

INSPECTION REPORT

**SIMON LANGTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR
BOYS**

Canterbury, Kent

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118884

Headteacher: Mr John Harris

Reporting inspector: Rose Godfrey
OIN: 2047

Dates of inspection: 20 - 22 March 2000

Inspection number: 186590

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Grammar
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	11-18
Gender of pupils:	Boys 11-16 Mixed in the Sixth Form
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Michael Gallagher
Date of previous inspection:	27/11/1995

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys is a larger than average selective foundation school educating 906 pupils aged 11 to 18. There are two hundred and fifty seven students in the sixth form, including twenty-six girls. The number of pupils attending the school has increased from 760 at the last inspection. The pupils come from within Canterbury and also from surrounding towns and villages. Pupils' attainment on entry to the School, as assessed by the Kent procedure for entry to secondary education, is well above average. Seventeen pupils have special educational needs, which is very low, about one fifth of the national average. None of these pupils has statements. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties but there are a few with more complex needs. Pupils from ethnic minorities total 3.4 per cent of the school population. There are 33 pupils for whom English is an additional language, although only one pupil receives additional support. Thirty-three pupils receive free school meals, which although less than the average for all schools nationally is higher than the average for grammar schools. Compared to the national picture pupils' socio-economic backgrounds are relatively affluent. Almost all pupils stay on to follow sixth form courses at the school and the vast majority of sixth form students go on into higher education.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys provides a good standard of education. Standards of attainment are very high and the majority of pupils make good progress by the time they leave the school. The main factors that contribute to this are good teaching, the very positive attitudes of the pupils and efficient management. Expenditure per pupil is broadly average. However, the School is not using the potential of this positive learning environment sufficiently to ensure that all pupils reach the highest possible levels of attainment. A small but significant proportion of pupils do not gain five A* to C grades at GCSE and the School needs to improve the standards achieved in comparison to other grammar schools. This reduces the overall effectiveness of the School. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Very high standards have been sustained in national tests and GCSE examinations and the School's results place it amongst the top five percent of all schools nationally.
- Provision for sixth form students is very good and standards of attainment at Advanced Level are improving.
- A high proportion of very good and excellent teaching, especially in the sixth form, leads to high quality learning.
- Very good relationships exist at all levels ensuring that pupils have very positive attitudes to learning.
- High standards are promoted in the subjects chosen as a focus for this inspection - economics and drama and theatre studies.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- The School needs to improve the achievements and progress of some pupils, particularly in Years 10 and 11.
- The School's systems for monitoring and evaluating its performance and for setting targets to bring about improvement need further development in Years 7 to 11.
- The use of information technology to support teaching and learning across the curriculum requires further development, good practice evident in some subjects needs to be spread to all subjects.
- Provision for religious education in the sixth form and for ensuring a daily act of collective worship need to fully meet legal requirements.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The School has made satisfactory progress since its last inspection in November 1995. Standards in national tests and examinations have been sustained at very high levels compared to all schools nationally. Key Stage 3 results have remained at similar levels over time. Advanced level results have shown improvement above the national trend. There is a positive climate for learning that results in very good working relationships being established across the school. Teaching quality has been sustained at the level of the last inspection and the proportion of satisfactory or better teaching matches the national average. Strategies for the sharing of good practice in teaching have been planned and implemented. These have developed into a regular programme for monitoring the quality of teaching. However the action taken as a result of this has not yet impacted sufficiently on improving the range of opportunities for learning.

The following progress has been made in addressing key issues for action identified in 1995:

- The new accommodation for mathematics, modern languages and science has improved the learning environment for these subjects and enabled the school to re-arrange other teaching areas into more effective teaching suites. However accommodation still restricts learning in physical education.
- A number of curriculum improvements mean that the School now provides effectively for art and music and that control technology has been introduced as a component of design and technology in Year 8.
- The School still does not make adequate provision for religious education in the sixth form.
- The policy for collective worship still does not meet statutory requirements.

Effective management gives the School sound capacity for future improvement. However, setting more challenging targets to ensure improvement and developing better links between planning by subject departments and the whole School Development Plan will strengthen potential for future improvement.

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
	1997	1998	1999	1999
GCSE examinations	A*	A*	A*	E
A-levels/AS-levels	B	B	A	

Key

Well above average A

Above average B

Average C

Below average D

Well below average E

- *This comparison has to be against all grammar schools nationally which are generally more selective than Simon Langton Boys and the other Kent Grammar Schools.*

When pupils enter the School their standards in the core subjects, English, mathematics and science, are well above the national average. Standards of performance in both Key Stage 3 national tests and GCSE examinations are very high, placing the School amongst the top five per cent of schools nationally. Standards at Advanced Level are well above national averages.

In the national tests for 14 year olds, taken at the end of Year 9, combined results for all three core subjects are well above the average for all schools nationally. Key Stage 3 results have remained at similar levels over time. The 1999 results are typical of those achieved by grammar schools. The best results are achieved in mathematics. Results in English are similar to those in science and in both subjects reflect the averages achieved by grammar schools.

Overall GCSE results, based on average points score, are very high in comparison to the national average. The proportions of pupils achieving five or more higher grades (A* to C) and those gaining five or more grades at all levels (A* to G) are also very high compared to the national average. The School's average points score, which is the most comprehensive measure of performance at this stage, does not compare favourably with the average achieved by grammar schools. Pupils perform less well in English than in other core subjects, reflecting the lower national attainment by boys in this subject. In science, excellent results are achieved by the most able pupils taking separate sciences but results achieved by pupils taking dual award science are well below those achieved by other grammar schools. Modern languages results are consistently better than results achieved in other subjects. Standards were poorest in drama and design and technology in 1999. The School's targets for 2000 and 2001, although realistic predictions for the particular pupil groups, do not reflect the need to improve in comparison with other similar schools.

In the sixth form standards are well above national averages in 1999. This represents a further improvement over 1997 and 1998, when standards were already above average. Advanced level results have improved at a faster rate than the national trend over the past four years. The school has targeted improvement for this age group, particularly through improving the monitoring of students' progress during their A Level courses. Science subjects, especially chemistry and physics, are the strongest sixth form subjects.

Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 7 to 9. Pupils' progress is less satisfactory in Years 10 and 11 and their achievements in GCSE are less than the average achieved by schools having similar Key Stage 3 points scores. This lack of consolidation slows down the rate of progress of some Key Stage 4 pupils. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress in both key stages and their achievements are satisfactory.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to school. Pupils appreciate that they are expected to work hard and most pupils work with enthusiasm and evident enjoyment.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave very well in lessons. Most pupils report that any poor behaviour is dealt with immediately and that bullying is limited.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good. They are confident, articulate and enjoy very positive relationships with staff and one another.
Attendance	Attendance is good and similar to the national average for boys' grammar schools. Unauthorised absence is very low.

Pupils' very good attitudes to learning are a strength of the school. Their good levels of attendance, commitment to learning and enthusiastic contributions in lessons all lead to the achievement of very high standards.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

In the 59 lessons observed, teaching quality was satisfactory or better in 96 per cent of lessons. It was very good or excellent in 26 per cent, good in 28 percent and satisfactory in a further 42 per cent. This is very similar to the national average. Teachers' subject expertise and enthusiasm for their subjects is developed through well planned and purposeful lessons. Resources are often used imaginatively and creatively to stimulate learning. Where there were weaknesses in teaching these arise because uncertain aims, slow pace and a lack of challenge mean that pupils are not being stretched sufficiently. The School meets the needs of most pupils well. The shortcomings observed in some lessons endorsed concerns expressed by parents that work provided for the School's more able pupils is not always sufficiently challenging.

In the core subjects there is much good teaching in English, especially in the sixth form. Teaching in mathematics and science is judged good overall. Standards of literacy are generally high. Oral and reading skills are well developed. The writing of the majority of pupils is accurate, fluent and well organised. An insistence across subjects on pupils' understanding and using the correct technical vocabulary is a particular strength of the School. Very good calculation skills are used widely across the curriculum and recording in numeracy is also very good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Pupils in Years 7 to 9 have a broad and balanced programme of study. In Years 10 and 11 the curriculum is broad for most pupils. The sixth form has a wide choice of Advanced Level subjects. The good programme of extra curricular activities has particular strengths in music and in sport, which has been recognised by the School gaining the National Sportsmark Award.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes sound provision for pupils with individual needs. The appointment of a special needs co-ordinator has improved provision.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Arrangements for bi-lingual support are sound. Pupils who have been helped are using the English language well. They are able to socialise successfully and are making satisfactory progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There is good provision for pupils' personal, moral social and cultural development. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory, but opportunities are missed to extend this.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school makes sound arrangements for the welfare and safety of its pupils. Child protection procedures are fully implemented.

Weaknesses in curriculum provision are that:

- some pupils do not study design and technology in Years 10 and 11;
- there are limited opportunities for sixth form students to take part in religious education as

required.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The Headteacher and senior management team provide effective leadership, promoting high standards in the School in relation to national averages. School targets for pupils' attainment should include the need to improve performance in comparison with other similar schools.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its responsibilities well, maintaining an effective strategic overview of the school's development. Annual reports to parents do not meet legal requirements in full.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Comprehensive systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the school's performance, but these do not yet impact sufficiently on all pupils' levels of achievement and progress.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of the resources available to it. Accommodation has been improved since the previous inspection.

The effective leadership provided by the headteacher and senior staff has been recognised by the gaining of the Investors in People Award for the School. The governing body monitors spending well, although the principles of best value still have to be applied in their entirety in relation to pupil achievement. Heads of department are actively engaged in monitoring the quality of classroom teaching and learning. School development planning is not sufficiently focussed on improvement of pupils' achievements. There is lack of coherence because some department development planning has insufficient impact on achieving the priorities set by the whole School Development Plan.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children's enjoyment of school and their good behaviour • Good teaching in most subjects • The good progress pupils make and the standards they achieve • The prompt response to parental concerns • The rapid and effective handling of any incidents of bullying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The underachievement of some pupils • The quality of marking and recognition of excellent work • The information on pupils' progress • The way the school works with parents

Parents are generally pleased with the school and the education their children receive, as expressed in the positive responses to the parent's questionnaire. Inspection findings support this view. The inspectors found that the School does have good systems to work with, and consult parents. Scrutiny of pupils' annual reports supports the concerns of some parents about the inconsistency in the quality and usefulness of the information they receive about how their child is getting on.

OTHER INFORMATION

The governing body is responsible for drawing up an action plan within 40 days of receiving the inspection report, showing how the school will tackle the improvements needed. This action plan will be circulated to all parents at the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Very high standards have been sustained in national tests and GCSE examinations and the School's results place it amongst the top five percent of all schools nationally.

1. The standards achieved by pupils at the School are very high, and are well above the national averages in both the national tests for 4 year olds and in GCSE examinations. The School has sustained very high levels of attainment in comparison to national standards since the last inspection. In the national tests for fourteen year olds, taken at the end of Year 9 results have been well above national averages in English, mathematics and science for the last four years. Standards are highest in mathematics. The average national curriculum points score achieved by pupils in mathematics has been more consistent over the past four years than in the other core subjects. Standards in English are more similar to those in science.
2. Pupils achieve very high standards in public examinations at the age of 16. In GCSE examinations taken at the end of Year 11 the proportion of pupils achieving five or more A* to C grades in 1999 was very high compared to the national average for all schools. When considering the average points score per pupil, the school's standards were very high compared to the national average figure. Since the last inspection the School has sustained its position amongst the top five per cent of schools nationally. In 1999 results in chemistry, French, German and mathematics were particularly good when compared with pupils' other results.
3. Student's attainment in GCE Advanced Level courses is consistently well above the national average. In 1999 there was evident improvement and results were well above average. Students' achievements are appropriate for their abilities, many of the students showing high levels of prior attainment in GCSE. Standards are consistently high in science subjects and modern languages.
4. The standard of work seen in lessons and pupils' work during the inspection was also high. Much of the teaching challenges pupils' above average ability and they learn at a good rate. Staff have created a positive climate for learning in which academic success is recognised.
5. Standards of literacy are generally high, although there are strengths and weaknesses evident. Oral and reading skills are well developed. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 receive regular library lessons where they are encouraged to read independently from a range of genres. The writing of the majority of pupils is accurate, fluent and well organised. However, although there are opportunities to write for a range of purposes across the curriculum, some pupils in Years 7 to 9 are less willing to extend and develop their ideas through writing at length. An insistence across subjects on pupils' understanding and using the correct technical vocabulary is a particular strength of the School.
6. Very good calculation skills are used widely across the curriculum and recording in numeracy is also very good. Pupils and students across the school use and apply numeracy skills effectively in a range of other subjects. Computational skills are used in humanities and science and numbers are used in the context of a range of activities within design and technology.

Provision for sixth form students is very good and standards of attainment at Advanced Level are improving.

7. The sixth form curriculum provides a wide range of experience for students. ~~Gi~~r have been successfully integrated into the sixth form since the last inspection. Provision is cost effective with a good number of students studying each subject. Most students take three Advanced Level subjects. All students spend some time each week on general education lessons and physical education. Chemistry, English, mathematics and physics are the strongest subjects at this level. Large numbers of students study these subjects and standards are above average. Curriculum provision is enhanced by the range of subjects offered at Advanced Level, including economics, politics and theatre studies all ~~wh~~ich are achieving good standards.
8. The school has an improving trend of performance at this level with a significantly greater increase in the average points score per candidate in 1999. The results for students taking two or more subjects at Advanced Level in 1999 are well above the national average. This represents an improvement over 1998 and 1997 when results were already above average. Students in chemistry, economics, mathematics, physics and modern foreign languages gained good results, with a high proportion of A and B grades. However performance is more variable in other subjects.
9. In lessons and work scrutinised high standards ~~is~~ are also evident. In a Year 12 physics lesson practical activity provided high levels of challenge and made significant demands on students, which extended and deepened what they already knew. In a Year 13 politics lesson questioning was used effectively to stimulate a good level of debate about bias in the media. Very well prepared student presentations in a Year 13 geography lesson included some very good use of case studies to illustrate key points and showed high levels of attainment.

A high proportion of very good and excellent teaching, especially in the sixth form, leads to high quality learning.

10. Whilst the standard of teaching overall remains at similar levels to the last inspection and the proportion of satisfactory or better teaching reflects the national average, there is a higher proportion of very good and better teaching evident, especially in the sixth form. This high quality teaching is a positive feature of the school's provision.
11. Excellent teaching was observed in drama, ~~Eng~~lish, mathematics and science. The teaching of drama, economics and theatre studies is very good in Years 10 and 11 and in the sixth form. The strengths of teaching across the curriculum include very good subject knowledge, enthusiastic delivery, skilful questioning and ~~well~~ timed activities using resources imaginatively and effectively. Teachers use time well in these high quality lessons and have high expectations of what pupils will achieve. Teaching also has a strong focus on helping pupils extend their thinking and make better progress. Teachers challenge pupils who have been successful to take on more demanding activities.
12. Teaching quality is particularly good in sixth form lessons. Very good subject knowledge and staff expertise ensures that teaching offers high levels of challenge. A wide variety of learning strategies are used to make lessons interesting and to encourage further research of topics. Resources are used well to extend students' learning opportunities. For example in a Year 12 physics lesson students studying light used spectrometers to take actual measurements of wavelength and improve their understanding of the use of the apparatus in real life situations as well as in theoretical exemplars. Pupils apply themselves intellectually and creatively to these tasks and sustain concentration well.

13. There is a high level of challenge in art, where pupils make good progress in developing their work from direct observation to creative and imaginative outcomes. Pace is brisk in most lessons, this sustains interest and enhances value as time is used effectively throughout the lesson. In a Year 12 mathematics lesson the teacher provided clear time targets for students working on challenging questions; this enhanced both the pace and learning in the lesson. In economics students make good use of internet resources to stimulate interest and add an extra dimension in learning.
14. Teachers use questioning techniques effectively. For example, in English questions for Year 7 pupils are designed to encourage pupils to reflect, consider and predict based on what they already know about a character in "Treasure Island". Year 11 pupils are challenged to support or refute a series of provocative statements about Macbeth. In history pupils are asked to make judgements on differing sides of an argument. In modern languages varying opportunities are provided for pupils to use the target language.

Very good relationships exist at all levels ensuring that pupils have very positive attitudes to learning.

15. Relationships among pupils and between pupils and teachers are very positive. Teachers provide good role models for pupils. Pupils listen carefully to teachers and to each other. Strong relationships at all levels lead to open and honest exchanges, negotiation and discussion. Pupils often draw on their own personal experience when providing extended answers to teachers' questions. For example in a Year 11 religious education lesson pupils were tolerant and willing to explore differing beliefs while Year 7 pupils empathised with the hopes and aspirations of the Crusaders. In most lessons a mutual trust is established and pupils feel secure to question or challenge as for example Year 9 pupils responding to and evaluating the oral presentations of their peers in English.
16. In all year groups most pupils are enthusiastic learners. They are eager to participate in the activities planned in their lessons. Pupils show a high level of maturity for their ages and join in willingly with group activities or when the class works together. Where opportunities are offered for pupils to take initiative or work independently they rise to the challenge. Good examples include pupils engaged in research projects, pupils directing others in drama or pupils preparing and delivering talks and power-point presentations.
17. Behaviour of pupils of all ages in lessons is consistently good. Pupils are courteous and respectful. Some pupils show less consideration in their movement between lessons in the more congested areas of the school. There are very few exclusions and few instances of bullying.
18. Pupils are positive about the School and appreciate the educational opportunities it provides. Pupils participate eagerly in out-of-school activities. Parents expressed satisfaction about the School's provision and appreciated the variety of extra-curricular activities.

High standards are promoted in the subjects chosen as a focus for this inspection - economics and drama and theatre studies.

5.1 Economics

19. Economics was not reported on in the school's previous inspection. Examination results are very high in terms of national averages. The proportion of pupils achieving grades A* to C in GCSE economics has been above the average for all pupils in selective schools over the past 3 years. In 1999 the proportion of pupils achieving grades A to E in the Advanced level examinations matched the average for all pupils in selective schools. Achievement was above this average in 1997 and 1998. Significantly, the proportion of pupils achieving higher grades A and B in Advanced Level examinations have been well above the average for all

pupils in selective schools.

20. These high standards are also evident from lesson observations and the scrutiny of students' work, both in Years 10 and 11 and in the sixth form. Students have positive attitudes towards economics, they enjoy the subject, behave very well in lessons and respond well to teachers and the learning opportunities presented to them. Students develop a good understanding of key concepts and principles in economics and can relate these to current issues, for example, the Budget. Many are able to express their understanding of issues in economics with confidence. A significant minority of students, however, is more reluctant to answer questions and engage in class discussion without prompting and encouragement from their teacher.
21. The standard of teaching is consistently good or better, demonstrating a number of strengths. This impacts significantly on pupils' level of attainment. Expectations of students are high. Effective use is made of newspaper articles, video clips and appropriate Internet sites. There is a very good emphasis on the use of subject specific terminology and data, reinforcing and building on students' understanding of the subject. Teaching effectively structures, supports and encourages students' learning and the development of positive attitudes to economics, both in and away from the classroom. Student access to a range of resources is good, although both students and teachers would benefit from Internet links within the department.

5.2 Drama and Theatre Studies:

22. GCSE drama was introduced in 1997. Although the results from the first cohort were below the national average in 1999, changes in course requirements and student expectations should ensure significant improvement. The Advanced Level theatre studies course began in 1998. High standards were observed in both Key Stage 4 drama lessons and Advanced Level theatre studies lessons.
23. The quality of teaching is very good or excellent. In Years 10 and 11 and at sixth form level teaching is characterised by a very high level of challenge and a careful balance between theory and practice. Lessons are very well structured with clearly defined objectives. Students are set dramatic problems that they respond to with ingenuity and imagination. Year 10 pupils exploring mask techniques are able to convey character and emotions through stance, gait and gesture. Year 11 pupils are able to develop their improvised performance skills by considering pace and contrasting sound and silence.
24. Year 13 students are able to translate Artaud's theatrical theories into the physical expression of a modern abstract poem. All students and pupils are totally focused, listening attentively and critically to the teacher and to each other. Their movement is controlled and disciplined. They are very supportive and appreciative of each other's efforts and work well together. They are also able to reflect on and critically evaluate their own performances, refining where necessary. Another strength lies in the students' and pupils' ability to relate their practical work to plays and practitioners that they are studying or plays that they have seen performed.
25. The subject makes an important contribution to the cultural life of the school. There are regular school productions such as "Ratz" or "Our Country's Good" as well as an inter-form drama competition and the showing of work by examination groups. Frequent visits are made to local theatres and further afield. A dedicated drama room ("The Ardis") has been well equipped with appropriate lighting, staging and part carpeting. This is adequate for the numbers currently opting for drama, but is not appropriate for groups exceeding twenty pupils.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The School needs to improve the achievements and progress of some pupils, particularly in Years 10 and 11.

26. Pupils entering the school have well above average ability and the majority are achieving their potential. However, achievements of some pupils, particularly in Years 10 and 11 do not match the expectation of their prior attainment.
27. Pupils' Key Stage 3 results show satisfactory progress in comparison with their results in national tests taken at the end of Year 6. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels of 6 or above in these tests is not always consistently high in each of the core subjects. In English although results are well above the national average they are not as high as results achieved by the same pupils in mathematics and science. There are a few pupils with specific literacy difficulties who receive specialist support and achieve satisfactory standards. However, in some subjects across the curriculum insufficient attention is paid to pupils' previous literacy experience at Key Stage 2. Some Key Stage 3 pupils are less willing to extend and develop their ideas and write at length. In some subjects they are not encouraged to do so, and this limits their progress and achievements.
28. When the GCSE results are compared with those achieved by similar schools the average points score achieved by pupils is well below those achieved by other grammar schools. Although the narrow margin between each grade boundary means that a degree of caution is needed in the interpretation of this data when they are considered together with other indicators there is evidence of less satisfactory progress and some underachievement amongst pupils at this level. In 1999 eight per cent [11 pupils] failed to gain five or more passes at GCSE grades A* to C. Five of these pupils failed to gain five passes at grades A* to G and three pupils failed to gain any passes at GCSE. These are high proportions for a selective intake of pupils with well above average ability.
29. In addition pupils' GCSE results do not show any significant improvement in comparison to their end of Year 9 national test results. In 1999 pupils' progress at GCSE, based on the average total point score per pupil, was below average in comparison to schools with similar outcomes in their Key Stage 3 national tests. This lack of consolidation slows down the rate of progress of some Key Stage 4 pupils. In science results achieved by pupils taking GCSE dual award science are well below those achieved by other grammar schools. Pupils performed less well in drama and design and technology than in their other subjects in 1999. Whilst the school meets the needs of many pupils well weaknesses observed in teaching, including lack of clarity about lesson objectives, slow pace and insufficient challenge mean that some pupils are not always stretched sufficiently. A consequence of this is that pupils' motivation and interest is reduced and they are working below their capacity.
30. The school has set targets for 2000 and 2001 which will continue to sustain current levels of attainment against national expectations. Currently the setting of targets relies too heavily on prediction. Insufficient challenge is included to provide a focus for improvement. Although the school has plans to increase the involvement of pupils in individual target setting at the time of the inspection this is under developed, particularly in Years 7 to 10. The school needs to set more aspirational targets for pupil achievement and ensure that development planning at all levels clearly identifies strategies to support the intended improvement. Effective monitoring and evaluation of the progress made towards achieving these targets is also necessary.

The School's systems for monitoring and evaluating its performance and for setting targets to bring about improvement need further development in Years 7 to 11.

31. Development of teaching is taken seriously and senior management monitors and evaluates

teaching and pupil progress. A detailed monitoring framework has been devised with an emphasis on regular observation of teaching. Heads of department are actively engaged in this process and provide feedback to staff. Senior managers meet pupils on a regular basis to scrutinise and discuss pupils' work with them. They also seek views of a representative sample of parents every half term.

32. Although the framework has the potential to make a significant contribution to improvement in the quality of teaching it is not yet achieving sufficient improvement in practice. The process is systematic but it is not sufficiently rigorous. The focus is currently on gathering information rather than on evaluating the impact of teaching quality on pupil learning and progress, or identifying the action to be taken to improve the quality of teaching. Consequently teaching quality remains at similar standards to the last inspection and is overall only in line with national standards. The outcomes of monitoring do not explicitly contribute to the targets of the school's development plan.

The use of information technology to support teaching and learning across the curriculum requires further development, good practice evident in some subjects needs to be spread to all subjects.

33. The school has made sound progress in developing its approach to information technology since the previous inspection. Resources have been improved, new National Curriculum requirements have been implemented and the use of control technology has been introduced as a component in design and technology in Year 8. Pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4 have access to discrete time for information technology. Some good links have been established with other subjects, English in particular, to provide curriculum contexts for activities during this time. Attainment in IT matches national expectations for pupils in all schools, but does not significantly reflect attainment at higher levels across the programmes of study.
34. The use of information technology to support pupils' learning across the curriculum is variable. Good progress has been made in using information technology in English, geography, modern foreign languages and economics. Appropriate Internet sites are effectively used as a source of reference by pupils to support their work and a good start has been made on the development of materials for the school's Intranet. The use of information technology to support pupils' learning in other subject areas, however, is more limited. As a consequence, a significant minority of pupils does not have access to a broad enough range of activities involving information technology across the curriculum to sustain and develop their capability to a sufficiently high level.
35. Planning for information technology within the school's development plan and within individual department plans is insufficient to ensure that all pupils, including those in the sixth form, have a broad range of opportunities to use information technology and Internet resources. Within subject schemes of work there has not been a formal agreement to include sufficient activities using information technology, to progressively develop pupils' capability and to support learning across the curriculum. The use of information technology within subjects is not sufficiently monitored to ensure its appropriate delivery.
36. Although resources have been improved recently and the quality of available equipment is good, the ratio of pupils to computers is still worse than the national average for all secondary schools. Individual subject departments have insufficient access to information technology and Internet resources. The school is planning to commence a programme of National Opportunities Fund [NOF] information and communication technology [ICT] training for teachers before the end of the current year, to extend its programme of staff training and development.

Provision for religious education in the sixth form and for ensuring a daily act of collective worship need to fully meet legal requirements.

37. The school offers a broad curriculum that is flexible enough to meet the particular needs of most pupils and allow access to a wide range of subjects. Recent revision of the curriculum followed by Years 10 and 11 means that instead of some pupils studying separate sciences, all pupils take dual award science at GCSE. All pupils now take GCSE examinations in at least nine subjects. The options system allows pupils a wide choice. However at the time of the inspection not all pupils studied design and technology in Years 10 and 11 which meant that current Key Stage 4 statutory requirements were not fully met.
38. Although some additional time has been allocated for religious education in Years 7 to 9 not enough time is allocated for religious education in Years 10 and 11 to teach the agreed syllabus adequately. In the sixth form the lack of discrete religious education results in non-compliance with statutory requirements. There has not been any significant improvement on the arrangements for teaching religious education in the sixth form since the last inspection.
39. The School does not meet the statutory requirements for collective worship. Weekly Year assemblies do not always incorporate an act of worship. The theme for the week does not feature in every tutor period and when it does feature the opportunity for reflection and prayer is not always there. The requirement for acts of worship to be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character' is not always addressed. None of this detracts from the positive contribution to school life made by assemblies and tutor time.
40. Overall there has not been any significant improvement in provision for sixth form religious education and for collective worship since the last inspection. Statutory requirements for collective worship and the provision of religious education are not fully met.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

41. The School has succeeded in creating a positive ethos where good attitudes and behaviour and very effective relationships promote a positive climate for learning. The selective nature of the intake means that high standards are reached in comparison to national standards. However, although the School is sustaining high standards in comparison to national averages, it has the capacity to improve some pupils' achievements. GCSE results compare less favourably with those achieved by other grammar schools, particularly in 1999.
42. In order to improve the school should now:
- (1) Raise the attainment of pupils in relation to similar schools by increasing the:
- percentage of pupils achieving Level 6 in Key Stage 3 and
 - average GCSE points score at Key Stage 4.
- further developing monitoring and evaluation processes to ensure that they have a direct effect on improving teaching and learning;
 - developing target setting procedures which ensure that there is sufficient challenge to support improvement and raise standards of attainment;
 - ensure that development planning at all levels focuses on securing improvement;

- ensure that teaching and learning is supported by high level use of information and communication technology across the curriculum.

See paragraphs: 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35 and 36.

(2) Make sure that the School provides a curriculum which meets statutory requirements for pupils of all ages by:

- improving the time allocation for religious education in Years 10 and 11 in order to cover the locally agreed syllabus and providing religious education in the sixth form.
- ensuring a daily opportunity for all pupils to participate in an act of collective worship.

See paragraphs: 37, 38, 39 and 40.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	59
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
7	19	28	42	2	2	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 – Y 13	Sixth form
Number of pupils on the school's roll	906	257
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	33	n/a

Special educational needs	Y7– Y11/13	Sixth form
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	17	4

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	33

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	18
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.0
National comparative data	4.5

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0
National comparative data	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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1999	121	0

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	118	119	117
	Girls	0	0	0
	Total	118	119	117
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	98 (98)	98 (98)	97 (97)
	National	63 (65)	62 (59)	55 (56)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	83 (83)	96 (95)	81 (81)
	National	28 (35)	38 (36)	23 (27)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	121	121	121
	Girls	0	0	0
	Total	121	121	121
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	64 (62)	64 (63)	60 (62)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	91 (90)	96 (95)	90 (90)
	National	31 (30)	37 (37)	28 (30)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4

Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	144	0	144

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	133	139	141
	Girls	0	0	0
	Total	133	139	141
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	92.4 (96.1)	96.5 (98.4)	97.9 (98)
	National	47.8 (46.3)	90.7 (89.8)	93.9 (93.4)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	55.6 (60.2)
	National	37.8 (36.8)

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	n/a
	National	n/a

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
	1999	82	1	83

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	19.3	16	19.2 (18.2)	6.8	n/a	6.8 (7.7)
National	17.7	18.1	17.9 (17.6)	2.7	2.8	2.8 (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	n/a
	National	n/a

International Baccalaureate	Number	% success rate
Number entered for the International Baccalaureate Diploma and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all they studied	School	n/a
	National	82.5

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	4
Black – other	5
Indian	10
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	9
White	869
Any other minority ethnic group	6

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7– Y13

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	50.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y7– Y13

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	195

Deployment of teachers: Y7– Y13

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

Key Stage 3	26.6
Key Stage 4	20.3

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	8	
Other minority ethnic groups		

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

Financial information

Financial year	1998-1999
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	£
Total income	2300300
Total expenditure	2393300
Expenditure per pupil	2748
Balance brought forward from previous year	159300
Balance carried forward to next year	66300

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	Less than 906
Number of questionnaires returned	271

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	47.0	47.0	4.0	1.0	1.0
My child is making good progress in school.	52.0	41.0	4.0	1.0	1.0
Behaviour in the school is good.	41.0	54.0	2.0	1.0	2.0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32.0	53.0	11.0	2.0	2.0
The teaching is good.	53.0	40.0	4.0		3.0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	58.0	33.0	8.0	1.0	
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69.0	24.0	5.0	1.0	
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74.0	22.0	3.0		1.0
The school works closely with parents.	45.0	40.0	11.0	1.0	3.0
The school is well led and managed.	66.0	28.0	3.0		3.0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	60.0	33.0	3.0		4.0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	45.0	39.0	8.0	1.0	7.0