

INSPECTION REPORT

CLAYDON HIGH SCHOOL

Claydon

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124846

Headteacher: Mrs Elizabeth Soule

Reporting inspector: Akram Khan OBE
RgI's Ofsted No: 27296

Dates of inspection: 25 - 28 September 2000

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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
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr John Williams
Date of previous inspection:	25 - 29 September 1995

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Claydon High School is a mixed comprehensive school for pupils aged 11-18. There are 812 pupils on the roll making it smaller than most other comprehensive schools with a sixth form. The percentage, 7 percent, of pupils known to be eligible for free meals is well below the national average. Pupil turnover is low compared with that found in similar schools. The percentage of pupils speaking English as an additional language is very low. Overall attainment on entry is average. The percentage of children, 8.7 per cent, on the school's register of special educational needs (SEN) is well below the national average. Ten pupils have statements of special educational needs. This is also below the national average. Since the last inspection the school has established a joint sixth form centre with Thurleston High School.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school in which the headteacher and senior management team, well supported by the governing body and the LEA, provide highly effective, purposeful and perceptive leadership. Pupils achieve high standards, particularly in GCSE examinations, because of the staff's very strong commitment to raising standards and the school's considerable capacity to do so. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning, good teaching and effective and efficient use of resources contribute to high standards. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are high, particularly in mathematics, science, German, drama, geography and history.
- High expectations of teachers and good teaching promote high standards.
- Pupils' positive attitudes, good behaviour and a strong positive ethos lead to effective learning.
- The school provides a broad range of curricular and extra-curricular opportunities; provision for careers education is very good.
- The educational provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Provision for pastoral care is very good.
- Highly effective leadership from the headteacher, well supported by governors, senior and middle managers, sets clear direction for the school in enabling pupils to achieve high standards.

What could be improved

- Pupils' attainment in English is not as good as in science and mathematics and GCSE results in French, art and food technology could be improved. There is scope for further improvement in A-level students' attainment.
- Provision for personal and social education in Years 7 and 8.
- Opportunities for reflection and collective worship by all pupils and sixth formers' entitlement to religious education.
- Effective applications of information and communication technology skills across the curriculum.

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 September 1995, there have been very significant improvements. The senior management team has been particularly effective in planning creatively to identify opportunities, delegating responsibilities, providing professional support and in making decisions based upon analysis, interpretation and understanding of pupils' performance data. Teachers have worked hard to improve the quality of teaching and learning and activities are now well matched to pupils' prior attainment. Monitoring and evaluation procedures are well established and staff and pupils are well supported. Pupils' attainment has improved at both key stages, particularly in mathematics and science. Challenging and realistic targets have been set for improvement in tests and examination results and largely have been reached. Key Stage 3 and GCSE results have improved very considerably. The

performance of both girls and boys has improved since the last inspection. Since September 1997, Claydon High School has successfully operated a joint sixth form centre with Thurleston High School. The facilities of both sites and the staff offer a full range of A-Level, AS-Level and GNVQ courses. The addition of a business manager has improved the financial management of the school and has led to the school addressing some of the issues raised in the previous report. School improvement planning is now embedded firmly in the functioning of the school, but there is progress to be made in its costing and evaluation. At both key stages, curricular balance has improved. The organisation and the teaching of personal and social education have improved but not enough in Years 7 and 8. The religious education provision has improved substantially but the school does not meet the statutory requirement for collective worship. The reports sent to parents about the progress of pupils have improved considerably but there is scope for further 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	A
A-levels/AS-levels	n/a	n/a	D	

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

Results in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 3, with the exception of 1999, have been consistently well above average. In 1999, National Curriculum test results were well above the national average in mathematics and science but below the national average in English. In comparison with schools with similar socio-economic characteristics, pupils' performance was well below average in English, well above average in mathematics and very high in science. The provisional results for 2000 show similar trends. GCSE results have shown substantial improvement since the last inspection in 1995, from 37 per cent of pupils gaining five or more higher grades A*-C in 1995 to 58.8 per cent in 1999, which was well above the national average of 46.6 per cent and well above the average for similar schools. Provisional GCSE results show further improvement, with 63 per cent of pupils gaining higher A*-C grades. The results reflect the high number of pupils with special educational needs who achieve at least one GCSE grade. Girls' results have improved considerably over this period, while boys' results, though well above the national average, are still below the girls'. Analysis of the performance of individual subjects since 1995 indicates consistently above average attainment in science, drama, mathematics, German, geography and religious education but slightly below average performance in English, French, art and food technology. Results gained by the students who are entered for two or more GCE A-levels or AS equivalent were below the national average. The 2000 results show marginal improvement in these point scores. Pupils achieve high standards in extra-curricular sports, music and drama.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very positive attitudes to learning contribute to pupils' attainment and progress. The commitment to work and to succeed is very high.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils show respect for people and property. Exclusion rates are low.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils take responsibility for their own learning. They have a good understanding of the importance of citizenship. Relationships are exceptionally good at all levels.
Attendance	Attendance is above the national average and unauthorised absence is low.

The school encourages all pupils to show respect for each other and for all staff. Most pupils respond well, making the school a good place for learning. Guidelines for unacceptable behaviour are clear and levels of exclusion are low.

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 good overall and makes a major contribution to effective learning and to the standards achieved. The teaching in mathematics is rigorous and challenging and promotes critical thought and high standards. The quality of teaching in science, geography and history at Key stages 3 and 4 is consistently very good and teachers adopt varied and interesting methods to encourage thinking and consolidate pupils' understanding. In most subjects teachers' very good subject knowledge and enthusiasm lead pupils to learn at a very good rate. Numeracy skills are taught well across all subjects and exceptionally well in science and geography. Similarly the teaching of literacy skills is good. Most pupils are articulate, and respond well to opportunities to write for different purposes and improve their listening and speaking skills for example in science, mathematics, history and geography. Information and communication technology skills across most subjects are under-developed. A secure learning environment is created in which pupils learn from their mistakes. Planning for pupils with special educational needs is very good; they learn well in all subjects. Extra tasks are set for high attaining pupils, for example in mathematics and science. Pupils' work is marked and evaluated in line with the school's policy. Teaching was satisfactory or better in 97 per cent of lessons: it was good in 34 per cent and very good or excellent in a further 37 per cent of lessons. Two ineffective lessons were seen in which little progress was made by pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	All pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum except for personal and social education in Years 7 and 8. An excellent range of A and AS-Level subjects, with exciting GNVQ courses. No universal religious education provision in the sixth form.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The quality of support is very good. In 1999 most achieved five or more GCSE grades A*-G. Very good educational provision for Traveller children.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The very few pupils who need support benefit from teachers' careful attention to language development.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral development. Its provision for cultural and social development is good and that for spiritual development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has very effective arrangements for monitoring pupils' academic and personal development. Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare and child protection are very good.

Overall, the curriculum is broad and balanced, reflects the aims of the school, and is successful in enabling pupils of all abilities to achieve good standards. The arrangements for grouping pupils according to attainment work well. Pupils in higher attaining modern languages groups have the opportunity to study German in which they achieve high standards. Extra-curricular activities, especially in sports, drama and music, enrich pupils' experiences and contribute to their personal development. A very good programme of support and guidance helps pupils to make good progress in all aspects of school life. Arrangements for monitoring pupils' progress are good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and senior managers create a very good ethos where staff and pupils are valued and this results in very good learning and high standards of achievement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are very supportive and set priorities to improve the quality of education for all pupils. They fulfil well their statutory responsibilities except for collective worship.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher and senior managers have a very good knowledge and understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The programme for monitoring teaching and learning is well established and has led to a significant improvement in the quality of teaching.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes effective and efficient use of available accommodation and resources. There is careful long-term strategic planning. The governors apply well the principles of best value.

Leadership of the school is very good. All staff share the school's aims and planning for improvement is well focused and effective. The organisational structures are developing well, ensuring delegation and accountability. Leadership and management of most subject departments are good. Throughout all its work the school applies the principles of best value effectively. Resources for special educational needs are very well used to promote learning. Work on extension and further improvement in accommodation is going to start in Spring 2001.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children enjoy going to the school. They work hard, are making good progress and achieve their best. • Professional and dedicated staff. Teaching which is consistently good. • They find staff approachable. • The school helps their children to become mature, responsible and supportive of each other. • The way the school is led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount and quality of homework. • Range of after-school activities. • Closer partnership with the school. • The behaviour of a very few pupils.

Almost all parents are pleased with the school and the quality of education it provides. Inspectors agree with the positive views of parents. Pupils feel the homework set is usually manageable and appropriate. It is set and marked conscientiously but not always consistently. The tasks set could be more challenging, especially for high attaining pupils. Some parents responding to the questionnaire are unhappy about the way the school works with parents and the information they receive. The school offers a good range of extra-curricular activities including school productions and varied sporting, dramatic and musical activities though participation rates are not high. The arrangements for the induction of pupils in Year 7 and post-16 courses are very good. The new headteacher is keen to strengthen relationships with parents, to enable pupils to benefit from the educational opportunities that are offered. Behaviour strategies are working and pupils' behaviour in classes and around the school was good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Standards are high, particularly in mathematics, science, German, drama, geography and history.

1. The attainment of pupils when they come to Claydon High School from their primary schools is average. Their attainment is average in the National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science and in the standardised reading and non-verbal tests administered on entry. There has really been an improvement in the ability profile of pupils in Year 7 as confirmed by the attainment of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 in the National Curriculum Tests in English, mathematics and science. The school carries out extensive screening each year, using Suffolk Reading scores and verbal and non-verbal NFER standardised tests to identify pupils with special educational needs and to provide staff with useful information on individual pupils and class groups. The mathematics and science departments make excellent use of these performance indicators to identify and challenge talented and gifted pupils. Effective literacy and numeracy initiatives across the curriculum and good planning in most subjects enable teachers to meet these needs. Pupils respond very well to this very good provision and make very good progress in Key Stage 3, achieving above average standards in most subjects. The value added analysis shows that the school adds good value to pupils' attainment.
2. In 1999, pupils' attainment, at the end of Key Stage 3, at the age of 14, was above the national average: it was close to the national average in English and well above the national average in mathematics and science. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 6 was well above the national average in mathematics and science but in English it was well below the national average. The provisional results for 2000 show similar levels of attainment and relative trends in all three subjects. Over the last four years pupils' attainment in the National Curriculum tests has been consistently well above the national averages in mathematics and science and above the national average in English. The trend in the school's average National Curriculum point scores was broadly in line with the national trend. In comparison with similar schools pupils' performance was well below average in English, well above average in mathematics and very high in science. Overall, girls, in line with national trends, perform better than boys in English and science even though the boys' results are above the national average. However in mathematics, against the national trends, boys outperform girls. The very few pupils with English as an additional language and Traveller children are well supported and perform as well as others.
3. Pupils achieve well above average results in the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examinations at the age of 16. Results have shown substantial improvement since the last inspection, from 37 per cent of pupils gaining five or more higher grades A*-C in 1995 to 58.8 per cent in 1999. Overall, in the last three years, 1997-1999, pupils' results have remained well above the national average and well above the average for similar schools. The proportion of pupils, for 1997-1999, gaining five or more higher grades A*-C (59.3 per cent) and A*-G, (98.4 per cent), was well above the national averages of 45 and 89.8 per cent respectively. Girls' results have improved considerably over this period, while boys' results, though well above the national average, have remained below those for girls. A high number of pupils with special educational needs achieve 5+ A*-G GCSE grades.
4. In 1999, the 58.8 per cent, of pupils gaining five or more higher GCSE grades was well above the national average of 46.6 per cent. 34 per cent of 102 pupils entered gained nine or more A*-C GCSE grades. In mathematics and science, pupils' results were well above the national average and they were above the national average in English. In mathematics and science, there were no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls but in English and English literature, girls outperformed boys, significantly above the national trends. Pupils achieved well above the national averages in drama, geography and history. They achieved below the national average in art and design, food technology and systems and control. Results in science, resistance materials, history, geography and religious education have improved over the last three years and pupils in mathematics, drama and German have consistently performed very well. The provisional GCSE results for 2000, show further improvement, with 63 per cent of pupils gaining higher A*-C

grades. There are significant improvements in pupils' GCSE results in science, drama, geography, history music, and systems and control but their performance has declined slightly in English, art and design and religious education. Pupils entered for GCSE physical education, for the first time, achieved a well above percentage of A*-C grades.

5. The standards of achievement, as seen in lessons during the inspection and in an analysis of pupils' written work are well above average in most subjects. This was particularly the case in mathematics, science, German, history, geography and religious education. In many lessons, high quality learning resulted from the very positive response of pupils to challenging teaching.
6. Standards of literacy are above average and most pupils are articulate. Pupils are encouraged to speak clearly and with confidence in most subjects. Their listening skills are very good and pupils demonstrate a high level of maturity when listening attentively with concentration and understanding to each other and their teachers. Pupils express their viewpoints fluently, having a good command of standard spoken English. In English and drama, pupils listen reflectively and are able to discuss persuasively their own experiences and the text they are reading. They show above average comprehension skills and offer good analysis and response to literature. In drama pupils work well to prepare improvisation and role-plays. They understand and use specialist vocabulary in mathematics, science and design and technology. In religious education, pupils articulate their responses to challenging questions clearly and use language precisely when speaking. Pupils often engage in high quality spontaneous discussions to explore their learning and they use sophisticated vocabulary when talking about their work. Pupils in a Year 7 religious education class discussing "learned and instinctive behaviour," made extended and well informed contributions, showing good understanding of morality. Although talk is promoted in most subjects, there were a few lessons in which the less confident pupils were not always actively encouraged to take part in oral activities.
7. Standards in reading are above average in all three key stages and most pupils are competent and fluent readers. In most subjects pupils read accurately, with understanding and expression and they demonstrate good reading skills to meet the demands of the curriculum. In English pupils begin to analyse critically and respond positively to both literary and non-literary texts. Low attaining pupils in a Year 9 class, for example, read and interpreted perceptively Seamus Heaney's poem "The Early Purges" and compared it with the "Death of a Naturalist". They compared and contrasted the two poems by giving their personal response and identified 'innocence' as a central theme. Pupils read accurately and fluently using good intonation to establish meaning. Pupils with special educational needs read fluently to reflect their level of attainment and use appropriate strategies to pronounce words and develop meaning. By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils read texts closely before giving a personal interpretation. High attaining pupils read and interpret texts with insight and explore language and style confidently. Pupils with special educational needs also have a sound grasp of what they have read as seen in their responses to a wide range of literary texts.
8. Pupils write accurately, neatly, relevantly and at appropriate length. Much of the time, across a range of subjects, they take notes which are useful for revision or in planning essays. Writing is well organised and pupils express their ideas coherently using grammatical features correctly. Pupils write imaginative stories, poems and plays in English and drama. In most subjects, pupils organise and express their ideas coherently, using grammatical features correctly. There is some variety of writing in a range of subjects, including long projects and extended coursework assignments. In mathematics, science, history and geography, particularly good examples of coursework projects are found. However, research and retrieval skills are not well developed in subjects such as French and food technology. Pupils with special educational needs make good use of writing frames to organise their ideas. While most pupils' presentation is good, some average and low attaining pupils would benefit from structured help with spelling, handwriting and technical inaccuracies.
9. Pupils have very good number skills and quick mental recall. The mathematical skills are developed through a range of subjects and the vast majority of pupils demonstrate a high level of competence in numerical and graphic skills. In mathematics lessons pupils exhibit these skills in the course of routine exercises. At both Key Stages 3 and 4, the majority of pupils show

considerable confidence in mathematics, including number, shape and space and most aspects of data handling. At Key Stage 3, most pupils know mathematical symbols, can manipulate numbers and solve everyday problems involving money, weight, time and shapes. Pupils at Key Stage 4, preparing for GCSE examinations, showed a particular strength in their knowledge and understanding of algebra, algebraic manipulation and trigonometrical functions. There was sufficient evidence that pupils can use and apply mathematics with reasonable competence in investigations and problem solving. In other lessons pupils use measuring skills appropriately in subjects such as science and design and technology. They successfully manipulate formulae and perform calculations and interpret a variety of graphs confidently, for example in science and geography where they use line graphs, frequency curves, bar charts and pie charts.

10. Pupils' attainment in science at the end of Key Stages 3 and 4 is well above the national average and very high in comparison with similar schools. Most pupils think scientifically and show a good grasp of scientific ideas. In both key stages pupils show accurate knowledge and understanding across all programmes of study and high attaining pupils quickly demonstrate accurate use of scientific ideas such as the transfer of energy in food chains, transverse and longitudinal waves, factors affecting rates of chemical reaction and osmosis in plants. Most pupils have confidence in setting up experiments, making accurate observations and recording results. Pupils in Year 10, investigating the effects of temperature and carbon dioxide on photosynthesis, were secure in hypothesizing and explaining patterns.
11. In geography pupils achieve above average standards in their lessons and public examination results. At Key Stages 3 and 4, most pupils demonstrate a firm grasp of geographical skills and good knowledge and understanding of decisions like investing in a local development and its impact on traffic pollution with its consequent effect of health. Pupils' attainment in history is above average. The highest standards in oral work occur when pupils apply their knowledge in analysing historical evidence. Written work is well presented and much of it demonstrates good understanding of a wide range of historical materials, with well-researched and imaginative accounts of Norman Britain and Nazi Germany.
12. High attaining pupils studying German achieve consistently high standards in lessons and results are excellent in public examinations. The pupils understand a wide range of the spoken and written language with ease. Standards achieved in French are average. Pupils, however, lack confidence in communicating their ideas effectively in the spoken language. Their written work is generally accurate but there is little evidence of creative writing. The pupils exhibit a sound understanding of the grammatical structures of language.
13. In physical education, most pupils understand the necessity of warm-up exercises and have a satisfactory understanding of the safety aspects associated with practical activities and apply them appropriately. They are able to use their skills in a variety of small game situations and are able to perform gymnastics movements. For the first time 21 pupils were entered for the GCSE examination, and 83 per cent of them attained higher grades A*-C. This percentage was well above the 1999 national average of 51 per cent. Drama valuably complements the school's curriculum and pupils achieve above average standards and improve as they steadily progress through the school. In Key Stage 3, through improvisation and mime, pupils combine the skills of planning and movement with effective use of relevant scripts. Pupils achieve well above the national average GCSE results: in 2000 all 13 pupils passed with higher A*-C grades.

High expectations of teachers and good teaching promote high standards.

14. Overall the quality of teaching is good and makes a major contribution to the quality of learning and to the standards achieved. The commitment, scholarship and enthusiasm of the teachers contribute importantly to the pupils' progress and attainment. Teachers have worked hard since the last inspection to improve the quality of teaching and learning. They received well-planned professional support to develop effective strategies to improve the quality of teaching in all areas of the curriculum. The senior management team and subject managers monitor and evaluate teaching and review pupils' progress. These initiatives are having a positive effect, encouraging teachers to share ideas and spread good practice within departments. The quality of teaching has improved significantly: from 90 per cent satisfactory in 1995 to 97 per cent during this inspection.

Similarly the percentage of good and very good teaching has gone up from 40 per cent to 71 per cent. In good or very good lessons teaching is varied and challenging; it not only stimulates thoughtful responses, it also motivates pupils to do their best. In the 37 per cent of very good or excellent lessons, teaching was imaginative, rigorous, well paced and highly productive. It enabled pupils to learn new knowledge, gain understanding and acquire appropriate skills quickly.

15. Very good teaching occurs in mathematics throughout the school and in science, religious education geography and history at Key Stage 4. Teaching was conducted at a brisk pace, contained clear aims and objectives and involved pupils actively in a range of lively and varied tasks. These lessons offered good opportunities for pupils to question, to challenge, to hypothesise and to enter into discussions. The most successful teaching, for example in mathematics, was challenging: it posed penetrating questions, gave clear explanations and achieved a good balance between direction of learning and encouraging pupils to work on their own initiatives. These highly effective strategies enable pupils to understand new mathematical ideas, which they apply to solve challenging problems. In religious education teaching is meticulously planned and it provides many routes into learning and demonstrates confident command of the subject. The teaching draws sensitively on the personal experiences of pupils and class investigations and planned discussions provide them with real insights into the beliefs and traditions of various faiths. Many younger pupils are eager and able to explore ideas, formulate hypotheses and express personal points of view.
16. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of their subjects are a strength which and they use to plan lessons effectively and present work clearly. In nearly all lessons the teaching is purposeful and well planned and caters well for individual differences. The quality of exposition and class discussion is often very good. In the vast majority of lessons, teachers' expectations are appropriately high and the response to pupils' work both orally and in writing is sometimes detailed and helpful. Teachers in mathematics, for example, provide extensive individual support to pupils either to help in case of difficulties or to take the talented further. A range of other teaching approaches is used, including project work, in mathematics, history, and geography and design and technology. In English and religious education lessons, clear objectives are translated in most cases into appropriate strategies; previous learning is always reviewed, talk is integral to lessons and pupils are well supported and are allowed to question and share their views. In drama high standards are achieved as a result of confident teaching which makes good use of a wide range of strategies within coherent units of work. There is effective use of both demonstrations by the teacher and class investigations in science and design and technology. In modern foreign languages, teachers have a very good command of French and German and often conduct lessons entirely in the language being learned; this is very effective in reinforcing learning, developing pupils' listening skills and consolidating understanding of new vocabulary. In design and technology teachers strike an effective balance between designing and making, with focused practical tasks which enable pupils to develop sound skills and knowledge.
17. Teachers make good use of resources. In mathematics teachers ensure that pupils use calculators, textbooks and other resources competently to enhance pupils' learning opportunities. The library staff provide excellent support to make available to staff and pupils a good range of books, newspapers, periodicals and CD-Roms. In English pupils are encouraged to use library resources to extend the range of reading of fiction and non-fiction to broaden their horizon and individual pleasure. In history pupils make good use of library resources to select, synthesise and compare sources of evidence. Although some use is made of computers to support teaching in English, geography, history and art, this is an under-developed area in the school. Classroom management is very good. Between teachers and pupils and among the pupils themselves, the quality of relationships is almost always good and frequently excellent. The scope for pupils to take initiative is good in most subjects.
18. On the rare occasions when teaching has shortcomings, it is usually caused by content or method not matching precisely the needs of pupils. In these lessons teachers' expectations of what pupils are able to achieve are low, management of the class is weak and activities are not challenging for some or all of the pupils. Pupils are given limited opportunities to share and explore ideas.

19. Homework is set in most subjects but the quality, nature and frequency of tasks vary. Homework is usually relevant and constructive in preparing pupils for the following lessons but there are not enough examples of challenging and imaginative tasks to promote and consolidate learning. Some very good examples of extended homework tasks were seen in English, mathematics, history, science and religious education. Homework diaries are well established but are not always monitored to ensure a consistent approach to extending pupils' learning.
20. Assessment is used satisfactorily in most subjects to inform planning, though the quality of marking varies considerably. Some pupils receive valuable detailed and helpful information about how to improve, while for others it is less useful. Some subjects such as English, mathematics, history, geography and religious education give much helpful advice and feedback in high attaining classes; the advice is not always effective in lower attaining teaching groups.

Pupils' positive attitudes, good behaviour and a strong positive ethos lead to effective learning.

21. The educational ethos in the school is very good and the pupils speak warmly of the many opportunities it affords. It provides a very supportive environment in which good learning flourishes. Pupils have a very positive attitude to work. They are proud of their school and make a very positive contribution to their own progress and success. Pupils feel they are valued as individuals and teachers genuinely care about them. They participate enthusiastically in lessons, respond well to teachers' expectations and cooperate sensibly when asked to work in small group. In mathematics, science, geography, history and religious education they recognise the value of work prepared for them and they seek to rise to the challenge. In general pupils are keen, motivated, conscientious and highly attentive. In English and religious education lessons they are willing to express and substantiate their views, while respecting those of others. In mathematics, pupils are willing to answer questions, discuss methods and use thinking time to explore different approaches to solve problems. When set an extended task, for example in history and design and technology, the pupils demonstrate they are capable of perseverance, diligent research, imagination and creative presentation. In most science lessons pupils show respect for evidence, tolerance for uncertainty and open-mindedness in their scientific investigations.
22. Pupils enjoy coming to the school and are fully engaged by the work of their lessons. They respond well to the challenge of the task and the interest engendered by their teachers' commitment, knowledge and enthusiasm. The school ethos emphasises community and interdependence as well as a personal responsibility to fulfil individual potential. Behaviour in and around the school is good. There are good relationships between staff and pupils, they relate well to each other and they are courteous and welcoming to visitors. These constructive relationships are the basis of teachers' class management style and to mutual respect and effective learning. Outside the lessons pupils' behaviour is good. The school is an orderly community and conduct around the school is well managed despite the congestion that occurs in some corridors and shared spaces because of the design and layout of the school buildings. Pupils queue patiently near the dining room, make their way to assemblies in a calm manner, respect others in the library and work quietly and purposefully. Incidents of poor behaviour are rare and are dealt with effectively by staff. Temporary and permanent exclusions are low. In response to the Circular 10/99, the school has adopted 'behaviour management' as a key focus in order to promote effective learning and to raise standards. The school has communicated the findings of the 'behaviour surveys' to seek their support. Since the last report a system for rewarding achievement has been introduced in an effort to encourage pupils to make consistent and sustained improvements in their attitude to work. Rewards and sanctions for good or unacceptable behaviour are clear and simple and are used effectively and consistently by staff. Strategies adopted by the school have a positive impact on pupils' behaviour.
23. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. The number of opportunities to exercise initiative and responsibility varies considerably in different years but where they occur pupils respond in a mature manner and gain self-esteem. Some sixth form students act as classroom assistants to support teaching in Key Stage 3 and to enhance provision for pupils' reading and information technology skills. Young Enterprise, open to Year 10 upwards, runs successfully and students, well supported by staff, help run the school shop and numerous charity events. Younger pupils

new to the school relate how helpful and supportive they find older peers. However, there is considerable scope for developing pupils' sense of responsibility, personal initiative and leadership skills and for providing opportunities for them to contribute to the community through, for instance, school council, clubs, presenting assemblies or becoming involved in mini-enterprises.

24. Overall pupils' levels of attendance are good and are above the national average. The attendance rate, 93.5 per cent at the school in the 1998/99 academic year, was above the national average of 91 per cent. In the most recent full academic year, 1999/2000 the average attendance of each year group, though still above the national average, had declined to 92.56 per cent. Pupils' good attendance and punctuality at the school have a beneficial effect on their standard of attainment since it means that they can consolidate their learning over a sustained, uninterrupted period.

The school provides a broad range of curricular and extra-curricular opportunities; provision for careers education is very good.

25. The school aims to provide "the highest possible quality of education for all pupils in a supportive and encouraging environment in which teachers are happy to teach and pupils want to learn." The school provides all pupils with a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum which fulfils its aims and provides appropriate opportunities to learn and to experience achievement and success. All subjects of the National Curriculum, together with religious education and drama, are taught. Information technology is taught as a discrete subject in Years 7 and 8 and in Year 9 it is part of the personal and social education carousel arrangements. In Years 7 and 8 all pupils study French and in Year 9 some high attaining pupils study German as a second modern foreign language. They are given reduced time in art and design and technology. All pupils in Year 9 devote one lesson per week to a personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme which includes careers, health and sex education, education for citizenship, environmental education and economic and industrial understanding. Grouping arrangements in English, mathematics, science and French enable staff to meet the intellectual needs of all pupils.
26. At Key Stage 4, the school offers a broad and relevant curriculum. All pupils study an extended core of English, mathematics, a double award science, physical education, religious education and a PSHE programme which covers careers and health education. All pupils choose two subjects from a full range of courses, including a Youth Award course for a small number of lower attaining pupils who do not study French. Some high attaining pupils continue to study German as a second modern foreign language with reduced time in English and mathematics. They are taught an additional lunchtime lesson in Years 10 and 11. Parents are very pleased with these arrangements. Pupils with special educational needs have access to a broad and balanced curriculum at both key stages. The curriculum is planned effectively in most subjects and provides continuity and progression both within and across key stages.
27. The school offers a good range of extra-curricular activities including school productions and varied sporting, dramatic and musical activities which enable pupils to raise the standards of their work. Additionally subject departments make facilities available to meet the needs and interests of pupils at lunchtimes and after school. These extra-curricular activities, including visits and excursions at home and abroad, are well planned across the academic and pastoral curriculum and published in booklet form so that everyone is aware of the overall provision. Teachers give generously of their time.
28. There are well-managed initiatives and innovative projects which are having a positive impact on pupils' learning. The school's drama and mathematics departments provide interesting opportunities to challenge high attainers. The drama department organised a successful summer school for the talented and gifted which was well supported by pupils and much appreciated by parents. The mathematics department organises a 'mathematics challenge' and pupils are awarded gold, silver and bronze awards for their impressive achievements. A local business concern sponsored a special mathematics day for Year 11 pupils from Claydon and other Suffolk schools. The mini-quiz and the two lectures by guest speakers on "The Beauty and Power of Mathematics" were well received by all pupils. All Year 9 pupils participate in a well organised industry day in which they work with local businesses in problem solving activities. The evidence gathered during the inspection week highlighted pupils' appreciation of the range of opportunities offered though participation rates are not high because of large numbers of pupils who travel

considerable distances after school hours. Computers and the learning resource centre are freely available for the homework club and provide a valuable opportunity for pupils to do personal study and research.

29. Preparation for the next stage of education is excellent. There is a coherent, well-organised, well-ordered and well-led careers education programme which enables pupils to develop knowledge, skills and good attitudes to higher education and employment. The LEA's careers advisers work closely with the careers teacher. Pupils are well prepared for option choices in Year 9. In Year 10, all pupils undertake work experience which is well planned and monitored effectively. They benefit a great deal from a programme of outside speakers, a careers convention, and visits to colleges and local businesses. The careers' library is well organised and well stocked with appropriate resources which pupils use extensively to obtain information.

The educational provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.

30. The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. There is strong positive commitment to a whole school approach to their needs and governors, senior managers and subject teachers work jointly to ensure that they succeed in developing the necessary skills, attitudes and personal aspirations. Most pupils on the register of special educational needs have moderate learning difficulties or dyslexia and the school accommodates a significant number of pupils with emotional and behaviour difficulties. All pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum at both key stages. They are well supported through effective and efficient school provision.
31. Pupils with special educational needs show good attitudes to learning. They appreciate the difficulties they face and work hard to overcome them. They take full advantage of additional literacy support, the homework club and the paired reading scheme. Pupils with special educational needs are generally polite and well behaved.
32. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress at both key stages in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, information and communication technology and religious education. In all other subjects they make satisfactory progress. Most have targets which are related to either reading and writing skills or emotional and behavioural difficulties. By the end of Key Stage 3 their reading skills have improved significantly and most pupils are able to read for meaning in the majority of lessons. Their listening skills are well developed and in drama they have learned to work co-operatively when developing ideas through discussion and improvisation. These skills serve them well in Key Stage 4 when they embark upon examination courses and continue to make progress in developing and using them. In science and design and technology, they enjoy practical activities and acquire sound manipulative skills but their understanding of scientific and technical vocabulary is weak. By the end of Key Stage 4, almost all pupils with special educational needs achieve five or more A*-G grades in GCSE examinations, and their average grade in the core subjects is between a 'D' and an 'E'. Pupils with special educational needs make better progress in literacy than in numeracy skills.
33. At Key Stage 4, a small number of pupils with special educational needs are taught the Youth Award Scheme as an alternative to a French GCSE course. This course has a strong vocational bias and includes elements of work experience and vocational training at one of the local further education colleges. On the successful completion of this course, pupils are accredited with a modular certificate which prepares them for GNVQ Intermediate.
34. For pupils with special educational needs annual reviews of statements are carried out effectively and efficiently. Statutory requirements for their assessment are met fully. Good liaison with the main primary schools identifies those pupils with special needs. Very good and detailed analysis of pupils' attainment on entry is published in an attractive booklet but these data are not used effectively by all departments to determine value added improvement at the end of both key stages. For English and mathematics, there is further effective screening to inform setting arrangements. Special needs teaching from specialist staff is skilled and focused, using a range of approaches. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) ensures that pupils' individual educational plans (IEPs) provide relevant and focused targets and that these are

properly shared with subject teachers. These plans are used effectively in most departments, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' work is assessed accurately against these objectives, and reports to parents provide a clear picture of what their children know and can do. There is a high degree of joint planning to achieve objectives and meet the needs of the pupils.

35. The special educational needs department is ably led by the SENCO who has strong links with subject departments, and monitors the progress of pupils with special educational needs very effectively. A useful learning support policy provides an effective framework for the work of the department and there are strengths in the way pupils' individual education plans are supported and monitored across all departments. There is a high level of expertise amongst the teachers and learning support assistants in the special needs department, which is reinforced by a commitment to ongoing in-service training for the teaching and non-teaching staff. The SENCO enjoys good support from the school's senior management team, and also from the named governor who fulfils her role as "critical friend" to the department most effectively. There are good links with the LEA's Special Educational Needs Support Team and there are very good links with feeder primary schools and outside agencies. The targets for special needs are precise and focus on effective and efficient methods to improve standards. The arrangements for monitoring pupils' progress through the link teachers in departments are very effective.
36. The school allocates sufficient sums to promote its main function to provide quality learning for all pupils including pupils with special needs. The school's funding for the special needs department has generated a good stock of appropriate schemes and materials. Resources are used efficiently and the special needs department achieves good outcomes in pupils' learning with the resources available.

Provision for pastoral care is very good.

37. The school provides very good support for pupils in a carefully structured and friendly environment. There is an effective pastoral system which successfully balances rigour and appropriate expectations with sensitivity to each individual's circumstances and needs, thus enhancing the standards of attainment which they can achieve. The heads of upper and lower schools, assisted by the other members of the pastoral team, are highly successful in promoting an environment in which pupils feel personally valued and respected. Effective systems are in place to monitor pupils' academic performance. Form tutors monitor the pupils' personal development, behaviour and attendance and the pastoral team is also well attuned to the individual pupils in their year and keep a close record of their progress. Both pupils and parents speak highly of the advice and guidance provided. They also consider that bullying is well handled, although it is seen as a rare occurrence. The school fulfils its statutory requirements for recording National Curriculum assessments at the end of Key Stages 3 and 4. The school has made progress on the format of reports although these do not always inform parents of what pupils actually know and can do in a particular subject. The school fulfils satisfactorily its obligation of reporting to parents and of completing National Records of Achievement for all pupils. The school informs parents both when their children are achieving well and when they are causing concern. The pupils like the school; consequently they attend regularly which helps the pupils' personal development, maturity and attitude to learning.
38. Pupils value the rewards system which has been strengthened since the last inspection and which is implemented consistently. The staff reward good behaviour, good work and consistent effort. The ethos of the school is one of respect and self-discipline which is highly effective in promoting good behaviour. Members of staff provide good role models for the pupils to emulate. Since the last inspection the school has introduced very effective procedures for child protection and the promotion of pupils' well-being, health and safety. There are good systems in place for caring for those who have accidents or feel unwell.
39. Parents are generally well informed by the school through reports, newsletters, parents' evenings and curriculum support evenings. The parents are pleased that their children like the school and make good progress. They also believe that their children are helped by the school to become more mature and responsible. Staff and parents of the school are developing a partnership which

is used effectively for the benefit of the pupils. The majority of the parents consider that they are well informed about school events and their children's progress and they are confident that they will be contacted by the school should any need arise. Their suggestions and concerns are listened to and acted upon.

Highly effective leadership from the headteacher, well supported by governors, senior and middle managers sets clear direction for the school in enabling pupils to achieve high standards.

40. The headteacher, who has been in post since January 1999, provides confident, purposeful and highly effective leadership. Informed by current national development, the head has a far-sighted vision for the future development of the school. She has analysed a number of the school's developmental needs and established key priorities for action thereby ensuring that changes take place at a reasonable pace. Structures have gradually been developed to ensure that the quality of education and levels of pupils' achievement are monitored systematically. She leads by example by taking personal responsibility for whole school policies and development. Strategic management of the school is now measured and appropriate. Over the last eighteen months, the school has developed systems which allow a more rigorous scrutiny of pupils' attainment and progress. Appraisal systems are in place and a series of review meetings between the headteacher and the subject managers have taken place with a clear focus on raising pupils' achievement, teaching and learning strategies. There is a consultative approach, which encourages all staff, pupils and parents to express their views, although the decision-making is the responsibility of the senior management team and the governors. This approach has successfully harnessed the commitment of staff and created a strong learning environment.
41. The school's mission statement provides insight into the purpose and values of the school and has a strong influence on policies, procedures and practices. The success of the mission statement is demonstrated clearly by the strong positive ethos, effective behaviour management strategies and sharp focus on pupils' attainment and progress. The school has had considerable success in raising pupils' attainment particularly at the end of Key Stages 3 and 4.
42. The leadership is accountable and securely based in the school's mission statement. There are highly effective procedures for consultation, planning and review. The senior management team, consisting of the headteacher, deputy head, head of sixth form centre, heads of upper and lower schools and the business manager, has complementary skills and experience and forms a cohesive and effective team. There are well-planned meetings of the senior management team, curricular and pastoral teams, planning groups and task groups, which provide an effective forum for discussion of whole-school issues. The deputy headteacher spends considerable time and effort in analysing public examination results to evaluate the comparative performance of subjects and has supported effectively all heads of departments on data analysis and value added target setting. Members of the senior management team have responsibility for subject departments and participate with staff in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching, standards and aspects of other provision. The school is well supported by the LEA's officers. External evaluation and support by the LEA's link advisor have played an important part in raising standards. At the request of the school's governors, the work of the English department was reviewed and a very helpful report produced to effect improvements. Through well-planned staff reviews and the in-service training programme, teachers are well supported in raising pupils' attainment. There are clear and well managed systems for the induction of newly qualified teachers.
43. The management skills of middle managers are successfully applied in most curricular areas. Considerable effort has been made to ensure that curricular planning and the implementation of the curriculum are documented thoroughly. Improvements have been assisted by the opportunities created by the management and encouragement given to staff to carry out self-evaluation. Most departments have developed effective strategies to carry out self-reviews using a range of performance indicators. Most subjects monitor classroom practice, observe each other's lessons and share ideas. The best departments are scrutinising pupils' work, analysing National Curriculum tests and GCSE performance and raising the level of discussion and action. Although manageable systems not yet fully developed, much progress has been made in using assessment information to provide individual educational profiles and targets.

44. The governing body is very supportive and is involved actively in overseeing the work of the school. With the exception of collective worship, the governing body meets its statutory duties. Positive relationships and mutual trust exist between the governing body and the senior management team. Governors understand their role in strategic planning, critical support and monitoring and evaluation. They have established close links with areas of the curriculum and are highly effective in monitoring, challenging and participating in the annual review and evaluation. They receive detailed reports on the issues identified in the last inspection from the headteacher, who gives them the best advice possible. They readily question policies submitted to them, particularly in respect of curricular planning, pupils' attainment and progress and financial and staffing decisions. Constructive links exist between the governors and the special educational needs department. The annual report to parents includes much useful information such as details of the curriculum and the provision for special educational needs and pupils' attainment in public examinations.
45. The infrastructure of the school is good. Developmental planning is well established and secure and is well integrated with financial planning. The development plan addresses effectively all of the weaknesses which have persisted since the time of the last inspection and includes strategies for remedying them. It recognises the need to improve and extend systems for monitoring, evaluating and further developing good classroom practice. Effective and efficient procedures and systems are in place to ensure that financial decisions on spending are informed by the school's development needs. Governors are actively involved in scrutinising and agreeing the budget allocations. The allocation of funds to departments is open, fair and equitable and matches subject-specific needs. The addition of a business manager has improved the financial management of the school and had led to the school addressing some of the issues raised in the previous report. Effective controls are now in place to monitor expenditure. Auditors' reports are detailed and recommendations are acted upon. Governors and senior managers continually seek to improve cost effectiveness and ensure that maximum resources are available for teaching and learning. The site is well managed and the services provided by the technical, educational and administrative staff is of a high standard. Good and highly productive working relationships have been established with local primary schools and with Thurleston High School. The income per pupil is close to the national average for similar schools. Having regard for the standards achieved and the quality of education provided, the school gives good value for money.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Pupils' attainment in English is not as good as in science and mathematics and GCSE results in French, art and food technology could be improved. There is scope for further improvement in A-level students' attainment.

46. The school is well aware that pupils' attainment in English at the end of Key Stages 3 and 4 is below the school's averages for mathematics and science. Pupils' attainment in English at the end of Key Stage 3 as shown by the National Curriculum tests, is below the national average and well below the average for similar schools. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is slightly higher in English than in mathematics and science but the value added improvement in English is well below the improvement in other subjects. The provisional results for 2000 indicate a further drop of 2 per cent. The GCSE results for 1999 were above the national average but not as good as in mathematics and science. It is of concern that boys' performance in English, over the last two years, has dropped significantly, well above the national trends. In the 2000 GCSE examinations, girls achieved one-third higher grades in comparison with boys and almost twice as many boys as girls achieved lower GCSE grades. Given that over the recent years attainment on entry for both gender groups is on a par, boys are grossly under-achieving at the end of both key stages. Classroom observations indicate that strategies to motivate are always effective. More structured guidance, monitoring, support, challenge and subject specific targets are needed to lift their self-esteem and raise standards. Pupils' performance data at the end of Key Stage 2 and much other useful screening data prepared by the learning support department could be used to identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses and target support to meet their needs. Aspects of literacy strategies could be used more effectively, particularly to enhance pupils' writing skills.
47. By the end of Key Stage 4 the percentage of pupils gaining A*-C grades in French is close to the national average though the school averages show that the subject does not perform as well as other subjects in the school. Results fluctuate in French for A*-C grades. In 1999, boys achieved better than the average for boys nationally while girls achieved below other girls nationally. The provisional results for 2000 show marked improvement in the performance of girls while there has been little change in the boys' results. Inspection evidence indicates that high and low attaining pupils are achieving their potential but a significant number of pupils of average ability need greater challenge. Pupils' reading and listening skills are above average and spontaneous use of language is satisfactory but there are few opportunities to use language for real purposes and for creative writing.
48. Over the last two years, pupils' performance in art and design and in food technology has declined significantly. This relates directly to staffing difficulties - the prolonged illness of the previous head of the department and the maternity leave of her replacement coincided with examination periods. Their classes were taught by different temporary staff. Both subjects have suffered as a result of temporary staffing arrangements. Over this uncertain period, pupils' attitudes to work changed and this adversely affected their approach to completing assignments. Some poor behaviour persists and there was evidence of this in the lessons observed. Previously the art and design department was highly successful and pupils' attainment was high and the situation is improving.
49. The attainment of students studying A-levels in 1999 was below the national average. Students who were entered for two or more GCE A-levels or AS equivalent scored 13.4 points per candidate which was below the national average of 17.9. The provisional results for 2000 have improved, with the corresponding point score increasing to 15. The girls outperformed boys by 1.2 points per candidate. The number of students entered for different subjects varied from four in design and technology to 30 in mathematics. Relative to the school's average points score, students achieved above average results in art and design, business studies, English literature, chemistry, biology, drama and French; close to average in geography and mathematics; and below average in other subjects. The very small number of students who were entered for further mathematics have achieved excellent grades.

Provision for personal and social education in Years 7 and 8.

50. The school has made some progress in providing a well-planned personal, social and health education programme in Years 9, 10 and 11. In these years the personal and social development of pupils is nurtured in a careful manner. The PSHE programme is comprehensive and provides opportunities for pupils to explore and discuss pertinent issues and make informed decisions. In Years 7 and 8 provision for PSHE is unsatisfactory. Pupils in these years study some aspects of inter-personal relationships and moral and social issues in religious education lessons and the biological aspects of growing up are taught through National Curriculum science but there is no structured PSHE programme in Years 7 and 8. These arrangements are unsatisfactory, as some very important aspects are not taught adequately.

Opportunities for reflection and collective worship by all pupils and sixth formers' entitlement to religious education.

51. The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral and social development. Its provision for cultural development is good and that for spiritual development is satisfactory. A code of conduct for behaviour in the school is managed with a very clear sense of fairness and justice. A strong moral framework is provided to help pupils to distinguish right from wrong. Teachers provide very good role models and pupils develop a very good sense of moral responsibility. Religious education in particular plays an important role in helping pupils to understand their responses to the moral dilemmas that they will face as adults. In other subjects they learn about societies around the world and compare different attitudes to moral issues such as social and political freedom. In science, moral issues associated with family life are taught very effectively as part of pupils' sex education.
52. Claydon High School is a civilised community in which pupils are encouraged to respect themselves and others in the school and wider community. All pupils are involved in raising funds for local and national charities, and this enables them to develop an understanding of the problems faced by people in situations very different from their own. Cultural awareness is well developed, not only through classroom experience, but also by a wide range of extra-curricular activities. There is a good range of cultural visits including a number to overseas destinations.
53. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Within the constraints of available accommodation in the school there is satisfactory provision for assemblies for each year group but the school does not meet the statutory requirements. The way in which some year assemblies are conducted makes a significant impact by encouraging pupils to reflect on social and moral issues in an atmosphere of quiet reverence and self-discipline. Some assemblies do not achieve this so successfully. Tutor time in classes does not include opportunities for reflection and spiritual awareness. Subject lessons make too little impact on spiritual awareness, apart from religious education, which focuses strongly on building an awareness of Creation, the diversity of Christian faith and the beliefs and practices of the faith of other communities in Britain. Opportunities in a few subjects to develop pupils' sense of wonder about the natural world are not exploited. There is considerable scope for promoting spiritual awareness in a more systematic way.

Effective applications of information and communication technology skills across the curriculum

54. The attainment of pupils in information and communication technology (ICT) at the end of Key Stage 3 matches the national expectations. By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils can use a variety of software packages with some independence. Strengths include using information technology to communicate effectively. Pupils can use desktop publishing to communicate to a wider audience and they can discuss the social and ethical problems of information technology. Weaknesses in ICT include lack of familiarity with data logging in subjects such as science and geography, and using procedures that involve the use of variables in control work. At Key Stage 4, information technology is offered as a full or short course but the take up rate is low. The quality of teaching in planned ICT lessons is sound. Appropriate context is provided for each activity and lesson objectives are shared with pupils to motivate them. Teachers share lessons

objectives with careful consideration of pupils' prior attainment, using assessment data to establish individual targets. Teachers have a good understanding of the new software and they are quick to give individual help in lessons. Pupils' attitudes to information technology are good. Pupils listen and carry out instructions, and use equipment responsibly. They have good relationships with their peers, helping each other with problems. In a Year 8 lesson, pupils investigating applications of Excel in calculating used sum formulae successfully to calculate prices. Special needs pupils were well supported by the teachers and sixth form enthusiasts. Some pupils use ICT resources to complete their homework assignments.

55. The progress in information technology is complemented by enrichment in other subjects such as English, geography and art. In other subjects, pupils do not make sufficient progress in developing and applying their ICT. In science for example, pupils are not skilled in using data logging to design their own investigations. In design and technology, pupils do not progress to using computer-aided drawing or manufacture in graphics, textiles or resistant materials. There have been nevertheless significant improvements in information technology since the last report. Resources have improved and there are excellent facilities in the specialist rooms. Specialist information technology teachers' knowledge of the new software has improved, as has the use of assessment data.

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

Sixth form

56. In September 1997, Claydon High School was redesignated as an 11 -18 school and since then it has collaborated successfully with Thurleston High School to offer a wide range of A-Level, AS-Level and GNVQ vocational courses. The first cohort of Year 13 students completed their studies in summer 1999. Popular subjects such as English, mathematics and some vocational courses are offered at both schools, with Thurleston accommodating most of the science and technology subjects and Claydon specialising in the arts and humanities. The sixth form utilises the facilities of both sites and the staff of both schools. Courses are sited to minimise the amount of travel for students, for which a free minibus shuttle service operates. Responsibilities are shared as equally as possible between the two schools, co-ordinated by the head of sixth form and a joint management committee. These arrangements work very well, maximise choice and make the whole provision efficient, economical and effective.
57. The induction procedures for post-16 students are very good. The transition from Key Stage 4 into the sixth form is well managed. Admission of both internal and external students into the sixth form follows well-organised and structured procedures, at the heart of which lies genuine concern for the individual student. Substantial consultation with teachers, parents and particularly the students themselves enable students to make informed choices. To supplement the course selection there are a series of consultation evenings and visits to other institutions including local colleges. The students regard these events as extremely helpful and very informative. They settle well in the sixth form, which is beginning to develop its own distinctive identity and is making excellent progress in establishing academic and social unity. The quality of pastoral and working relationships between teachers and students is a major strength.
58. Year 11 students entering the sixth form have an open choice of A and AS-level subjects and vocational courses. As a result of the guidance they receive, most students choose subject combinations which are relevant to their preferences and aspirations. The timetable is flexible to accommodate their choices. The absence of physical education, religious education, general studies and a personal and social education programme restricts breadth and balance. Moral and ethical issues are discussed BUT sixth formers do not receive their entitlement to religious education. Opportunities to cultivate students' spiritual understanding are being overlooked and could be taken more regularly.
59. In nine out of ten lessons seen, students' attainment in the sixth form is at least in line with the national expectations for each group. In half the lessons, attainments are above or well above the national average. Attainment at the highest level is reached in only a handful of lessons and it is evident that the highest attaining students are not being challenged consistently in all subjects.

Most students build successfully on their achievements at GCSE. They consolidate their knowledge, acquire new skills and the vast majority attain further academic qualifications. Most students leave school to pursue a course of study in higher education. In the brief existence of the sixth form centre, four students have successfully secured Oxbridge places.

60. The quality of teaching in the sixth form (only a small number of lessons at Claydon High School were observed) has many good features. Teachers have strong command of their subject and many lessons are characterised by a brisk and challenging pace which promotes effective learning. The most successful teaching displays a variety of approaches and includes rigorous questioning of students, who respond enthusiastically and show excellent progress in developing their communication and research skills. Teaching in mathematics, for example, was stimulating and scholarly and promoted critical thought and high standards. Some lessons, however, encourage little student participation and offer insufficient challenge. On occasions, the teaching is too dominant or there is little questioning to challenge understanding. While overall standards are improving, the school should continue to review its strategies for teaching and learning in the sixth form so that they build progressively on their high achievements at Key Stage 4.
61. The head of sixth form provides good and effective leadership. The school has made an excellent start and it provides good opportunities for students of all abilities to pursue their studies with a high level of encouragement and support. The sixth form committee is effective in organising social events and other facilities. There is, however, no senior school council to harness the voice of the students and undertake constructive dialogue between these mature and responsible students and the rest of the school. The process would be aided by more formal arrangements for incorporating students' perceptions into the review of courses and other provision.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62. In order to sustain and continue to develop the good work, the governors and senior management of Claydon High School, with the support of the local education authority, should now:
- **raise pupils' attainment in English, French, art and design and food technology by:**
 - challenging under-achievement amongst boys, introducing aspects of the National Literacy Strategy in English;
 - using pupils' performance and other screening data at the end of Key Stage 2, to recognise their strengths and target their weaknesses;
 - setting subject specific targets for pupils;
 - encouraging more creative use of the language in French ;
 - providing more challenging activities in art and design and food technology;
 - providing in-service training and professional support where needed.(Paragraphs 4, 12, 46-48)
 - **raise students' attainment in the sixth form by:**
 - using GCSE results to build on their strengths;
 - providing more challenging tasks in some subjects;
 - matching classroom practice to departmental policies and declared aims;
 - targeting in-service training on more challenging teaching strategies, where needed.(Paragraphs 49, 60)

- **extend applications of information and communication technology skills across curriculum by:**
 - monitoring pupils' information technology skills and ensuring effective applications across the curriculum;
 - offering opportunities to all pupils and staff to extend their experiences in using information technology to communicate, such as web-page design and multi-media work. (Paragraphs 54, 55)

- **improve the provision of personal, social and health education in Years 7 and 8 to ensure that a planned programme of topics is systematically covered:**
(Paragraphs 23, 50)

- **provide, planned opportunities for reflection and collective worship for all pupils and introduce religious education lessons for all in accordance with the statutory requirement:**
 - (Paragraphs 51-53, 58)

In addition paragraphs:19 (homework), 23 and 61 (pupils' personal development), 20 (marking) and 37 (reporting to parents) include weaknesses which have not formed the basis of 'Key Issues' identified above; the school should consider including these in the governors' post-inspection action plan.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	70
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
8.5	28.5	34	26	1.5	1.5	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	591	221
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	52	0

Special educational needs	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	10	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	71	4

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	23
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.5
National comparative data	7.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	1.1

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	62	47	109

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	28	43	46
	Girls	36	37	35
	Total	64	80	81
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	59 (61)	73 (77)	74 (75)
	National	n/a (63)	n/a (62)	n/a (55)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	14 (10)	54 (40)	41 (40)
	National	n/a (28)	n/a (38)	n/a (23)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	31	41	41
	Girls	36	37	36
	Total	67	78	77
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	61 (73)	72 (80)	71 (61)
	National	n/a (64)	n/a (64)	n/a (60)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	20 (37)	45 (40)	28 (18)
	National	n/a (31)	n/a (37)	n/a (28)

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
	2000	58	57	115

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	32	54	56
	Girls	40	57	57
	Total	72	111	113
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	63 (59)	97 (98)	98 (98)
	National	n/a (46.6)	n/a (90.9)	n/a (95.8)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	46.2 (45)
	National	n/a (38)

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

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			

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 (14)	15.0 (12.8)	15 (13.4)	6	2.5	n/a
National	n/a (17.7)	n/a (18.1)	n/a (17.9)	n/a (2.7)	n/a (2.8)	n/a (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	4	100
	National		

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	8
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	0
Any other minority ethnic group	0

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	3	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	41	3
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)	44.69
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y7 – Y13

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	267

Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y13

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	77.2
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Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y13

Key Stage 2	n/a
Key Stage 3	19.6
Key Stage 4	18.5

Financial information

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	2,048,555
Total expenditure	2,035,778
Expenditure per pupil	2634
Balance brought forward from previous year	31184
Balance carried forward to next year	43961

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	773
Number of questionnaires returned	241

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	32	60	5	2	2
My child is making good progress in school.	47	44	5	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	25	55	10	2	8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	16	64	12	5	3
The teaching is good.	29	60	5	1	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	32	53	10	2	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	45	49	3	2	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	43	5	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	23	56	12	2	7
The school is well led and managed.	26	58	5	2	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	28	58	7	2	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	12	44	22	6	15

Summary of parents' and carers' responses