

## **INSPECTION REPORT**

### **STANLEY PARK HIGH SCHOOL**

Carshalton

LEA area: Sutton

Unique reference number: 103003

Headteacher: Mr M Dunman

Reporting inspector: Mr Brian Rowe  
1695

Dates of inspection: 14 – 18 January 2002

Inspection number: 243389

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	11 - 18
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Stanley Park Road Carshalton Surrey
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs S Norris
Date of previous inspection:	17 March 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
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9748	Cliff Hayes	Lay inspector		How high are standards? How well does the school care for its students? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
1068	Jan Allcorn	Team inspector	Mathematics	
			Post-16 mathematics	
			English as an additional language	
28199	Peter Lawley	Team inspector	English	
			Post-16 English	
			Drama	
30294	David Gower	Team inspector	Science	
			Post-16 chemistry	
15576	David Nebesnuick	Team inspector	History	
			Post-16 business education	
2183	Peter Thompson	Team inspector	Design and technology	
			Post-16 Information and communication technology	
11043	David Whale	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages	
10391	Valerie du Plergny	Team inspector	Special educational needs	
27662	Elizabeth Schofield	Team inspector	Religious education	
8622	Heather Housden	Team inspector	Physical education	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
30695	Geraldine Dinan	Team inspector	Art and design	
23522	Elizabeth Sidwell	Team inspector	Geography	
15208	Anthony Briggs	Team inspector	Music	
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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Stanley Park High School is a mixed school for students aged 11 – 18 years, situated in Carshalton, in the London borough of Sutton. It is designated as a comprehensive school but, as it operates within a local education authority with a selective system, it can be more accurately described as a secondary modern school with inner-city characteristics. The school draws its pupils from across the whole of Sutton, but the majority live in local housing association estates where rented accommodation is the norm. Relatively few pupils come from the immediate locality. Pupils have a wide range of backgrounds, but the proportion from advantaged backgrounds is much lower than average. There are currently 948 pupils on roll, making it an average-sized secondary school. The number of boys (515) is greater than that of girls (433). There are 67 students in the sixth form and numbers have stabilised in recent years. About 19 per cent of the pupils come from minority ethnic groups, a higher proportion than average. About ten per cent are of black heritage. About four per cent of the pupils are of Asian origin and there are also pupils from several other minority ethnic backgrounds. Over 11 per cent of the pupils speak English as an additional language, of whom about four per cent are at the early stages of learning English. A higher than average proportion of pupils has English as an additional language. Over 28 languages are spoken, but the most common home languages for pupils are Tamil, Albanian, Arabic and Bengali. There are also about 30 refugees from Albania and seven travellers on roll. The proportion of pupils (22 per cent) receiving free school meals is high when compared to the national average. Pupils' attainment on entry is well below the national average. Over 31 per cent of the pupils have been placed on the special educational needs register, of whom over ten per cent have been assessed as having a high level of learning difficulty. Both these proportions are higher than in most other secondary schools. Thirty-eight pupils have statements of special educational need; this is above the national average. A high proportion of the pupils either do not start or do not finish their education at the school; during the academic year there is a high number of pupils leaving and starting at the school in each year group. The school has changed significantly since the last inspection; most noticeably numbers have increased, there are now far more pupils speaking English as an additional language, more pupils have special educational needs, the school has merged with another local school, and there is now a sixth form. Due to the increased numbers, the school site is overcrowded and this has led to some accommodation difficulties. During the last two years, over 60 per cent of the staff have either left or joined the school and this has had an adverse effect on the school's rate of development and the progress made by pupils. Despite considerable effort made by the school the recruitment of teachers has been difficult.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Stanley Park provides its pupils and students with a satisfactory quality of education whilst operating within a very challenging context. The school works hard to ensure that all pupils are fully included in suitable courses and is becoming more successful. By the time pupils reach the age of 16 they attain academic standards that are well below the average for all schools nationally and below average for schools with pupils of a similar background. However, they make progress at a rate expected, given their attainment when they entered the school. Standards in the sixth form are above average and most students achieve well. Pupils' attendance is well below average, but there are encouraging signs that it is improving in the earlier year groups. Pupils' attitudes to school and learning are improving as a direct result of recent management strategies, but are still unsatisfactory overall. Behaviour is variable; many pupils develop positive relationships with the teachers and with each other, but there are still too many in each year who do not come to school sufficiently well prepared for learning. These pupils are not making sufficient progress. Overall, the quality of teaching

and learning is satisfactory throughout the school, and in the sixth form it is good. Although sixth form provision is not financially cost-effective it is a strength of the school and provides considerable benefits to the students. The overall quality of management is satisfactory although there is some variation between subject departments. The headteacher provides purposeful, effective and imaginative leadership, which has ensured that the school has made significant improvement since his appointment just over four terms ago. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- It provides the pupils with good opportunities in art, information and communication technology (ICT), drama, geography, business education and vocational education in Years 10 and 11 so that they achieve well in these subjects.
- The headteacher, very well supported by the senior managers and governors, has significantly improved the ethos and environment for learning and raised the school's image in the community.
- The sixth form students are supported well and taught effectively.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards of attainment throughout the school in most subjects, but particularly in literacy, numeracy and science.
- The overall quality of teaching and learning, especially in Years 8 and 9.
- Behaviour and attitudes to learning of a significant number of pupils in Years 8 to 11.
- The overall provision for religious education and music.
- Attendance in all year groups.

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

#### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in March 1997. In the challenging context of a changing pupil intake and considerable turnover of staff, the school has accomplished a great deal in the last two years. Many of the recommendations identified in the last inspection have been successfully addressed, with the exception of provision for religious education and collective worship. The school has also made improvements in many other important areas. These include: strengthening leadership and management; improving the quality of teaching and learning; and providing greater curriculum opportunities for pupils and sixth form students. The school has also been successful in maintaining Investors In People Status and in establishing a successful sixth form. A number of building projects have also been completed.



## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 11 and by sixth form students at the end of Year 13, based on average point scores in GCSE and A-level/AS-level examinations.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
GCSE examinations	E	E	E	D
A-levels/AS-levels	n/a	B	n/a	n/a

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

In the 2001 National Curriculum tests taken by pupils in Year 9, pupils attained overall standards that were well below the national average. In English, attainment was very low (in the lowest five per cent nationally) and in mathematics and science attainment was well below average. For the three years up to 2001, standards mostly remained unchanged, but the ability level of cohorts has markedly declined. Standards in English are especially low and in 2001 the results of the national tests were well below the average for similar schools. In mathematics, results compared to similar schools were below average and in science results were average. Boys often outperform girls and this is contrary to national trends. The low attainment is due to a number of factors: the ability profile on entry to the school is low as the school operates within a selective system, attendance rates are low, there is a very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and of those who use English as an additional language. In addition, there is a very high proportion of pupils who join and leave the school during their secondary education career and their progress is disrupted.

In 2001 GCSE examinations, overall results were well below the national average and also below those of similar schools. Results have declined during the last three years and have been constantly well below the national average. Part of the reason for this decline in examination results is the lower ability profile of pupils, although this trend has begun to improve. Girls have gained better results than boys, but to a lesser extent than the national trend. In many subjects, pupils' results in the GCSE examinations are as expected based on their prior attainment when measured at the age of 14. The most successful subjects are those that do not require a high level of skill in literacy and numeracy. The overall trend of improving pupils' performance is satisfactory, but many pupils do make spectacular improvements. The standards of work seen in the sixth form and the examination results have been sustained at a level above the national average.

The school has found difficulty in meeting its academic targets, mostly because of the high level of staff turnover and difficulties with recruiting and retaining appropriate teachers. Evidence from standardised assessments indicates that many pupils achieve well, some making better progress than that indicated by their prior attainment. Pupils with special educational needs and those speaking English as an additional language make progress at the same rate as their peers. Achievement in all year groups is unsatisfactory in music and religious education

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Unsatisfactory. A significant minority of pupils do not want to come to school, lack interest and find concentration difficult.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Unsatisfactory. Behaviour is improving. Although the majority behave well there is too much disruption in class. The level of exclusions is high, but on a downward trend.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. Most pupils accept responsibility and like to use their own initiative. Relationships with staff are generally good
Attendance	Poor. Signs of recent improvement in the lower years.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 7 – 9	Years 10 – 11	Years 12 – 13
Quality of teaching	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	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.

The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory throughout the school. It is especially strong in the sixth form. However, there are significant weaknesses in Years 8 and 9. Teaching and learning are extremely variable, both within and between departments. Many teachers who are new to the school or in temporary posts find managing pupils' behaviour very difficult, and in these lessons the progress made is often unsatisfactory. As there are several new staff in the school, examples of both very good and unsatisfactory teaching were seen in most departments. In Years 7 to 11, the teaching in English, mathematics and science is satisfactory overall. Teaching in most other subjects is at least satisfactory, but less effective teaching was observed in some science and music lessons. Teaching in drama is frequently very good. Most teachers have good subject knowledge and many manage the pupils very well. This promotes learning and pupils make satisfactory progress in the skills, knowledge and understanding of subjects. Literacy is taught well and is helping to raise standards in some subjects. Numeracy is less developed, but pupils use their skills to good effect in science, design and technology and geography.

The school makes considerable efforts to meet the needs of all its pupils. The satisfactory teaching of pupils with special educational needs ensures that they make sound progress. The higher-attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged to achieve the highest possible standards. The provision for pupils with English as an additional language is not as well developed and some pupils do not achieve their full potential.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The school provides a good variety of subjects that meet the interests, aptitudes and particular needs of most pupils. Religious education is not being taught in Years 10 and 11 or the sixth form and thus statutory requirements are not met. The provision for collective worship and music does not meet statutory requirements.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. The curriculum arrangements ensure satisfactory learning opportunities for pupils with special educational needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory, but in need of further development. A specialist teacher provides support to those with the greatest need. Beyond that, the extra support given to these pupils by the school is too dependent on the skills of individual teachers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory. Currently, religious education is not being taught in Years 10 and 11 or the sixth form and so opportunities for spiritual development are unsatisfactory. Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Teachers promote a framework of moral values through the respect they show to pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Academic and personal support and guidance, health, safety and welfare of pupils, are all satisfactory.

Parents have positive views about the school but few give it a great deal of support. They receive useful information about school life and are always made to feel welcome.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher has a clear vision for the future of the school and the developments required to address the areas that need improving. He is well supported by staff with management responsibilities and by governors.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governors are aware of their responsibilities for the overall performance of the school. However, they do not comply with the requirements to provide a daily act of collective worship, teach religious education or publish all the information necessary in the annual governors' report to parents. They are committed to the school's improvement and work hard in a well-organised committee structure to ensure continuous development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school is working hard to establish systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of work in school and results of tests and examinations.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Sound systems are applied to ensure that the school gets best value when purchasing goods or services. The school makes good use of a number of specific grants. The school has experienced difficulties in replacing staff who have left during the academic year.

The school has sufficient appropriately qualified staff to teach the curriculum effectively, and to meet the needs of pupils and sixth form students, except in music and religious education. Overall, learning resources are satisfactory, but there is a shortfall in the provision of computers in some subjects and texts for sixth form English. The site is very cramped and the accommodation is inadequate for the numbers on roll.

## **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

The school sent out 940 questionnaires of which 60 (six per cent) were returned. Approximately 12 parents attended a meeting before the inspection to express their views about the school.

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• Children make good progress.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• The school has high expectations of the pupils.</li> <li>• They feel comfortable in approaching the school with problems.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The school helps children to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children's behaviour.</li> <li>• The amount of homework set.</li> <li>• Information about their children's progress.</li> <li>• The school working more closely with parents.</li> </ul>

The inspection team endorses the positive views expressed by parents, except for teaching in Years 8 and 9. They do not agree with the views concerning homework and the information provided about children's progress. In both these aspects they found the provision to be satisfactory. Strong attempts are made to strengthen the partnership with parents though parents do not always respond to the school's efforts in this respect. Inspectors do agree that behaviour could be much improved

## ANNEX: THE SIXTH FORM     STANLEY PARK SCHOOL

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SIXTH FORM

The sixth form of this average-sized school has 67 students. There are 38 boys and 29 girls. The sixth form is relatively new and has been established since the last inspection. It offers a limited range of AS, A2 and vocational courses. About 25 per cent of students from the main school continue their education in the sixth form. Most students entering the sixth form pursue AS and A2-Level courses, or a mixture of AS/A2 and vocational courses, although some follow an exclusively vocational programme of study. Entry to the sixth form is open to all students for whom there are appropriate courses and who are committed to further study. Nearly 50 per cent of students enter higher education when they finish their sixth form studies.

### HOW GOOD THE SIXTH FORM IS

The sixth form provides a good education for its students. Although presently not financially cost-effective it provides satisfactory value for money because of the good quality of education and appropriate range of courses. The overall standards achieved have been above national averages, because teaching is good and students have positive attitudes to their work. The range of courses offered meets the differing interests and aptitudes of all students. Satisfactory provision is made for students' personal development and they are well supported by the school. Teachers are committed to their students and care for them well. Students are prepared well for the next stage of their education, training or employment.

#### Strengths

- Overall, students make good progress and achieve especially well in ICT and business education.
- The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good and often very good.
- The sixth form is effectively managed and considerable efforts are made to support students.
- Students have positive attitudes to their studies.

#### What could be improved

- Accommodation.
- Resources to support teaching and learning.
- The attendance of some students.
- Provision for religious education.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan. Strengths and areas for improvement in individual subjects are identified in the sections on individual subjects in the full report.*

### THE QUALITY OF PROVISION IN INDIVIDUAL CURRICULUM AREAS

The table below shows overall judgements about the provision in the subjects and courses that were inspected in the sixth form. Judgements are based mainly on the quality of teaching and learning and on how well students achieve. Not all subjects in the sixth form were inspected.

Curriculum area	Overall judgement about provision, with comment
<b>English</b>	<b>Good.</b> Although A-level and AS results are below average, students make good progress and achieve well. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan lessons and guide students to develop a greater understanding of the subject. A team of well-qualified teachers is effectively led. They regularly share their good practice in order to improve the overall quality of education.
<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Good.</b> AS results are variable. Although lower than expected nationally, for some students they represent good progress and achievement. Key skills and GCSE re-take courses are well run and the students who work hard derive benefit from them. Many gain creditable results.
<b>Chemistry</b>	<b>Good.</b> A-level and AS results are as expected, given students' previous GCSE scores. However, many students who start with a Grade C at GCSE find the course very difficult. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are skilful at making students think for themselves. Lessons are well planned with appropriate activities and resources.
<b>Business education</b>	<b>Good and improving.</b> Examination results are better than would be expected from the students' GCSE grades. Staff have strong subject knowledge and teaching is good. The quality of the coursework is a particular strength of the subject.
<b>Information and communication technology</b>	<b>Good.</b> Standards both in the examination courses and in the key skills element of the sixth form curriculum are broadly in line with what is expected from students' GCSE results. Teaching, students' assessments and the presentation of work are particular strengths of the course.

Work was sampled in other subjects during the inspection week. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. The provision in drama is very good. Recent A-level examination results have been good and represent good achievement in relation to the students' prior attainment. The teaching is frequently inspirational. Leadership of the drama department is very good and this is having a positive impact on standards and continuing improvement in the subject. The provision in biology is satisfactory. The examination results are as expected given the students' earlier GCSE results. Teachers use a good variety of teaching techniques and students respond positively. The subject is managed well. The provision in hospitality and catering is good. The course was started during the current year and is already very well established. Effective links have been built up with local businesses and a college of further education. The provision in art is satisfactory. However, the subject is not well time-tabled as students are taught at different times, including after school, and many do not come together to share ideas and learn from each other. Teaching is good and students develop their skills in a range of techniques. Art is managed well and there is increasing evidence from students' work to indicate the improvements that are being achieved. The provision in travel and tourism is satisfactory. The AVCE examination results are below average, with 30 per cent of students gaining A\* - C grades in the unit for tourism development. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Management of the subject is good and there have been good improvements since the subject was introduced. The provision in geography is good. The first examination results in 2001 were better than expected. The teaching is good and has ensured that students make good progress. Management of the subject is very good and this has ensured a good start to the course. Two general studies lessons were observed. In both, the teaching and learning were good. Pupils, especially those in the first year of the course, are responsive and keen to learn. They attain satisfactory standards.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SIXTH FORM

Aspect	Comment
<b>How well students are guided and supported</b>	<p>Students are supported well. Teachers are accessible and helpful. Assessment of, and information about, students' progress is regular and helpful. Their health, safety and welfare needs are met satisfactorily although arrangements for private study and relaxation are inadequate. Procedures for monitoring attainment and progress have been established since the sixth form started.</p> <p>A good programme of careers education and guidance prepares students effectively for transition to the next stage of their education, training or employment. Overall, the key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT are taught well, but the communication element of the course is not covered adequately.</p>
<b>Effectiveness of the leadership and management of the sixth form</b>	<p>Leadership and management of this relatively new sixth form are good and a good start has been made. Pressures on accommodation and resources caused by the growth in numbers have been well managed in the circumstances, and the school is aware of the need to do more to improve accommodation. There is a strong emphasis on raising standards through the monitoring of students' progress. Equal emphasis has been placed on students' personal development. There is a clear vision of the educational direction the sixth form should take to raise standards further.</p>

## STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SIXTH FORM

What students like about the sixth form	What they feel could be improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality of the teaching</li> <li>• Encouraged to do independent research</li> <li>• Accessibility of teachers</li> <li>• Assessment and information on their progress</li> <li>• Printed information about courses available</li> <li>• Help they received to settle in the sixth form</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their treatment as responsible adults</li> <li>• Extra-curricular and enrichment activities</li> <li>• Advice on careers and universities</li> <li>• Responsiveness to sixth formers' views</li> </ul>

The aspects that students like about the sixth form are supported by evidence found during the inspection. The inspectors agree with the views of what could be improved. However, whilst many students highlighted the areas where improvement is desired, during interviews they clearly indicated their satisfaction with overall sixth form provision.

## COMPARING PROVISION IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

*Inspectors make judgements about provision in subjects and courses, and about leadership and management, in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. Excellent and very good are equivalent to the judgement "outstanding" in further education and sixth form college reports; poor and very poor are equivalent to "very weak".*

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

##### **Main school**

1. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is well below average when compared with the intake of other comprehensive schools. A high proportion have basic literacy skills that are very low for their age. For example, at least 40 per cent of the pupils arrive at school with reading ages that are two years behind their chronological ages. By the time pupils reach the age of 16, their average total GCSE points score<sup>1</sup> across all subjects is well below average when compared with all secondary schools, and below scores achieved by pupils in similar schools.
2. Since the last inspection the ability profile of the pupils has declined significantly, for a number of reasons. These include the merger with another school whose pupils' attainment on entry was very low and attendance was poor. The subsequent profile of attainment on entry to Stanley Park since the last inspection indicates a very much higher number of pupils with special educational needs (1997:16.3 per cent compared with 2001: 31.5 per cent). The number of pupils with statements of special educational need has also risen equally dramatically. In addition, the proportion of pupils with English as an additional language has markedly increased (1997: 2.2 per cent compared with 2001: 11.0 per cent). The number of pupils at the very early stages of learning English has also greatly increased. The school has a growing number of refugees who have affected the profile of attainment. In many ways the intake is significantly different and matches closely the declining trends in test and examination results. The school now has more boys than girls in most year groups and this has a negative impact on examination results, as girls are usually more successful than boys. However, there are now encouraging signs that attainment is improving, especially with regard to literacy and computer skills.

##### **Years 7 - 9**

3. The national tests taken at the end of Year 9 in 2001, reveal that the combined average points score for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science was well below the national average. Results over the last few years have declined and not kept pace with the national trend of rising scores. This can be attributed to the effect of staffing shortages in some subjects, the decline in attainment on entry to the school and the imbalance of more boys than girls taking the examinations. The average points score for the core subjects, when compared with similar schools, is below average. Compared to similar schools the points score for English is well below average, for mathematics below and for science in line with the average. There are some

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<sup>1</sup>The average points score provides schools with a single statistic to compare the overall grades attained by their pupils with the grades attained by pupils in another school. At Key Stage 3 the Level attained by each pupil, for example, in mathematics, is given a score. A Level 4 = 27 points, a Level 5 = 33 points and so on. Therefore the average points score in mathematics is worked out by adding up all of the points based on the Level attained by pupils and then dividing by the number of pupils who took the test. Therefore, a school whose average points score for mathematics in the end of Key Stage 3 tests is greater than 33 is one whose pupils are performing above that expected for their age. The calculation is similar for the GCSE points score. The only difference is the value of the points assigned to an individual grade, for example, an A\* grade is worth 8 points, A is 7 points, B is 6 points and so on until grade G which is worth 1 point.



differences in the performance of boys and girls in the individual subjects. For example, in English girls outperformed boys, but to a lesser extent than the national difference. In mathematics and science boys have outperformed girls and this is contrary to national trends. This matches the pupils' profile on entry to school in which assessment data indicates that girls are further behind national trends. Inspection evidence confirms that the level of attainment now being achieved is slightly better than that predicted by these results. This is due to the improved quality of teaching and the more positive ethos for learning that is being created in school.

4. By the time pupils are in Year 9, attainment is above expectations in drama. In English, art, geography, French and physical education, attainment is below average. In mathematics, science, design and technology, history, music and religious education attainment is well below average. Attainment in music has been adversely effected by difficulties of recruiting staff. Standards in subjects that predominantly depend on writing and spelling competence are adversely affected by pupils' basic literacy skills on entry to the school. In addition, information and communication technology skills used across subjects are under-developed. Overall, pupils' achievement<sup>2</sup> is satisfactory. However, achievement and progress are unsatisfactory in music and religious education. In English, art and geography achievement is good.

### **Years 10 - 11**

5. In 2001, the school's total GCSE/GNVQ points score was well below the national average. The attainment of both boys and girls is well below average; however, in relation to national averages, boys are closer to the average than the girls. Over the last four years, the trend in the school's average points score per pupil has risen at a slower rate than the national trend. This can be attributed to the effect of the declining profile of attainment on entry to school, staffing difficulties in some subjects and the imbalance of more boys than girls taking the examinations. There is insufficient assessment information on the attainment of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds to make accurate deductions.
6. By the time pupils are in Year 11 the proportion of them gaining five or more GCSE A\*-C and A\*-G grades in the 2001 examinations was well below the national average. When compared with similar schools, the results for five or more A\*-G grades were average. This is a most significant and positive indicator as the school operates in a highly selective local education authority system. The number of pupils gaining five or more A\*-G grades over the last five years has improved steadily from 80 per cent in 1997 to 84 per cent in 2001. In recent years, the numbers achieving A\*-C grades has been erratic, but below the national trend. The number of pupils gaining at least one GCSE examination grade is improving and this is a testament to the school's commitment to inclusion and to providing a curriculum that is relevant and of interest to the pupils. The school has made satisfactory progress in raising the attainment of both boys and girls during the last few years and in ensuring that pupils of all abilities gain some examination success. Last year, the school did not meet its GCSE points score target for the Year 2001. However, targets are sufficiently challenging and based on records of pupils' prior attainment. Although the examination results have not improved yearly, most individual pupils have made satisfactory progress. The school is fully aware that further improvement in raising attainment is the most important priority.

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<sup>2</sup> Achievement reflects the accomplishments of students in relation to what might be expected of them in relation to their prior attainment.

7. Pupils' attainment in English language, as indicated by the 2001 GCSE examination results, is well below the national average. The proportion achieving A\*-C grades is above average when compared to similar schools. The results in English literature were further below the national average. This is largely because pupils have not sufficiently developed their reading and writing skills before they come to the school, nor do they have a well-developed range of speaking and listening skills. The results in English are better than those for mathematics and science.
8. In mathematics, the percentage of pupils attaining GCSE examination grades A\*-C in 2001 is very low compared to the national average, but in line with expectations based on pupils' prior attainment in Year 9. Boys' results are slightly better than those of girls, the reverse of the position nationally. Results in mathematics are well below those of similar schools. In English and mathematics, a scrutiny of the pupils' work by inspectors confirmed attainment as similar to that indicated by the most recent examination results.
9. In GCSE examinations, most pupils take a double option in science and the results are well below national averages. This low level of attainment is, however, as predicted, given pupils' low attainment on entry to Year 7. In the 2001 examinations, the A\*-C grades achieved were in line with similar schools. Pupils did as well in their science GCSE examinations as they did in most other subjects. Standards seen during the inspection matched the level of attainment indicated by the examination results.
10. In most subjects pupils' achievement is as high as could be expected. In art and information and communication technology achievement at Years 10 and 11 is good. However, achievement in music and religious education is unsatisfactory due to staff shortages, inadequate resources and insufficient curriculum time.

### **Sixth form**

11. Most students entering the sixth form pursue AS and A2-Level courses, or a mixture of AS/A2 and vocational courses, but some follow an exclusively vocational programme of study. Entry to the sixth form is open to all students for whom there are appropriate courses, and who are committed to further study. About 25 per cent of students who attended the main school stay on to undertake post-16 courses. Nearly 50 per cent of students enter higher education on completion of their sixth form studies.
12. The sixth form is a developing area of the school. The range of courses has been broadened recently to enable a greater proportion of the students to stay at school to continue their studies after the age of 16. It is creating a curriculum relevant to the needs of its students. In 2001, the examination results were above the national average, and several students exceeded their predicted grades. The results achieved in business education were especially noteworthy. At A level in 2001, all candidates achieved grades from A to D and about 50 per cent of those taking the examination gained an A grade. This is well above the national average. This represents a very significant improvement for most students based on their results in GCSE examinations. Overall, for all subjects, students' achievement is as expected from their performance at GCSE. This level of attainment was reflected in the work observed during the inspection.

### **Literacy and numeracy**

13. Pupils' standards of literacy are very low on entry to the school and the reading ages for many are very low. In Years 7 to 9 they write adequately in simple sentences, but these

are repetitive and lacking in variation. Pupils rarely write at length without detailed prompting from the teacher, and their vocabulary is very limited. These factors inhibit their ability to think independently, and to learn effectively across the subjects. In recognition of these difficulties, the school has taken useful initial steps to develop policy and help teachers adopt better teaching methods to promote the teaching of writing for a variety of purposes across the curriculum.

14. Pupils' numeracy skills are not sufficiently developed. There is not enough emphasis on the regular practice of number skills, such as the quick recall of times tables, for older pupils. This lack of skill hinders their progress in other subjects of the curriculum. Pupils' ability to draw graphs and bar charts is better and in both science and geography they are able to cope competently with these subjects' requirements. Very few examples of pupils developing their numeracy skills in other subjects of the curriculum were noted during the inspection.

### **Special educational needs**

15. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactory standards in relation to their prior attainment and they make progress towards their individual targets. This is especially so where their targets involve literacy skills. Pupils at an early stage of need on the register are usually given effective help by subject teachers, especially so for English and mathematics. Support is less effective in some science lessons. However, a significant numbers of pupils learn well for much of the time. A high proportion of the pupils with special educational needs do not attend school regularly and this inhibits their progress. The school has a high proportion of pupils at higher stages of the register, including a high proportion with statements. A majority of these pupils also make satisfactory progress because the work of subject teachers is supported by good practice from the specialist learning staff. Progress by pupils when withdrawn from class is good. Pupils' reading ages improve and some improve their number skills. The school has assessment information on pupils with special educational needs but this is not always used to full advantage by all departments.

### **English as an additional language**

16. Pupils who are not at the early stages of learning English achieve as well as other pupils during lessons. In summer 2001, four of these pupils obtained A grades in GCSE examinations in their first languages: Arabic and Russian. However, those pupils at the early stages of learning English often have difficulties when learning support assistants are not available and do not always make the progress they should in lessons. Strategies to help these pupils in lessons when support is not available are not yet firmly in place. Although the school monitors pupils' individual progress well, it does not yet analyse their performance as a group. It has no clear evidence yet on how well these pupils achieve. Those students from minority ethnic groups, including those with English as an additional language, who stay on into the sixth form, make progress equivalent to that of their peers. This is usually because their teachers provide the extra support needed, for example in mathematics, through additional tutorial time.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

#### **Main school**

17. Although the majority of pupils have positive attitudes to learning and behave well in lessons and around the school, the overall standard of behaviour is unsatisfactory. Many pupils are not enthusiastic and frequently disrupt the learning of others. In about one lesson in every seven in Years 8 and 9, pupils' attitudes and behaviour were

unsatisfactory. Pupils in Year 8 are particularly difficult for teachers to motivate and control. Pupils' behaviour is unsatisfactory in Year 10 but it improves in Year 11, when most are motivated by the forthcoming examinations. The unacceptable behaviour is characterized by a lack of interest or concentration, too much noise, and unwillingness to follow instructions promptly. Exclusions are high, especially with Year 9 pupils in the current year. Pupils of black heritage feature disproportionately highly in exclusion figures. The school is aware of this and monitors the situation carefully. However, during the inspection there was little evidence that racism or other forms of bullying are significant problems.

18. Most pupils are friendly, polite and helpful to adults and visitors. They enjoy good relationships with most staff and among themselves. However, the extent of lesson disruption indicates that too many pupils are unaware of, or ignore, the impact of their actions on others. There is a lack of respect for those pupils who want to work. In some lessons pupils show that they are able to accept responsibility and exercise initiative when given the opportunity. There were good examples of this in information and communication technology and physical education. The personal development of the majority of pupils is satisfactory despite the low levels of attendance and unsatisfactory behaviour of the minority.
19. Pupils with special educational needs generally show satisfactory attitudes to work when supported by effective teaching and teaching assistants. However, when not supported adequately their behaviour in lessons and around the school is often poor. Pupils from minority ethnic groups and those with English as an additional language have positive attitudes towards learning. They work hard in lessons and in nearly all classes take advantage of the support offered to them. Pupils from minority ethnic groups appear well integrated into the life of the school. Any incidents of racist bullying are dealt with well. The sixth form students seen and spoken to had very positive attitudes to learning, were well integrated and valued the help and support of their teachers.
20. Attendance is poor and has been so for a few years. It is currently well below the national average for all schools. It is low for all year groups except Year 7. There are encouraging signs that recent school initiatives are beginning to have a positive effect, as attendance has improved, particularly in Years 7 and 8. The school attributes the low rate of attendance and the instances of poor attitudes and behaviour to the large influx of disaffected students with poor attendance and behaviour records who join the school during the year from other schools. Inspectors accept this as a significant contributory factor to some pupils' unsatisfactory response to opportunities provided by the school and their poor attendance. Some pupils find it difficult to arrive on time, but a change to the start of the school day has improved the situation for many.
21. Almost a quarter of the relatively small number of parents who responded to a questionnaire expressed concern about behaviour and inspectors found that there was sufficient evidence to support their views. Parents, staff, governors and pupils reported that behaviour has improved considerably since the appointment of the current headteacher, and that the school is now a much calmer place in which to work and study. Recent school initiatives, for example to improve the quality of teaching and learning, are having a significant impact on the quality of pupils' learning and behaviour.

Although attendance and behaviour have not improved since the last inspection,<sup>3</sup> there is evidence of considerable recent improvement.

## **Sixth Form**

22. A small proportion of sixth form students have an unsatisfactory attendance record, but when at school they show positive attitudes and good behaviour. Students willingly accept responsibility, as they provide support in Years 7 and 8 tutor periods. They are able to work independently and use their initiative to support their own learning.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

### **Main school**

23. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. However, there are significant differences in the quality of teaching and learning between the key stages, subjects and individual teachers. Teaching was sound or better in 85 per cent of lessons in Years 7 to 9 and 90 per cent in Years 10 and 11. In these key stages, about 50 per cent of the teaching was good or better. In about 16 per cent of the lessons, teaching was very good or excellent. In the sixth form all of the teaching was satisfactory and about 90 per cent was good. Throughout the whole school, 89 per cent of lessons were satisfactory or better of which nearly 60 per cent were good, and about eleven per cent of the lessons were unsatisfactory. In two lessons, teaching was poor and in one very poor. This represents an improvement on the quality of teaching reported during the last inspection, when 82 per cent of the teaching was judged as satisfactory or better, including 50 per cent that was good. The quality of teaching has improved due to the school's focus on improving teaching and learning, a systematic review and monitoring of departments' work, including observing lessons, and recent staff appointments. During the last two years, about 60 per cent of the teachers have joined the staff and are new to the school. Due to difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff, faced by many schools throughout the country, some of the teachers are still in training or are on temporary contracts. During the inspection, a pattern to the unsatisfactory teaching emerged. It became obvious that some teachers new to the school have initial difficulties in establishing class control and developing effective strategies for pupils' learning. The vast majority of teachers who have been in school for over a year develop satisfactory systems and positive relationships with the pupils.
24. For the reasons explained above, there are differences between individual teachers and subjects. The incidence of unsatisfactory teaching was much greater in Years 8 and 9. This was because subject leaders had usually deployed the most experienced teachers to cover the examination groups in Years 10 and 11. There are examples of good and very good teaching to be found in most departments, but during the inspection throughout the school teaching was consistently satisfactory or better in English and business education and at Years 7 to 9 in religious education. There were significant weaknesses in teaching music because much was taught by non-specialist visitors to school. The reasons for unsatisfactory teaching were that teachers did not ensure that pupils fully understood the aims and purposes of the lesson. Often the work set and teaching strategies used were not sufficiently stimulating to the pupils. At times the tasks set did not match the ability of the pupils so they could not develop an adequate understanding of the topic. This was the case in a few science lessons. Where

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<sup>3</sup> Due to the merger with a local closing school, in many respects, Stanley Park High is a totally different school when compared to the last inspection. The nature of the pupils has changed dramatically and now many more have special educational needs or speak English as an additional language.

teaching is unsatisfactory, the level of work expected of pupils is unchallenging. This results in pupils making unsatisfactory progress.

25. There was a high degree of correlation between the good quality of teaching and how well pupils learn and make progress, especially in acquiring new knowledge, developing skills and increasing their understanding. At times, although the teaching observed was sound or good, it was still not promoting enthusiasm amongst some pupils, especially the lower ability sets in Years 8 and 9. Good learning and positive responses were more evident among pupils in Years 10 and 11, including those with special educational needs. This is partly due to the success that the school has had in improving pupils' learning skills and their attitudes to work. The school has begun to focus on improving pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.
26. Generally, teachers have a good understanding of the National Curriculum and good subject knowledge. However, there is also a lack of confidence amongst some teachers about using information and communication technology. The majority of teachers use a wide range of teaching strategies effectively to develop fully pupils' learning skills and understanding of the subject, although there are weaknesses in mathematics and science.
27. The expectations of teachers that pupils will achieve good standards of work, behave well and show positive attitudes towards learning are usually appropriately high. However, at times teachers accepted behaviour and poor attitudes to the work. In English, drama, information and communication technology and physical education expectations are notably high. In most lessons pupils are consistently challenged to conform to acceptable standards in behaviour and attitudes to learning.
28. The quality of teachers' lesson planning is satisfactory in most subjects. Many teachers provide work to match pupils' needs, but at times there is not enough differentiated work in lessons. Schemes of work have been developed for most subjects and are usually detailed and adequately reflect the requirements of the National Curriculum, with the exception of the use made of information and communication technology across the curriculum. Few schemes of work identify opportunities to contribute to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
29. The assessment of pupils' progress in a few subjects is good and has a positive impact on learning. These subjects include English, design and technology, information and communication technology and business education. The school administers a range of standardised tests, and the results together with department assessments have been used well to assist in setting targets for individual students. This aspect of assessment has improved since the last inspection. However, the use of assessment and target setting are under-developed and, generally, information from assessment is not used to guide teachers' future planning and raise pupils' achievements.
30. Most teachers manage their classes well. However, a number of pupils in each year are not sufficiently motivated to work, and consequently their attitudes to learning are unsatisfactory. The school has satisfactory procedures for dealing with the disaffected pupils. Most pupils apply themselves in lessons and work hard at a good pace. They normally show an interest in the work and sustain concentration. A few teachers successfully help pupils to develop as independent learners but overall this is an under-developed aspect of the teaching. Throughout the school, pupils usually understand what is expected of them and most get on with their work.

31. Teachers get on well with their pupils and their support and encouragement help to promote learning and progress. Homework is managed well in some subjects, and set in line with the published programme to reinforce and extend what students have learned in the lessons. However, there is some variation in the way which departments make use of homework diaries. Homework in some subjects is set and marked regularly and normally followed up by the teacher if not completed sufficiently well. However, there is too much inconsistency of practice throughout the school, including the sixth form.
32. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Teachers have had some training in this aspect of their teaching. They know their pupils well and provide work for pupils with special educational needs that is usually challenging and at an appropriate level. Teaching assistants provide good support, but their effectiveness varies between subjects and teachers. Where extra support is provided in lessons, there is usually effective teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants that leads to good provision for pupils with special educational needs. There are specific individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs that contain well-focused targets. The special educational needs team have established satisfactory links with other subject departments, but still do not sufficiently influence teaching strategies across the school or the variety of resources that should be used to ensure that all pupils can fully understand the topic being studied.
33. During the inspection, pupils with English as an additional language frequently received good support in lessons and made good progress. However, the amount of classroom support available was limited because the English as an additional language support teacher was absent. In this situation, liaison between the class teacher and learning support assistants before the lesson is fairly limited, although in English the learning support assistants are given an overview of the term's work. This they find helpful. Where support is not available, teachers have limited strategies for ensuring that pupils at the early stages of learning English are able to access the content and ideas being presented. Teachers have yet to develop the full range of skills needed to address these pupils' learning needs.
34. The basic skills of literacy are taught effectively in several subjects. The teaching of numeracy skills across the curriculum is far less developed. Good teaching to identify, use, and explain key words was seen in history, geography, art, drama and religious education, while in music and mathematics opportunities were missed to explain, understand and use technical terms. There is too wide a variation in teachers' expectation of pupils' writing. In most subjects, apart from English, opportunities for pupils to convey information and express their understanding in writing are far too limited. In history, design and technology, and science for example, the amount and quality of writing are very limited. In modern foreign languages, on the other hand, teachers are good at seizing opportunities to help pupils acquire the skills of grammatical analysis, to understand how language communicates, and to improve their study skills, for example by using an index or glossary.

### **Sixth form**

35. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout both years of the sixth form. During the inspection, the quality of teaching was good in 73 per cent of lessons, very good in 10 per cent, excellent in 5 per cent and satisfactory in the remaining 12 per cent. There were no unsatisfactory lessons, and this represents a good profile of teaching. The quality of teaching is a significant strength in the sixth form and has contributed to the students' effective learning and their success in examination courses. In addition,

the good teaching has a positive impact on the support and guidance given to students and prepares them very well for the next stage of their educational career or employment. The school is teaching key skills effectively through a well organised programme and subject courses. The quality of teaching has developed well since the sixth form was started four years ago

36. In the sixth form, teaching is good in English, mathematics, business education, information and communication technology, art and design, hospitality and catering, and geography. In chemistry, biology and travel and tourism it is satisfactory. Teaching is very good in drama and some excellent lessons were seen.
37. The particular strengths of teaching are the high level of teachers' subject expertise and the good relationships between the teachers and students. Most teachers have high expectations of the students and provide good support and guidance for them. In return the students respect this commitment by their teachers and most respond by working hard in lessons and on their course work assignments. Marking in science is sometimes less effective and did not always help students to increase their understanding or help them to improve their work. The quality of teaching and development of students' independent study are restricted at times by the poor accommodation and shortfall of resources. However, independent study was a positive feature in the vocational courses. The school is aware of the inadequate provision to promote independent study and is making every effort to remedy the current shortfalls.

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

### **Main school**

38. The curriculum has undergone major restructuring since the time of the last inspection. A new school day was introduced at the start of the current academic year, and both staff and pupils are in a period of adjustment. At the same time, the school is still honoring the curricular needs of pupils who were transferred to Stanley Park on the closure of their old school. In the spirit of inclusive education, the grouping of pupils has also changed so that pupils of lower attainment are taught together less often. All departments have re-written their schemes of work in response to recent national guidance about teaching and learning. Evidence suggests that the school's efforts to provide both a balanced curriculum, and one which pupils regard as relevant and interesting are proving successful. The number of referrals of pupils for poor behaviour has been reduced and the attendance at school of pupils who follow a part-time course at the local college in Years 10 and 11 has improved. Pupils' learning has improved as a direct result of curriculum changes. For example, each week pupils have three option subject lessons, instead of two, in Years 10 and 11.
39. Overall, the curriculum for pupils in Years 7 to 11 is satisfactory. The curriculum in Years 7 to 9 is enhanced by the provision of drama and Spanish, which is taught after school. However, the time allocated to design and technology and religious education is too short to cover National Curriculum requirements and the local Agreed Syllabus respectively. A good variety of courses are available to meet the wide range of interests and academic needs of pupils in Years 10 and 11. Provision of GNVQ courses in information and communication technology, both foundation and intermediate, and other accredited vocational courses, such as travel and tourism, extend opportunities to study subjects other than those offered at GCSE. About 190 students are disappled from the National Curriculum in modern foreign languages to follow business, commerce, information and communication technology and college courses. Almost all pupils are



appropriately placed. The additional vocational education for older students at risk of exclusion is good. On a visit to the college during the week of the inspection, pupils following child-care, brickwork and animal husbandry courses were seen to be enjoying their learning, increasing in confidence and gaining in knowledge.

40. The school does not provide a daily act of worship but, since the last inspection, the quality of assemblies on moral or ethical themes has improved. They are now held twice instead of once a week. Since there is no provision for religious education for pupils in Years 10 and 11, statutory requirements are not met. The provision for music does not meet National Curriculum requirements.
41. Pupils with special educational needs have satisfactory access to the curriculum in most departments. Where the school works with other agencies to provide for these pupils, the relationships and support are good.
42. Since September 2001, the school has had a well thought out action plan in place to address the learning and personal needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language. Although in its early stages, it is rightly focusing on developing the skills of departments in producing appropriate learning resources to meet these pupils' needs. This is because in-class support for the number of pupils requiring help is spread too thinly. The English as additional language support teacher has so far worked with the English, history, food technology and design and technology departments – for example, producing a resource pack on Macbeth. No specific classroom support is available for sixth form students. However, teachers willingly give of their time to help pupils with difficulties.
43. Provision for extra-curricular activities is good. The school has systematically set about identifying activities of interest to pupils, successfully gained the necessary funding, and set up a comprehensive and imaginative programme. Activities funded by the New Opportunities Fund are targeted at groups of pupils, such as those with poor attendance, at risk of exclusion and travellers and refugees. Bricklaying, fitness and beauty and aerobics courses are well attended. A breakfast internet club is available to pupils who have no access to the internet at home. The quality of provision for gifted and talented pupils varies from department to department. It is excellent in drama, where the department has put on a performance of 'Red Hot Cinders', and good in design and technology and physical education, but poor in music. Its policy on provision for gifted and talented pupils has been recognized by the school as an area for development.
44. All students follow a well-planned course in personal and social education, which provides for the development of a range of learning and inter-personal skills. The Years 10 and 11 programme provides good opportunities to prepare them for adult life. Topics include health education, substance abuse and sex education. The impact of the course is rigorously monitored through senior management's link with the year heads, and effective support is given to teachers by way of training.
45. The school has effective arrangements for careers guidance and work experience. An increase in curriculum time has improved provision. Good links with the business community are forged through work experience. There are good pastoral links with local primary schools but curriculum links are generally underdeveloped. However, a headteacher of a feeder school interviewed during the inspection expressed appreciation of initiatives such as the music and drama workshops that are organized by Stanley Park. The school enjoys an improved reputation in the locality, which in turn contributes to its work through sponsorship.

46. Apart from the breaches of statutory requirements, the school has made good progress in curricular matters since the last inspection. More time is allocated to English, mathematics and science since the new school day has been introduced and this results in better coverage of the curriculum. There is better use of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum information in placing pupils into mixed-ability tutor groups in Year 7, and good exchange of information about pupils with special educational needs.

### **Literacy and numeracy**

47. The school's recent involvement in the Key Stage 3 national literacy initiatives is doing much to complement the work it has initiated itself in response to its own analysis of pupils' needs. The school has also secured an impressive level of parental interest and support for its strategies to promote literacy. This means that pupils take seriously the school's efforts to teach them, so that they are starting to learn more rapidly as a consequence.
48. The school is in the early stages of developing a whole-school numeracy policy. Training for key staff and all staff is planned for the next few months. An initial audit has been undertaken but requires further detail to inform a whole-school policy. Progress has been slow in developing this aspect of the school's work.

### **Sixth form**

49. The school has worked hard to encourage students to continue with their post-16 education and makes good provision for them. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good and the individual needs of most pupils are met. The school offers an acceptable range of advanced academic, and advanced and intermediate vocational courses, and GCSE re-takes in English and mathematics. All students follow core courses in key skills in application of number and information technology. Religious education is not taught, which is a breach of statutory requirements. Courses available are a good match to students' needs and interests. There are a few timetabling difficulties that affect pupils who wish to re-take GCSE examinations in English, mathematics and art.
50. Although some valuable enrichment activities are provided, such as students' involvement in the mentoring of younger pupils, extra-curricular opportunities are limited. For example, there is no competitive sport. The school acknowledges that this is an area for development. The careers and work experience programmes are effective in preparing students for the world of work. A good allocation of curriculum time is devoted to careers advice and work experience. The personal and social education programme is strengthened by the emphasis on preparation for adult life, such as teaching on the tax and banking systems. Links with other colleges and schools are underdeveloped but there is improved involvement of the community. For example, three students raised money for a trip to Kenya organised by Sutton Youth Trust. On their return, a report of their trip was presented to younger pupils in assembly.

### **Equal opportunities and educational inclusion**

51. The school has made considerable efforts to include all pupils in all aspects of school life. It meets the learning needs of pupils in the school by providing a varied and relevant curriculum. Courses offered to the sixth form are particularly good. However, the school does not fully meet all the needs of pupils who have English as an additional

language, because of insufficient monitoring and lack of extra support staff. The systems of assessing pupils to help track progress and ensure that they reach their individual targets is at an early stage of development. In some subjects this is ensuring that pupils of all abilities are working at an appropriate level. Positive relationships exist between most of the pupils and staff and among the pupils themselves and exclusions are used for clearly defined reasons. The well-being of all pupils is important to the school, which successfully supports and integrates many pupils excluded from other schools. There is sound racial harmony throughout the school and this is an area of much recent improvement.

52. There is a strong commitment to the provision of equality of opportunity and access to the curriculum with a clear emphasis on social inclusion. There is no formal entry requirement to the sixth form in terms of previous GCSE examination results: it is open to all pupils for whom there is an appropriate course and who show a commitment to work. About 25 per cent of pupils from the main school choose to enter the sixth form.

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

53. The school makes satisfactory provision overall for pupils' personal development. In the school improvement plan the vision statement is clear: 'To develop the over-riding expectation that achievement and success are the norm'. However, there is no whole-school policy for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development or reference to these opportunities in schemes of work, with the exception of drama. The school accepts that this is an area for development. This is a similar situation to that at the time of the last inspection and the school has not sufficiently addressed the issues raised in that report.
54. The spiritual development of pupils is unsatisfactory, overall. The school is at an early stage of developing a climate or ethos within which all pupils can grow and flourish, respect others and be respected. Other than in drama and in some assemblies, opportunities for spiritual development are not clearly developed, which was the case at the last inspection. Religious education makes some contribution to spirituality within the curriculum in Years 7 to 9. As there is no religious education in Years 10 and 11 or in the sixth form, the pupils are denied the opportunity for further personal development in this area after Year 9. Spiritual development is implicit in terms of self-knowledge and self-worth in physical education. It is good in Year 10 drama, where pupils consider, for example, material love versus spiritual love and in art, through works of fantasy and imagination using poetry and music in Years 10 and 11.
55. Although assemblies do not meet statutory requirements for collective worship they are usually strong on social and moral issues and are seen as affirming all that the school stands for. There are twice-weekly assemblies for all pupils, which usually include opportunities for reflection. In one inspirational Year 7 assembly, time was given for pupils to reflect on what they might do and what they might become. Participation was the theme in the five assemblies seen during inspection week. The Year 9 assembly included four girls reading poems they had written in response to school matters such as counteracting bullying. The pupils' personal reflections were powerful, moving and thought-provoking. There was a strong spiritual dimension to this assembly, together with a celebration of pupils' achievements.
56. Provision for the moral development of pupils is satisfactory and is promoted through the personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme, academic tutoring and assemblies, with a strong school emphasis on individual responsibility. Teachers give a strong lead in encouraging positive inter-personal relationships, respect for others and

distinguishing right from wrong. However, in one PSHE lesson the teacher missed an opportunity to make a judgement on stealing. In trampolining, for example, pupils take good care of one another's safety and abide by the rules in team games. Drama makes a significant contribution to pupils' moral development through lessons on understanding peer pressure and in the consideration of choices between alternative courses of action. Valuable opportunities to take responsibility are offered to pupils, including participation in the school council, assisting at parent evenings and membership of subject committees such as childcare and horticulture. Charitable giving and other events organised to raise money give many pupils practical opportunities to help others.

57. The social development of pupils is satisfactory. Extra-curricular activities and experiences in and beyond the school site make a valuable contribution to the broadening of social and cultural horizons. The teacher of pupils with English as an additional language encourages ethnic minority pupils to join in activities and offers good support. The sixth-formers are good role models and assist tutors. A wide range of sporting clubs, including the non-competitive, are popular. There are good opportunities for social development in physical education and excellent opportunities in drama through school productions. The school places great value on trips and external experiences as a way of developing social skills and appreciating other cultures. Visits include the Key Stage 3 stay in the Isle of Wight, the annual trip to St Omer and the ski trip.
58. Provision for the cultural development of pupils is satisfactory and the multi-cultural dimension has improved since the last inspection. Many of the staff received useful training on 'Race and Racism' last June. Theatre visits in English and drama and visits to museums in history and geography enhance pupils' cultural development. Other countries and areas, such as South Africa, North Africa and Mexico, are studied in geography, and in music lessons, taught by visiting musicians, pupils explore multi-cultural styles of music. In sixth form general studies there is an element of multi-cultural education in discussion on black and Asian influences on election outcomes. In the food technology GCSE course pupils can choose to design a product that would illustrate a multi-cultural theme.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

### **Main school**

59. The health, safety and welfare needs of pupils are satisfactorily met. Consequently, the satisfactory provision that existed at the time of the last inspection has been maintained. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme includes good coverage of all these areas. Child protection arrangements continue to be satisfactory.
60. The school strives hard to improve attendance. Many initiatives have been started and the monitoring and analysis of attendance data are thorough. Attendance has improved slightly, particularly in Years 7 and 8. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are sound. The school has been effective in reducing recorded incidents of exclusions, misbehaviour and detentions.
61. The school has good procedures for the admission of pupils with English as an additional language but is aware that support for these pupils is not sufficiently developed. The English as an additional language teacher has worked with heads of year to produce a comprehensive pack to assess the learning and personal needs of these pupils on entry to the school. This includes relevant information as to whether the pupils are refugees or asylum seekers. She is involved as far as possible in admission

interviews. The appropriate information is given to all teachers. Pupils as far as possible are placed in classes with a 'buddy' who speaks the same language. However, further support appears informal and limited to checking that all is well. A number of clubs and trips are undertaken specifically with refugees and pupils with English as an additional language to help them with their work and to gain confidence. These include homework clubs, work experience visits, and links with local youth service projects. Parents are appropriately consulted on work experience placements. Monitoring of the progress of pupils with English as an additional language as a specific group is in its early stages of development. Since September, data on their stage of learning of English has been added to the school database and this will enable the school in the future to monitor their progress compared with that of other pupils. The school is developing sound procedures to ensure that appropriate translators are available when needed.

62. Procedures for monitoring and supporting academic and personal progress are satisfactory. A strong feature is the use of academic tutoring days, whereby a day is set aside for extended discussion with pupils and parents. The pupils with special educational needs are well known by their teachers and support assistants. There are supported well through a system of withdrawal and in-class help by teaching assistants. Support for pupils for whom English is an additional language, for refugees and for asylum-seekers, is not yet well developed.

### **Sixth form - Advice, support and guidance**

63. Procedures for monitoring attendance are satisfactory but have not succeeded in raising attendance to an acceptably high level. Assessment procedures are thorough and enable students to know at any point in time how their performance compares with national averages or their course requirements. Academic support and guidance are based on this assessment and are of good quality, focusing on regular reviews and tutorials. Students' health and safety needs are satisfactorily met but their welfare and private study opportunities suffer from inadequate social accommodation and a lack of dedicated study rooms. Students have access to good quality information on their progress, and tutors and teachers are readily accessible for help. Guidance on careers and higher education is satisfactory and students are encouraged to visit careers conventions and university open days.

### **Assessment**

#### **Main school**

64. The school has made a positive start in establishing effective arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment, progress, and achievement. Considerable time, effort and money have recently been invested in a good computerised assessment recording systems. Reliable information is already available about what individual pupils are good at, and where they need support, and it is presented in a clear way. The school records this information as pupils come into the school, and as they move through the year groups. This marks an improvement since the last inspection.
65. A few departments, such as English, design and technology and information and communication technology, are beginning to use the available data very effectively. Whole-school strategies for all teachers to use this information to set individual targets and to modify their teaching to match the needs of individual students have yet to be developed. There has been no in-depth training programme to enable teachers to interpret the data and to link the additional information into a process which can lead to

changes in the curriculum and the way it is taught. Not all departments have appropriate computer hardware and software to access the assessment data. Consequently, this useful information is not used as fully as it might be to inform teachers' planning, or to assist teachers in their task of supporting pupils' behaviour, attendance and development.

66. The learning support department makes a significant contribution to compiling assessment information, as it co-ordinates the construction of individual learning plans for pupils with special educational needs. The staff responsible for pupils with English as an additional language also gather information on pupils' progress, but this process is at an early stage of development.
67. The reviews conducted through the academic tutoring system are thorough and frequent. Increasingly, pupils are taking responsibility for setting their own targets, or at least contributing to their formulation. This is a promising initiative that is in the very early stages of development. The information contained within this system is now being analysed by some teachers to set realistic targets and raise attainment and achievement throughout the school.

### **Sixth form**

68. In the sixth form, the arrangements for assessment are more established and therefore more effective. The information recorded is used to inform teachers' planning and future curriculum developments. The school can track the progress of students and predict the examination grades they should achieve. The use of assessment data is particularly good in ICT and business education. Students find the data useful and this helps them make important decisions about their future careers.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

69. Most parents hold positive views about the school, as was seen at the time of the last inspection. Very few parents attended a meeting held for them before the inspection, and there was a poor response to the questionnaire asking for their views about the school. Some wrote letters expressing their satisfaction with the school. In particular, parents were positive about the quality of teaching, teachers' expectations of pupils, the fact that their children like school, the progress pupils make, leadership and management and the school's approachability. A significant minority (about 20 per cent) were less pleased with the way the school works with parents, the effectiveness of homework, pupils' behaviour and the information parents receive on their children's progress. Inspectors agree with most of the positive views although they do not view teaching in Years 8 and 9 as satisfactory. They did not find evidence to support parents' criticisms, except in respect of behaviour, where they agree that it is not satisfactory amongst a significant minority of pupils.
70. The school provides regular and useful information to parents, including maintaining good contact on issues of concern, such as behaviour and attendance. In particular, the quality of annual reports is high. Reports contain detailed information on performance, together with statistical targets for the ensuing year based on National Curriculum or GCSE examination levels. Performance is measured against these levels, which are included for each subject.
71. Parents do not have a significant impact on the work of the school. There are good attendances at some meetings, notably options evenings and academic tutoring when the progress of their children is discussed. However, their involvement tends to be

restricted to occasions when their own children are involved. Even so, attendance at consultation evenings is usually only between 70 and 80 per cent but this is an improvement on previous years. There is significantly less involvement in general matters as evidenced by the turnout at the inspection meeting and response to the questionnaire mentioned above.

72. Parents do contribute to the school via the Stanley Park Association (SPA), whose functions are well supported, though only a few parents are directly involved in their organisation. The SPA is well supported by teachers. Some parents make use of the student planners, which represent a potentially valuable means of enhancing dialogue between parents and teachers.
73. The school is developing sound procedures to involve the parents of pupils with English as an additional language in their children's work and, as part of its future plans, aims to develop links with parents further. The school in particular needs to build up a good resource bank of possible translators and encourage parents of pupils with English as an additional language to be more involved in the work of the school. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited to be involved at all stages of their children's progress through the school. Parents and carers attend the annual reviews, and contribute to the targets set. Parents know that they can contact the special needs co-ordinator before and after school, and at parents' evenings.

#### **Sixth form students' views**

74. Inspectors agreed with the views expressed by students in the questionnaire and detailed in the sixth form annex to the summary of this report. In discussion with inspectors, sixth form students almost unanimously expressed overall satisfaction with everything except their accommodation.

### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

#### **Leadership and management**

##### **Main school**

75. Since the last inspection the school has fully merged with another local non-selective school that was closed by the local education authority. Consequently, the nature of the pupil intake at Stanley Park has changed significantly. There are now on roll substantially more pupils with special educational needs, including a high proportion with behavioural difficulties, and pupils who speak English as an additional language. The school that closed had experienced very low examination results for a number of years and declining pupil numbers as many parents appeared to have lost confidence in the quality of education that it was providing. To the credit of Stanley Park, within a few years it had successfully integrated the pupils from both schools, and GCSE examination results were back to their former level. However, the merger impacted on Stanley Park in a number of ways. For example, parents in the immediate locality felt that the problems that existed in the school that closed were transferred to Stanley Park, and so its reputation in the area declined. Many of the parents in the immediate neighborhood selected other schools for their children's education. Consequently, the attainment of the pupils on entry declined and the school did not recruit its full number of pupils each year. Spaces became available throughout the school and these were often taken up by pupils who had been excluded from other schools or who were recent arrivals in this country. The number of pupils joining or leaving the school during their education is very much higher than normal and has had an adverse influence on their

attitudes to learning and success in tests and examinations. The school has become overcrowded and accommodation is inadequate for the number of pupils in school, despite the addition of new classrooms. The present senior management team has been together for only two years, but there are very encouraging signs that many of the difficulties caused by the effect of the merger and current national problems in recruiting and retaining teachers are being successfully addressed. The school now has a combination of dedicated key staff, sound management systems and clear priorities for its future development. The inspection team are therefore confident that the school has the capacity to succeed, despite the difficulties that it still faces.

76. The headteacher has a clear vision for the future of the school and the developments required to address the areas in need of improvement. He provides purposeful, effective and imaginative leadership which has ensured that the school has already made significant improvement since his appointment just over four terms ago. This vision has been successfully shared and accepted by the staff and governors. Since the last inspection, the senior management team has been strengthened. They and key governors work effectively as a cohesive team. During the last two years there have been good improvements in many important aspects of school life. The most important of these includes creating a more positive environment for learning in which the contribution of students and staff is valued highly. The result has been to raise levels of expectation throughout the school, improve behaviour and focus on developing the quality of teaching, curriculum planning and the variety of courses offered to the pupils. In addition, the school has established effective systems to review and monitor the work of departments, which have improved the quality of learning. The school is rightly proud to have gained and maintained Investors in People status and initiated a range of successful and innovative curriculum projects.
77. The school has a clear set of aims and objectives that are centred on providing equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. The school is mostly successful in implementing its aims to ensure the educational and personal progress of its pupils, but the level of attendance and the behaviour of a significant minority of pupils remain key issues to be addressed.
78. The school has established clear roles within the senior management structure, and delegation is appropriate and effective. The work of all academic and pastoral managers is supported through an appropriate structure of meetings and information bulletins that ensure good communication.
79. Many heads of departments are effective and efficient and have made sure that improvements have taken place within their departments. There are particular strengths in the management of English, business education, drama, art, design and technology, information and communication technology and the pastoral system. However, there are significant weaknesses in the management of geography and music. The senior management team is aware of the weaknesses and of the specific issues that have to be addressed.
80. The co-ordinator for special educational needs has shown effective leadership and management in preparing individual education plans, ensuring that staff are aware of them and in setting up procedures for learning support. Support staff and teachers have had a satisfactory level of training and this contributes to raising standards. The senior management and governors have made a satisfactory contribution to the development of special educational needs provision from a low base. There is a link governor for special educational needs and the governors' monitoring of this area of work is satisfactory. Statutory requirements for special educational needs are met.



81. The recent significant increase in the number of pupils with English as an additional language is now being addressed by the school. Since September, a clear action plan has been put in place with good support from the local authority refugee and EAL support team. Much of this is in the process of being implemented. However, staff awareness and subject department approaches to ensure that these pupils achieve their learning potential are still underdeveloped. The school recognises this and, on the return of the English as an additional language support teacher in February, this area of work is planned to be a high priority. The school appears to have no structures in place to address and monitor specifically the needs of refugees and students with English as an additional language in the sixth form. However, given the small size of the sixth form and the good support it provides for students overall, there is no evidence that the needs of these students are not properly addressed.
82. The governors are aware of their responsibilities to meet all statutory requirements and for the overall performance of the school. However, they do not comply with the requirements to provide a daily act of collective worship, teach religious education in Years 10, 11 and the sixth form or publish all the information necessary in the annual governors' report to parents. In addition, they do not ensure the full implementation of the National Curriculum for music. The governing body has an informed and strategic view of the school's development due to the openness of the headteacher and the dedication of the chairman and other sub-committee leaders. More members are gaining in confidence with regard to fulfilling their role. They are committed to the school's improvement and work hard in a well-organised committee structure to ensure continuous development. The governors still have some way to go in developing their own role to evaluate independently the school's progress and set the educational direction.
83. The governors maintain satisfactory monitoring of finances and make informed decisions based on accurate budget information. Senior managers and governors are clear about the cost of developments and the identified targets in the development plan. The school has made a satisfactory start in developing best value principles and applies them rigorously: the procedures for securing the most cost-effective price for the purchase of large items and securing a competitive price for a contract are managed well. The finance officer has a central role in advising on purchases and this strategy is effective and helps secure best value. The control of finances is good and the headteacher and governors benefit from up-to-date financial statements. The school does not have a sufficiently accurate view of the sixth form costs. However, the sixth form is becoming more financially cost-effective as more students stay on to take the courses provided.
84. The quality of development planning and the systems for monitoring have improved since the last inspection. The development plan has been written after a process of review involving the staff and some of the governors. The plan has much merit and has benefited from the school gaining the Investors in People status, which has helped to sharpen the planning process. The development plan identifies appropriate targets based on review procedures. The planning is linked to staff appraisal and their training needs. The school implements the performance management requirements well.
85. The school has worked hard to establish systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of work in school. The senior management team has undertaken a number of detailed departmental reviews and issues for improvement have been identified. There is now more effective monitoring of pupils' attainment and progress in subjects by the heads of department. However, analysis of pupils' performance data, regular reviews of

the standards of work and monitoring of the implementation of the school's policies are not sufficiently used by departments to set group and individual targets for improvement. The school is embracing the use of new technology for administration purposes, but there is insufficient analysis of data to diagnose trends in pupils' performance throughout the school.

86. The school makes good use of a number of specific grants for areas such as supporting students with special educational needs, improving attendance and providing staff to implement new curriculum initiatives. Finance for special educational needs is clearly identified in the delegation by the local education authority. The school spends this appropriately and adds other sums from the general delegated budget, thereby providing sufficient staffing and other resources for special educational needs.

## **Staffing**

87. There is a core of very experienced teachers who provide continuity for development throughout the school. Sixth form courses are appropriately staffed. However, there are not enough appropriate specialist teachers to meet the needs of all pupils in the main school; this is the case particularly in science, music and religious education. Learning support staff liaise and work well with teachers to aid pupils' learning except in art where there is insufficient support. Administration and clerical staff provide an efficient level of service.
88. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained the Investors in People award which reflects its good arrangements for the appraisal and performance management of its teaching and non-teaching staff. There are clear policies in place for appraisal and performance management which meet statutory requirements and which include non-teaching staff. The recent appointment of a single member of the senior management team as co-ordinator of all matters relating to staffing is increasing effectiveness both in the main school and the sixth form.
89. Provision for professional development of staff is good. There are effective procedures for identifying whole-school, departmental and individual training needs. The school is supported by the local education authority in the provision of training courses – for example, for teachers new to the profession and for aspects of special educational needs. Teachers new to the school frequently experience difficulties with teaching and learning and support for them is not sufficiently clear or established. There is an active special educational needs group in the school, representing all departments and led by the co-ordinator of special educational needs.
90. There are satisfactory policies and strategies in place for the induction of teachers new to the profession and to the school. The school is also a provider of initial teacher training and is currently training six students in partnership with South West London Teacher Consortium (SWELTEC).
91. During the last few years, the high level of staff turnover and difficulties in recruiting appropriately experienced staff have had an adverse effect on the speed of school development. However, there is evidence that the previous high staff turnover in the school is reducing and long-term absences are being addressed. This should ensure the continued improvement of learning opportunities for all the pupils.

## **Accommodation**

92. The quality of the accommodation is unsatisfactory. The provision of sixth form accommodation is poor, but the school has promising plans to build a new sixth form centre. The school site is over-crowded and much of the accommodation is cramped, creating a number of difficulties for pupils, especially relating to learning support and pupils' social areas. In general, accommodation is adequate for most curriculum needs but there are serious deficiencies in religious education and physical education. The learning resource centre (LRC) provides a good environment for pupils with learning difficulties.

## **Resources**

93. Overall, the school has adequate learning resources to teach the curriculum it offers to pupils. However, the expansion of the school and sixth form, introduction of new courses, and changing examination requirements at AS/A2 levels in the sixth form have inevitably placed considerable pressure on the existing learning resources. The school has planned well to address the issues, and there has been a significant improvement in the overall level of these resources since the previous inspection. At subject level there are good resources in physical education, careers and for special educational needs. Internet access is good and there are sufficient computers, although departments' access is limited by the examination courses in ICT that have priority of use. Resources are inadequate for the curriculum in English, music, history and religious education.

## **Sixth form**

94. Leadership and management of the sixth form are good, and have ensured that students achieved well during a period of development. Pressures on accommodation and resources caused by the growth in numbers have been well managed in the circumstances. The school is fully aware of the issues to continue developing the sixth form. There has been a strong focus on raising standards through the use of assessment and providing support to the students. Monitoring the quality of teaching and students' progress in lessons is less well established. Emphasis has also been placed on students' personal development. There is a clear vision of the educational direction the sixth form should take if standards are to be further raised. The sixth form is not financially cost-effective, but makes a good provision for this stage of the students' education. Examination groups vary considerably in size from some that are large to subjects that have a limited take-up by students.

## **Value for money**

95. Taking into account:

- the satisfactory progress made and the standards achieved by pupils and students,
- the satisfactory improvements since the previous inspection;
- the satisfactory quality of teaching and learning; and
- the overall quality of leadership and management;

The school gives satisfactory value for money.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

96. In order to further improve the standards of education, the governors, headteacher and staff, as appropriate, should:

- (1) Raise attainment throughout the school in most subjects, but particularly in literacy, numeracy and science by:
  - applying the school's literacy policy consistently across all subjects;
  - improving the standards of writing across the curriculum;
  - implementing the National Numeracy Strategy throughout the school;
  - increasing the opportunities in all subjects to practise the basic skills of numeracy;
  - making greater use of the assessment information available to set pupils precise targets for achievement;
  - ensuring that marking is carried out regularly and focused on providing pupils with useful information on how to improve;
  - improving access to information and communication technology.  
(Paragraphs: 13, 29, 31, 34, 37, 47, 64-67, 103, 117)
  
- (2) Improve the overall quality of teaching and learning, especially in Years 8 and 9 by:
  - consistently applying the school's agreed Framework for Effective Teaching;
  - providing further training for staff on managing pupils' behaviour;
  - increasing the support to teachers who are new to the school;
  - careful deployment and use of teaching assistants and other in-class support;
  - increasing the regularity and rigour of reviews of the work in departments by heads of department and monitored by senior managers.  
(Paragraphs: 23-25, 28, 33, 79, 85)
  
- (3) Improve pupils' attitudes to learning and the behaviour of a significant number of pupils in Years 8 to 11 by:
  - ensuring school systems are followed consistently by all staff;
  - ensure that lesson planning and teaching strategies take account of the needs of all pupils so that they are fully involved in their learning;
  - raising the level of expectations of all staff to the high level found in the most successful departments;
  - sharing the good practice that exists in school.  
(Paragraphs: 17, 27)
  
- (4) Improve the overall provision for religious education and music, including staffing issues, increased curriculum time, improved management and meeting statutory requirements.  
(Paragraphs: 167-174, 180-187)
  
- (5) Raise the level of attendance in all year groups by:
  - continuing with the current arrangements for rewarding good attendance and monitoring the outcomes.  
(Paragraph: 20)

## **SIXTH FORM**

- (1) Improve the quality and extent of the accommodation for students.  
(Paragraph: 92)

- (2) Increase the range and quality of resources to support teaching and learning.  
(Paragraph: 93)
- (3) Raise the level of attendance of some students.  
(Paragraphs: 22)
- (4) Ensure that religious education is taught to all students.  
(Paragraphs: 49, 54)

## **Other issues which should be considered by the school**

Governors may consider including the following less important issues in their action plan:

- Implement the school's good action plan to meet the needs of refugees and pupils with English as an additional language.
- Enlist the support of the local education authority to provide further support for pupils with English as an additional language.
- Develop departmental practice and resources and staff awareness for teaching pupils with English as an additional language.
- Provide more opportunities for students' spiritual development.  
(Paragraphs: 16, 19, 33, 42, 51, 53, 54, 61, 66, 73, 81)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	Years 7 – 11	138
	Sixth form	26
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils		72

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
<b>Years 7 – 11</b>							
Number	5	17	48	49	15	3	1
Percentage	4	12	35	35	11	2	1
<b>Sixth form</b>							
Number	0	4	19	3	0	0	0
Percentage	0	15	73	12	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting the percentages for sixth form as each lesson represents more than four percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils on the school's roll	881	67
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	207	0

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	38	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	299	1

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	99

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	84
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	87

## Attendance

### Authorised absence

	%
School data	10.3
National comparative data	8.1

### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.7
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 9)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	2001	103	65	168

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	23	46	48
	Girls	22	20	21
	Total	45	66	69
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	27 (41)	39 (47)	41(50)
	National	64 (63)	66 (65)	66 (59)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	2 (20)	20 (19)	16 (12)
	National	31 (28)	43 (42)	34 (30)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	41	51	39
	Girls	25	29	11
	Total	66	80	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	39 (42)	48 (38)	30 (38)
	National	65 (64)	68 (66)	64 (62)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	14 (22)	24 (16)	7 (2)
	National	31 (31)	42 (39)	33 (29)

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



### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 (Year 11)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 4 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	108	73	181

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	24	93	100
	Girls	15	59	67
	Total	39	152	167
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	22 (24)	84 (83)	92 (90)
	National	48 (47)	91 (91)	96 (96)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	25.6
	National	39.0

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

Vocational qualifications		Number	% success rate
Number studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all those they studied	School	0	N/a
	National		N/a

### Attainment at the end of the sixth form (Year 13)

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
	2001	21	12	33

Average A/AS points score per candidate	For candidates entered for 2 or more A-levels or equivalent			For candidates entered for fewer than 2 A-levels or equivalent		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
School	15.3	9.9	13.9 (13.4)	7.0	5.0	6.0 (2.0)
National	19.2	19.8	19.5 (19.3)	3.1	3.4	3.2 (3.3)

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	19	89
	National		N/a

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	28
Black – African heritage	37
Black – other	26
Indian	22
Pakistani	8
Bangladeshi	4
Chinese	6
White	807
Any other minority ethnic group	10

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	6	1
Black – African heritage	2	0
Black – other	3	2
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	44	6
Other minority ethnic groups	5	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)	59.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15.9

#### **Education support staff: Y7 – Y13**

Total number of education support staff	24
Total aggregate hours worked per week	510

#### **Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y13**

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	72.9
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#### **Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y11**

Key Stage 3	24.8
Key Stage 4	21.0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2001
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	£
Total income	2,857,195
Total expenditure	2,888,813
Expenditure per pupil	2,997
Balance brought forward from previous year	11,239
Balance carried forward to next year	-20,379

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	33
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	36

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	2
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	940
Number of questionnaires returned	60

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	29	64	7	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	37	53	5	2	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	17	57	20	3	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	15	59	18	5	3
The teaching is good.	25	65	8	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	28	47	21	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	32	7	2	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	37	5	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	22	54	17	0	7
The school is well led and managed.	32	60	5	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	26	60	5	2	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	48	7	0	10

### Other issues raised by parents

- 1) There is a need for a cleaner environment.
- 2) General agreement that the school is 'on the up'.
- 3) The staff think highly of the pupils and sixth form students.

## PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4

### ENGLISH

Overall, the quality of provision in English is satisfactory.

#### Strengths

- Teachers' good subject knowledge, used effectively to plan lessons which hold pupils' interest and develop their understanding well.
- Good behaviour and involvement in lessons by pupils.
- Recent extension of choice between literature and media-studies in GCSE examination courses, leading to improved motivation and achievement of boys.

#### Areas for improvement

- Expand pupils' range of vocabulary and use of varied sentence structure in their writing.
- Extend pupils' speaking and listening skills for answering questions in more detail and taking part in discussions in class.
- In Years 7 to 9 give pupils more specific advice on what they need to do to improve further.

97. Results in GCSE examinations have remained stable over the last three years. In 2001, the proportion of pupils gaining higher grades (A\*- C) was half the national average, and overall results were well below the average, although their performance was similar to that in other subjects. Girls did better than boys, as is the case nationally. For those obtaining higher grades, results in English literature were lower than in English language, and below the level of other subjects. National test results in 2001 for 14-year-olds were very low in relation to national standards. They were also below the standard reached in science and mathematics, very low in relation to similar schools, and show a decline over the last three years. Girls did better than boys, but girls' performance is further below that for their gender nationally than boys'. Since the last inspection, standards have declined, matching the decline in standards by pupils on entry to the school. Results in national tests and examinations have been adversely affected by the high number of pupils who leave or join school at a late stage of the examination course. Frequently, it is these pupils who have poor attendance and attitudes to learning.

98. Pupils' quality of learning and achievement is satisfactory. In their first three years in school, they discuss ideas acceptably in pairs and small groups although they are hesitant to explain their ideas at any length to the rest of the class or to take part in fuller discussions. They read a good variety of fiction, plays and non-fiction. In response to well-focused questioning, they tackle successfully quite difficult texts such as an article on the nature of language in Shakespeare, explaining the main points and drawing out examples of how slang has changed both over centuries and in recent years. Although pupils account for events and describe main characters adequately when studying novels, they rarely explain sufficiently the importance of other significant features such as setting and theme. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, form their handwriting legibly and lay out their work well, spelling common words accurately. They write with interest and enthusiasm about books they have read. For instance, pupils studying Nigel Hinton's 'Buddy' produced an imaginary school report and a diary, demonstrating well their understanding of the events experienced by the main character. Nevertheless, in work seen, writing is below nationally expected standards,

because sentence structure is repetitive, and vocabulary limited, apart from what has been learned in class. Boys' performance is worse than girls', reflecting the gap found in recent tests. Attainment in Year 9 has improved so that it is better than that of the previous year group. While attainment still remains below national expectations for the age group, achievement is satisfactory. This is an effect of better structured teaching and of the greater help given to pupils to understand what they have learned and what they need to do in order to improve further, although much more still needs to be done in this respect.

99. By Year 11, standards are well below national averages although achievement is satisfactory. Pupils write acceptably to show sound understanding of a good range of reading. For instance, one group of pupils analysed Carol Ann Duffy's view of love in her poem 'Valentine', while others reviewed, in a well-balanced way, an article examining the rights and wrongs of the use of animals for scientific research. Pupils write appropriately, and take pride in the presentation of their work, so that it communicates their ideas logically to the reader. Pupils make good use of computers to organise and present their work attractively. At the same time, work continues to suffer from a lack of extended vocabulary and from a limited ability to vary sentence structure for effect. A strength of pupils' work lies in the way they use their everyday knowledge in media studies lessons, for example, by analysing thoughtfully the changing role and presentation of women in different types of film. For example, one group identified and explained the difference between the sensitivity and independence of the Jodie Foster character in 'The Silence of the Lambs', in contrast to the decorative function of 'the Bond girl' in early James Bond films. Newly introduced media work has also helped to raise the level of thinking and writing from boys, by engaging their interest and curiosity more effectively than in the past.
100. Across the age range, pupils with special educational needs make good progress, particularly as a result of the help they receive from additional support in the class. Pupils speaking English as an additional language make progress in line with their peers, and those in the early stages of learning English make good progress when supported.
101. Pupils are normally well behaved in lessons, in response to good teaching, which secures their attention through varied activities and materials, well-matched to what they are able to do, while challenging them suitably to improve further. In a few lessons, there is a tendency for boys to call out without waiting to be asked, or to speak out of turn, slowing down the rate of teaching and learning for others in consequence.
102. Overall, teaching is satisfactory, and in half the lessons it is good. Teachers plan their work well, deploying good subject knowledge as they explain ideas and question pupils to check what they know. It follows that teachers hold pupils' interest well, judging aptly when to support them in their efforts and when to challenge them further. Work is marked sensitively, but more could be done to give pupils specific advice about what they need to do to improve. At the same time, teachers are beginning to improve the quality of guidance they give. Alongside enhanced lesson planning, this is starting to have a beneficial effect upon achievement, especially in the first three years. Teachers are less successful in finding ways to help pupils answer questions at length and to learn together by discussing at length ideas and responses to what they have read.
103. The school has identified the need to improve literacy as a priority within its planning. Constructive action taken to tackle a very challenging problem is now starting to have a positive effect. Teachers have benefited from the training and support by a cross-curricular group of staff, well led by a co-ordinator of literacy. As a result, effective

teaching and learning to tackle literacy difficulties were observed during the inspection, although the early implementation of new school policies remains far too inconsistent for it to be as effective as it could be.

104. English is well led by a subject leader who has helped the specialist team to share effective teaching methods and approaches, with a beneficial impact on pupils' work. The team has worked productively to identify ways to raise pupils' attainment, for example, by changing the content covered in the GCSE course. This is starting to have a positive effect upon all pupils' performance in the first three years and on boys' performance in particular in the GCSE course.

## **Drama**

The quality of provision in drama is very good.

### **Strengths**

- Teaching and learning of speaking and listening skills are excellent.
- Pupils' acquisition of self-confidence and the ability to work in a team are excellent.
- Relationships among pupils, and between pupils and teachers, are excellent.
- Achievement is good.
- Teachers' subject knowledge of dramatic literature and practical drama techniques is excellent.

### **Areas for improvement**

- Accommodation is cramped and unsuitable for practical drama where it demands movement or use of space.

105. In drama, the proportion of those obtaining higher grades at GCSE in 2001 exceeded the national average and overall attainment was above average. Pupils learn exceptionally well in their first three years in school, even though their skills are far below national expectations in Year 7. They also learn very rapidly on the two-year GCSE course, where standards are currently higher than those reached in the last year's examination.

106. Drama teaching is excellent in most lessons and never less than very good. It is characterised by expectations and challenge of the highest order, excellent subject knowledge of dramatic literature and of practical drama skills and techniques. As a result, pupils are inspired, grow in poise and self-confidence, and learn rapidly. Lesson planning ensures that pupils are involved in a very good variety of activities, that their individual contributions are assessed incisively and supportively by the teacher and that they assess thoughtfully their own and each other's contributions while working together in class. For example, one group in Year 9 examined the issue of peer pressure, discussing intently, under detailed teacher guidance and stimulus, a recent news story involving Prince Harry. They generated copious suggestions about the possible pressures he had suffered, and summarised them well, before devising a short dramatic piece to present to others. Here, the lesson was charged with tremendous enthusiasm, and a real zest for learning together. Teacher and pupils shared a sense of urgency and commitment to produce outstanding work within the pressing time limits of a single lesson.

107. Drama benefits from very good leadership, where recent work to plan and organise lessons and examination courses is leading to a rapid improvement in standards and a very good rate of learning in class. A highly successful programme of theatre visits,

visits to the school by professional companies, a flourishing after-school drama club and school productions, all make an excellent contribution to the cultural life of the school. Specialist accommodation in drama is cramped and inadequate because it restricts movement and the use of space in pupils' work.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Overall, the quality of provision in mathematics is satisfactory.

### **Strengths**

- The teachers are committed and hard working with good subject knowledge overall.
- Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and in most lessons have good working relationships with the pupils.
- Standards and attitudes to work in Years 7 and 8 are improving.
- Work is regularly marked and teachers keep good records of pupils' progress, which helps them to plan future work to meet their learning needs.

### **Areas for improvement**

- Results in National Curriculum tests and in GCSE examinations are well below the national average.
- Although teaching is satisfactory overall, the range of teaching approaches used by staff are not motivating or interesting enough to improve pupils' enthusiasm and rates of learning and to raise standards further.
- Pupils' numeracy skills are not as good as they should be because they are not practised and consolidated regularly enough.
- Computers are not used sufficiently to support pupils' learning of mathematics.

108. Pupils' standards in mathematics on entry to the school are well below those expected nationally. Their progress throughout the school is satisfactory overall and this means that standards remain well below average. Hence, results in national tests for 14-year-olds and in GCSE examinations in summer 2001 were well below the national average. The pupils did less well than pupils in similar schools, although in summer 2000 in National Curriculum tests for 14-year-olds their performance was equivalent to that of pupils in similar schools. Boys did better than girls in summer 2001 national tests and examinations for both 14-year-olds and 16-year-olds. However, this reflects their previous attainment at 11 and 14 years, which was better than that of the girls. In other years the performance of boys and girls has been equivalent. In tests for 14-year-olds in recent years, pupils have done better in mathematics than English and roughly the same in science. In GCSE examinations few pupils gain the highest A\*- C grades, but this is as expected given their results in national tests for 14-year-olds. Most pupils who take GCSE mathematics pass, but overall results suffer from pupils who join the year group after the start of the year or do not attend school and hence do not take the GCSE examination.

109. Inspection evidence also shows the attainment of current 14-year-olds in Year 9 as well below that expected nationally. The most able pupils are working at the level expected for their age and a few above. These pupils have good attitudes towards learning and work well in class. They have made at least sound progress since entering the school and achieve appropriately. The standards of the rest of the pupils are below or well below those expected for Year 9. Nevertheless, the lowest-attainers in Years 8 and 9 make sound progress because of small groups and teaching that is well planned and meets their learning needs. In other groups pupils' progress is more variable. Whilst work in books is mostly completed successfully, and soundly presented, pupils often



have difficulty in recalling methods for undertaking questions – for example, how to work out the median of a set of results. The number skills of many are weak, such as the quick recall of tables. However, overall work and the standards pupils achieve show an improving picture in Years 7 and 8. Attitudes are positive and pupils generally settle to work well in the classroom.

110. The attainment of current Year 11 pupils is also well below that expected nationally. The unresponsive attitudes, irregular attendance and leisurely pace of work of a significant number of pupils adversely affect their progress, and make it unsatisfactory. Occasionally some pupils behave badly and disrupt the class. Pupils in the highest groups show good attitudes towards their work and concentrate hard in lessons. They are keen to do well and to achieve a grade C, or in a few cases a better grade, in GCSE examinations. For a substantial number, this would be a considerable achievement. Number skills are sound, but the algebra skills of these pupils are not as secure as they should be and could affect their performance in other aspects of mathematics. During the inspection they were coping well with problems on trigonometry and using Pythagoras's theorem, required expertise for a GCSE grade C or above. However, across the rest of the ability range in both Years 10 and 11 pupils' recall of work previously completed successfully is often weak. The number skills of many of the lower attaining pupils are not as good as those of many younger pupils – for example in the recall of table facts beyond the five times tables.
111. Because the school has yet to fully implement a whole-school numeracy policy, opportunities for pupils to reinforce and practise their numeracy skills in other subjects are not as good as they could be. They cope satisfactorily in geography and science, particularly when asked to draw graphs and bar charts to display information.
112. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, although better in Years 7 to 9 than in Year 10 and 11. During the inspection, teaching in the majority of lessons seen was satisfactory, with one in five lesson good or very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge, have clear learning objectives for lessons and use sound strategies for managing pupils' behaviour. As a result pupils in most lessons settle quickly to the tasks set, undertake their work sensibly and quietly and make sound progress.
113. The best lessons are lively and move at a good pace, so that pupils make good gains in learning. This is because the learning activities are made interesting by the teacher and involve all pupils fully in the learning process. For example, on the topic of probability in a lower-attaining Year 8 class, containing a significant number of pupils with special educational needs, the teacher purposefully encouraged all pupils to become involved and to begin to take responsibility for their own learning. This was through good initial questioning which gave the pupils the confidence to answer questions and to understand the ideas being taught. The pupils were then able to work effectively in pairs on a game to reinforce their understanding of the probability of something happening, as certain, possible or unlikely. The lesson ended with a good recap of the work done, in which pupils showed their understanding of the work covered. A particularly good feature of this lesson was the effective working relationship between the teacher and the learning support assistant, which helped all pupils to make progress. Learning support assistants provide sound help in lessons, but their effectiveness would be improved further in some classes by better liaison with the class teacher.
114. Where pupils' learning is less effective the teachers do not take opportunities to put the work in a context that makes it interesting and relevant to pupils. This leads to a lack of enthusiasm and pace which results in pupils do not making the amount of progress they could in the lesson. Also, too often not all pupils are fully involved in the learning

process because most of the class is allowed to sit quietly whilst one or two pupils answer the teacher's questions. In some lessons the teachers rely solely on the approaches of the textbook. These are not always appropriate for the pupils who, in order to learn, need problems in mathematics to be set in a familiar everyday context. On a few occasions the behaviour of a small number of pupils was unsatisfactory, though not disruptive, but this slowed the amount of work that was accomplished in the lesson.

115. Work is generally at an appropriate level given pupils' previous learning. This is due to setting arrangements in Years 8 to 11 and the use of exercises at different levels in the Year 7 mixed-ability groups. Teachers plan lessons according to the national Key Stage 3 structure of a starter, main activity and closing review. This last part of the lesson checks whether pupils have understood the objectives for the lesson explained to them at the beginning. However, in too many instances teachers do not leave sufficient time to go over the key points fully. This contributes to pupils' poor recall of previous work. Key technical words are brought to pupils' attention in some lessons as part of the school's literacy strategy. Nevertheless, their display on the walls of classrooms is not large enough for all pupils to see and too many words are displayed at any one time. This means that displays are not always clearly focused on the topics being taught. Teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously and are beginning to provide more informative comments to help pupils improve. They work hard to ensure that all pupils do the homework set, but are not always as successful as they would wish. This is an issue throughout the school.
116. Good records are kept of pupils' attainment and progress, but the department has yet to analyse them in order to identify which groups of pupils are not doing as well as they should – for example, pupils with English as an additional language. This is particularly important as teachers have quite limited strategies for supporting pupils at the early stages of learning English, even though a few of these pupils have good mathematical skills. Pupils at more advanced stages of learning English cope well in lessons and have particularly positive attitudes towards learning.
117. Staff in the mathematics department are committed and hardworking, and a substantial number hold senior positions in the school. This contributes to the department's stability. However, it currently has one long-term absence filled by a supply teacher who is a non-specialist. This person would benefit from more structured support in planning lessons. The new head of department has a clear view of the department's strengths and weaknesses but developments have been hampered by the long-term absence of the second in department. The National Numeracy Strategy for 11 to 14 year olds is being implemented, although slowly. It is beginning to have a positive effect on pupils' learning in Years 7 and 8. However, not all teachers are yet using the new resources available sufficiently to create more variety in mental mathematics sessions. Nevertheless, some good practice was seen in Year 7, where the teacher developed pupils' understanding of factors through the use of an investigational activity that gave practice in finding the factors of numbers whilst solving a problem. Limited accommodation and the lack of a departmental area where teachers can meet and share ideas do not help to develop the range of teaching strategies used by the department. Pupils have good opportunities to learn how to use electronic calculators effectively, but little opportunity to use computers to help them learn mathematics. Overall the available practical resources are not well organised or used.
118. Improvement since the last inspection, given the changes that have taken place in the intake, has been satisfactory overall. Schemes of work and lesson planning are better and good strategies are in place to support pupils who find it difficult to concentrate in

class. All this, with the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, is beginning to have a positive impact in improving attitudes and progress in Years 7 to 9. However, the development of a wider and more interesting range of teaching and learning styles still needs to be addressed. The school must ensure that all members of staff are trained in the teaching and learning approaches of the National Numeracy Strategy. This is essential if pupils' standards are to be raised. The current good features of the department's work – particularly sound classroom management and good relationships with pupils, and the positive approach and knowledge of teaching methods of the head of department – provide a sound basis for further improvement.

## SCIENCE

Overall the quality of provision in science is satisfactory..

### Strengths

- Pupils make satisfactory progress, although their standards of attainment are significantly below the national average when they enter the school.
- Some teachers have very good classroom management skills.
- Accommodation is good.
- Technician support is good.

### Areas for improvement

- Teaching is not always effective.
- Marking is uninformative, giving pupils little idea of how to improve their work.
- Students spend too much time copying and sometimes they do not understand what they are writing about.
- Sharing the good practice in the department so teachers learn from one another about how to develop and improve their teaching.
- Increase the use of information and communication technology (ICT) as a resource for learning.

119. On entry to the school in Year 7, most pupils' attainment in science is well below national averages. The situation is similar when they take National Curriculum tests in Year 9 and performance in science is well below the national averages for that age group. This remains the case when the school's results are set alongside those of other comparable schools. A similar picture has been evident for the previous three years. The school's results have improved slightly since 1998, at the same rate as other schools generally. In GCSE examinations, most pupils take a double option in science and the results are well below national averages. This low level of attainment is, however, as predicted, given pupils' low attainment on entry to Year 7, and the large proportion who leave and join the school at various times during their education. Throughout the science department, pupils from both white and minority ethnic cultures work harmoniously together and make similar progress. Boys and girls participate equally in classes and enjoy science lessons when the teaching is good. Pupils with special educational needs receive appropriate help from some teachers and make good progress. In some classes, however, their needs are not met; for example, they spend too much time laboriously copying lesson objectives while other pupils are doing practical work.

120. Although pupils' learning and progress are satisfactory overall, teaching varies between very good and poor. In Year 7 it was good in both the lessons observed. The pupils are taught in mixed-ability groups; many have difficulty in reading and writing and their range of attainment fits the expectations from the below-average intake scores on the National

Curriculum tests taken last year. For example, in a lesson about eclipses, attainment ranged between levels 2 and 5 with very few reaching the highest level. The success of the lesson was due to the teacher's approach, which encouraged all pupils' active co-operation, developed a real thirst for scientific understanding and marginalized any tendency towards misbehaviour. In contrast, learning in Year 8 was superficial in both the observed lessons. One class copied material from the board, which was expressed in technical language far beyond their understanding. Another had to write about an experiment involving dissolving and filtering, but without being challenged to consider a mechanism for the processes in terms of moving particles. Thus their knowledge and understanding of this topic were minimal. From Year 8 onwards, pupils are grouped by ability. Those in a top Year 9 group were attaining National Curriculum level 6 in a most successful lesson about inheritance. They could speculate effectively about how a mix of inherited and environmental factors might contribute towards a person becoming over-weight. Another Year 9 lesson for a different group was poorly planned. The pupils were asked to carry out simple experiments about light, but the instructions were unclear and there was too little apparatus for all to be gainfully occupied so that many became bored and noisy. Their understanding of the topic was poor and they made insufficient progress.

121. Learning in Years 10 and 11 follows a similar pattern to that in Years 7 to 9. Some teachers are highly skilled, and succeed in motivating even the most difficult pupils and extending their knowledge and understanding. For example, one Year 10 group responded collaboratively to a well-paced lesson about the parts of an electric plug. Despite their wide range of attainment and special needs, all the pupils made real progress. In contrast, students in a Year 11 lesson about the reactions between metals and water were baffled, and failed to grasp the concepts involved, because the teacher gave them little opportunity to engage with the scientific ideas. They had few opportunities to ask questions when he went over the topic. Subsequent copying from the board about what they should have learned was almost pointless and did not ensure that pupils understood the work.
122. On balance, the quality of teaching in Years 7 to 11 is satisfactory. Marking by all staff is generally conscientious and conveys warmth ('good', 'well done' etc.) but pupils are not told what they should do to improve their scientific understanding. Five of the ten lessons observed were good or very good and the unsatisfactory teaching was often associated with teachers new to the school in the current academic year. In the best lessons, teachers are clearly enthusiastic. Their objectives are clear so that pupils know what is expected of them. Questioning goes beyond simple factual recall and the teachers use pupils' answers, weaving them into the fabric of the lesson so that there is a strong sense of working together. Minor misbehaviour is dealt with good-humouredly, without interrupting the lesson flow, and there is a strong sense of pupils and teacher working collaboratively together. Other teachers are too concerned to cram as much material as possible into each period. Their lessons are poorly constructed, and neither grab pupils' interest nor challenge their thinking. Pupils spend too much time copying.
123. The department has made insufficient progress since the last inspection. Similar concerns about teaching were evident then. A new head of department was appointed in Autumn 2001 and is aware that there is much to improve. Currently, teachers do not work and plan together so that they can share good practice and learn from one another. The department lacks a shared vision about what constitutes a good science education. Regular internal monitoring of teaching and the marking of pupils' work are not systematically established. There is no clear, practicable marking policy that gives pupils easily understood diagnostic information on how to improve their understanding of science. Pupils have insufficient access to ICT and its use is not adequately

incorporated into the schemes of works. The pupils are taught in good accommodation and the laboratories are a stimulating environment in which to work. The technicians provide a very effective service and this has a positive effect on pupils' learning.

## ART AND DESIGN

Overall, the quality of provision in art and design is good.

### Strengths

- The quality of teaching is consistently good in the department.
- The leadership and management are very good.

### Areas for improvement

- Facilities for information and communication technology.
- Technical support in the department.
- Provision for departmental technician support.

124. Standards have improved since the last inspection in each year group. The examination results at GCSE are good when compared with other subjects in the school. They are in line with similar schools but below average when compared with all schools nationally. The number of pupils opting to take GCSE examinations in the subject is increasing. Considering the higher than average numbers of pupils with special educational needs being entered for the examination, the results are commendable. This upward trend is attributable to the dedication and practical expertise of all teachers in the department and to the trust, respect and self-confidence which they promote in the pupils. The percentage of A\* to G grades achieved by pupils is slightly above national averages. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys or girls. Pupils from minority ethnic groups achieve as well as their peers.

125. Pupils enter the school with very limited capability in art. By the end of Year 9 and because of the good teaching, pupils reach standards which are only slightly below national expectations, and this shows good progress. Teachers introduce pupils to a wide variety of drawing, painting and three-dimensional media. They teach drawing techniques on a carefully structured step-by-step basis and this builds pupils' skills whilst promoting confidence. Pupils use their sketchbooks well for class as well as homework exercises. They make preliminary, annotated drawings, which they continually analyse and amend in the light of evaluative discussion with each other and teachers, before using them as a basis for finished pieces such as paintings and ceramics work. Pupils use effective tonal contrasts, increasingly sensitive linear depictions and a variety of textures in their work. They learn to match and mix their own colours and hues and use this skill well when expressing ideas and emotions. Teachers encourage pupils to make regular comparisons between their own work and that of recognised artists from a variety of cultures, European and worldwide. For example, pupils in Year 9 used oil pastels well to make a pastiche<sup>4</sup> of 'Woman Crying' by Pablo Picasso. Pupils in Year 8 carefully contrasted the works and ideas of two different artists. They did this by making their own closely observed drawings of feathers, gourds and seashells in the style of Georgia O'Keefe and by making bold tonal drawings, in charcoal, of machine parts, in the style of Fernand Leger.

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<sup>4</sup> Pastiche - A recognised educational method, traditionally used by artists, whereby pupils make a faithful copy, in order to see through the eyes of the artist and learn about ideas used and techniques employed in a painting.

126. Teachers take every opportunity to introduce, teach and reinforce relevant aspects of literacy in art. This includes specific word lists for each lesson, such as 'futurism', 'avant-garde', 'surrealism'. Pupils use vocabulary appropriately when identifying and discussing paintings and sculpture. Pupils effectively use the internet, for homework, to research great art movements and artists. Opportunities for pupils to generate their own graphic imagery, within the department, are lost because of the lack of computers.
127. By the end of Year 11 standards are in line with national expectations. This marks good improvement since the last inspection given that pupils' attainment is much lower than it was then on entry. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 demonstrate an increased repertoire of painting, drawing, collage, printmaking and ceramics skills. They are proficient in low-relief modelling and produce good examples of three-dimensional sculptural form in some units of work. They use papier-mache to good effect, and use clay with increasing skill. Teachers constantly encourage pupils to develop a recognisable personal style and to pursue more individual responses to topics and issues in their work. This represents a considerable challenge to a few pupils who are content to rely heavily on a more instructional style of teaching.
128. Pupils take pride in their work and show respect for each other's ideas and work produced. Pupils currently working on GCSE coursework units incorporate the ideas and works of such diverse artists as Kurt Hauswein and Hue Walker. They contrast the architectural and decorative art forms of the former with the poetic book illustrations of the latter, in order to learn about modern printing techniques and the requirements of batch and mass production. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in line with their peers in their own creative work because of the sensitive and inclusive relationships fostered by teachers and the good range of adaptable teaching methods used. These pupils, and those for whom English is an additional language, do their best and show enthusiasm but the written element is a severe constraint for many, as they do not benefit from additional support within the art lessons and this hinders their progress. This is important, as there is now an increased emphasis on literacy and written communication as a requirement of the National Curriculum. Boys and girls make equally good progress.
129. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good. This reflects the good preparation which teachers make in their planning for interesting topics, with a wide appeal. The management of pupils by teachers is good, involving as it does classes which are often heavily resourced with tools for shaping and cutting. The school provides no technical support for the department, which necessitates teachers spending valuable time on tasks not directly involved with teaching pupils. Teachers work as a team and lead by example, showing respect for the dignity of all pupils. They recognise the potential for learning of all pupils in their care. Firm guidelines for acceptable behaviour are laid down and implemented consistently and fairly. In consequence, all pupils feel secure and supported in lessons.
130. Leadership and management in the subject are very good and have improved since the last inspection. The present head of department is well qualified and experienced and has a very good grasp of what needs to be done to develop the subject. The new schemes of work and the departmental handbook are thoughtfully produced and are useful working documents. Procedures for assessment are appropriate. Data is regularly updated and used to inform pupils of their progress and of what they need to do to improve further. Teachers use assessment information effectively in their lesson planning. Displays are insufficiently used to celebrate the successes of pupils, particularly in the wider school environment. Displays are not always clearly labelled to ensure that work is interpreted well enough to a wider audience, such as other year

groups of pupils, parents and visitors to the school. Teachers provide a good range of extra activities to enrich pupils' experiences in the subject. These activities include lunchtime and after school clubs, and visits to art galleries and museums which are well timed to coincide with and inform new units of work. Teachers also generously provide extra practical workshops at Easter, which are well supported by pupils. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Overall, the quality of provision in design and technology is satisfactory.

### Strengths

- The teachers' knowledge of the subject and planning of lessons.
- The arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and progress.
- The range of learning opportunities.

### Areas for improvement

- Attainment of pupils, particularly in electrical and graphic products.
- The commitment, attendance and behaviour of disaffected pupils in lessons.
- Teaching of the basic skills, including practical skills, English and numeracy.

131. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is well below the national average. By the time pupils reach Year 9 standards remain well below average, with only one in five pupils reaching the expected standard. However, significant progress is made by pupils between the ages of eleven and fourteen, with their attainment increasing overall by one National Curriculum level. This represents satisfactory achievement. Girls perform significantly better than boys. In Year 11, attainment remains well below the national average, with only three out of ten pupils attaining the higher A\*- C grades in the GCSE examinations. Nevertheless, this is a satisfactory achievement in relation to the standards reached by the same pupils at the age of fourteen. The standards in textiles technology and food technology are higher than in the other aspects of the subject; the majority of girls take courses in these aspects. Boys perform best in resistant materials and textile technology.

132. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated well in lessons and receive significant help from specialist teachers. During the inspection they were supported by a learning assistant in a food technology lesson. In some lessons, but not all, their behaviour and commitment are poor and some times extremely poor. Pupils with English as an additional language find it difficult to make progress when learning assistants are not present. However, one pupil with English as an additional language obtained a pass in the GCSE examinations last year, a significant achievement for both the pupil and the teachers involved. In general, pupils with special educational needs do not have sufficient support in lessons and poor attendance lowers their attainment and progress. The attainment of those with special educational needs is unsatisfactory between the ages of 11 and 14, but satisfactory in the later years.

133. Overall, the quality of learning is satisfactory between the ages of 11 and 14. Pupils are required to design and make interesting products in wood, metal, plastics, food and textiles materials. They learn to design and make simple electronic devices and acquire the basics of control satisfactorily. Textile lessons cover the requirements of both art and design and technology but do not provide enough opportunity for pupils to learn the full range of making skills. All lessons are satisfactorily based on the design and make cycle. In Year 7 pupils were satisfactorily learning the principles of isometric projection.

In a sound textile lesson in Year 8 pupils were seen learning about positive and negative images, a mainly art topic. Two Year 9 lessons were observed in which pupils made CD holders; one was very good and the other extremely poor. Disruptive behaviour was the main reason why one lesson was extremely poor. In the very good lesson pupils were making CD holders with great accuracy and precision; their final designs had been well prepared using drawing boards and instruments. In a practical lesson observed pupils were paying much attention to accuracy and finish; some of the wooden CD holders incorporated accurate finger joints. In general, there is insufficient opportunity for pupils to write about their work and to use computing to improve presentation. More emphasis is needed on teaching pupils to use simple hand tools and powered machines properly and safely.

134. Overall, the quality of learning is good between the ages of 14 and 16. Three-quarters of pupils take one of the GCSE courses in electronic products, food technology, graphic products, resistant materials or textile products. They learn to work from a design brief, research a topic, provide a range of design ideas, select a final design, make a product, and evaluate their work satisfactorily. In a very good lesson in Year 10, pupils were successfully making an electronic timer to indicate the length of time children brush their teeth. In a satisfactory lesson in Year 11, pupils were designing and making a food product for a fast-food outlet. In another, in the same year, pupils were designing and making a halogen lamp satisfactorily. Scrutiny of last year's course work showed that the standard varied significantly. Some of the better course work had been presented using information and communication technology but most was hand written. The use of English was basic and many designs were hand drawn. There was good use of questionnaires and numerical analyses of the results.
135. The overall standard of teaching is satisfactory; it is good in Years 10 and 11. All teachers have a secure knowledge of their aspect of the subject, give pupils valuable help and advice in lessons and plan lessons well. The best teachers are able to control pupils effectively, place good emphasis on the presentation and accuracy of pupils' work and achieve satisfactory progress. When lessons are unsatisfactory the management of pupils is deficient and teachers cannot gain the commitment of a significant number of pupils. In an extremely poor lesson in Year 9, pupils with behavioural difficulties caused great disruption during the practical work and engaged in a number of dangerous practices when operating power machines. During one generally satisfactory lesson in Year 11 the teacher had great difficulty in getting a number of the girls to participate in the lesson; they were tired and lethargic. With these exceptions, attitudes in lessons during the inspection were satisfactory overall and good in Years 10 and 11.
136. The department is well led by an experienced teacher who has the support and commitment of his colleagues. Teachers meet regularly to discuss an appropriate range of issues and the department has a good handbook. New and very comprehensive arrangements for the assessment of pupils' work and progress have recently been introduced. This enables pupils' progress to be regularly monitored and recorded against National Curriculum levels. The department has some new good accommodation and the learning resources are adequate. There have been many changes since the last inspection; the school has been merged with another, there has been an influx of a significant number of less able pupils and there have been many changes in the staff. However, progress has been satisfactory overall, particularly during the past two years.

## **GEOGRAPHY**



Overall, the quality of provision in geography is good.

### **Strengths**

- The quality of teaching and learning.
- The number of pupils taking the examination course in Years 10 and 11.
- The good progress made by pupils with special educational needs.
- The display of work in classrooms enhances learning.
- The provision for fieldwork trips in Years 10 and 11.

### **Areas for improvement**

- Computers to be accessible within the department.
- The management structure to be clarified.
- Using assessment information to analyse pupils' progress and achievement.
- Provision for fieldwork in Years 7 to 9.

137. Since the last inspection, standards have improved in all year groups. Last year saw the best results yet for the department, with half of Year 9 achieving at least the expected National Curriculum level and seven pupils achieving above this standard. In the GCSE examinations in 2001, 41.7 per cent achieved a C grade or above, including two pupils who achieved the highest A\* grades. While these results are below the national average, they represent an improvement on standards at entry in the school and show that the department is challenging the pupils. Of the 18 pupils who took the Travel and Tourism Certificate, 11 achieved a pass or better. Geography is increasingly popular in the school and the take-up at GCSE level reflects this, with 60 per cent of the year group taking the examination last year. In the current academic year, there is an extra set in Year 10 to accommodate increased numbers.
138. The observation of pupils in lessons and an analysis of their work indicate a sound understanding and knowledge of topics in both physical and human geography. Pupils make good progress in Years 7 to 9 and master difficult concepts. In Year 7 they were able to explain clearly the features of a river basin. Pupils' progress is helped throughout by the teachers' use of visual aids. In Years 10 and 11 progress is maintained and pupils can appreciate the physical and human concepts of changing landscapes. For example, Year 11 pupils showed a good grasp of counter-urbanisation and its impact on the London Docklands, while Year 10 pupils clearly understood the effects of flooding on an area. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs, with the support of the class teachers and the educational assistants, is good, particularly in Years 7 to 9. Pupils with English as an additional language make sound progress, but there is insufficient planned support for their learning.
139. Overall, pupils learn well. Their learning is helped by working on short-term tasks and is inspired by the enthusiasm and energy of the teachers. Pupils respond well to personal anecdotes such as one teacher's account of her experience of Mount Etna. They were fascinated with issues such as why people live beside volcanoes and how engineers can now direct lava using new technology. Pupils have the ability to combine skills – for example, listening to an account of a volcano erupting in Mexico, then watching a video of Mount St. Helens erupting in the U.S.A. and comparing the two. The majority of books are neat and reflect pupils' pride in their work.
140. Overall the quality of teaching is good. Of the eight lessons observed in the main school, only one was unsatisfactory and the rest were all good or very good. Lessons are well planned, which ensures that the most important facts are learnt and consolidated. Questioning is probing and enables pupils to arrive at the right answer –

for example, when the location of a woollen mill was examined and the correct factors influencing location were established by the pupils. Display in the classrooms is very good and enhances teaching and learning. Large colourful maps help pupils to develop a sense of place and are used by teachers during their lessons. Pupils' work on display is clearly labelled with their names and gives pride in achievement. Throughout the year groups, praise is used effectively by teachers; star awards were obviously greatly valued by Year 7 pupils. Teachers have high expectations – for example, of Year 10's confident mastery of flood hydrographs.

141. The curriculum meets National Curriculum requirements. Fieldwork opportunities in Years 10 and 11 are good, with five trips taking place this year. They include fieldwork by the River Cuckmere, a joint venture with the information and communication technology department, the London Docklands and an introduction to the Big Bus Company personnel in London for the travel and tourism group. Pupils are very enthusiastic about their fieldwork assignments and keen to discuss their work. Similar, high quality opportunities do not exist in Years 7 to 9. The department contributes to the development of pupils' numeracy skills through using and interpreting data in a variety of ways. Literacy skills are also enhanced through keyword lists. Work is marked regularly and recorded by teachers, but some constructive comments are too brief to give detailed guidance on improving performance. As yet the department has not developed sufficient assessment information to measure and analyse pupils' progress and improvement.
142. The head of department left at the end of last year and the new management structure is still being developed. However, there is a strong team ethos and a clear sense of identity among the staff in the department which ensures continuity of learning for the pupils. The accommodation is good. Resources are sufficient to deliver the curriculum but pupils do not have access to enough computers in the department.

## HISTORY

Overall, the quality of provision in history is satisfactory.

### Strengths

- The teaching of history is good in Years 7 to 9, reflecting the teachers' subject knowledge and enthusiasm.
- Good knowledge of the individual needs of pupils.
- Good accommodation in the specialist rooms.

### Areas for improvement

- Ensuring that GCSE results are in line with the other subjects that pupils take.
- Developing a wider range of learning strategies.
- Ensuring a greater range of effective teaching strategies.
- Inclusion of information and communication technology in the schemes of work.
- Increasing the range of textbooks.

143. The standards on entry to the school in Year 7 are well below the national expectation. Although standards in Year 9 remain well below the national average pupils make satisfactory progress. The responses of pupils in class and the work in a sample of books indicate a range of attainment, with the majority achieving well below levels expected. In Year 11, standards remain well below average and in line with results in the 2001 GCSE examination, when only eight per cent of the pupils achieved the higher A\* - C grades. Results in history are lower than in most other subjects and are

adversely affected by poor attendance and the high proportion of pupils who do not complete coursework and assignments.

144. The evidence from inspection confirms that by the end of Year 9, achievement is satisfactory; and pupils of all levels of attainment make steady progress in their first three years in the school. Pupils develop a range of historical skills, including the interpretation of appropriate historical evidence and data, the prioritising of historical issues and the understanding of chronology. They are able to use a range of materials, including thematic worksheets, pictorial evidence, timelines, and a range of primary and secondary source material. The handling of different forms of historical data is satisfactory and pupils are able to work individually and in groups to develop their understanding of history. However, their recall of factual knowledge and ability to interpret information from a range of sources is limited.
145. Pupils are given various opportunities to use historical sources, to prioritise them and to make judgments about their reliability. In Year 7 pupils are introduced to the Bayeux Tapestry and are asked to consider its reliability and how much bias is included in the evidence. Pupils' historical experience is extended in Year 8 by a close analysis of the causes of the English Civil War. The Verney video is effectively used to illustrate the divided loyalties families faced during this period. By the end of Year 9 pupils are able to analyse the causes of The Great War. They are able to extend their understanding by playing a war game, through which they learn how to build alliances and to make and break political and diplomatic arrangements. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment, particularly in the smaller classes and because their teachers and learning support assistants know them well and provide effective guidance in lessons. Higher-attaining pupils are able to make satisfactory progress particularly through their oral contributions in class. Pupils with English as an additional language appear to be well integrated into their classes; effective additional support was observed in a Year 9 class.
146. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress throughout Years 10 and 11 as they build upon the foundation of skills and knowledge acquired in the earlier years. By the end of Year 11, pupils have developed an understanding of historical causation and of the relationship between documentary evidence and analysis. They have had the opportunity to develop their own understanding of a wide range of historical material. Study skills are strengthened by studying a range of source material relating to the history of medicine. At this stage there is a greater emphasis on developing reasoning skills through the close examination of the reliability of primary evidence. In Year 10, although a few pupils displayed an unsatisfactory response, most were interested and involved. Those pupils with special educational needs found the task of sorting medicine cards into their correct chronology too difficult and this resulted in unsatisfactory progress in their learning. As a result of this exercise these pupils lost focus and interest and caused the overall pace of the class to lose its momentum. The Year 11 class reviewed the recent mock GCSE paper and several in this group were too passive and took little part in the lesson.
147. Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory and pupils make satisfactory progress. However, there is some inconsistency across the department. One poor lesson in Year 8 was seen, in which several pupils were unable to make satisfactory progress owing to a lack of suitable behavioural management strategies. Teaching in one lesson in Year 10 was unsatisfactory because of a lack of suitable tasks for all pupils. There is a direct relationship between unsatisfactory teaching methods and inadequate learning. However, the overall standard of teaching has improved greatly since the last inspection especially in the earlier years. Currently, there is too much inconsistency of teaching

strategies across the history team. Teachers use a relatively narrow range of strategies to create a sense of purpose and learning in history. There is no consideration of information and communication technology in the scheme of work, although there are plans to develop this area in the next year. There is an over-emphasis on teacher-led discussions; this leads to some pupils remaining passive recipients of knowledge rather than developing active learning skills through individual research or paired and group work. Nevertheless, teachers know their subject well and their enthusiasm for it is clearly communicated to the pupils, providing a firm basis for learning. The department makes a sound contribution to cross-curricular issues including literacy. This is achieved through identifying and recording key vocabulary and by encouraging listening skills through extensive question and answer sessions. Spiritual and moral experiences are provided through, for example, the study of the 1066 succession crisis, the conflict between King and Parliament in the 17th century and the visits to Rochester, the Globe theatre and the National Army Museum.

148. Overall, standards of behaviour are satisfactory, although variations were observed in some classes. A good knowledge of the pupils' needs is one of the strengths of the history department. Good examples of pupils listening to each other were observed and co-operation amongst most pupils in all years was satisfactory.
149. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed. Since the last inspection the head of department has revised the scheme of work to include a non-European unit. However, in some modules the learning resources have not been sufficiently identified in the scheme. There is a good match between the expertise and qualifications of staff and their teaching assignments. Homework is set regularly and marking is supportive and encouraging, but the pupils are not sufficiently aware of the National Curriculum levels and what they have to do next to make further progress.
150. The two specialist classrooms create an effective learning environment with very attractive displays of pupils' work. The departmental accommodation is in very good condition with satisfactory storage space. There is a good range of pupil worksheets and video material, but the range of textbooks is insufficient.
151. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in the quality of the teaching particularly in Years 7 to 9. There does need to be consistency in the teaching quality across the department and across the key stages. Several of the areas for improvement which were highlighted in the last inspection remain to be achieved, namely extending the range of teaching and learning strategies, developing planning to meet the needs of all pupils and encouraging pupils to become active learners. There is still much to be developed in the history department.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

Overall, the quality of provision in information and communication technology is satisfactory.

### **Strengths**

- Standards are rising.
- Quality of teaching and learning is frequently good.
- Very effective curriculum and assessment arrangements.
- A significant number of out-of-lesson opportunities.

### **Areas for improvement**

- Standards in Years 7 to 9.
- Improving opportunities to use ICT in all subjects.

- Monitoring of pupils' achievements in ICT across all subjects.

152. In 2001 in Year 9, the number of pupils attaining the expected level was just over half the national figure. However, these pupils started at a very low level and made satisfactory progress over the three years. The school is confident that, with the improved access to equipment and the new curriculum, standards of work will improve over the next few years. This is certainly true of a lot of the work seen in Year 7, where some pupils are achieving the standard appropriate for their age. The work of many pupils in Years 8 and 9, however, is still well below the expected standard for their ages.
153. In Years 10 and 11 some pupils opt to take a GNVQ course in ICT. They can study this at two levels: foundation and intermediate. Passes at the foundation stage doubled from 2000 to 2001 and are now better than the national figure. The small numbers taking the intermediate stage make it difficult to compare pass rates from year to year but results were good in both years.
154. Overall, attainment by the time pupils are 16 is below average. All pupils in Years 10 and 11 take the key skills course at level 2. Last year all the pupils passed. The most significant differences in attainment within a teaching group were the result of pupils' opportunities to develop confidence in using the equipment and in their basic literacy and numeracy skills. In one lesson, for example, the progress of two pupils was markedly different because one pupil had used the program before at home and another had not. In another lesson, a pupil was having difficulty in making a successful internet search, not because of a problem with the program, but simply because of a difficulty in spelling the words needed. The head of department works hard to provide additional opportunities for pupils to develop their skills. Pupils have access to the computers through lunchtimes and after school. There are even early morning sessions starting at 7.30am for the real enthusiasts. At one of these sessions, pupils from Years 8 and 9 turned up to continue work on their personal websites.
155. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 7 to 9, and good in Years 10 and 11. In all but one lesson, the quality of teaching was at least satisfactory. In many lessons, the teaching included a number of strengths. The most effective lessons mixed brief whole-class demonstrations with extended periods of individual work. Teachers were good at explaining tasks and made good use of newly installed projection equipment which allowed the whole class to see without having to move. These lessons flowed smoothly from one task to the next and made good use of additional support to help pupils who had difficulties. Where there was effective teaching the pupils' learning was good. They acquired new information quickly and had plenty of time to practise their skills. In one lesson, a pupil quickly applied formatting skills learnt in Word to the text in a PowerPoint presentation. In another lesson, a pupil was able to create and work on a FrontPage website within minutes of the teacher's tightly focused demonstration.
156. The only lesson where teaching was unsatisfactory was with a non-specialist teacher. The lack of expertise meant that pupils did not have effective instruction. They did, however, receive great support from a member of the sixth form who had been attached to the group. This rescued the lesson and, although the overall learning was unsatisfactory, pupils did have some chance to try out new ideas. The department is fully aware that it needs another specialist teacher. Pupils are very motivated by using the equipment. They concentrate well and are enthusiastic to try out ideas. They work hard and co-operate well in the few instances where they are forced to share equipment. Although there is a very small minority of pupils who find it difficult to settle and concentrate, the overall standard of behaviour in lessons is good. Pupils show a lot of respect for the equipment and take great care when logging in and out of the system.

157. The department is very effectively led. The new head of department has produced a new curriculum for Years 7 to 9, introduced the internet to the curriculum and ensured that assessment procedures are in place and effective. The new equipment has been installed and is working and, although some of the rooms are rather small, the department is able to follow all the courses it has planned.
158. The cross-curricular use of information technology is the area in most need of development. The emphasis on ICT courses has made it difficult for other departments to gain access to the facilities. There is some very good work – for example controlling lathes in design and technology – but it is too limited at present. The departments are keen to start and the school is about to distribute some systems to assist them. More will be needed before departments’ needs are met. There is insufficient monitoring of the overall ICT work and achievement of each pupil, throughout the school, to ensure that all receive broad and balanced experiences. Since the last inspection the school has invested in new equipment, and additional technical staff to ensure that it works. The new head of department has introduced a new scheme of work and ensured effective internet access. This represents good improvement.

## MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Overall, the quality of provision in modern foreign languages is satisfactory.

### Strengths

- The quality of teaching is good.
- Pupils behave well or very well in most classes.

### Areas for improvement

- Encourage pupils to speak more in the foreign language.
- Ensure that no pupil who wishes to study a foreign language in Year 10 is prevented from doing so by the option choice system.
- Improve arrangements for pupils with special educational needs in Year 7.
- Increase the access to computers.
- Enable staff, particularly the newly qualified teacher, to share in the department’s expertise by observing each other’s lessons.

159. In 2001, GCSE examination results in both French and German were well below the national average. More pupils gained higher grades in French than in German. The number of pupils taking a modern language examination is proportionally the same as in most schools. As is the case nationally, girls performed better than boys. In Year 9 attainment overall is well below average but higher attaining pupils perform in line with the national average. A few do better than this and girls achieve better than boys. Pupils with English as an additional language usually make satisfactory progress.
160. Currently in Years 7 to 9 all pupils learn French. Pupils are better at speaking and listening than at writing. However, when they do speak it is usually in formal situations prepared by the teacher. They do not often use the foreign language for everyday communication with their teacher or with each other. Higher-attaining pupils can write several paragraphs on simple topics and use different tenses correctly. However, many pupils find it hard to understand grammar. Even if they answer correctly in class, they often forget and make mistakes when writing the same language.
161. In Year 11 attainment overall is still below national expectations though some pupils’ work merits a GCSE grade C or higher. Most pupils in Years 10 and 11 do not now

study a foreign language. There are two groups in Year 11 studying German and two studying French. In Year 10 just two groups learn German. Standards are about the same in French and in German. However, higher attaining pupils learning French produce quite good written coursework, but feel embarrassed when speaking. Pupils in the parallel German group speak with unusually good intonation. They make a few minor errors of pronunciation, but obviously enjoy trying to sound like native speakers. Many pupils in the higher Year 10 group can make up interesting sentences following a pattern set by the teacher. They remember previous vocabulary well but, when writing, easily forget a grammar point such as word order that has just been practised.

162. Pupils made good or very good progress in half the lessons observed. Only in one lesson was their achievement less than satisfactory. The setting system in Years 8 and 9 helps groups to progress effectively. Teachers are good at including everyone in the lesson. They ensure that pupils with special educational needs progress as well as the rest. Such pupils clearly benefit in a Year 8 group, where there is a support assistant permanently assigned to help them. However, in Year 7 mixed-ability groups, pupils with special educational needs are disadvantaged by being withdrawn from one in every three French lesson. In-class support does not help them keep up with the rest in French or sufficiently enhance their literacy skills. Because so few pupils now continue with a foreign language in Years 10 and 11, the range of ability in each set is wider there than in the lower school. It is therefore much harder for teachers to give every pupil all the help they need throughout the lesson. Progress is also significantly affected when some pupils in top sets do not do homework or examination coursework on time. In many lessons throughout the school pupils with English as an additional language are fully integrated and achieve well.
163. In about four lessons out of five, pupils' behaviour is good or very good. Their written work is well organised in books and folders which are generally well kept. Only one lesson was seen where attitudes were unsatisfactory. This was a Year 9 middle set who took very little notice of a newly qualified teacher. The school seating policy encourages boys and girls to work willingly together. Although pupils are generally co-operative, they do not routinely expect to speak the foreign language. Consequently, there is insufficient conversation in the language between each other and with their teacher.
164. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. In over half the lessons observed the teaching was good or very good. Only one lesson was unsatisfactory. This was due partly to the group's negative attitude and partly to the inexperience of a newly qualified teacher who taught other classes much better. The department's strengths are good organisation and planning, and a good relationship with pupils. All teachers are sound linguists and most speak to their classes mainly in French or German. The teaching could be improved by a little more consistency in this respect, and by encouraging pupils themselves to speak more often in the foreign language.
165. Modern language learning has been enhanced by educational visits to St. Omer, foreign language theatre visits, a new reading scheme in Years 7 to 9 and voluntary after-school Spanish lessons in Year 8. Although improved by lively displays, the accommodation is poor overall. Rooms are cramped and carpets scruffy. There is no departmental office. Some interesting display work has been produced on computers. Year 10 pupils have emailed a German school and also downloaded information from German websites for a project. However, there is little room for the department to accommodate computers of its own, and access to information and communication technology facilities elsewhere in the school is inadequate.

166. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Standards in French and German are now similar. Time allocated on the timetable matches the national average. Languages teachers, at least in Years 7 to 9, can now make setting arrangements independently of other subjects. Pupils' progress is better in their reading and writing. Most importantly, the quality of teaching has much improved.



## MUSIC

Overall, the quality of provision in music is unsatisfactory.

### Strengths

- The majority of pupils in Years 10 and 11 enjoy the subject and are keen to learn.

### Areas for improvement

- Overall standards in music.
- The implementation of the National Curriculum.
- The quality of teaching and learning.
- The lack of assessment procedures.
- Resources for practical sessions.

167. Teacher assessments and inspection evidence show that, by the end of Year 9, the attainment of the majority of pupils is well below national expectations. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. In the 2001 GCSE examinations the proportion of pupils achieving the higher A\* to C grades was well below average. The numbers entered for examinations is low, so comparison with national statistics is unreliable. Overall, pupils achieve lower standards in music than other subjects in school. Pupils with special educational needs make unsatisfactory progress in all year groups. No students go on to study music in the sixth form.

168. In Years 7 to 9, pupils have not successfully built on the skills and experience they developed in primary school. Pupils in Year 9 frequently undertake the same work as those in Year 7. During the inspection, Year 8 pupils received the same lessons as Year 7. As a result pupils make unsatisfactory progress. An unusually large proportion of pupils have very limited musical knowledge. Contributions to literacy and numeracy skills are small, with no attention given to the use of key words and simple musical vocabulary. Pupils have a very limited knowledge of the requirements of the National Curriculum programmes of study for music. Performance standards are very low. The majority of Year 9 pupils have only a limited experience of composition. Their work is at a low level, lacking structure, musical expression and dynamics. They have a poor vocabulary of technical musical language, which prevents them from accurately appraising the music they hear. A large proportion of pupils cannot develop or extend their musical ideas. They do not demonstrate a secure sense of rhythm when trying to maintain their own parts within a group. A minority of pupils throughout the key stage have very poor concentration. This lack of concentration, particularly during practical activities and listening exercises, can be disruptive to the rest of the class and hinder learning.

169. Standards of performing and composing in Years 10 and 11 are well below average. Pupils do not have the in-depth musical knowledge normally expected at this stage. The level of composing work is substantially lower than that found in other similar schools. Progress at Years 10 and 11 is also unsatisfactory for the majority of pupils, as borne out by the recent poor examination results and by observation of pupils' work during the inspection. None of the current Year 11 pupils receive instrumental tuition. This significantly restricts their performance standards. The vast majority of Year 10 and 11 pupils cannot demonstrate suitable understanding of musical history and harmonic analysis. They have a low level of knowledge of some basic musical techniques, such as musical forms and harmonic structures. Although some understand the concept of musical intervals they cannot use any harmony to enhance their pieces. Most can recognise the sounds of popular instruments, but none could

accurately name a composer from the Baroque or Classical periods when asked. Most cannot read musical notation and fail to use technical vocabulary when describing music. Year 11 pupils have a poor knowledge of the historical and theoretical aspects of the GCSE examination syllabus: for example, during a listening exercise over half the class incorrectly identified the styles and periods of several musical excerpts. The majority of pupils in Year 10 and 11 are keen to learn and enjoy the subject. Most pupils can work co-operatively in small groups, as was demonstrated in a Year 10 lesson when the whole class produced a performance using guitars, keyboards and percussion.

170. The music department has made unsatisfactory progress since the last inspection. In some areas there has been significant deterioration. Standards throughout the school remain very low. The quality of teaching and learning is still unsatisfactory. Resources are unsatisfactory, with shortages in instruments from other cultures, ICT equipment and music software. Many of the percussion instruments and keyboards are badly damaged. This restricts access to the kind of sound sources required to fulfil the National Curriculum programmes of study. Music extra-curricular activities did not occur at the time of the inspection. There is no instrumental tuition available to the pupils. This results in missed opportunities to enhance the normal curriculum and prevents talented pupils from developing their musicianship. The head of the performing arts faculty has plans to increase the amount of extra-curricular activities within the school in the near future.
171. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory, which results in low levels of progress and achievement. In one Year 8 lesson the pace and challenge were poor and unclear explanations by the teacher resulted in the pupils making poor progress. The management of pupils is unsatisfactory and expectations are generally low. Homework is regularly set but fails to enhance work undertaken in lessons. Marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and rarely informs them of their progress.
172. The department has undergone immense disruption due to long-term problems with recruitment and retention of suitable specialist staff. The current teacher is a good musician with a secure knowledge of the subject, which he tries to pass on to the pupils. The leadership and monitoring of the subject fail to ensure clear educational direction. The senior management of the school have tried to address the staffing problems by utilising their skills in delivering the subject. The newly appointed head of faculty has imaginatively employed the services of an external professional company of visiting performance artists to supplement the curriculum for some Year 7 to 9 classes. The pace and challenge of these sessions are high, which results in pupils being motivated and enthusiastic. Whilst the quality of these practical activities is good and valued highly by the pupils, they do not deliver the statutory requirements for the subject.
173. The music curriculum fails to meet the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. Planning for the subject is poor. It is not based on the National Curriculum and fails to ensure that the full range of abilities is catered for. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 do not experience music from different cultures. Assessment is generally poor: pupils are unaware of its meaning and it does not relate to the National Curriculum levels. There is a high reliance on commercial worksheets, which results in very unmusical and unrewarding lessons. Pupils have not had the opportunity to explore a range of musical activities that integrate performing, composing and appraising. They do not have access to ICT to create, manipulate and refine sounds and they have virtually no experience of composing their own music. They have not been taught how to develop their voices, so consequently the quality of singing is poor. Most pupils have made unsatisfactory progress in music since coming to Stanley Park.

174. It is clear that the school has experienced major recruitment and retention problems in music, which accounts for many of the difficulties outlined above. The steady decline in standards and teaching quality is seriously hindering learning. Pupils are making unsatisfactory progress and they are becoming increasingly disillusioned with the subject. The status and direction of the subject within the school need to be addressed urgently. The lack of instrumental tuition hinders the musicianship of the more musically talented pupils. The school needs to take urgent strategic action to address the currently unsatisfactory provision for the subject.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Overall, the quality of provision in physical education is satisfactory.

### **Strengths**

- The overall quality of teaching and learning is good.
- There is good, imaginative curricular and extra-curricular provision.
- The standard of trampolining is good.
- The majority of pupils have positive attitudes.

### **Areas for improvement**

- Standards are below average.
- Assessment needs to make closer reference to the National Curriculum.
- Take-up of girls aged 14 to 16 for GCSE courses and extra-curricular activities.
- Consistency in teaching pupils the skills to evaluate their own work and others' performance.
- Inadequate on-site facilities.

175. Standards of attainment are below average at ages 14 and 16. However, given the low level of attainment on entry to school, this represents satisfactory progress and achievement. Standards of work seen during the inspection were higher than teachers' assessments. This apparent difference is mostly explained by the high level of absenteeism, failure of some pupils to regularly bring kit, resulting in their non-participation for that lesson, and the poor indoor facilities. In recent years, examination results have been close to averages for similar schools, but below for all secondary schools. Results in physical education are generally higher than the same pupils obtain in their other subjects. Small minorities of pupils achieve very high standards – for example, in football. Standards are limited elsewhere, despite good teaching, mainly due to lack of continuity of learning, and inadequate outdoor accommodation. Standards are lower than at the time of the last inspection, largely due to the changes in the ability level of pupils. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls or between other groups of pupils.

176. Overall, pupils' achievements are higher in individual activities, such as athletics, than in team games, and the school has been successful in borough athletics competitions. The standard of trampolining is good throughout the school. Pupils' basic games skills are very low on entry to the school, and pupils rarely play a full game due to lack of on-site playing fields. This adversely affects the standard of team games such as football and hockey. With an increase in subject time, pupils are now able to use facilities in the locality. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, usually make good progress in knowledge, understanding and skills in lessons. For example, all pupils know the basic rules of major games. Gains in practical skills in lessons are not necessarily reflected in higher standards over time. This is because of a lack of

continuity of learning due to change of teachers, absence of pupils, and deficiencies in schemes of work. There is evidence that the recently introduced schemes of work are improving consistency, for example, in the teaching of evaluation skills. In a Year 9 gymnastics lesson, boys correctly evaluated the quality of their balances with reference to National Curriculum levels.

177. The standard in Year 11 lessons seen during the inspection ranged from below average to above average, but was below average overall. A strong feature of most lessons is pupils' knowledge and ability to either lead, or conduct their own effective warm-ups. Examination pupils make better progress than pupils in core lessons because the assessment procedure is more tightly structured. This system has now been extended to all pupils. A small number of higher attaining boys play football with considerable skill, accuracy and consistency. For example, in order to initiate attacking play, they successfully switched the ball from one side of the pitch to the other. In trampolining, the majority of pupils have a good grasp of all the basic moves, such as 'swivel hips' and 'seat' and 'front' drops. In performing their sequences they show good poise, height and body shape. The standard of practical work of examination pupils is higher than the standard of theory work. Poor literacy skills hinder the progress of low attaining pupils.
178. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, and ranges from very good to unsatisfactory. Teachers' knowledge is communicated in language that pupils can readily understand, and is good in GCSE courses. In one lesson seen, pupils quickly grasped the concept of body somatotypes, applied the principles to their own body type, and related this knowledge to different sports. Good lesson planning, pace and generally good time management strengthen teaching, and result in improved basic skills. Imaginative use of resources, such as the video recorder, both maintains interest and also raises standards of work. After seeing a video of advanced trampolinists performing basic moves, Year 8 girls doubled the height of their bounces. Teachers' skill, knowledge and understanding of pupils with special educational needs enable these pupils to make good progress in lesson because work is either adapted, or approached differently. Some good opportunities for pupils to organise their learning were observed, which contributed effectively to their personal development. The main weaknesses of teaching are a lack of consistency of methods, and inadequate use of assessment. Pupils lack awareness of their standards of work in relation to National Curriculum levels. The only unsatisfactory teaching seen resulted in lack of progress among pupils because the tasks set did not engage their interest. Effective class management, including the management of pupils with behavioural difficulties, ensures a safe, calm working environment. Apart from lack of concentration on the part of a substantial minority, the attitudes, behaviour, and standard of dress of most pupils is good. Very few pupils sit out of lessons because they have forgotten their kit.
179. The department is well led. The new head of department has made some effective changes to lesson planning, schemes of work, and assessment procedures. The curriculum has been broadened to include a wider range of activities in order to capture pupils' enthusiasm and interest. Provision for extra-curricular activities is good and some imaginative activities, such as lacrosse, have been introduced. The school is through to the South of England final in the Panathlon Challenge, which involves over 100 pupils competing against other schools in ten different activities, including chess, cycling, and table-tennis. Girls in Years 10 and 11 are under-represented both in extra-curricular activities and examination courses. Despite less than satisfactory progress since the time of the last inspection, the department is now set to improve provision.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Overall, the quality of provision for religious education is unsatisfactory.

### **Strengths**

- The quality of teaching has improved significantly in recent years.
- Comprehensive schemes of work that match the needs of pupils of differing abilities.
- Good knowledge of the pupils with special educational needs.

### **Areas for improvement**

- Raising the status of religious education in the school.
- Meeting statutory requirements in Years 10 and 11 and the sixth form.
- Developing assessment procedures, including the use of assessment information to raise standards.
- Improving the schemes of work by adding opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Working towards religious education as a viable GCSE subject in the future.

180. Standards are well below average in Year 9 in relation to the standards expected in the local Agreed Syllabus for religious education. In lessons and work seen during the inspection, standards in Year 9 were also well below expectations. There were no differences between the attainment of boys and girls. Standards achieved are adversely affected by several factors. These include: too many pupils are passive learners; insufficient curriculum time for religious education; and poor attendance by some pupils. During the inspection week many of the classes had nearly one-third of the pupils absent. There is wide variation in pupils' response, from good to unsatisfactory. Pupils do not always show respect for one another and unsatisfactory behaviour by a significant minority of pupils, both boys and girls, adversely affects standards reached in Year 9.

181. Christianity predominates in the Year 7 to 9 curriculum, with the other principal religions represented in Great Britain – Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism and Sikhism – being systematically introduced. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 are beginning to identify some of the beliefs of the religions studied. Learning is superficial, mostly factual, and involves little personal reflection or empathy. The contribution of the subject to pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory although there are few opportunities for spiritual development. There is insufficient time for in-depth study. Pupils study religions in isolation and most pupils are unable to compare what religions have in common and how they differ.

182. There is no significant difference between the progress made by boys and girls. Gifted and talented pupils, those with English as an additional language, and pupils with special educational needs all make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment. Most pupils express themselves better orally than in written form. Average and less able pupils sometimes limited success with writing tasks sometimes, often failing to complete their work or to present it neatly except when supported by teaching assistants; without support they struggle with writing. Pupils' recall of previous lessons is generally poor. For example, a review of past work on Sikhism produced little response from pupils, and most Year 8 pupils were unable to find Bible references without the teacher's help.

183. The quality of teaching is satisfactory or sometimes better, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Teaching is based on imparting factual knowledge, but there is also a commitment to developing attitudes and values. Strengths in teaching include a good command of the subject, precise schemes of work and good relationships with

pupils. Clear aims and objectives are shared with pupils at the start of lessons with a recap of learning at the end, and there are good questioning skills and effective classroom control. Teaching methods ensure the inclusion of all pupils, with appropriate differentiation in class and homework. The curriculum is enhanced by visiting speakers including a Christian theatre group and by a visit to Canterbury Cathedral.

184. All of the 560 pupils grouped in 22 classes at Years 7 to 9 are taught by the one religious education teacher. It is a considerable achievement that all books are regularly marked, and the teacher places importance on basic literacy skills. Homework is set regularly to enhance pupils' learning in class. Quick quizzes are used for testing pupils' knowledge with a formal examination at the end of each year. There is an appropriate, separate examination paper for lower-attainers. Weaknesses in teaching include the quality and use of ongoing assessment, lack of information and communication technology in religious education lessons and pupils' inadequate knowledge of their own learning. Pupils are dependent on the teacher as the key resource and, although learning is satisfactory overall, the acquisition of knowledge is very slow. There is insufficient in-class support in lessons containing a significant number of pupils with behavioural difficulties in the same teaching group. This hinders most pupils' learning, as seen in a Year 8 lesson when seven pupils needed the teacher's help at the same time.
185. The present accommodation is unsatisfactory. It is too small, and this affects the quality of the curriculum and restricts teaching methods. There is a lack of stimulating resources, too few artefacts, no computer and inadequate storage space. Frequently textbooks have to be shared and this further restricts pupils' learning.
186. Improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. Religious education is not taught to Years 10 and 11, or in the sixth form, which breaches statutory requirements. Consequently, pupils are not working towards a viable religious education GCSE course. The proportion of curriculum time allocated to religious education in Years 7 to 9, at one 50-minute lesson a week, is insufficient and is half that for geography and history. However, appropriate schemes of work, aligned to the Sutton Agreed Syllabus and the recommendations by SACRE, have been implemented and are regularly reviewed. Religious education makes some contribution to pupils' personal development, but there are few opportunities for spiritual development.
187. Pupils of different faiths are sensitively supported – for example, the teacher made arrangements for a room to be available for prayer by Muslims, and when fasting during Ramadan. The school's aims and values are reflected in religious education and the head of department has a clear vision for the future.

## **VOCATIONAL COURSES**

188. There were no direct observations of vocational lessons during the inspection and it was therefore not possible to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning.
189. Overall, the quality of provision in vocational courses is good.
190. The Year 10 to 11 curriculum was expanded in 2001 to include vocational studies in order to raise achievement, particularly amongst the less academic pupils and those who were disengaged at school, at risk of exclusion, or with poor attendance. Three vocational courses, in partnership with North East Surrey College of Technology (NESCOT), have been established; foundation certificate in general construction, childcare and horticulture and animal care. In addition, pupils have the opportunity to

take other qualifications including a food hygiene certificate, a CYA exercise to music award and NVQ 1 units in animal care. Pupils spend one day a week at the college and in addition have two lessons in school.

191. There is considerable enthusiasm amongst the pupils for these courses and all pupils who were interviewed were very positive about their experiences. They confirmed that their self-confidence had increased, as well as their motivation and the willingness to attend school on a regular basis. Many of the pupils had a clearer view of their futures and wanted to continue studying post 16. The college courses are well attended. The staff at NESOT spoke warmly of the enthusiasm of the pupils, the development of team skills and their willingness to become involved in all aspects of the courses.
192. These courses have already improved motivation and attendance of the 75 pupils taking them and it is hoped that this will improve performance in other GCSE subjects. The link with the college has led to increased links with local firms, with the careers service and with the feeder primary schools where childcare experience is provided. The Years 10 to 11 curriculum has been widened considerably for a large number of the pupils; this development should lead to increased qualifications and a general raising of achievement at the end of Year 11. These initiatives are providing a wider curriculum for many pupils and the development is strongly supported by the pupils themselves.

**PART E: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM**

193. In the inspection, five subjects and courses were inspected and are reported on in detail. Work in other subjects and courses was sampled and contributed to the overall picture of teaching and learning in the school.

194. The table below shows entry and performance information for courses completed in 2001<sup>5</sup>.

**GCE AS level courses**

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
English	7	100		0		28.6	
Mathematics	32	78		13		22.9	
Chemistry	8	25		0		7.5	
Biology	13	46		0		12.3	
Art and design	5	100		0		36.0	
Geography	9	89		22		31.1	
Drama	4	100		50		42.5	
Business education	11	82		18		30.9	

**GCE A level and AVCE courses**

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
English	11	91		18		4.0	
Chemistry	2	50		0		3.0	
Biology	3	33		0		2.0	
Art and design	4	50		0		2.5	
Geography	6	50		0		2.7	
Drama.	4	100		50		7.0	
Business education	8	88		50		6.8	
ICT GNVQ	14	100		71		7.9	
Travel & Tourism GNVQ	3	33		0		2.0	
Design and technology	7	71		0		2.3	

<sup>5</sup> At the time of publishing the report, comparative national data was not available



General studies	2	100		50			
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## SUBJECTS AND COURSES GROUPED IN CURRICULUM AREAS

### MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCES

195. The inspection focus was on mathematics and chemistry. It was possible to sample the work in biology. The quality of provision in biology is satisfactory. The examination results of the small group of students taking the subject are as expected, given their GCSE results. Teachers use a good variety of teaching techniques and students respond positively. The subject is managed well.

#### Mathematics

196. The mathematics department currently runs an AS course in Year 12, a GCSE re-take course and a key skills numeracy course.

Overall, the quality of provision in mathematics is good.

#### Strengths

- The teaching on all courses is good.
- Teachers have good relationships with students and give generously of their time to provide extra help.
- Students on all courses have positive attitudes towards their work and, where their commitment is particularly high, do better than expected.

#### Areas for improvement

- The confidence and experience of staff in teaching the AS and A2 courses
- Students on the GCSE and the AS courses are not able to attend all lessons because of timetable clashes.
- Students on the AS course do not yet work sufficiently together to tackle the homework problems set.

197. Since the sixth form was established in 1998 students have started A-level and A-level supplementary (AS) courses in Year 12 with lower standards than is usual nationally. As a consequence results in A and AS examinations have not been as good as those nationally. They are also not as good as those in most other subjects at these levels in the school. Results are variable and do not always reflect previous performance at GCSE. A few students underachieve but some do better than expected. This is due to their hard work and commitment to succeed. In summer 2001 three out of six candidates passed the A-level examination, but none obtained the higher A-B grades. In summer 2000 one student out of four passed. No students took the new AS examination in summer 2001, deciding to undertake further study and to take it this year. In summer 2000 three out of six students passed the AS examination.

198. Currently nine students from both Years 12 and 13 are studying the AS course. Their progress is satisfactory, although the overall standard is below that expected nationally. The need to revise basic algebra skills and other aspects of GCSE work at the beginning of the course means that the students do not yet have the depth of knowledge and understanding expected by this stage of the course. However, they are still on target to complete the different elements for the examination in summer 2002 and they now show sound algebra skills. This is a very important skill for all aspects of the course. Some students find the course demanding and although they understand the work in class they have difficulty in completing questions at home on their own. For

some the amount of independent work required is greater than expected. The students appear rarely to work together outside lessons to support each other in completing the problems set by the teacher. As no students sat the AS course in summer 2001, no students in Year 13 are currently taking the A2 course.

199. Results for students taking the GCSE re-sit course over the last few years have been variable. Although attitudes towards learning are positive, many students find it difficult to improve on their previous grades, especially to reach a grade C or better. However, current students are achieving well and in their first module test a significant number showed improved performance on that achieved last summer in Year 11. Students on the key skills numeracy course work at appropriate levels. Last summer a few students gained the highest level.
200. Teaching on the AS course, GCSE re-sit course and the key skills numeracy course is good. All three courses are planned carefully to ensure that topics and approaches meet the students' learning needs: for example, the GCSE re-sit students are given an outline copy of the teachers' topic planning, because they are unable to attend all lessons due to timetable clashes. This enables them to cover the work required in their own time and not to fall behind. In both this course and the key skills course the well-organised individual support is proving effective. On the A-level Subsidiary course, the teacher uses question and answer techniques well to encourage the students to explain their answers and to deepen their understanding. He uses diagrams effectively to help them grasp the basic principles and ideas, such as in work on probability rules. These approaches give the students good strategies to help them with their individual work. Although students are competent users of calculators, computers are not yet used as much as they could be to support students' learning.
201. All teachers observed had very good relationships with their students and they give generously of their time outside lessons to help them with their work. The students have positive attitudes towards learning and appreciate the help they receive. In all sessions seen boys and girls worked equally well, as did students from different ethnic groups and those with English as an additional language.
202. Teachers show good subject knowledge for the courses they teach. However, currently the department has only one teacher confident and with sufficient expertise to teach the advanced level courses. The head of department recognises this is an area for staff development. Although results are below national averages, the sixth form courses in mathematics provide students with worthwhile learning experiences.

## **Chemistry**

Overall, the quality of provision in chemistry is satisfactory.

### **Strengths**

- Teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic.
- A wide variety of teaching styles is used.
- Relationships between teachers and students are good.
- Students make satisfactory progress, though many lack a good foundation at GCSE.

### **Areas for improvement**

- Marking is uninformative and sometimes non-existent.
- Use of information technology is insufficient.

203. In 2001, six out of eight candidates failed at A/S level and one of the remainder withdrew from the examination. Of the three A-level candidates, one failed while the two others obtained C and D grades. In the two previous years, the picture was similar, although the department justly takes pride in a girl who left in 2000 to read chemistry at university, having obtained a B grade at school; she subsequently became the top chemistry student in her college. Standards on entry to the sixth form courses are low, and have been so since the sixth form was established. Many students begin Year 12 with a moderate GCSE pass and a limited understanding of science. Viewed in this context, the low grade GCE A-level and A/S results represent satisfactory achievement by the students.
204. Teaching groups typically number three or four students. Teaching time is reduced by timetable clashes with other subjects, principally geography and, in Year 13, with repeat A/S courses for those who failed modules in Year 12. Thus some Year 13 students, who already find the demands of A-level difficult, are additionally handicapped.
205. The attainment of current students indicates that a similar pattern of results is likely in 2002. In a Year 13 lesson, only two students were present. One was able to work out the oxidation states of vanadium in complex ions, but the other could not. His chemical knowledge did not go beyond GCSE C-grade standard; for example, he was unable to explain why powdered zinc would react more quickly than larger lumps. Neither student could suggest alternatives to zinc as a reducing agent. In Year 12, the range of ability is greater. In a lesson on trends across the Periodic Table, there was a very wide range in responses given by the six students. One or two found difficulty even in describing the trends accurately, whilst the best could account for them appropriately in quantum theory terms.
206. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Chemistry is taught by enthusiastic staff who know the subject and students well. Relationships between students and teachers are effective, warm and good humoured without being over-familiar. Laboratory facilities are good, with good technician support. There is a wide range of teaching styles, including the use of molecular models, presentations by students and use of the internet. Nevertheless, too little use of computers is incorporated into schemes of work
207. The marking of homework and other tasks is a weakness, although teachers are very willing to talk to students and to provide additional help. Most students' files are copious, reflecting considerable personal effort, although some work is unfinished. Sometimes notes are marked for factual accuracy, but this is exceptional; there are many uncorrected factual errors and almost no diagnostic comments. A few basic, numerical exercises were marked in Year 12, but Year 13 students who had completed whole series of calculations about equilibria and reaction rates had not had their work marked.
208. The management of science is satisfactory overall and the head of department is aware that improvements are needed in several important areas. For example, the use of ICT by the students as a tool for learning and personal research is not sufficiently developed. Assessment and marking procedures are not clear to students and teachers. The use made of assessment information to set targets and of marking to provide students with strategies of how precisely to improve their work are not firmly established. Opportunities for professional development through sharing good practice, both between the chemistry teachers themselves and with the staff who teach sixth form biology, are not regularly planned. At the time of the last inspection there was not a sixth form. The science department has done well in providing sixth form chemistry in the short time the course has been running.

## **ENGINEERING, DESIGN AND MANUFACTURING**

209. The school does not offer post-16 courses in this curriculum area. .

## **BUSINESS**

210. The main focus of the inspection was on business education.

### **Business education**

Overall the quality of the provision in business education is good and improving.

#### **Strengths**

- Teaching is good overall, reflecting the strength of the teachers' subject knowledge. There is a good understanding of how students learn most effectively.
- The active involvement of all students in discussions, and their positive attitudes.
- Good use of information and communication technology in supporting students' independent learning.
- The high quality of the students' coursework.
- The academic progress achieved by students.
- Good leadership and management.

#### **Areas for improvement**

- The addition of a second dedicated business education room.
- Developing further links with local businesses.

211. The results achieved at A-level in 2001 were very good, with all candidates achieving an A to D grade. About 50 per cent of those taking the examination gained an A grade. This is well above the national average and this represents a very significant improvement for most students in relation to their GCSE examination grades. The Year 12 students also did well in their AS examination. Eleven students sat the examination and nine obtained B to D grades. Over 50 per cent achieved B to C grades; this was a very good start to the new examination. The number of students continuing with their study into a second year matches the national picture and it gives a good indication of the students' commitment to and interest in the subject. Business students in the sixth form achieve well.

212. Standards in lessons and in written work were good overall with particularly good attainment in the coursework, which is consistently thorough in its planning, research and in its findings. In the Year 12 AS class, discussion was lively and the students had a good understanding of motivational theory in the workplace. They used the internet to complete a personal characteristics questionnaire, which gave insight into what motivates them in the workplace. This is an excellent example of fusing theory with business practice. The Year 13 A-level class worked effectively in groups to analyse the benefits for countries of companies relocating internationally. The discussion was brought together by effective use of the whiteboard. The students were thoroughly knowledgeable and could reflect effectively on the strengths and weaknesses of relocation issues. Collaborative work was of a high standard as was the students' concentration.

213. Teaching is good overall. The staff are very secure in their own knowledge of the subject and their classroom management skills are of a high order. Planning is very

good and support material is of a high quality. Teachers' enthusiasm for business education is readily shared with the students, who learn well as a result. The teaching approach is rigorous and is very appropriate for supporting student self-learning. The methodology is strongly supported by the students, who welcome the problem-solving approach. In discussion they confirm that the teaching style in the department increases their motivation and encourages them to set high personal study standards. A judicious use of praise supports learning and progress. Relationships between students and with staff are very strong and support an environment in which students gain in confidence and develop strong study skills.

214. Students learn well. They have a real sense of purpose and a desire to achieve high standards. Good progress is made throughout the course. Students enjoy business education and are pleased with the level and variety of the resources. They like the learning environment of the business education room and the open access afforded to them. They confirmed that they receive good feedback from the teachers and that they use the learning resource centre and the internet on a regular basis. The students enjoyed the residential trip to Amsterdam and the variety of Dutch businesses that were studied.
  
215. The good teaching and learning are the result of very effective leadership and management. The head of department has, in three years, established an ethos of achievement and she has a clear view about how the department may develop still further. The students won the 2000 Middlesex University Business Challenge and were finalists in 2001. This is an indication of the standards of learning already established in the department. New business courses have been introduced into Year 10, which are likely in time to increase further the demand at post-16 level. Currently, the one dedicated business education room is sufficient for post-16 students but it is insufficient already for the numbers of younger business pupils. The department needs a further room if the high quality learning environment is to be maintained. One area for further development is to strengthen the existing links with local businesses so that the students have wider experience of the range of commercial activities near to the school. Business education has developed strongly over the last three years and can be seen as one of the strengths of the school.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

216. The focus of the inspection was on information and communication technology.

Overall, the quality of provision for information and communication technology is good.

### Strengths

- The high quality of teaching and teachers' knowledge of the subject.
- Students' attitudes to and motivation for the subject.
- The modern computer network.
- The number of students on specialist courses.

### Areas for improvement

- The addition of an AS-level course.

217. Attainment of students on entry to the course was below the national average: the entry requirement is four GCSE passes at A\*-C grades. All students have passed the 'key skills' course in information and communication technology at Level 2 and two-thirds of those entering the AVCE course have passed the GNVQ, part 1, at intermediate level. All students take the successful key skills courses in information and communication technology at Level 3. Last year the examination results were disappointing for the school, being just above the national average, but many students achieved the highest grades and their progress was very good. A new GNVQ full course at intermediate level has been successfully launched in Year 12 and early indications are that standards are satisfactory. Last year 14 students took the GNVQ course at advanced level and the examination results were broadly in line with the national average. This course was replaced by the AVCE course in September 2000 and the examination results last year, at the end of Year 12, were significantly above the national average. (Two of the eight students are waiting for their final module to be marked). These outcomes represent good achievement. Computing is applied in a number of other departments including business education, design and technology, English and mathematics. There is no gifted and talented initiative, as such, but a number of students have produced work of outstanding quality.

218. The overall standard of learning is good. The department offers a wide range of modular courses at different and appropriate levels; the introduction of an AS-level course would improve the range even further. The modules cover a wide range of applications of computing including presenting information, publishing, spreadsheet design, systems installation and configuration, systems analysis, database design, use of the internet, and web-site design. Modules on the impact of computing on society are also included. In a good key skills lesson in Year 12, students developed an itinerary for a five-day visit of a relative which involved researching on the internet the weather forecast, local geography and places of interest. In a good GNVQ lesson in Year 12 students were preparing for an examination of their understanding of computer hardware and software, and, in another, learning about graphics and desktop publishing. In a very good AVCE lesson students were learned about methods to test software, and, in another, worked on the impact of computing on society and on spreadsheets. Some students on the AVCE course were working on units to improve the results they had previously obtained. The department offers a well-attended computer club in which sixth form students assist teachers to provide help and advice to young pupils and a breakfast internet club which is run and organised entirely by students from the AVCE course.

219. The standard of teaching is good overall and very good in two out of five lessons. All teachers have a good knowledge of the subject, plan lessons well and give good advice and help to students when needed in practical work. Teachers introduce topics well and have high expectations. The attitudes and behaviour of students are very good. All are eager to learn and they progress well. The relationship between students and teachers is very good and there is always a good working atmosphere in lessons. In general, homework involves working on unfinished class work and is a little limited in scope.
220. The department is very well led by an experienced, and enthusiastic teacher, who is ably supported by his colleagues. Teachers meet regularly and discuss an appropriate range of topics. There is a good departmental handbook. A new and modern computer network has recently been introduced. Accommodation and software are good and meet the present needs of courses. The application of computing in other departments is not sufficiently developed. The department has made very good recent progress since the establishment of the sixth form, after the date of the last inspection.

### **HOSPITALITY, SPORTS, LEISURE AND TRAVEL**

221. No subjects in this curriculum area were inspected in depth, but it was possible to sample travel and tourism and hospitality and catering.
222. The quality of provision in travel and tourism is satisfactory. The AVCE examination results are below average, with 30 per cent of students gaining A\* - C grades in the unit for tourism development. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Management of the subject is good and there have been good improvements since the subject was introduced.
223. The quality of provision in hospitality and catering is good. The course was started during the current year and is already very well established. One lesson was observed and the teaching was good, leading to students being very motivated and determined to succeed. Effective links have been built up with local businesses and a college of further education. Although A-level and AS results are below average pupils make good progress and achieve well

### **HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**

224. The school does not offer post-16 courses in health and social care.

### **VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS AND MEDIA**

225. No subject was inspected in depth, but the work in art and drama was sampled.
226. The quality of provision in art is satisfactory. However, the subject is not well time-tabled as students are taught at different times, including after school, and many do not come together to share ideas and learn from each other. Teaching is good and students develop their skills in a range of techniques. The numbers taking the examination have been too small to make comparisons with national averages. Art is managed well and there is increasing evidence from students' work to indicate the improvements that are being achieved.
227. The quality of provision in drama is very good. The most recent results at A-level have been good, with half the small number entered obtaining higher grades (A and B). The quality of teaching and learning observed shows that this level is being improved upon

further. As a result of very good teaching, students gain a high level of understanding and very good levels of skill to deploy performance techniques when collaborating together in class. Very good subject knowledge of dramatic literature, acting and practical theatre skills, are used to inform lesson planning and to question students supportively to extend and promote their knowledge and further understanding. Written work benefits from excellent assessment and individual guidance, leading to very good achievement in written work to tackle theory and background to the subject. As a result, students' quality of work is good, and achievement is very good in relation to levels reached when they started the course.

## HUMANITIES

228. No subject was inspected in depth but the work in geography was sampled. The quality of provision in geography is good. The first examination results in 2001 were better than expected. All of the students have continued with the A2 course this year, reflecting their commitment to the subject. The teaching is good and has ensured that students make good progress. Management of the subject is very good and this has ensured a good start to the course.

## ENGLISH, LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION

229. The focus of the inspection was on English. The inspection dealt with the A-level and AS courses offered by the school.

Overall, the quality of provision in English is good.

### Strengths

- Teachers' very good subject knowledge, used well to plan lessons, and to question and prompt students.
- Students' very good attitudes and behaviour, underpinning their commitment to learning and study.
- Effective planning of lessons to build upon previous knowledge and skills.
- Good guidance given to students when written work is marked, enabling them to know specifically what they need to do in order to improve.

### Areas for improvement

- Teaching to improve students' capacity to think and research independently in the first year of the course.
- Ways to help students discuss and express their ideas in preparation for written assignments.
- Library facilities, to provide opportunities for independent study.

230. Results in A-level English literature improved in 2001. Because small numbers of students enter the examination, it is not possible, to make meaningful comparisons between the performance of boys and girls or other groups in the past and in lessons observed. Virtually all students have obtained a pass grade over the last three years, and in the most recent year, one in five obtained a higher grade. Nevertheless, overall performance is below the national picture. In the last two years, results for those re-taking GCSE English examinations have been poor, but again, only small numbers are involved.

231. The department does well for its students, and the standard of work seen in lessons confirms an improving trend in attainment, and good achievement. Nonetheless, the



overall quality of students' spoken contributions in the AS level course falls short of that expected; they often lack confidence to take the initiative and develop ideas at any length, despite well-focused teacher efforts to draw them out. In their second year of the A-level course, students' confidence improves so that they are prepared to develop ideas autonomously, explain the results of independent research and to discuss texts sensibly. Written work demonstrates an ability to marshal ideas, without excessive help, from what they have learned in class. Here, students convey competently examples of how the language of a poem may communicate detail and ideas as well as thought and emotion. For example, they developed clear lines of argument to contrast different views of death in battle, when comparing Laurence Binyon's 'For the Fallen' with Tennyson's 'The Charge of the Light Brigade'. Nevertheless, approximately half the students have difficulty adopting the expected formal tone of expression appropriate for written critical analysis, but this improves by the second year in response to teachers' careful marking of written work.

232. In Year 12, students are skilled in annotating texts to highlight relevant details, and use well the knowledge gained from earlier years. For example, one group studying Chaucer's 'Wife of Bath's Tale' recalled appropriate historical background details from their earliest years in the school, adding to this useful information selected from an internet search. Another group made very rapid progress in identifying and summarising significant conflicts in the first scene of Shakespeare's 'King Lear', as well as in researching independently the political situation prevailing at the time of its first performance, and demonstrating how themes in the play related to historical national anxieties. In the second year of the course, students acquire and apply effectively the skills to identify significant features and details in texts, again using annotation, but allied to a higher quality of discussion and sharing of ideas. In one lesson, for example, in response to sensitive probing and questioning by the teacher, informed by good subject knowledge, they skilfully identified elements of historical and social setting, characterisation, and reflection of key themes when analysing together and reporting back on a single chapter of Sebastian Faulks' 'Birdsong'.
233. Students learn well in both A and AS-level courses because teaching is good overall. Most do better than expected, given their previous examination results. Teachers plan carefully and have high expectations of what their students can do, while taking sensitive account of the need to build their confidence and skill in advanced study. They prompt students subtly, directing them judiciously to relevant examples in the texts studied, encouraging them effectively to revisit and extend their thinking in depth, and to carry out independent research. In turn, students greatly appreciate their teachers' specialist knowledge and their ability to explain complex ideas to them clearly. Teachers mark work well so that students' work is evaluated constructively, and further thought and reflection are stimulated successfully. They also give students clear written advice on what they need to do in order to improve further. Again, this is a feature of teaching which students find particularly helpful in supporting their progress.
234. Teachers are well qualified and experienced. English is led effectively so that staff share ideas to maintain good standards of teaching. The library stock of biography, literary criticism and history is inadequate to promote the level of independent study expected at this stage. To compensate, students make good use of local public libraries. They have reasonable access to the internet in school and make good use of it for background research.