' skills are progressively developed, for example, in number, algebra, trigonometry and geometry. They become increasingly confident in using and applying mathematics in a variety of situations and in handling data. However, in a number of lessons in Key Stage 3, there was evidence that some of the highest attaining pupils were not being sufficiently challenged. A Year 7 class, for example, containing pupils with a very wide range of attainment levels, was undertaking work concerning the cubes of numbers; the pace and nature of the activities did not sufficiently take this into account, so several students became restless and the pace of their work declined. Whilst the achievement of pupils of average or lower attainment in several groups at Key Stage 3 is generally satisfactory, and sometimes good, insufficient challenge is provided for the highest attaining pupils. The progress and achievements of these pupils are, as a consequence, unsatisfactory. The achievements of pupils of all levels of attainment during Key Stage 4 are at least satisfactory and frequently good. In a Year 11 class of higher attainers, for example, the pupils increased their understanding of probability, and, as a result, they were able to tackle confidently the examples that were set. The level of work was well matched to the pupils, and extension work was made available for those pupils who required it.
93. Teaching overall is good, and sometimes it is very good. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. All lessons are well planned with clear objectives. In most lessons, pupils are engaged in a good range of activities including large group, smaller group and individual work. Pupils are encouraged to work collaboratively during aspects of some of the classes. Substantial use is made of high quality duplicated handouts and worksheets. Examples are provided in context and experimentation requires pupils to undertake investigations and to draw individual conclusions, and, thereby, develop their thinking skills. Very good teaching in a Year 9 class, for example, involved the pupils in constructing similar figures. As a consequence of this, the pupils were able to draw conclusions about the ratios of areas of similar figures, taking their learning forward rapidly. Much of the teaching of pupils with special educational needs is of outstanding quality. The teachers involved have a detailed knowledge of individual the pupils' needs; methods and approaches which are used take these fully into account. Although homework is regularly set for all classes, there are inconsistencies across the faculty in the approaches used for the marking and recording of the pupils' work. Some teachers mark, grade and record all the responses that are made. Others mark the work but do not grade or record this. Pupils in some sixth form classes are required to mark their own work after this has been reviewed in classes. As a consequence, pupils receive a variable

level of feedback from teachers on the quality of work that they have produced and on how this might be improved. Because of this, there is some underachievement, particularly among the higher attainers. Several sixth form students receive no formal or written feedback on their work. The majority of pupils have a positive attitude to mathematics. Behaviour with a few minor exceptions is of a high standard. Supportive relationships are developed between the pupils and with the teacher. Pupils are encouraged and able to support each other when working in small groups and this supports their learning. Although the overall level of attendance at classes is satisfactory, in some classes during the inspection a relatively high number of pupils were absent; because of this, it was difficult for teachers to ensure continuity of experience for these pupils.

94. The curriculum is appropriate and steadily builds on the pupils' earlier experiences. All statutory requirements are met and the time allocation meets the needs of the subject. Although the faculty makes some good use of graphical calculators, currently only limited use of information and communication technology (ICT) is made to support teaching and learning in the subject. Opportunities to enliven aspects of the mathematics curriculum and to further motivate the pupils are therefore missed. The faculty is aware of this and is planning once access to appropriate resources has been improved to make much greater use of computers to support aspects of the work with pupils. The modular schemes at AS and A-level provide additional flexibility for the sixth form students. Pupils are regularly tested in mathematics and their progress assessed. Reports are written on individual students and these include the setting of future targets. Pupils are expected to contribute to this process. Although there is some variability in the quality of day-to-day assessment and recording of the pupils' work, they have a good understanding of their overall progress and of the likely outcomes.
95. Management of the faculty is good. The teachers involved are working well as a team. Because they meet both formally and informally on a regular basis, and share teaching and learning materials across the team, good practice is disseminated. Teaching and learning are regularly monitored by the head of faculty or his deputy. The work of the department is reviewed on a regular basis during meetings of the head of faculty with a deputy head teacher on a fortnightly basis. Future targets covering examination and test results are agreed as part of the process. Monitoring of the work is also carried out during regular visits by a local authority specialist advisor. The three newly qualified teachers in the department are well supported at the faculty, school and county levels. Resources allocated to the faculty are at least satisfactory and in a number of areas they are good. Only for ICT is access to appropriate resources restricted. There is a good balance and range of expertise across the teaching team. A good level of additional staffing support is available in some classes where this is identified as being required. This ensures that lower attaining pupils make good progress. The accommodation available for the teaching of mathematics is good. Good use of high quality display materials is made in the suite of rooms, and these help to create a supportive environment for the mathematics work to be undertaken.
96. The department has made sound progress in most areas since the last inspection. Test results at Key Stage 3 and examination results at A-level have remained in line with national averages, though the proportion of pupils who achieve the highest levels at Key Stage 3 is below average. GCSE results have steadily improved over the last three years and are now above the national average in 2000. However they remain lower than at the time of the last inspection when they were well above the national average. The time allocation for A-level which was judged to be insufficient at the time of the last inspection has since been increased.

SCIENCE

97. The pupils' standards in science on entry to the school are broadly in line with the national average, and have been gradually improving in the last three years. At the end of Year 9, in the year 2000 national tests, the average points score for the whole year group is above the national average, with no significant difference in the scores of boys and girls. There is a significant increase in the proportion of pupils obtaining the higher grades compared with 1999. Results are in line with those obtained by pupils in similar schools, which is also an improvement compared with 1999. Pupils obtain results in science similar to those in English, but better than those in mathematics. At GCSE in 2000, results are also above the national average both in the proportion of pupils gaining grades in

the range A*-C, and in the range A*-G. Girls perform better than boys; their results are well above the national figure, with boys results in line. The overall improvement made by this year group since their results in Year 9 was above the norm, showing good achievement. Results at GCSE have shown a big improvement in the last two years. Results in science are broadly in line with those which pupils obtain in their other subjects. At A-level in 2000, there were no entries for chemistry or physics; the three biology candidates all obtained pass grades. The total number of entries in the three science subjects in the last three years has been low. A high proportion of these students have obtained pass grades, but with a relatively low number gaining the higher grades. Results at A level are better than at the time of the previous inspection.

98. The standard of work seen during the inspection is in line with results in both Key Stages 3 and 4, being above the national average. In the sixth form, standards are higher than suggested by recent A-level results, and are now in line with national averages. This is most noticeable in Year 12, where the numbers of students taking advanced level sciences have shown a significant increase; many of these students have started AS level with good GCSE grades and are making good progress. Overall achievement in both Key Stages 3 and 4 is good; pupils make good progress both in lessons, and in the level of work in their books. In a Year 8 lesson on forces, pupils concentrated well when writing answers to challenging questions; they contributed well to the subsequent discussions, and progress was good. In Year 11, pupils investigate the impact on the acceleration of trolleys of changing the mass, and learn and understand that, by doubling the mass, the acceleration is halved. Achievement in the sixth form is satisfactory overall. In many of the lessons seen it is good, as in a lesson on the respiratory system in mammals; sharp questioning retained the students' interest, and they became very involved in observing the details of the structure of a set of a pig's lungs. Work in folders, however, often lacks rigour, and teachers do not always engage all students in challenging activities throughout each lesson. For instance, in a lesson considering the meaning of latent heat, no mention was made of the cooling effect when liquids evaporate and its application in the principle of refrigeration. As a result, students did not achieve as much as they should have done in the time available.
99. Teachers in science lessons contribute effectively to the development of the pupils' literacy skills; there are effective displays of key words, and good opportunities for pupils to use these in the correct context, especially when completing investigations. Appropriate stress is placed on correct spelling. The standard of numeracy is good, and there are frequent opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills. The use of graphs to display information is well developed, and pupils are adept at interpreting what the graphs indicate. For instance, in a Year 9 lesson, they use graphs to predict the effect of pH value on enzyme activity. In a few instances, the pupils' lack of ease with number restricts progress, as in a Year 7 lesson on scale. The use of ICT is well integrated into the curriculum of each year group in the school. The subject laptops are used in Year 8 for pupils to research the solar system, and they discover for themselves detailed information about each of the planets. One pupil remarked 'Did you know that I would be only 0.07 years old if I lived on the planet Neptune?' which led to a fascinating discussion as to why.
100. The overall quality of teaching is good at all stages; there are examples of very good teaching in each key stage, and all teaching is at least satisfactory. The planning of lessons is particularly good. At the start of each lesson, the objectives are made clear to pupils, giving immediate impetus to the lesson. Furthermore, these are usually revisited at the end of the lesson, and this helps to consolidate the key points. In Key Stage 3, the teachers' planning takes into account the wide range of attainment in each class; this is of particular benefit to pupils with special educational needs, helping them to attain their targets. Teachers use a wide range of resources to assist pupils, including good quality worksheets, ICT, and video material. In a Year 9 lesson on the human eye, the high quality of the video, combined with interaction by the teacher to include additional background information, provided good learning opportunities for the class. The management of pupils is generally good. The teachers' approach is such that they convey to pupils that they like them, and pupils work hard as a result. A Year 10 class worked particularly well in a difficult practical lesson to produce ethene gas from polythene, and in undertaking the subsequent tests. One of the relative weaknesses in the department is in the quality of day-to-day marking; this is inconsistent across the department. Most teachers mark work frequently and provide targets for pupils to improve their standards. In a number of cases, however, marking is too infrequent, and

does not always comply with department policy. In one Year 9 class, this has resulted in pupils taking less pride in their work, and becoming careless with their presentation, which, in turn, has an adverse effect on their learning. Homework also is often routine, and rarely sufficiently challenging or interesting, for example by requiring pupils to undertake research.

101. The pupils' learning is good in all key stages. It depends largely on teaching, but the pupils' attitudes also have a major impact. These attitudes are mostly very good, resulting in effective learning in most classes. Pupils work particularly well in practical groups, co-operating well in setting up the equipment, in taking readings, and in discussing what these show. The department initiative in Year 7 to develop the pupils' thinking skills, their ability to express their ideas clearly, and also to listen carefully to others, is an important step. In a significant proportion of Key Stage 4 classes, boys are willing contributors to question and answer sessions, and keen to undertake practical exercises. However, their written work, including homework, often lacks thought and application in comparison with that produced by girls, and they do not always pursue their work to a conclusion, as in the evaluation of practical work. This results in the overall attainment of some boys at GCSE being lower than that of the girls. In one Year 10 class considering the combustion of hydrocarbons, although the teaching was satisfactory, a lack of concentration, particularly by a significant number of boys, meant that learning overall was unsatisfactory. By contrast, another year 10 group of similar attainment worked very hard to understand the principles underlying the extraction of aluminium, in spite of their difficulty with terms such as ion and electron. In a number of classes during the week of the inspection, especially in Key Stage 4, the level of attendance was below average, making it difficult for teachers to ensure continuity. In the sixth form, there is a wide variation in the willingness of students to contribute to lessons; in the best lessons, teachers attempt to overcome this by providing opportunities for them to ask questions, and thereby increase their involvement. Pupils with special educational needs are very well integrated into classes; they are provided with good support by teachers and classroom assistants. This enables them to make good progress; for example, in a lesson where the pupil was unable to carry out the practical tests herself, they were demonstrated by the classroom assistant so that the pupil could record her own observations.
102. There is very good leadership and management of the science department. The head of department leads by example in the time and thought which he commits to his work. All procedures are well documented. There is a good mix of experienced and more recently qualified staff, but laboratory technician hours are low, and there is a relative shortage of teachers qualified in chemistry and physics. One result is that pupils in Key Stage 3 are less likely to receive specialist teaching in physical sciences. The teachers and technicians work particularly well as a team; teachers provide support for one another wherever possible, for instance in practical lessons, and lessons using computers. They are receptive to new ideas and initiatives. There is a well defined development plan, which is forward looking, and which indicates the immediate priorities for the department. The monitoring of pupil attainment in examinations has resulted in changes to curricular planning, and this has helped to bring about the recent improvements in results. A start has been made to the monitoring of teaching skills, but overall monitoring by senior staff within the department is not sufficiently frequent or rigorous. Teachers and technicians work well to overcome the relative shortage of laboratories.
103. The department made a positive response to the last inspection report. Results at the end of Key Stage 3 were described as 'appropriate', and at GCSE as 'comparing well with national averages'. Both sets of results are now above the national average. A-level results were described as 'poor'; while the proportion of higher grades is still low, the overall pass rate is satisfactory, and there is a higher level of work in Year 12. Teaching was described as sound, but has improved and is now good in all three key stages. Differentiated work is now more widely used, with some very good exemplars, and is more closely linked to pupils' prior attainment and targets. There is a clear intention to increase its availability, particularly for higher attaining pupils. There was little evidence of the use of computers in science lessons, but they are now widely used by all teachers, and the quality of hardware and of lesson planning is very good. Areas where the department has not made sufficient progress include the marking of the pupils' work, and in the overall quality of the presentation of work in books and folders. Taking all factors into consideration, the department has made good progress since the last inspection, with the promise of continuing improvement.

ART AND DESIGN

104. The teachers' assessment of standards in art and design at the end of Key Stage 3 in 2000 show that the percentage of both boys and girls reaching the expected level, or above, is above the national average. In the 2000 GCSE examination, at the end of Key Stage 4, the percentage of both boys and girls who gained a grade in the A*-C range is well above the national average, as it has been in other recent years. In both key stages, the boys' attainment lags behind that of the girls, but by about the same amount that it does nationally; however, overall, boys do better in art & design than in the other subjects they take. All but one pupil who entered the examination passed at A*-G. At A-level, all the five students entered gained a grade in the range A-C. This is very high compared with the national average. The one student who was entered for the advanced GNVQ in art and design passed with distinction.
105. At the end of Key Stage 3, standards in work seen during the inspection are well above the average level for 14 year olds. This represents very good achievement by pupils whose attainment on entry is average. Their drawing skills and ability to represent complex forms in a variety of media are very well developed. They are able to select visual information from different sources and use their knowledge of the work of other artists to produce bold, lively images. The higher attaining pupils made individual comments on the paintings and all pupils were able to incorporate the idea of multiple viewpoints in their own pictures. Standards at the end of Key Stage 4 are also well above average. In a Year 10 lesson, pupils made a very good study of cubism. This is equally good achievement for pupils, whose ability covers a wide range. The pupils who have special educational needs, including those with physical disabilities, also make very good progress at both key stages. Pupils are very successful in using a wide range of 2-dimensional media and achieve a considerable depth of understanding. The work of the higher attainers is particularly colourful and dramatic. The sculpture too, is of a very high standard. Standards of work in the small group of students studying for the intermediate GNVQ in art and design are average. Most of this group has special educational needs of some sort, so this represents good achievement. Students develop a more individual and exploratory approach to their work, and make particularly imaginative use of computers. At A-level, the standard of work varies considerably from year to year, depending on the group, but at the time of the inspection the level is average overall. At one end of the scale, gifted students produce powerful and highly individual statements, whilst at the other, less able students produce work which shows limited technical skill. Nevertheless, there is a strong desire amongst all students to improve their work, and, in relation to their prior attainments, all are achieving well. In a Year 13 lesson, in which the results of a mock exam were being reviewed by the teachers and students, all listened intently to comments and criticisms, and took on board what they needed to do to achieve better results.
106. The quality of teaching is very good at both key stages and in the sixth form. During the inspection 80 per cent of the teaching seen was very good or excellent. This results in very good learning taking place in nearly all lessons. This is a measure of the very hard work and dedication, by all the art teachers, in maintaining the consistently very high level of expectation and challenge. Teachers ensure that all pupils understand the objectives of the lessons and show them how they can evaluate their own work against clear criteria. The pace of lessons is brisk and purposeful. In an excellent Year 9 lesson, which began late due to rescheduling, the teacher continually adjusted the level of pace and challenge to suit the needs of the pupils. At the same time she conveyed the knowledge and understanding needed to reach high levels of attainment. Even pupils who sought to take advantage of the disrupted lesson saw that resistance was useless and produced surprisingly good drawings. In all classes, pupils respond with enthusiasm and interest. They match the commitment of the teachers with their own commitment to doing their best in class, in their homework and in the care with which their sketchbooks are filled with drawings, cut-outs, designs and comments. In one Year 11 lesson, the richness of the pupils' sketchbooks was exciting and excellent.
107. Even though previous report was very good, art and design has made good improvements since then. Due to the very good leadership and management of the department, standards of attainment have risen and teaching and learning are even better. The attention given to the assessment and

monitoring of progress, the very good relationships, care for the pupils and the skill with which the programmes of study are planned, have all contributed to this success. The teachers have struggled with some difficult problems with accommodation, which have not affected their achievements. Some aspects of the curriculum need broadening. For instance, in contrast to the very good studies of twentieth century art and design, there is a limited amount of work that develops *themes* such as, say, "poverty" or "space exploration". Some of the resources need boosting, such as the choice of paints for Key Stage 3. Nonetheless, the shared commitment to improvement across the board, and the subject's capacity to succeed in this is very good.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

108. The teachers' own assessments of standards at the end of Key Stage 3 show above average levels of attainment, with girls significantly above and boys slightly below the national average. Over the past three years the proportion of pupils achieving an A*-C grade and likewise an A*-G grade at GCSE in the combined disciplines of design and technology has been above the national average. Results in food technology have fluctuated over the years from broadly in line to significantly below the national average last year, although the pupils involved attained their best grades in the subject, compared with the other subjects they took. In child development they were well above the average in 1998, below it in 1999 and slightly above it last year. Pupils achieve well above the national average results in graphics and significantly above it in textiles. Girls outperform boys in the subject, and they attain well above the national average for girls. Boys attain above the national average for boys in the subject. Pupils achieve as well in design and technology as they do in their other most successful subjects. The proportion of A-Level students achieving an A or a B grade was significantly above national average in 1999. With only one student in 2000, no meaningful comparisons can be made. Overall, in recent years, the proportion of students achieving an A-E grade has been well above the national average.
109. By the end of Key Stage 3, in work seen, overall standards are in line with the national average in all material areas with a significant minority, particularly girls, attaining well above average. Pupils with special educational needs show much interest in their work and make good progress, achieving standards appropriate for their capabilities, especially when supported by specialist staff. Indeed, overall, pupils of all levels of attainment are achieving well at Key Stage 3. Pupils progressively develop a good understanding of the principles and processes of designing in a broad range of materials throughout the key stage. The best work shows a high level of creative imagination in all areas and notably so in the Year 8 'automata' project. In all material areas the pupils' develop satisfactory presentation and graphicacy skills, although a small proportion of the work of mostly lower attaining pupils is not enhanced where outcomes of the use of felt-tip colour pens are garish and rendering techniques are ineffective. Higher attaining pupils show a good level of fluency in the use of technical terms, but lower attaining pupils are often more hesitant and unsure of the correct terminology. The attainment of most pupils in the Year 8 information technology control module is good. In Year 7 food studies pupils show good skills in using tools and utensils to produce their fruit salad their first practical outcome.
110. By the end of Key Stage 4, overall standards in work seen are above average. A significant proportion attain well above average in textiles and particularly so in graphics in Year 10. Work seen in all material areas reflects the recent examination results and shows a rising trend in attainment over time, and represents good achievement. The best design outcomes of both boys and girls are of a good quality in all areas with very high standards in graphical communication. Most pupils, but notably the higher attainers, show very good skills in researching topics, developing their ideas, and in manufacturing and evaluating their design outcomes. Very effective project management is evident in all stages of development. A wide range of individuality and creative imagination is evident in the packaging project in Year 10. In the Year 11 textiles groups, the great majority produces very good design solutions to a wide range of problems, and show very good knowledge and understanding of a wide range of fabric enhancement and production techniques. In food, such matters as nutritional value, shelf life, taste and cost are well researched. In almost all design areas the pupils' use of information and communication technology to complete coursework is underdeveloped especially in relation to computer aided design and manufacturing work. However,

some Year 10 pupils show satisfactory basic skills in using a computer aided design package to produce working drawings for their model dragster project.

111. Standards in the sixth form are above the national average; students are achieving well in relation to their prior attainment. The portfolios of design work show much creative flair and imagination and often excellent graphical skills. Students increasingly use computer-aided packages to support their design work and a very wide range of graphical communication techniques are deployed. Solutions to design problems are well researched and communicated.
112. Teaching is good; nearly all is good or better throughout the key stages. Teachers have a very good knowledge of their subjects. Planned activities in lessons are well matched to interest and ability. Teachers set high expectations for learning to which pupils readily respond. Because the teachers know their pupils very well and work as a team, there is good continuity in the learning for pupils across all areas of the subject. Teachers carefully support and encourage pupils of all abilities to experience success. As a result the quality of learning is good and often very good in lessons. Pupils make good or better progress in their studies and are very well behaved in all lessons. 'Buzz word' strategies and writing frameworks effectively support their development of literacy skills. The use of a range of very good exemplar material, which is either displayed on workshop walls or in display folders, effectively guides and supports them in their design tasks. Procedures for assessing the pupils' work are very good. Their attainment is carefully monitored and recorded as they progress from year to year. There are standard assessment sheets that teachers use to good effect in all aspects of the subject, which ensures consistency and helps pupils to understand how well they are doing. Work is consistently marked to a good standard, and teachers write constructive comments to explain to pupils what they need to do to improve their work. Homework is set regularly and the assignments are discussed with the class in advance. The design worksheets that are used provide clear guidelines for design work and effectively challenge, and extend the higher attainers. The technicians and learning support staff provide an invaluable contribution to the pupils' learning by helping them with their tasks, guiding and supporting their progress at an individual level under the direction of the teachers.
113. Leadership and management in design and technology are very good, and have enabled many improvements to take place since the last inspection. Overall improvement is judged good. The department as a whole approached the findings of the previous inspection in a positive manner, and standards overall have improved with all the issues reported having been successfully resolved. The accommodation for the subject is undergoing a complete rebuilding and refurbishment, which is almost complete. Teachers have in the meantime worked very hard under difficult circumstances to ensure pupils have not been unduly affected by the lack of specialist rooms during the rebuilding programme. Work has continued with minimal interruption to learning and standards have been maintained.

GEOGRAPHY

114. The teachers' own assessments of standards at the end of Key Stage 3 in 2000 show results above the national average for both boys and girls. The girls' performance exceeds that of boys by a proportion slightly greater than is the case nationally. Standards in geography at the end of Key Stage 3, as measured by the teachers' assessments, have remained above the national average since 1997. In 2000, the average points scored by pupils in GCSE examinations is above the national average. GCSE average points scores have been consistently above, in some years well above, the national average since the last inspection in 1995. In that period, the gap in standards achieved by girls in comparison with boys has been greater than that which is the case nationally in all years. In 2000, there was no significant difference between standards achieved by pupils in geography compared with the other subjects they took. However, an above average proportion of pupils achieved at the highest grade of A*, indicating that the most able pupils are achieving to their full potential. At the end of the sixth form, the proportion of students achieving the two highest A-level grades has remained above the national average since the last inspection. Similar stability in long term trends is apparent in the proportion of students achieving A-level grades A-E. The small numbers taking the subject do not make it possible to analyse differences in achievement between boys and girls with any degree of accuracy.

115. At the end of Key Stage 3, standards of work seen during the inspection are above the average level for 14 year olds, but not as much above average as National Curriculum teacher assessments indicate; nonetheless this represents good achievement and educational value added. At Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form, inspection evidence indicates that standards of work are above average, in keeping with the above average results at GCSE and A-level. Through both key stages and in the sixth form, all pupils and students achieve well reflecting continuous good progress in their work; the quality of extended writing successfully enhances the pupils' literacy skills. At Key Stage 3, pupils acquire a good knowledge of place through the use of in depth case studies of the local area, the wider United Kingdom, Europe and in other continents. However, their knowledge is at times unbalanced owing to more emphasis on human geography at the expense of physical geography in these extended studies. Through Key Stage 4, pupils build successfully on the knowledge, understanding and skills acquired in Key Stage 3. Coursework in the London Docklands gives pupils the opportunity to examine issues of urban geography in an urban area that contrasts with their home region and enhances their skills in data collection, processing and in testing hypotheses. Further enhancement of geographical understanding takes place in the sixth form particularly through the appropriate use of models such as the Demographic Transition Model and storm hydrographs. At Key Stage 3, good opportunities are given for pupils to extend their key skills of literacy and numeracy, while problem solving skills are enhanced through the use of well planned decision-making exercises. Opportunities for pupils to apply their information and communication technology skills are missed; this means that pupils are unable to extend their learning by using spreadsheets to generate graphs, or to write reports using word processing software, or to develop further their research skills through the use of CD-ROMs and the internet. However, this is remedied in both Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form where these skills are well utilized; pupils and students have opportunities to enhance their coursework through the use of computer generated graphs, word processed text and Powerpoint presentations.
116. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school, but is somewhat better at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form than at Key Stage 3. This is attributable to the use of a wider range of teaching methods and the teachers' greater depth and knowledge and understanding. These factors contribute to better levels of achievement by pupils at Key Stage 4 and the sixth form through their gaining a deeper understanding of material covered in lessons. Lesson planning is very good throughout the subject area; in the best lessons, this planning provides pupils with a range of activities and experiences that support very good learning by maintaining the pupils' interest and concentration. Examples of good quality whole class teaching were seen, but a number of lessons were too teacher-led and allowed pupils to maintain a passive role so inhibiting their development as independent learners. Good use is made of a range of teaching aids notably computers, overhead projectors, video films, maps and photographs. In one very successful lesson in the sixth form, groups of students made very effective use of a computer to illustrate short presentations. The teachers' management of pupils is very good overall and reflects good teacher-pupil relationships that are, in turn, conducive to good quality learning. The pupils' very good behaviour, keen interest and very positive attitudes to learning reinforce this. The learning of pupils with special educational needs is enhanced by high quality support from learning support assistants; for example, in a Year 7 lesson, three pupils made very good progress because the assistant adapted the learning materials to match their needs.
117. The subject is very effectively managed through the faculty of humanities. Well developed systems for the monitoring and evaluation of the pupils' progress, teaching and examination results contribute positively to the maintenance of high standards because future planning takes account of what has gone well and what has not gone so well. The level of improvement made in geography since the last inspection has been good. Issues raised at that time concerning marking, fieldwork and planning have all been dealt with effectively. The high standards, the pupils' good attitudes, strong support for pupils with special educational needs and good subject management noted in the last report are still strengths of the department.

HISTORY

118. The teachers' assessments at the end of Key Stage 3 in 2000 show the pupils' knowledge and understanding of history to be above average. Girls overall perform better than boys. Compared to the pupils' attainment at the age of eleven, the subject secures good value added over time. At the end of Key Stage 4, the pupils' performance in 2000 is above national figures, and the results show a rising trend. Girls again perform better than boys. Overall, however, in 2000, pupils tend to do less well in history than in their other subjects. At the end of the Sixth Form, the numbers of students taking history have been too small for reliable statistical conclusions to be drawn. Nevertheless, average points score in history in recent years has been marginally above average.
119. At the end of Key Stage 3, standards in work seen during the inspection are above the average level for 14 year olds; standards at the end of Key Stage 4 are at the average, whilst those at the end of the sixth form are above average. At all levels, however, pupils achieve well, making generally good progress in their work. They show strengths and some weaknesses. They investigate subjects using a range of sources well; for example, Year 7 classes use a missing person's possessions to speculate about what has happened to him, and a Year 11 class assess Hitler's priorities from remarks in 'Mein Kampf'. Speaking and listening are particularly good in all key stages and help pupils and students develop a range of skills and ideas: pupils in Year 8 gave accurate reasons for colonisation; those in Year 11 could explain clearly the links between economic depression and the rise of fascism, whilst students in a Year 13 class discussed constructively the problems of what to teach in school history. In particular, the latter students showed a developing ability to hypothesise, analyse and deduce. The most significant weaknesses observed were linked to a lack of understanding about facts and dates in their historical setting. The department is aware of this and has plans to produce standard teaching schemes and materials.
120. The subject makes a very good contribution to the development of the pupils' literacy skills. Excellent foundations are laid in Key Stage 3 with the systematic use of writing frames and historical vocabulary in all classes. The teachers' lesson plans include specific provision for explaining words like 'Aryan' and 'autarky'. The subject makes sound use of ICT to support the study of history and plans are in place to enhance the provision. Year 12 students used a 'Powerpoint' presentation well to explain the causes of fascism and pupils use word processors widely when producing compositions. Overall, numeracy skills are not well developed. The ethos of the department reflects the school's aims very well and teachers and adults provide very good role models. The personal development of pupils is encouraged and there are good arrangements for co-operative working, for example when Year 11 pupils work on joint assignments linked to world trade. History and humanities both incorporate the study of a range of cultures and societies, from the Incas, Zambia and the modern world to the Angmering of old. It therefore makes a good contribution to the moral, social and cultural development of pupils. However, in some lessons seen, opportunities to reflect on events and people, raised as a result of higher attaining pupils' questions, were sometimes overlooked.
121. The quality of teaching is good at all key stages. The major strengths of teaching are good planning and expectations and the very good use of assessment. The teaching of basic skills is usually good and sometimes very good. For example, pupils and students across the school are expected to work hard in and out of school. Some teachers show a very shrewd awareness of what is necessary to motivate pupils and then to structure the lesson to realise the teaching strategy. Thus, in a Year 13 class, both activities and methods were linked carefully to ensure that students grasped German foreign policy in the 1930s. A major strength of the department lies in its skilful use of assessment to help pupils learn. This was seen when Year 9 pupils studied the same previously written Key Stage 3 assignment on the Coal Mines Commission of 1842 before individually picking out its qualities and deficiencies and assigning it a level. They then got to work to produce their own draft. In a minority of otherwise satisfactory lessons, however, teachers do not always allow sufficient time for pupils to understand and absorb ideas before moving on, especially in mixed ability groups. For example, there is often a lot of discussion on topics such as feminism and neo-colonialism, but associated board work and subsequent noting is superficial and some

students at an early stage of learning become confused. The subject benefits from good accommodation and a well balanced team of specialists who are both hardworking and conscientious. Both have a positive effect on standards.

122. There has been good progress in the subject since the last inspection. Standards have improved by the end of Key Stage 4 and in the Sixth Form and the overall quality of teaching is better. In particular, the subject enjoys clear and effective leadership; the head of department is committed to raising standards, especially those of boys, and has good systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the subject. Overall, leadership and management are very good. There is a strong commitment to improvement from all who teach history and it is in a very good position to advance still further.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

123. All pupils take a structured course in ICT in Year 7. Almost 50 per cent take a GCSE course in ICT in Key Stage 4, and a further 20 per cent experience an ICT assessment as part of their Key Stage 4 GNVQ. In Years 8 and 9 ICT is developed through the other subjects of the compulsory curriculum through whole class, small group and individual activities.
124. Overall results in 2000, at the end of Key Stage 4, for both GCSE and GNVQ pupils are well above the national average, with the girls' results very high indeed. Girls tend to better in ICT than they do in their other subjects, whilst boys achieve similar results compared with their other subjects. GCSE results have improved significantly since the previous inspection. A small group took the GCE A-level examination for the first time in 2000; all obtained a pass grade with half at grade B.
125. At the end of Key Stages 3 and 4, standards of work seen during the inspection are well above average. Pupils achieve very well and constantly develop their skills successfully and with confidence. In Year 7 lessons they all show the ability to work independently at a Level 4 task to communicate information using modern commercial word processing software and are thoroughly familiar with databases, spreadsheets and graphics at the expected level. In other subjects at Key Stages 3 and 4, they attain at least average standards, achieving at least as well, and often better, than would be expected in a wide range of contexts. In a Year 8 science class, they used interactive software on laptop computers to develop skills of information gathering and hypothesis formation, and showed an above average knowledge of testing, and adapting sequences of instruction. In a Year 10 lesson on electrolysis, there was confident use of computer animation to demonstrate processes. In Year 10 ICT lessons, they showed clear ability to discriminate between types of software best suited to problem solving. In design & technology, there is widespread use of word processing, desk top publishing and computer graphics, with clear evidence of the discriminating use of CD-ROM and internet sources. In art & design, there is much use of computers throughout courses for scanning, photocopying and digital photography to create work of a high standard. Throughout their ICT experiences in the school, pupils with special educational needs are achieving good standards through the good use of equipment that has been carefully chosen to allow them to achieve as high standards as possible. Laptop computers are regularly used to produce and present work to above average standards, especially in GNVQ courses.
126. The quality of all teaching is very good at all stages; all is at least good and some is outstanding. All teachers communicate learning objectives clearly and often introduce lessons by using projectors or an electronic whiteboard; they use well-specified worksheets with good opportunities for different groups of pupils to work at different levels. For example, in a Year 11 GNVQ lesson, the provision of a template for a curriculum vitae, and a different worksheets for different groups, allowed pupils working at foundation and intermediate levels, and those with special educational needs, to create work that reached their full potential. Teaching benefits from underlying good preparation and the consistent use of the student handbooks in Year 7 and in Year 10 GCSE and GNVQ courses. This allows pupils to develop skills of independent learning, and to develop their initiative in the more challenging tasks. In Year 7, teachers have extension tasks available for those who are progressing quickly, and, therefore, these pupils are able to take their learning still further forward. Overall this encourages students to see teachers as role models for their own usage of ICT and encourages a lively pace of activity.

127. In Year 7 and in the GCSE and A-level courses, teachers encourage pupils and students to use specially written course guides to guide and measure their progress. Each pupil and student records their own progress on log sheets and uses these as part of self-assessment; together with the teacher's comments, this builds into an effective review and revision aid. Management of classroom resources, including teacher's aides and technicians is exemplary. This contributes strongly toward a purposeful working atmosphere. Monitoring and evaluation in Year 7, GCSE, GNVQ and A-level information technology components are effective, offering students a clear profile of their strengths and weaknesses and potential for development. Those with learning disabilities make excellent use of laptop computers and other technologies to facilitate their learning; this is notable across the curriculum, and was particularly observed in Geography classes and in GNVQ work. Whilst there is good liaison between departments to ensure delivery of ICT requirements, in years 8 and 9, and in other situations in years 10 and 11, the methods for recording and reporting achievement and level attainments are not fully developed, and opportunities for feedback are missed.
128. Overall, the subject has made very good progress since the last inspection. The quality of the Year 7 course is now very good and GCSE results are particularly improved. In order further to improve, there is a need to consolidate the reporting system, particularly in years 8 and 9.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

129. By the end of Key Stage 3 the teachers' own assessments in both French and German show standards for all pupils to be above those expected nationally; for girls the assessments are well above average, though the numbers of boys and girls reaching the highest levels are slightly below average. The trend since the last inspection is one of improvement and this is despite the fact that pupils spend slightly less time on each language than in most schools. At Key Stage 4, standards in GCSE French in 2000 are above the national average for grades A* to C and significantly above in German. Again, there has been an upward trend over the last three years. In the sixth form, the numbers of students are very low and so it is difficult to measure attainment against national standards; however, the grades achieved have covered the whole range and have been in line with expectations for the students' prior attainments.
130. In work seen during the inspection, in the early stages of Key Stage 3, the standards observed are not always comparable to those seen nationally and the language structures are sometimes quite limited. This appears to be the result of the equal status given to both French and German and the slightly reduced time given to each compared to other schools. However, at the end of Key Stage 3, the standards are generally in line with expectations. In speaking, all pupils can respond using short sequences of speech, and higher attaining pupils are able to produce extended dialogues independently. Pupils speak with good pronunciation and are generally accurate, although there are occasional examples when access to the written word interferes with pronunciation. In listening, pupils understand classroom instructions and taped material spoken at normal speed, although with appropriate repetition. In reading, pupils can respond to both short and longer texts. A good example of more challenging reading was seen in a Year 9 German lesson where pupils used known language and context to work out meaning. There is also an established independent reading scheme. Pupils copy write accurately and produce short pieces of writing and, by the end of Key Stage 3, most can produce more extended writing which is largely accurate, often using ICT to produce it. There is some good grammatical understanding, with one example of higher attaining pupils in Year 9 able to explain a rule in French. There was also an example in a Year 9 lesson where the acquisition of new vocabulary only and little new structure led to writing and speaking which was not above Level 1. At the end of Key Stage 4, standards achieved are above average in both French and German. Most pupils are able to produce both short and more extended responses in speaking, with greater or lesser support according to ability. In listening, pupils are able to identify attitudes and opinions from taped material often spoken at normal speed, covering a range of appropriate and interesting topic areas such as the environment in French and relationships and pocket money in German. Pupils are able to understand and respond to a range of texts, including authentic texts from youth magazines in German. Writing coursework examples demonstrated the pupils' ability to write more extended French and German, with higher attainers producing complex

and accurate language, including tenses and opinions. There is also good grammatical understanding, with for example, pupils in French, using the future tenses accurately.

131. All pupils achieve well in both French and German as they move through the school. By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils have made good progress in all four skills from their more limited experiences in each language in the early stages of Key Stage 3, with higher attaining pupils having a clear understanding of grammatical rules and producing accurate extended language. This progress continues into Key Stage 4, with grammatical understanding a strong feature in both French and German. Middle to higher attainers can produce more complex language and give opinions. In Year 12, students are making a good start to their course and are beginning to demonstrate the more demanding language skills required for the AS level.
132. Overall the teaching in Key Stage 3 is good, with two examples of excellent teaching; at Key Stage 4 it is very good, and, in the sixth form, it is excellent. All teachers have very good subject knowledge and, in many cases, the French or German language is the main means of communication in the classroom, which has a very good impact on the pupils' own level of the language. Lessons are clearly planned, including different objectives for different groups within the class, and appropriate assessment opportunities; all pupils understand clearly what they have to do and what they will have achieved by the end of the lesson. The pace of lessons and variety of activities motivate pupils and, as a result, the pupils' attitudes to the subject are positive, which enhances their learning. All pupils willingly work independently, in groups and in pairs and contribute to the lessons. A good example of this was seen in a Year 10 lesson, where pupils moved between a variety of activities, including recording themselves and using computers independently outside the classroom. A range of resources is used well both to introduce and to practise new language. The use of the overhead projector, card games and ICT ensure the pupils' interest and the confidence to speak and write independently across the ability range. In one lesson, reinforcement of a grammar point through a Powerpoint presentation ensured quick comprehension of a quite complex grammar point in German. The work in French in the Lavinia Norfolk Centre is clearly linked to the subject's scheme of work. Expectations of teachers in these lessons are high, with good pronunciation, especially from hearing impaired pupils. In Key Stage 4 and in sometimes in Key Stage 3, grammar is clearly built in to lessons and higher attainers in particular, are able to manipulate structures with some independence. There are cases however, when lessons are insufficiently challenging; for example when the emphasis is on the acquisition of new vocabulary items and when the use of the target language is not consistent. In Key Stage 4, the presentation of new language through the medium of English and translation means fewer opportunities for pupils to work meaning out for themselves and poorer pronunciation. Homework is set appropriately to consolidate the learning that has taken place in the lesson and books and assessments are regularly marked and include opportunities for self-assessment. In the sixth form, sensitive handling by teachers of the 'bridge' between GCSE and AS/A-level, including varied and appropriate authentic material, means that pupils in both French and German are developing new language skills, such as discussion and presentation skills, required for the new AS examination.
133. Leadership and management are very good. The head of the modern foreign languages faculty is experienced and promotes a department that works very well as a team, with all members contributing to schemes of work and identification of targets and areas for review. Resources and documentation are very well organised, giving access to materials and information to all and ensuring consistency of pupil experience and standards expected. There are exchanges and trips to Germany and France, which enhance the curriculum and the learning and cultural opportunities available to pupils.
134. Since the last inspection, progress has been very good. Standards at the end of Key Stage 3 and at GCSE have improved. The faculty has increased in size and specific responsibilities for Key Stages 3 and 4 have given to members of the faculty. The faculty has moved away from worksheets to a pupil booklet system in Key Stage 3, which has increased motivation, and provided the opportunity to set targets and signposts a range of opportunities to use ICT. The implementation of the revisions to the National Curriculum has begun. This has included a review of the Key Stage 3 curriculum; from next year, in order to raise standards and enable pupils to progress more quickly, one language will be taught in Year 7 with the introduction of the second language postponed to Year 8.

A review of provision in Key Stage 4 has resulted in the introduction of a GNVQ Language Units course, which is successfully motivating most pupils taking the course, and there are currently strategies being implemented to improve the uptake of languages in the sixth form. The implementation of the revised national curriculum is not yet complete, and there is a need to further develop language learning skills and knowledge, and understanding of the target language, and to take advantage of the increased flexibility in the teaching of topics. Target setting, although in place is sometimes vague, and is not yet sufficiently clearly linked to National Curriculum descriptors.

MUSIC

135. Although entry numbers are too small to provide valid national comparisons, in the 2000 GCSE examinations, 17 out of 18 pupils gained A* to C grades – a very high proportion. There is no significant difference in the results of boys and girls. In 1998 and 1999, three quarters of pupils gained A* to C grades and all pupils gained A* to G. Results at GCSE have improved significantly since the previous inspection.
136. Standards in lessons and work seen at the end of Key Stage 3 are broadly in line with the national average. There is no significant difference in the standards of boys and girls, and a significant number of pupils achieves higher standards. Some of these pupils are supported in their learning by additional instrumental lessons and extra-curricular performing opportunities provided by the school, and this enables them to achieve higher standards. Standards at the end of Key Stage 4 are above average overall, although there is a wide range of attainment. Standards in performance are also above average with examples of one third of pupils working towards advanced levels. Analysis of Year 11 composition work showed variation in style and quality ranging from average to exceptional. The pupils' achievements in Key Stage 3 are satisfactory. Many pupils do not have the range of knowledge and skills expected of their age group when they enter the school, and many are not familiar with the elements of music. The present Year 7 are making good progress in learning the elements and using them to compose and analyse music. There is satisfactory progress in Year 8 and 9 in playing and performing. Pupils are being given the opportunity to compose in a wide range of styles. The quality of ongoing assessment ensures that each pupil has a good knowledge of their standards, and what they need to do to improve. However, a large minority of pupils lacks the knowledge of notation, rhythm and structure because their experiences in music have been inconsistent due to the absence of a Head of Department last year. Those pupils who receive instrumental tuition make better progress.
137. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory. It is satisfactory at Key Stage 3, good in Key Stage 4, and very good in the sixth form. The main strengths in teaching are: the teachers' subject knowledge, good classroom management, which leads to good behaviour and attitudes in most lessons, and the quality of ongoing assessment. The teachers' good knowledge and good demonstration skills mean that they can work with pupils to improve their standards of playing, composition and analysis of music. As a result, the quality of learning is sound at Key Stage 3 and good at Key Stage 4. The content and activities of lessons are chosen with careful regard as to what appeals to young people. As a result, most pupils respond with enthusiasm. In one Year 8 lesson seen, where the pupils' attitudes were unsatisfactory, not all pupils were engaged in the lesson because teaching and tasks set did not match the needs of all pupils. The pupils' overall good attitudes have a positive effect on their progress and learning. Teaching in instrumental lessons seen in Key Stages 3 and 4 is good. The twelve peripatetic instrumental teachers complement the overall quality of class teaching by bringing a wealth of experience and expertise into the department. The two hundred pupils who take lessons make gains from this and standards are good overall. These pupils take their knowledge into the classroom where they are given opportunities to use their instruments for composing and performing in groups with other pupils. Most of these pupils support the many extra curricular activities that the department provides. Limited accommodation however means that during some Key Stage 3 lessons there is no extra space for groups to work in. Because of this, there are limited opportunities for pupils to work in groups for composition and performance, and their achievements are restricted. In particular, higher attainers, especially those who play instruments, do not always have the opportunity to play together, and consequently do not reach their full potential.

138. The management of the department has been in a period of transition. During that time, a small minority of pupils has developed a poor attitude to music. Since the appointment of the new head of department, the music teachers have worked hard on re-establishing music as a high profile subject in the school. The department holds weekly meetings to discuss pupils' progress and organisation issues. Overall leadership and management of the subject are now good; there is a shared sense of purpose, with the team working well together to review and rewrite schemes of work. Pupils are offered a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Teachers are skilled in instrumental playing and in ICT; however, the inadequate provision of computers in the department results in limited opportunities for staff to teach music technology to all pupils across the key stages.
139. The department has made satisfactory improvement and standards have been maintained since the previous report in spite of the inconsistencies in staffing. GCSE results have improved, a new, well-qualified head of department has been appointed, and the provision for pupils to take instrumental and vocal tuition has increased. The department has successfully introduced AS-level music in Year 12. However, the limited resources, especially computers, are restricting the scope of learning activities; more practice rooms would also allow teachers to plan a wider choice of activities in some lessons in their efforts to enthuse Key Stage 3 pupils. Further development of existing assessment procedures, to include target setting, is needed as part of strategies to raise achievement at Key Stage 3.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

140. The teachers' own assessments at the end of Key Stage 3 in 2000 show results that are above the national average for boys and girls. Although, in the 2000 sports studies examination, the proportion of pupils gaining grades A*-C is below the national average, pupils, overall, do better in sports studies than in the other subjects they take, representing good achievement. All pupils achieve a graded result. Results in the higher grades in the previous two years were above national figures. The trend in results since the last inspection – except for 2000 – is in line with the national average. Results at A-level in the higher grades are below the national average, overall, but all pupils achieve a pass. Many individuals and teams achieve highly, some at national and regional levels, for example in basketball, tennis and gymnastics.
141. Standards in work seen during the inspection at the end of Key Stages 3 and 4, and at the end of the sixth form, are above those expected for pupils of the same age nationally at the age of 14, 16 and 18. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and the gifted and talented, make good progress and achieve well. Most 14 year olds can plan and judge performance; they show good skills and understand basic principles of attack and defence. Higher attainers in games use well-refined skills and tactics to outmanoeuvre opponents. In dance their work is characterised by very good imagination, precision and timing. Lower attaining pupils often achieve beyond expectations because teaching is well-adapted to meet their needs. Their main weaknesses are below average body management and poor hand-eye co-ordination. Most 16 year olds understand the factors that constitute a healthy lifestyle, show tactical awareness, judge performance and plan ways to improve it. Higher attainers effectively apply training principles to plan specific fitness programmes. Lower attaining pupils lack the ability and confidence to use their individual skills under match conditions. Year 11 GCSE pupils are on target to attain beyond national expectations and are achieving high standards. Most understand the physiological effects of exercise on the body; they can judge performance and plan improvement. The overall standard of written work in GCSE groups is satisfactory. In Year 11 GCSE dance, pupils are on target to achieve national averages. Most of the pupils' work is expressive and energetic; they plan, judge and improve performance well. Lower attaining pupils lack creative expression. Higher attainers understand and apply more advanced techniques.
142. Standards in the sixth form (non-examination) are above national expectations and some pupils achieve at international level. Their application of individual skills, team skills and tactics to match situations, is often excellent. The small Year 13 A-level group is on target to attain national expectations, showing good achievement from their prior attainments. Most understand how physiological and psychological factors affect performance. Higher attainers at A-level can research from a variety of sources, analyse data and make accurate summaries; written assignments of lower

attainers are poorly researched and presented. Pupils of all ages confidently use number. They accurately measure, time and record in athletics, show mental arithmetic skills when scoring and in GCSE use number in fitness testing. A-level pupils can interpret graphs and calculate energy outputs. Pupils across the age range are confident in oral work and the teachers' emphasis on key words encourages their use of technical language.

143. The quality of teaching and learning in both Key Stages 3 and 4 is good, and, in the sixth form, it is very good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and plan lessons carefully. Continuity and progress are good across the full age range, due to established Year 6 curricular links, well-planned teaching that is adapted to challenge all pupils, and schemes of work that build on previous learning. The teachers' good relationships with pupils have a positive affect on their learning. Their expectations are high, particularly with regard to performance, behaviour, kit and safety. Systematic progress is aided by well-planned and challenging teaching. The pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They listen to instructions, communicate well in group work and confidently try new skills. Teachers provide opportunities for independent learning in most lessons. For example, in a Year 7 dance lesson, the teacher created a stimulating learning environment through using appropriate music, video support and stimulus cards. Pupils made very good use of opportunities to plan and judge performance; they progressed beyond expectations. Learning is not as effective in a few lessons, because of fewer opportunities for pupils to plan work. Teachers provide appropriate learning activities for pupils of all levels of attainment; because of this, those with special educational needs make progress matching that of others in their classes. In a Year 9 football lesson, lower attaining pupils learnt well because the teacher modified tasks, successfully grouped pupils, and simplified instructions. The learning of high attainers is accelerated by extension tasks, appropriate grouping and through the opportunities provided by extra-curricular activities. The marking of homework is thorough and includes comments on how it could be improved; this has a very positive effect on the pupils' learning.
144. Leadership and management by the director of sport and head of department are very good. Teachers work well together as a team and there are clear aims and strategies for monitoring, evaluating and improving standards. The lack of a faculty teaching base has a negative impact on learning for pupils in examination theory work. Non-specialist rooms create an uninspiring learning environment, because they are unable to house the permanent display of resources, nor do they allow pupils to undertake research easily. On the other hand, other accommodation, including the sports hall, gym and extensive fields enhances learning opportunities. The state of the art fitness centre within the Lavinia Norfolk Centre is used extensively by many pupils, particularly in Key Stage 4. The subject contributes considerably to the social, moral and cultural development of pupils because they are given opportunities to co-operate in teams, adhere to rules in games, and study multi-cultural dance themes. Faculty staff and qualified coaches provide a very successful extra-curricular programme, with strong community links. The standard of provision is recognised by a Sportsmark Award – a high percentage (40) of pupils participate in extra-curricular sporting activities.
145. Overall, the faculty has made good progress since the last inspection. The quality of teaching and learning has, and all the points raised in the last report have been tackled successfully, except for the acquisition of a teaching base. A new management structure has been established, and the achievements of the faculty have been recognized with the award of the prestigious Sports College status. From this strong position, the subject is in a good position to develop further through, for example, a health related fitness programme for Years 7 – 9, greater opportunities for sixth form students to participate in timetabled lessons, and implementing strategies to improve the number of higher grades at A-level and to increase girls participation in examination groups

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

146. There are no recent examination results to compare with the national figures. Pupils arrive in school with a wide variation in their understanding of religious ideas. By the end of Key Stage 3, standards are in line with those expected in the local agreed syllabus. Overall, given their different starting points, achievement is sound. Most pupils are able to identify some of the main beliefs and practices in the major religions in this country. A Year 7 class fully understood the main events in the life of Jesus. In discussion, they were able to give examples of miracles and parables. They looked at artists' impressions of Jesus and were full of curiosity about the varied interpretations. Year 8 pupils are taught factual information about capital punishment. In discussion, higher attainers demonstrate good thinking skills and opinions. In Year 9 they re-visit the topic and are given the opportunities to discuss in depth using research, diagrams, spread sheets and reference books as evidence with which to build up a global picture of capital punishment in the world today. As a result, the majority, both boys and girls, successfully extend their understanding of the issues. In one lesson seen, Year 9 pupils demonstrated a mature approach in discussion about capital punishment. All ability groups are identified in most lessons and well-planned tasks match the individual needs of pupils.
147. Standards in Year 10 GCSE are above average overall. In work seen, pupils study a wide range of religious and moral issues. In one lesson pupils were given opportunities to think about their roles in 10 years time. There were many perceptive comments showing maturity and sensitivity. There were no Year 11 religious education lessons taught during the inspection week. However, schemes of work show that pupils study many moral issues that are relevant to what is happening in the world today, such as abortion, contraception, drugs and their impact on society today. There is insufficient evidence to judge standards of attainment and levels of achievement.
148. Teaching and learning are good overall, and they are very good at Key Stage 4. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The accommodation in the humanities area provides a good learning environment for pupils to work in. Specialist rooms are full of displays, which pupils can use for reference and learning. In most lessons seen, teaching was at least good in Key Stage 3 and very good in Key Stage 4. This led to the pupils' enjoyment and enthusiasm for work and discussion. Good learning takes place in most lessons where pupils show respect and learn from the teacher and each other. Good teaching encourages pupils to make valuable contributions to the lessons. Pupils are given these opportunities within a controlled situation where the teacher manages pupils well and therefore keeps all comments focused. Most teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and use a variety of teaching methods to ensure that lessons are interesting and resources are well used in ways that stimulate learning and contribute to their spiritual development. For example, Year 7 pupils were given the opportunity to smell frankincense and listen, whilst working, to the music of a Mass. In one Year 8 class, where the teaching and learning were less successful, the lesson lacked pace and questioning was not sufficiently challenging for most pupils. The lesson was taught in a non-specialist room, which was uninspiring for pupils. The quality of the information was poorly presented and difficult for a small minority of pupils to read. As a result, the pupils' achievements were less than they should have been.
149. Religious education is taught within the humanities faculty. Through this faculty the department is well managed. A two-year development plan has been put in place to implement the main priorities for improvement. It is a lively department, which, together with the strong support from the senior management, has made good improvement since the previous report. There is a shared commitment to improve by the subject teachers and the managers of the faculty. The content of schemes of work has been improved. Extended writing tasks have been incorporated into most schemes of work. Pupil assessment profiles have been developed, though improvements in the use of assessment data to inform planning need to continue. However, the subject is now planning for progression, which will increase the level of pace and challenge across each unit. A major development has been the introduction of a short course at GCSE for all pupils in Key Stage 4, though planning for a full course still needs to take place. At present, the school does not meet statutory requirements because there is no provision for religious studies in the sixth form. Recent developments place the subject in a good position to build on its strengths for the future, so that it

will be able, for example, to increase the provision of ICT, which will enable all pupils to have access within the humanities accommodation.

VOCATIONAL COURSES [INCLUDING GENERAL NATIONAL VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS (GNVQ)], AND THE SIXTH FORM

150. Standards attained in 2000 by those taking units of GNVQ part one foundation, intermediate and advanced units are well above national figures. These results show a continuing improvement on attainment in previous years. Those students with relatively modest attainment in GCSE often make significantly better progress on the intermediate and foundation GNVQ, with several then progressing to the advanced course. There is a significant number of students with special needs, who attain well in relation to other elements of their academic profile.
151. Standards in work seen during the inspection are above average at the end of both Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. At all levels, pupils and students achieve well in relation to their prior attainments. They are able to express themselves well both orally and in writing. In leisure and tourism, they show particularly good oracy skills, and are able independently to sustain discussion of concepts such as SWOT analysis. They attain high standards in the use of computers. In art and design, digital cameras and paint programmes are used to produce and enhance work; in health and social care, spreadsheets and word processors are used to create work which is well laid out, analytic in nature and which at advanced level is often of industry report standard. Most pupils and students have good note-taking skills and maintain well ordered files. All maintain portfolios of work to at least satisfactory standard, with a higher than expected number which are outstanding in all respects.
152. The quality of teaching is very good; all is at least good and some is outstanding. All teaching is characterised by clear planning and the accurate communication of learning objectives to pupils and students. Teachers often make use of projectors and the electronic whiteboard; this gives students models of well laid-out presentation which has a clear effect on the pace and clarity of work students undertake in those sessions. The teachers' proficiency in ICT creates an effective and enthusiastic response from pupils and students. The clear layout of the written and computer-based work owes greatly to this input. At Key Stage 4, where the individual needs of pupils often vary, teachers take care to differentiate tasks so that all can achieve or exceed the learning objectives; in health & social care and in leisure & tourism work, sheets and computer generated resources are carefully devised, and learning support assistants are carefully briefed to ensure that learning objectives are set at an appropriately high and achievable level for each individual. Written and verbal feedback is designed to assist pupils and students to improve their work methodically. There are regular visits to industrial and commercial enterprises, which successfully develop understanding of the world of work, and teachers encourage pupils and students to use the data gathered to good effect in subsequent assessed activities and work.
153. The management of resources within the classroom is a significant factor in enhancing achievement. This is a result of careful team and individual teacher planning. Pupils and students perceive and atmosphere of organised and purposeful working and respond well to the challenges thus set. Monitoring and reviews of individuals and groups are good. The action planning by pupils and students is carefully monitored to ensure that they are continually setting objectives that are realising their potential. The school is an active member of local and national development networks which allows teachers to maintain their subject and industry knowledge at a high level, thus benefiting overall achievements of pupils and students.

The sixth form

154. There has been a major expansion of the sixth form since the last inspection. The school now offers a very good balance of academic, pre-vocational and non-examination courses. These are available in a flexible format, and students may easily combine, for example GCE A-level and VCE (Vocational Certificate of Education) courses. All students undertake key skills training and some are formally assessed. The intention is that in future all will be entered for key skills certificated assessments.

155. The expansion has been carefully planned in terms of curriculum, staffing and resources. A team of eight personal tutors, with particular sensitivity to the needs of members of the sixth form, provide a valuable resource for students. There is systematic provision of advice for Year 11 pupils prior to their making choices for the future, continuing advice and guidance during courses, and specialist advice on university applications and career choices.
156. A general studies programme acts as an integrating mechanism for careers and higher education advice, and for a programme of visits to places of work and work experience and talks by local and national employers. It also includes a leisure and recreation module. Students are expected to be involved in a broad programme of community activities, and separate accreditation will be available for participation in this programme.
157. Progress of individuals in terms of attainment, achievement, potential and application is formally surveyed three times each year, with students involved in a parallel process of self assessment. Subject teachers are made aware of individual progress across the range of individual students' profiles and use this data on a regular basis in their planning. These very thorough procedures have a very positive impact on the motivation of students and on the quality of support the school gives to students. As a result, most are achieving well.
158. Through their work in Key Stages 3 and 4, students are well-prepared for those A-level and GNVQ subjects which are related to their previous experience. For A-level courses which do not relate directly to this prior experience, such as those in the broad area of the social sciences, subject teachers pay particular attention to the early development of the unique vocabularies and methodologies of these subjects. The examination results in economics, sociology and psychology have been consistently good, and the attainment and achievement of those studying government & politics have outstanding features. These results reflect the high quality of teaching that was observed in these subjects; overall, teaching in these subjects is judged very good.
159. Overall the sixth form offers a very good preparation, for all its students, for the challenges of higher education and the world of work. This achievement occurs in a civilised atmosphere of mutual respect and constructive relations between teachers and students.