

INSPECTION REPORT

HIGHSHORE SCHOOL

Peckham, London

LEA area: Southwark

Unique reference number: 100872

Headteacher: Yvonne Conlon

Reporting inspector: Mary Last
17171

Dates of inspection: 30th September – 3rd October, 2002

Inspection number: 249291

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	11-17
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bellenden Road Peckham London
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Judy Smith
Date of previous inspection:	September 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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17171	Mary Last	Registered inspector	Music Modern foreign language (French)	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school. The school's results and pupils' achievements. Teaching and learning. Leadership and management
8941	John Fletcher	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. Pupils' welfare, health and safety. Partnership with parents
8810	Sue Aldridge	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Citizenship	
21397	Ingrid Bradbury	Team inspector	Physical education Religious education	
13101	Mike Kell	Team inspector	Mathematics	
27960	Jane Reed	Team Inspector	English English as an additional language	
22178	Kate Robertson	Team Inspector	Art History	
22391	Nick Smith	Team Inspector	Information and communication technology Geography Special educational needs	The quality and range of the curriculum and opportunities for learning.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Highshore is a mixed, day, community special school for 127 pupils aged from 11 to 17. There are seven Year 12 pupils who have repeated a year in the past. They are now in Year 11 classes, and follow the Year 11 curriculum. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Since the school was last inspected, it has been re-designated as catering for mixed needs and has admitted pupils with more complex needs, particularly in the early secondary classes. It now caters mainly for pupils with speech or communication difficulties, moderate learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural difficulties, autism, and physical difficulties. Over half the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is high compared with similar schools nationally. There are almost three times as many boys as girls. The school's population is ethnically diverse. White pupils make up the largest group of 77 pupils, 20 pupils are black Caribbean, and 12 are black Africans. There are a few pupils of Asian origin, and a few of mixed race. There are 14 pupils from homes where English is an additional language, and six of these are at an early stage of learning English.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school gives its pupils a sound standard of education. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall, and so is teaching. Pupils behave well, and have positive attitudes to their schoolwork. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve very well in art and music; achievement is good in English, design and technology, physical education, information and communication technology, and in science in Years 7 to 9.
- Pupils display good attitudes and behaviour, and become more responsible for their actions as they progress through the school.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and help to create a positive environment for learning.
- The school provides a very good range of breakfast, lunch and after-school clubs.

What could be improved

- Higher attaining pupils in Years 10 and 11 do not achieve well enough in science as their course work is not sufficiently challenging. In mathematics, work is not always matched to pupils' needs which limits the progress of the higher attainers.
- The senior management team is not rigorous enough in identifying and addressing weaknesses with a view to raising standards.
- Subject co-ordinators do not monitor teaching and learning sufficiently well to contribute to raising standards.
- The assessment of pupils' skills is inconsistent; information on their achievements is not well enough analysed and used to inform planning for improvement or whole-school target setting.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the action plan prepared by the appropriate authority.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was previously inspected in September 1997. Since then, improvement has been satisfactory. Pupils' achievements in the resistant materials strand of design and technology have improved. The school has worked hard to improve attendance, but although better, this

remains unsatisfactory in relation to similar schools. Punctuality at the start of the day remains unsatisfactory; this is linked to the late arrival of school transport. Curriculum planning has improved, but assessment information is not always used well to help with planning the next steps in learning. There are now co-ordinators for all subject areas, but their roles in monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning to contribute to raising standards remain under-developed. School development planning identifies priorities for the school, and the plan shows suitable monitoring arrangements. Senior staff are now better involved in leading whole-school initiatives.

STANDARDS

The table summarises inspectors' judgements about how well pupils achieve in relation to their individual targets.

Progress in:	by Year 9	by Year 11	Key	
speaking and listening	B	B	very good	A
reading	B	B	Good	B
writing	B	B	Satisfactory	C
mathematics	C	C	unsatisfactory	D
personal, social and health education	C	C	poor	E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	C	C		

Pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall. The achievement of average and lower attaining pupils is better than those of higher attaining pupils. Pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 achieve well overall, whilst the achievement of those in Years 10, 11 and 12 is satisfactory overall. Pupils achieve very well in art and music; they achieve well in English, design and technology, physical education, information and communication technology, and in science in Years 7 to 9. In mathematics, achievement is satisfactory overall, but higher attaining pupils – particularly the oldest - do not achieve as well as lower attaining pupils as they are not always well enough challenged. In science, higher attaining pupils in Years 10 and 11 do not achieve well enough; this is because the content of their courses is not challenging enough. Achievement in religious education, history, geography, French and personal, social and health education is satisfactory. The targets set in pupils' individual education plans are not specific enough for progress to be measured accurately, or to properly inform the whole school target setting process, but pupils make satisfactory gains in the broad areas identified. Last year, the school set challenging targets for pupils' achievement and other aspects, such as attendance. Not all of these were met. Target setting is now more refined, but it is too early to tell whether the most recent targets set for improving pupils' achievement will be achieved.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils show interest in their work, and a determination to do well. When tasks appeal to them, pupils concentrate hard, and take care in presenting their work. Clubs after school are attended well, including a homework club.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in classes and around the school. This creates an orderly environment that supports learning.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils show respect for individual differences, including values and beliefs. Staff and pupils enjoy very constructive relationships, which help to promote learning. Pupils generally get on well together, at work and play.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Pupils' attendance does not compare favourably with similar schools nationally. About a third of the pupils arrive late in the mornings, mostly because of the late arrival of school transport.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 7 – 9	Years 10 – 12
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory

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.

Although a high proportion of good teaching was seen during the inspection, some specific weaknesses in teaching emerged from a study of pupils' work over the last year, and from analysis of the match between tasks and pupils' abilities. Teaching is, therefore, judged to be satisfactory overall. It is very good in art and music, good in English, design and technology, physical education and information and communication technology. Teaching is satisfactory in mathematics, religious education, history, geography, and personal, social and health education. In science, teaching of pupils in Years 7 to 9 is good, in Years 10 and 11 it is unsatisfactory, although it is satisfactory for the few Year 12 pupils. Teaching of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills through other subjects is satisfactory. Strengths in teaching include very good relationships between staff and pupils, which create a harmonious learning environment, and the use of methods that generally interest pupils, such as practical tasks which involve them well. Team work between teachers and support staff is good, and support staff contribute well to pupils' learning. Pupils generally show good interest, concentrate well, and try to work independently. The failure to challenge higher attaining pupils is the most important weakness in teaching, and leads to these pupils' under-achievement in some subjects. Pupils' individual needs are met in a satisfactory manner overall, but teachers do not always take account of individual targets when they plan their lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. All subjects are taught as required and planning helps to ensure that most pupils continue to make gains in their knowledge, understanding and skills throughout their time in school. Strengths include the range of clubs, good vocational education, including careers and key skills education, and the very productive links with the community that enrich the curriculum. Targets in pupils' individual education plans are not consistently measurable which prevents a clear focus on promoting their progress; this is a weakness.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. Pupils who require this receive satisfactory support from the school. This helps to ensure that they make the same progress as pupils whose first language is English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There is good provision for developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' personal development is encouraged particularly well through the subjects of art, music, French, design and technology, personal, social and health education, and vocational education for the older pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are satisfactory procedures for checking on pupils' academic and personal development. However, the school's management team does not analyse assessment information in ways which enable the information to be used to raise standards.

The school works well in partnership with parents. They are welcomed by staff, and are given a good range of information about the work of the school and pupils' progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher and senior management team are successful in creating an environment in which pupils are valued as individuals, and there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. However, arrangements for identifying and addressing weaknesses are not rigorous enough.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Good. Governors are supportive and carry out their duties well. The headteacher keeps them well-informed via regular reports, and governors keep a check on the school's work through their committees and by visiting the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. Although strengths and some weaknesses are identified as part of monitoring activities, the scope of these is narrow, and the action taken does not ensure that achievement is systematically improved.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Resources are generally used well to support planned developments. Day-to-day financial arrangements are very good although strategic financial planning is weaker as the impact of spending decisions on raising standards is not assessed. The school seeks value for money in purchases and has worked to compare itself with similar

	schools, but the other criteria for best value, such as consultation of others and self-challenge, are not interwoven into the school's management practices to secure improvement.
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Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory. The school's library is good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are approachable • Pupils are expected to work hard and achieve their best • Staff work closely with parents • The school helps pupils to become mature and responsible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework

Inspectors agree with most of the parents' positive views of the school, although they have found that teachers' expectations of the higher attaining pupils in Years 10 and 11 are not always high enough. However, they find that arrangements for homework are satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In general, pupils in Years 10 and 11 are higher attainers than those in Years 7, 8 and 9, as the school has admitted more pupils with complex needs in these early secondary years. The younger pupils, and those in Year 12 achieve better than those in Years 10 and 11. This is because the older, higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently well challenged. There are no differences in the achievements of boys or girls, groups of pupils with different special educational needs, pupils from different ethnic backgrounds or those who come from homes where English is an additional language. Inevitably, a small number of pupils who do not attend regularly, or are persistently late for school, achieve less well than others.

2. In the past, the school has set targets to raise achievement, and these have been too demanding in some cases, so have not been achieved. For example, one target set out to raise pupils' reading ages by six months in the space of a year. It has now arrived at more realistic targets to raise achievement over the period from 2002 to 2004. In some respects these targets are demanding, as the school strives to increase the percentage of pupils who pass Certificate of Achievement examinations. However, expectations of achievement for higher attainers, currently in Year 10, are not high enough. The school does not yet have any information showing progress towards these targets, so it is not possible to say whether the targets are likely to be achieved.

3. Achievement in English is good across the school. Pupils achieve well in speaking and listening, reading and writing. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy in Years 7, 8 and 9 has given teachers a suitable structure for their lessons, and in Years 10, 11 and 12 nationally recognised qualifications have been introduced.

4. On entry to the school, most pupils listen to one another, take turns and follow verbal instructions. As they progress through the school, they improve their skills, by giving an account of what they have done in lessons, for example. They acquire vocabulary that is specific to subjects they study, such as science. Good support from a designated teacher ensures that pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress in language development too. Similarly, pupils with communication difficulties, who are well supported in the Language Support Unit, and by speech therapists, make good progress in developing their communication skills. By the time pupils leave the school, they are confident and competent communicators. They speak easily to adults at school, college, and on work experience.

5. The introduction of a whole-school reading scheme has helped to promote pupils' progress in reading, which is good. There is also careful teaching of letter and word sounds, which helps pupils to read words that they do not know on sight. Displays of key words associated with subjects ensure that many pupils become familiar with these. By the time they leave school, pupils read a variety of literature, social signs and newspapers. Their work on Anne Frank's diary shows that pupils are able to empathise with others' writings.

6. Good achievement in writing is linked to the teaching of letter sounds, which helps pupils with spelling skills, as well as pupils' own use of dictionaries and word processors when drafting. Pupils in Years 10, 11 and 12 use the spell checker on the computer when they have drafted a piece of writing, then amend it accordingly. Older pupils write factual reports, letters, poetry, and complete forms and diaries.

7. In science, pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 achieve well. In the summer of 2002, half of the pupils in Year 9 were assessed at Level 3 or above in national tests. A few of these attained Levels 4 or 5. However, for those in Years 10 and 11, achievement is unsatisfactory. Work completed by pupils in Years 10 and 11 last summer shows that much of the planned content was not taught. Although the school's results in the Entry Level Certificate of Educational Achievement (CoEA) for science suggest that pupils did well, pupils' work shows clearly that they could have done better if there had been less disruption caused by school trips. The present Year 10 and 11 pupils include a significant minority of higher attaining pupils who are following the CoEA course in science, yet they have already reached Level 3, which is the ceiling for this qualification. They are not sufficiently challenged, and are making unsatisfactory progress.

8. For most pupils, achievements in mathematics are satisfactory. By the time they reach Year 9, most pupils know how to add, subtract, multiply and divide; they know the properties of two-dimensional shapes, and use their skills to solve problems, such as calculating the cost of a meal from a given menu. The lower attaining pupils in years 10 and 11 follow the CoEA nationally accredited mathematics course. However, this is not demanding enough for the higher attainers. They are given more challenging work, and if attaining at a sufficiently high level, are taught from the GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education) foundation level course. However, this does not lead to GCSE accreditation. The school used to provide a GCSE course, but no longer does this. By Year 11, not all pupils are achieving as well as they could.

9. Pupils' achievements in art and music are very good, and both subjects have a high profile in the life of the school. High achievement is linked to very good teaching and the extremely broad range of learning experiences provided in both subjects. There is skilful teaching in both art and music, by subject specialists. In the summer of 2002, most pupils who were entered for the GCSE art examination obtained B or C grades, which is in line with national expectations for mainstream schools. Achievement in music is promoted well by the opportunities that pupils have to receive individual tuition during after-school clubs, as well as opportunities to perform in public, including at national venues such as the Purcell Room. By Year 11 and 12, higher attaining pupils play guitar, drums, keyboards, piano and a range of percussion instruments.

10. Pupils achieve well in design and technology, information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education. In all three subjects this is an improvement since the school was last inspected, but in design and technology the improvement is most marked, as achievement was poor in the resistant materials strand of the subject five years ago. Better co-ordination of the subject, combined with improved planning for resistant materials, has helped to secure improvement in design and technology. The resistant materials strand is now much better taught too. Pupils generate an increasingly complex range of design ideas as they move through the school, and by Year 11 and 12 they have made a good variety of artefacts; higher attainers are able to evaluate end products perceptively, making good use of their knowledge of construction methods.

11. Good achievement in ICT is the result of a well-planned curriculum and good teaching. Pupils soon become confident users of ICT, particularly for good presentation of their work. By Year 11 and 12, they can construct and get information from databases, make posters, draw graphs, and use the Internet to research and shop online.

12. In physical education, pupils are given a wealth of physically demanding learning experiences, well taught by a specialist teacher. By Year 11 and 12, pupils participate skilfully in a wide range of games, such as basketball.

13. Achievement in religious education, history, geography, French and personal, social and health education are satisfactory. At this early stage, it is not possible to make a judgement about how well pupils achieve in citizenship, which has been introduced recently.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Pupils' attitudes to the school and to their learning are good overall and make a significant contribution to the standards achieved. Parents are almost unanimous in saying that their children like school, and discussions with pupils confirm they are happy to be there. In lessons the vast majority of pupils show a genuine interest in their work and a determination to extend their knowledge and understanding. When teaching captures their imagination and the challenge is appropriate, pupils are eager to contribute, show enthusiasm for learning and become engrossed in the tasks. In a Year 10 personal and social education lesson on road safety pupils enthusiastically followed the routines, discussed the main issues in a mature fashion, tried hard to produce individual eye-witness statements, and were justifiably proud of their achievements by the end. The large numbers of pupils who keenly attend the very good range of after school clubs and activities clearly demonstrate pupils' positive attitudes.

15. Pupils' behaviour in the school is good and contributes to a safe and orderly environment that is conducive to learning. There is evidence to support improvement in behaviour for most pupils over their time at the school. In the vast majority of lessons, pupils act maturely, interact politely with adults and peers, maintain concentration well and make good progress. In some lessons, concentration can waiver, usually when pupils are pre-occupied or unsure, but teachers and support staff work effectively to keep pupils focused and learning. Pupils understand and respect the school's behaviour code and respond positively to encouragement, praise and the recognition of their efforts and achievements. Fixed term exclusions are high but are used appropriately as final sanctions. At breaks and lunch times, the school is generally an orderly environment in which pupils relax with each other in a responsible manner, although there can be some boisterous and excitable play. At the end of the day, a few pupils show little respect for others in their haste to board the buses. Most pupils had the confidence to exchange pleasantries with inspectors, and to engage them in sensible conversations. At the end of the inspection, one boy expressed the hope that inspectors had enjoyed their time in the school. Overall, the majority of pupils clearly feel safe and secure and respond well to the routines and expectations. The school has very clear procedures for dealing with bullying and harassment and no incidents were seen during the inspection.

16. Relationships between pupils and staff are very good and a real strength of the school. There is a great deal of mutual respect between pupils and adults and the trusting relationships make a significant contribution to learning. Most pupils are uninhibited and do not hesitate to discuss problems and seek advice on personal issues. The strong relationships with adults are often exemplified by the positive use of humour. Relationships between pupils are generally good and there are good examples in lessons of pupils working harmoniously together, sharing equipment, taking turns and being supportive of each other. In a Year 9 personal and social education lesson on bullying, pupils took turns to make their views known, listened politely to others and showed great patience and understanding when waiting for a boy with a speech difficulty to make his contribution. There can be flash points between pupils where unkind things are said but these are very well dealt with by staff and quickly forgotten. Pupils' levels of personal and social development are satisfactory. In lessons, most are very dependent on the teachers and there is little evidence of pupils taking responsibility for furthering their own learning. However, in a Year 11 religious education lesson on Ramadan, pupils took the initiative in developing the discussion and showed a high

level of respect and interest in the beliefs of the Islamic faith as expressed by one Muslim boy in the group.

17. Attendance has improved since the last inspection but is still unsatisfactory. The targets for improving attendance have been exceeded in each of the last three years. A small number of pupils with very poor attendance records are having a significant effect on overall school figures. Punctuality to school at the start of the day is unsatisfactory with as many as a third of pupils regularly arriving late. The majority of late arrivals travel on special school buses which are provided by the Local Education Authority, and are very often held up in bad traffic. The school is in frequent contact with the Local Education Authority to try and improve this situation, but the transport continues to arrive late. The unsatisfactory attendance and punctuality are having a negative effect on pupils' progress and the overall standards achieved at the school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

18. During the inspection, a high proportion of classroom teaching was found to be good or better. However, pupils' work over the past year, and planning for pupils in the current year shows weaknesses in teaching that result in pupils making less progress than they should, particularly in the core subjects of mathematics and science. As a result, teaching is judged to be satisfactory overall. The variations in teaching are the result of weaknesses in monitoring and evaluation of this important aspect of the school's work.

19. Some excellent teaching was seen in music and art. In both of these subjects, enthusiastic and knowledgeable subject specialists, who have high expectations of what pupils might achieve, plan tasks that appeal to pupils and challenge them to improve their knowledge, skills and understanding. For example, in art, pupils work towards a GCSE examination. They have spent a great deal of time studying the work of other artists, so that they successfully interpret the original ideas and methods into presentations of their own.

20. In music, terms are carefully explained, and the teacher checks to ensure that pupils understand these. Constant use of terminology means that pupils become familiar with musical language, and understand and use it themselves. For example, in a lesson for Year 8 pupils, the teacher asked pupils to '*sing that last phrase again, this time rising to a crescendo*'. He then checked to see if pupils understood the term *crescendo*, and one was able to explain this as '*getting louder*'. Pupils learned from this and were subsequently able to follow his instruction well. Music lessons proceed at a lively pace, and pupils work towards public performances, which motivates them well; they try hard to improve their skills and produce a polished performance.

21. In English, teaching is good. The National Literacy Strategy has given teachers a clear structure for planning, and the careful teaching of letter and word sounds enables pupils to increase the range of unfamiliar words they can read, and helps them to spell accurately. However, not all teachers plan work that caters well enough for pupils of different abilities. For example, worksheets used are occasionally the same for all pupils, not challenging enough for the most able ones, and too difficult for those with limited literacy skills. Staff often support pupils well in such circumstances, so that they do make progress, but such practice reduces the extent to which pupils are able to work independently.

22. In mathematics and science, there are many strengths in teaching, but the failure to set suitable work for pupils of different abilities is a significant weakness that results in higher attainers making insufficient progress in some classes. In science, over half of the pupils in Year 10 are following an examination course that does not allow them to progress beyond their current levels of attainment. These pupils are capable of following a GCSE course. The school is aware of the shortfall in provision, and has tried unsuccessfully to tap into courses

in mainstream schools, but has not taken robust enough action to implement a more challenging learning programme for these pupils.

23. There are teachers who are skilled in planning tasks that are suitable for pupils' different ability levels. In a very successful physical education lesson, for instance, the teacher had planned well. Less physically able pupils were well supported by a member of support staff, higher attainers were given more physically demanding tasks, asked more difficult questions, and had to follow a set of rules during the football game that followed a period of practice in dribbling skills. As a result, all pupils found the lesson demanding, and were able to make progress in developing skills and understanding.

24. Three lessons were unsatisfactory during the inspection, two in mathematics and one in geography. In each of these lessons, the teachers were not fully knowledgeable about the subjects or did not use methods to ensure that all pupils were included.

25. The teaching of basic skills is satisfactory; it varies from subject to subject, and between teachers, but in general enables the pupils to see the importance of continuing to improve their reading, writing, numeracy, and ICT skills. In most lessons, teachers encourage pupils to deepen their understanding of literacy and numeracy. To do this they identify subject-specific vocabulary within each lesson and ensure that pupils understand and use technical terms. There are good opportunities for pupils to measure, weigh, use time and even calculate the cost of materials in design and technology and science. In art, the use of ICT as a learning tool is very good; in English it is satisfactory. Pupils are beginning to use ICT to present their work professionally, particularly portfolios of examination coursework.

26. Since the last inspection, the school has improved most opportunities for pupils to gain nationally accredited qualifications and many do so successfully. However, many parts of the school's assessment processes are not satisfactory because the targets for pupils' learning are not sufficiently clearly identified. Equally, targets in pupils' individual education plans are often too broad for actual gains to be identified. Teachers do not always take pupils' individual targets into account when planning their lessons, and this reduces the progress that pupils make towards the targets. Pupils' written work is not always well presented or well marked. This occasionally means that mistakes are left uncorrected, and pupils do not learn to spell words correctly.

27. Staff and pupils enjoy very good relationships. Most staff manage pupils successfully, and in their turn, most pupils focus on their work and try hard to do their best. They understand that they are valued as people and individuals. However, on a small number of occasions, when work is set that is too easy or too difficult, pupils do become restless and distracted. They demonstrate their developing disinterest through their negative body language and, occasionally, outbursts of unacceptable behaviour.

28. Teachers' expectations vary, and are better for pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 than they are for pupils in Years 10 and 11. There is also a slight difference in the levels of expectation between teachers and different subjects. For example, in some subjects only the very best effort will be accepted as the pupil's contribution, such as in music when an instrumental piece is practised thoroughly before its performance to the school. In others, such as religious education, some undemanding tasks were set for higher attaining pupils, such as sequencing a set of pictures of the Christmas story. For the few pupils in Year 12 expectations are satisfactory, and these pupils are provided with suitably challenging tasks in all lessons.

29. In general, teachers are good at using methods that appeal to pupils, such as practical tasks. Pupils tackle these enthusiastically. Good use is also made of visits and visitors, to bring subjects to life, and enable pupils to see the relevance of what they are

learning to life outside school. This is the case in art and design and technology. However, there are too few real resources in religious education and French to help pupils learn at first hand.

30. The staff work together well as a cohesive team and have a good understanding of the pupils' personalities and their difficulties. Learning support staff have good relationships with teachers and generally provide good quality guidance to pupils about their learning. In design and technology, a member of the support staff is knowledgeable about the subject and the pupils, and provides good continuity whilst temporary teachers need to be employed. However, the management and deployment of support staff is sometimes unsatisfactory because the teachers are briefing them on their duties during teaching time. Not only does this interrupt the flow of the lesson, but valuable time is lost. In some cases, support assistants do not successfully intervene to correct pupils' behaviour. Nonetheless, this group of staff is an asset to the school and provides a frequently needed listening ear for pupils to express their concerns when they do not wish to consult a teacher.

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

31. The curriculum is satisfactory overall. Pupils are offered a broad and well-balanced range of learning opportunities throughout the school. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection. The school has produced policy documents for the statutory curriculum as well as an overall curriculum document. Throughout the school, satisfactory schemes of work, (plans of what is to be learned) have been introduced. Pupils in Years 7 to 11 are taught a broad curriculum, based on the National Curriculum and religious education, which is being adapted to meet their needs. This is particularly evident in English and geography, where staff are working to develop knowledge of pupils' achievements in the early part of their stay at Highshore. The curriculum is particularly good in music and in French. The National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies are satisfactorily addressed and the school has recently started to develop the National Key Stage 3 strategy.

32. The curriculum is designed well to prepare pupils for leaving and to enable them to be aware of the world in Southwark and beyond. Good careers education and guidance are effectively included in the curriculum and pupils and parents have attended careers evenings. Discrete careers lessons are timetabled for pupils in Years 9, 10,11 and 12. Careers action plans ensure that provision is made to prepare pupils for the next step, and a careers adviser is allocated to the school. The personal and social education programme helps pupils to learn about themselves, citizenship and the wider community. Good work experience enriches pupils' awareness of the world of work; this is particularly well monitored and supported. There are currently links with colleges, which enable pupils to have a good range of vocational taster courses. However, despite considerable effort on Highshore's part to form inclusive links with neighbouring mainstream schools, for example to enable pupils to follow GCSE courses, these schools' own situation - they are full - has meant that they are currently unable to support such links. A positive development since the last inspection is the introduction of the teaching of the Key Skills course, in conjunction with the Youth Award Scheme. This enables pupils to work towards, and demonstrate success in, important areas such as communication, application of number, working with others and problem solving.

33. Provision for pupils' additional special educational needs is satisfactory. Individual education plans have been developed, and these reflect pupils' priority needs, but they have some weaknesses. Targets within the plans vary, and are often too broad, rather than specific and measurable; there are no clear success criteria. Those pupils who remain in the school in Year 12 are pupils who have repeated a year in the past for various reasons. They are provided with the same curriculum as pupils in Year 11, and learn alongside the Year 11 pupils. This is entirely appropriate, and meets their needs well.

34. The curriculum does not cater for pupils of all abilities well enough. Lower attaining pupils and middle attainers are generally well provided for, but higher attainers in Years 10 and 11 do not have the opportunity to continue to learn and make progress in mathematics and science because courses do not challenge them sufficiently.

35. The curriculum is enriched by a very good range of extra-curricular clubs and visits, and by visitors and links with outside agencies. There are particularly good opportunities for pupils to make music, both in school during clubs at the end of the school day, and at a number of other venues, performing alongside pupils from mainstream schools. The school offers good residential experiences, such as a woodland camp. Older pupils travel to Holland, where they socialise with pupils from a link school there. Recently, pupils have worked both with a poet and an artist-in-residence. A permanent reminder of the latter is a stunning piece of art work on the brickwork of one of the school's staircases. Good use is made of personnel from the police force to raise pupils' awareness of safety matters, and the school has taken part in a Healthy Schools Partnership Programme, with a module on Healthy Eating.

36. Overall, the provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory, and moral, social and cultural education is good. This is in line with the findings of the previous inspection in relation to social and moral education and an improvement for spiritual and cultural education.

37. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. The school's policy for spiritual development does not have sufficient impact in the day-to-day planning of lessons to ensure that this aspect of pupils' personal development is continually reinforced. However, there are good moments of reflection in assemblies to support spiritual development. In religious education, pupils reflect on how world events affect other people and they show empathy with people in distress. They learn about the spiritual aspects of life encompassed by the major faiths of the world, handling, for example, the Qur'an with respect. There are some missed opportunities in lessons to develop pupils' spiritual development. For example, in science, paper-clips sticking to a magnet were described as 'magic' by a pupil but this was not used by the teacher to extend the excitement or wonder. There is a good example of pupils' work in the poetry books published by the Education Action Zone, when some of the pupils wrote movingly about their feelings; this is a good celebration and example of pupils' spirituality. In art, opportunities for pupils to exercise their imagination, and express their inner thoughts are planned for and encouraged; this makes a positive contribution to their development. The school is aware of the need to develop this aspect and to ensure that spirituality is planned for more consistently in lessons.

38. Provision for pupils' social and moral development is good and this has been maintained since the last inspection. Everyday routines and planned pastoral sessions support the pupils well, as does the good ethos of the school. There are good opportunities for pupils to work in pairs and small groups, and for social co-operation, in physical education, for example. Music teaching promotes good social development when pupils play instruments or sing together. In history, pupils learn about the moral basis of war. Pupils learn about the moral issues of exploitation, prejudice and bullying whilst studying important works such as the 'Diary of Anne Frank'. They are encouraged to think of others who are not as well off as they are, and to give to a range of charities. For example, they support the fund for Afghan children. In art, pupils consider social influences on the work of artists and graphic designers. Relationships between staff and pupils are good, and this supports pupils' social and moral development well.

39. Provision for cultural development is good, and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Art and design and music continue to make a good contribution to pupils' cultural development. Multi-cultural aspects are now well represented in the curriculum. The

school uses a wide range of visits to support pupils' cultural development, such as geographical field trips, which are used to reinforce pupils' knowledge of localities. In food technology, pupils make food from different countries; for example, they have made different sorts of bread – naan, baguette and ciabatta - and this enhances pupils' understanding of different ways of life. Religious education supports pupils' cultural development in their learning about different world religions. The school uses visitors well to develop opportunities for pupils to see aspects of other cultures; for example, a Sikh parent has come into school to play Indian musical instruments. In design and technology, pupils are encouraged to make puppets reflecting the racial groups in the school. The library has a good range of multi-cultural books which further raise pupils' awareness. The school celebrates a range of festivals including Eid, Diwali and the Chinese New Year. The school is developing pupils' knowledge of world cultures and the faiths of people in multi-ethnic Britain well.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. As at the time of the last inspection, the school's procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are effective, consistently applied and have a positive impact on pupils' achievement and personal development. All staff know pupils very well and have established very trusting relationships. They have pupils' well-being uppermost in their minds at all times, and effectively and sensitively deal with some very difficult problems at individual pupil level. Pupils feel safe and secure; they clearly enjoy their time at Highshore, and benefit from the education provided.

41. The procedures for dealing with child protection issues are very good, fully meeting statutory requirements. The school is vigilant and sensitive in exercising its responsibilities. Any pupil who experiences difficulties in any area of school life is quickly identified, and staff work diligently to develop and implement support programmes. Good working relationships with the educational welfare service, educational psychologists and specialist support services for the hearing and visually impaired help the school to provide good individual support and guidance to all pupils.

42. The school has very clear procedures to ensure pupils' health and safety, and staff are conscientious in ensuring that any identified health and safety concerns are reported and dealt with as quickly as possible. There are regular evacuation practices, and suitable records of independent fire prevention and electrical appliance inspections. Appropriate first aid supplies are available around the site and first aiders hold up-to-date accreditation. Comprehensive records of incidents and accidents are maintained, and there are good procedures to ensure parents are informed quickly of any illness or injury. There are clear procedures relating to medicines on site. In lessons observed during the inspection, great care was taken to ensure that pupils followed safe procedures and practices. For example, in science, pupils in Year 7 are taught about safe conduct in the laboratory as soon as they start at the school.

43. The school has satisfactory procedures in place for monitoring and promoting attendance. Registers are marked accurately and any unexplained absence is followed up by telephone as soon as it is discovered. Follow-up calls, letters, meetings at school and at home are used determinedly to seek explanations for absence, and to encourage attendance. The school has improved overall attendance over the last few years. The monitoring and analysis of attendance data is focused on individual pupils. It is now planned to extend the analysis of attendance to identify patterns of absence for groups of pupils and to implement schemes to encourage attendance across the identified groups. Reward schemes for good and improved attendance are being used and are valued by most pupils. Good records showing that late arrival of school buses significantly reduces learning time are

used as a basis for discussions with the Local Education Authority to try and secure an improvement.

44. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour are effective. Staff are very good role models and consistently apply the school's code of conduct. Pupils understand how they are expected to behave and respond well to the use of rewards for good effort and achievement. Unacceptable behaviour is effectively handled to minimise the disruption to learning. Recording systems and support plans are used well to formally monitor behaviour and personal skill development of pupils experiencing difficulties. However, the targets are often too general and are not measurable. Similarly, the targets set for improving behaviour and aspects of personal development at formal annual reviews and parents' meetings cannot be used to accurately monitor progress. The success of the school in improving the behaviour of many pupils stems from the close daily observation by all staff and their early intervention to correct and encourage pupils. The school has clear and effective procedures for dealing with bullying and oppressive behaviour, and these effectively minimise incidents.

45. Overall, the school has satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' achievements and progress. These arrangements are particularly good in subjects such as music, art, physical education, and design and technology because achievements are assessed regularly and pupils are increasingly involved in self-assessment of their developing skills, knowledge and understanding. Other subjects, such as mathematics, science, geography, and ICT have satisfactory procedures but they need further development. For example, in mathematics pupils take end of unit tests but these are not used consistently across the school. Procedures are similarly inconsistent in ICT where pupils in Years 10, 11 and 12 are assessed satisfactorily but this is not the case for pupils in Years 7 to 9. Assessment procedures in religious education are unsatisfactory. Generally, teachers use assessment information satisfactorily to plan future work to meet individual pupils' needs but this does not take place sufficiently well in science, mathematics, history and religious education.

46. The weakness in the school's arrangements for evaluating pupils' academic performance lies in its arrangements for monitoring their achievements and progress. Assessment is not co-ordinated well, or integrated into the school's evaluation of teaching and learning. Therefore, pupils' progress is not monitored and evaluated effectively. In practical terms, this means that subject co-ordinators are not given the opportunity to monitor the quality and effectiveness of the assessment process in their subject. For example, the school does not yet have in place systematic procedures that involve staff meeting together to ensure that they are all applying National Curriculum criteria in the same rigorous way when standardising pupils' work. The absence of such internal moderation and levelling practice has a particularly adverse effect on ensuring consistency in subjects like mathematics, which is taught by nine different teachers.

47. Whole school monitoring procedures in relation to assessment also require improvement. Although the school has recently introduced a commercial software package that enables it to collate assessment information, the school's management team does not analyse or use this data. For example, assessment information is not analysed to identify the achievements of different ethnic groups or differences in achievements between boys and girls. Nor are they examined to compare pupils' progress in different subjects or in different classes, or to provide a basis for discussion with teachers or subject co-ordinators. The school does not use this assessment information effectively to raise standards.

48. At an informal level, the school monitors and supports many aspects of pupils' personal development well. Good relationships and the staff's understanding of individual needs and circumstances mean that pupils are given good quality personal support and

guidance, supported by a strong school ethos of respect and the consistent use of praise and encouragement by all staff. The effectiveness of these informal procedures is evident in pupils' attitudes and behaviour. However, once again the lack of formal procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development reduces the overall impact of the school's provision. Individual education plans go some way to addressing aspects of personal development but targets are not always sufficiently sharply worded to enable judgements to be made as to whether pupils achieve them. The school does not have a formalised mechanism for the ongoing detailed assessment of pupils' social and other personal skills. Therefore, it is not able to build up a secure profile of individual pupils so that specific areas can be targeted. For example, to help pupils develop self-esteem, improve confidence and communication skills, and learn self-control and independence. The absence of such recorded information means that the school is unable to assess the effect of strategies it might employ to help pupils. The school is aware of the need to introduce such a system but it has not met its own target date for implementation and further work still needs to be done.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. The links with parents and carers are good, and have improved since the time of the last inspection. The school works hard to develop the partnership. The vast majority of parents and carers hold positive views and are supportive of the school, and parental links contribute positively to pupils' learning and development.

50. Information received from parents indicates strong agreement that the school staff are very approachable; parents are quickly contacted and involved if there are any difficulties. Parents find that pupils' attitudes and behaviour improve whilst they are at the school. They also believe that the school is well led and managed, that the teaching is good, that they are kept well informed, and that their children are enjoying their time at Highshore.

51. Inspectors find that homework is set regularly, and do not support the concern expressed by some parents about the amount of homework; tasks that are set consolidate and extend classroom learning. The school also provides a homework club, which was attended by almost a third of pupils during the inspection week. However, homework is not always marked, and where it is, comments do not consistently explain what pupils need to do to improve.

52. From the initial transition meetings, and throughout a pupil's time at the school, staff work closely with parents and carers to build a trusting relationship, and to encourage their support. Parents receive regular, good quality information about the school and its activities. They are quickly contacted if there are any concerns and equally quickly informed of positive achievements, particularly related to personal and social skill development. The strength of the relationship with some parents and carers is such that they are happy to approach the school and staff for advice and guidance on general aspects of life. Formal meetings and reviews to discuss progress are well attended by parents and carers, but the agreed targets for improving pupils' attainment are often too general, they are not measurable, or in a form that parents can use to support development at home. The school always makes parents welcome, and regularly seeks their views and opinions on aspects of school development. A parent support group is due to be launched in the near future to extend further the partnership with parents, and to encourage more involvement in, and contribution to, their children's education.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. The senior managers, led by the head teacher, work together well as a team. They have successfully created a warm and supportive ethos in which pupils are valued as individuals and their strengths recognised. Pupils' personal development is given high priority. For example, the senior managers recently introduced a revised pastoral system, and its success is evident in pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes to work.

54. Overall, however, leadership and management are satisfactory. The school does not have in place routine, robust and systematic monitoring procedures that enable it to maintain oversight of standards being achieved. Although members of the senior management team monitor the quality of teaching and learning in a satisfactory manner, there are no opportunities for subject co-ordinators to fulfil their management responsibilities by monitoring classroom practice. Several subject co-ordinators do not feel skilled enough to do this, and time for such activity is limited. There is a clear need for monitoring in mathematics in particular, because nine different teachers teach the subject, and one class is taught by three different teachers each week, yet monitoring is insufficient and some higher attaining pupils are under-achieving. The weakness in whole school arrangements for ongoing self-evaluation is also evident in the lack of formal procedures for monitoring and evaluating pupils' academic performance and personal development. Assessment is not co-ordinated well and nor is it integrated into the school's self-evaluation cycle. There are no clear guidelines on how responsibilities are delegated to staff with a management role and therefore their contribution to the school's development is limited.

55. The school has set targets for improvement in key areas such as attendance and exclusions, parental attendance at annual reviews, and pupils' participation in extra curricular activities. These have helped it to measure its success. School development planning has, in the past, identified the right areas for further development and underpinned improvement. However, targets are not always sharp enough, or accompanied by clear criteria for success. This lessens the school's ability to evaluate its success and use the information as a basis for improvement.

56. In some respects, the school has not made a good enough response to information that is available. For example, the mathematics and science co-ordinators had both identified aspects of their subject areas that were affecting the quality of pupils' achievements and progress, but insufficient action has been taken. Similarly, although the school now has the tools that enable it to collate assessment information on individual pupils' academic performance, and progress towards whole school targets, this data is not analysed. Therefore, the school cannot use the information effectively to raise standards by planning future priorities.

57. The governing body is very supportive of the school and interested in its work. Governors fulfil their statutory duties well and they also involve themselves in wider aspects of school life, for example one governor regularly attends the breakfast club. Governors' understanding of the school's work is informed not only through the headteacher's reports and membership of sub-committees, but also via first hand information. For example, the governor responsible for literacy meets frequently with the school's English co-ordinator. Governors make a good input into shaping the future direction of the school because they are effective contributors to the annual planning process. They are able to do this positively and knowledgeably because they have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas in which it needs to develop further. The processes of formulating and documenting clear development plans specifying priorities, and working systematically towards achieving them needs strengthening.

58. Staffing is satisfactory, and the school's arrangements for staff induction and development, including its arrangements for performance management, are satisfactory too.

59. Accommodation is satisfactory overall and the school is well maintained. There are some areas of the school that have limited access for disabled pupils, but this has been noted by the school staff and numerous requests have been made to the Local Education Authority to make the upstairs rooms accessible. The quality of the learning environment has remained satisfactory since the last inspection and the replacement of all doors and windows in the last two years has enhanced the building. The accommodation for all subjects, except physical education is satisfactory. The school hall, which is used for teaching physical education, for school assemblies and dinners, narrows at one end and has sloping walls. The closeness of the walls in one area to the edge of the basketball court limits its use for basketball and volley ball and the sloping walls make the practice of ball skills against the wall impossible. There is no grassed area for playing football or for the teaching of athletics, and the hard surface limits the possibilities for long-jump or for playing any sport because pupils may be at risk of falling and injuring themselves. However, the teacher ensures that the pupils have a rich programme of physical activities within the confines of the space and surfaces available. The pupils' work is displayed throughout the school and supports their learning well, particularly in art and design, history and design and technology.

60. Day-to-day management of finances is very good. The efficiency and effectiveness of the school's overall arrangements were confirmed by the local authority audit carried out in January of this year. Procedures for linking spending to the school's priorities and longer-term strategic direction are sound. For example, the development of both information and communication technology, and college links was accompanied by extra funds earmarked for these areas in 2000/1, as planned. The school has an ongoing program of building refurbishment and development which is funded through planned savings.

61. The school does not apply the principles of best value well enough, as there are no clear arrangements for applying these criteria by following recommended practice. This is particularly the case in terms of consulting all those involved with the school regarding spending decisions. Comparing its performance and expenditure with similar schools has proved difficult, but efforts have been made in this direction. Some informal work has been carried out by the school's finance officer, but governors and the school management team do not have systematic procedures in place that enable them to monitor and evaluate the impact of their major spending decisions on raising standards in the school.

62. The use of resources to support pupils' learning is satisfactory overall, as it was at the previous inspection. Since the last inspection there has been an improvement in the resources available for design and technology which are now satisfactory; in French, resources are now satisfactory overall, although limited in authentic French articles. Resources are now very good to support pupils' learning in geography and music. The library has a good range of books, tapes and CD-ROMs which are appropriate to pupils' ages. Resources to support learning in religious education are unsatisfactory; there are still insufficient artefacts and a range of other resources to bring the subject to life, such as videos or pictures. The school makes good use of resources outside the school, including residential visits, to enrich the pupils' experiences and learning.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63. The headteacher, governors and staff should:

- a) Improve standards attained by pupils:
 - in mathematics, by ensuring that teaching is improved; that work is set to match pupils' needs; and that the higher attainers in Years 10 and 11 follow a course to enable them to have their achievements externally accredited, where ever appropriate;and
 - in science, by ensuring that all pupils in Years 10 and 11 are provided with tasks and courses that enable them to learn, make progress and explore having their achievements appropriately accredited externally;

(Paragraphs 7, 8, 84, 92)
- b) Strengthen the role of school self-evaluation in raising standards by:
 - developing clear guidelines for the delegation of responsibilities to staff
 - identifying specific targets for development in the school improvement plan
 - identifying clear, measurable criteria for success, linked to pupils' achievements

(Paragraphs 54, 55, 56)
- c) Improve the monitoring of teaching and learning by subject co-ordinators by
 - ensuring that they have the necessary skills for this
 - providing them with the time for this activityand
 - use this information to contribute to plans and targets set for raising standards;

(Paragraph 54, 55, 74, 85, 93, 114, 127, 149)
- d) Improve assessment procedures and the use of information gained by:
 - developing assessment procedures to be consistent across all subjects
 - monitoring the implementation of these procedures
 - ensuring that assessment information is analysed to provide a clear picture of the attainment and achievement of individuals and different groups within the school
 - using the information to set individual targets and whole-school targets for raising achievement.

(Paragraph 45, 46, 47, 55, 56, 127, 149)

In addition, the following areas for improvement should be considered for inclusion in the school's action plan:

- the use of suitable worksheets *(paragraphs 21, 68, 83, 119, 120, 148)*
- improving pupils' IEP targets so they are more specific and measurable *(paragraphs 26, 33, 48, 52, 77, 114, 125)*
- taking pupils' individual targets into account when planning lessons *(paragraph 26)*
- develop a system for determining progress in pupils' personal development *(paragraph 48)*
- develop methods for moderating standards of work achieved in curriculum areas *(paragraph 46)*

- improving marking so that practice is in line with the school's marking policy (*paragraph 26, 74, 91, 113, 119, 125, 148*)
- improving resources in religious education (*paragraph 62, 149*)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	90
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	10	41	33	3	0	0
Percentage	3	11	46	37	3	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 these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	127
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	76

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	14

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	19.5

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.94

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)

Results of assessments in July 2002 (in percentages). Number of pupils eligible:

English	Level	Disapplied	Absent	W	1	2	3
	Test	100	0	0	0	0	0
	TA	0		13	9	52	26

Maths	Level	Disapplied	Absent	Below L2	2	3	4
	Test	48	0	13	13	13	13
	TA			22	43	35	

Science	Level	Disapplied	Absent	Below L2	2	3	4
	Test	35	17	0	31	13	4
	TA			26	9	56	9

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

2002: 26 pupils eligible

15 pupils passed GCSE Art

18 pupils achieved the Youth Award Scheme: 1 at Bronze level
12 at Bronze/Silver
5 at Silver

19 pupils obtained Certificate of Educational Achievement in mathematics

22 pupils obtained the Certificate of Educational Achievement in English

18 pupils obtained the Certificate of Educational Achievement in humanities

18 pupils obtained the Certificate of Educational Achievement in science

5 pupils obtained the Certificate of Educational Achievement in music

16 pupils obtained the Certificate of Educational Achievement in information technology

22 pupils obtained the Certificate of Educational Achievement in design and technology

17 pupils obtained the Certificate of Educational Achievement in physical education

16 pupils obtained the Certificate of Educational Achievement in lifeskills

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	71	28	1
White – Irish	2	0	0
White – any other White background	4	5	1
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	8	41	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	2	3	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	20	10	0
Black or Black British – African	12	4	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Financial information

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y12

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	19.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	6.5
Average class size	12

Education support staff: Y7 – Y12

Total number of education support staff	20
Total aggregate hours worked per week	495

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	1373898
Total expenditure	1381023
Expenditure per pupil	10790
Balance brought forward from previous year	102061
Balance carried forward to next year	94936

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2.4
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	127
Number of questionnaires returned	42

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	34	0	2	7
My child is making good progress in school.	48	43	2	0	7
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	36	7	2	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	31	16	10	12
The teaching is good.	53	38	2	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	62	24	5	2	7
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	77	17	2	2	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	77	17	2	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	67	27	2	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	64	30	2	2	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	27	2	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	48	31	9	0	12

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

ENGLISH

64. Provision for English is good. Since the last inspection, there have been good improvements in the subject. For example, the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy for pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 has promoted a much clearer structure to the English lessons. The resources remain at a satisfactory level in the classrooms, although the library has improved significantly.

65. Since the last inspection, there has been a satisfactory improvement in pupils' achievements in English in Years 7, 8 and 9. Pupils in Years 10, 11 and 12 gain good grades in a range of nationally accredited qualifications such as the Youth Award Scheme and the Certificate of Educational Achievement, at entry level, with pupils gaining passes, merits and distinctions in 2002. This represents good improvement.

66. Pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 make good progress overall in speaking and listening. They greet staff and visitors politely and listen to instructions well. Higher attaining pupils in all year groups are able to describe the story they are reading and can explain why they do or do not like a particular book. They can talk about books that they have enjoyed. Their interaction with their peers is variable, but at best they support each other well by offering encouragement and suggestions. Pupils take turns and listen to others well; this was particularly evident in shared reading activities when pupils encouraged each other well. At the end of some lessons, in the plenary session, pupils either read their work to the class or give an account of what they have done. They describe what is good about their work, how it could be improved, and what they would like to do next. Some do this confidently and others do so with the sensitive support of the teacher. Pupils who have more significant communication difficulties receive support from the Language Support Unit, where a teacher and speech and language therapist offer support through specially devised individual and small group programmes. Those pupils who have been identified as having English as a second language have been supported well by the designated teacher.

67. Pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 make good progress overall in their reading skills. The lower attaining pupils recognise some words by sight, and learn the sounds that individual letters make. Others can blend sounds through their work on phonics and spellings. The majority of pupils read books from a recognised reading scheme that has graded levels, and support materials. As an extension to this, some pupils make their own reading books based on the reading scheme. During reading activities, pupils develop their use of common words, and use their phonic skills to break down words that they do not understand. In Year 7, pupils understood that the book they are studying is in a diary format and they develop their understanding of this by preparing their own diary about themselves, by researching the origin of their names, for example. Older pupils have studied *Romeo and Juliet*, and have produced work that shows an understanding of the sequence of events in the story. This work has been extended further by the pupils designing invitations to a 'Capulet Party', and then comparing these to a party invitation they might send to their friends.

68. Pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 use a range of worksheets to learn phonics and spellings, which support their writing skills. The worksheets are alike and teachers have not designed different sheets for pupils with different ability levels. As a result, some pupils complete the work too quickly, whilst others struggle with tasks that are too difficult. Some pupils use dictionaries and a Thesaurus to complete the work. Most are able to write their own diary of events, with descriptions of themselves as babies and how they have developed into young adults. There is a limited use of pens and word-processors for writing.

69. Higher attaining pupils write in sentences and know that a capital letter must be used at the beginning and that a full stop must appear at the end. Pupils have neat handwriting, and they are encouraged to draft their work before submission. However, it would be more age appropriate to see the work written in ink rather than pencil in the final draft.

70. In Years 10, 11 and 12, pupils made good progress in the lessons observed. Additional support is available through speech and language therapy sessions for those pupils who need it. The higher attaining pupils are beginning to learn that their feelings, needs and wants can be clearly communicated to others through discussion sessions. They articulate their views in a wider arena, such as on study visits to Holland and through work experience placements. They widen their experience through trips out into the community, which has a wealth of opportunities to support pupils' cultural development.

71. Pupils in Years 10, 11 and 12 also make good progress in reading; they develop their own skills in a variety of ways. They are beginning to use appropriate magazines and newspapers as a stimulus for reading sessions, There has been a tremendous emphasis on work inspired by *The Diary of Anne Frank* and the result of this has made pupils think about their own identity and feelings of isolation. They have produced examples of work which show that they can empathise with the fear of living in hiding, and they can describe how they would feel if they were placed in that position. There are many visual clues within the classrooms to support pupils' reading skills such as key words relating to verbs, adjectives and common nouns.

72. Pupils in Years 10, 11 and 12 continue to make good progress in writing, and they learn phonics and spellings to support their writing. They also use dictionaries when drafting their work. Pupils use the word processor on the computer to produce a final draft, and can operate the spell checker when their work is completed. Pupils have the opportunity of writing letters to pen friends in Holland and Kent and they compose letters well. Although some writing is word-processed or in pen, there is still a tendency to write in pencil, which is not appropriate for this age group.

73. Teaching and learning are good overall, and never less than satisfactory. When teaching is good, the teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations of what pupils will achieve. Most learning support assistants are deployed well; when working with pupils they are effective and support the learning activity well. The use of information and communication technology is variable. Pupils have researched information about Anne Frank and her family and younger pupils used a CD-ROM to extend their work in the reading scheme, however, ICT is not always used to advantage. In lessons where teaching was good, there was a distinct and clear introduction to the session and pupils were told what would happen next. Pupils had good opportunity of discussing their views and opinions. In most lessons, pupils' behaviour was managed well and they were moved from task to task at a brisk pace. In a good lesson in Year 7, the teacher's understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and the pupils' needs led to very good planning of the activities across all areas of the English curriculum. This ensured that pupils had good opportunities to be involved in speaking and listening activities, and shared reading and writing tasks which were based on a balance of whole group and independent work. When teaching was judged to be satisfactory, this was due to lack of structure in literacy sessions.

74. The English co-ordinator has worked with staff to ensure the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, which has resulted in improved achievement and increased participation by pupils. The planned work is on-going, and the co-ordinator has a clear understanding of the subject's future needs for development. She has given good guidance to teachers, for example to use clear introductory sessions, independent and group tasks and

good quality plenary sessions. Suitable training has been disseminated to all staff. However, the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy during lessons is variable. The co-ordinator has been given insufficient time to monitor the effectiveness of this work and to support colleagues to teach in a way that reflects the strategy and promotes consistency across the school. The effect of this is inconsistencies in teaching, such as variations in the quality of marking and target setting.

75. A satisfactory number of subject areas contribute well to the development of pupils' literacy skills. For example, in design and technology pupils are provided with guidance on how to present written work. There is a good use of key words in science, and this reinforces pupils' scientific vocabulary. This is also evident in mathematics lessons, when pupils learn and understand the meaning and use of important words such as 'most' and 'least'.

76. Resources are satisfactory overall. The library provides a very good range of books and its management is skilfully supported by a learning support assistant whose enthusiasm is communicated to pupils. It is well organised, with a colour coded system, which enables pupils to search for books independently. Pupils respect and care for the books. A library club operates several times a week, and this enhances pupils' appreciation of literature. The school's involvement in the *Peckham Education Action Zone Poetry Project* is impressive; for two consecutive years there have been a number of contributions to the published booklets from Highshore School pupils. These appear alongside contributions from mainstream pupils. This is good inclusive practice, as it enables pupils to contribute alongside their mainstream peers.

77. Assessment is satisfactory overall. All pupils have individual education plans with literacy targets. However, in some classes, targets are more specific than they are in others. There is an inconsistent approach to the marking of pupils' work and marking is not in line with the school's marking policy.

78. There are some good examples of the recording of reading which allows the teachers to plan for the next step in learning for these pupils. However, recording is inconsistent. Some pupils' records are too vague and do not show their progress well enough.

MATHEMATICS

79. The school's overall provision for mathematics is satisfactory but there are weaknesses in this provision in terms of the quality of teaching and learning in some lessons, the progress made by higher attaining pupils, the implementation of assessment procedures and the management and development of the subject across the school. This represents unsatisfactory improvement since the previous inspection when pupils of all ages were judged to make good progress and all teaching was at least satisfactory. The school does not now offer GCSE examinations in mathematics and this restricts the opportunities open to those higher attaining pupils who performed well in the national tests at the end of Year 9.

80. An effective long-term planning framework promotes the progressive development of pupils' mathematical skills through a broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils develop satisfactory knowledge of number and space, shape and measurement, and they are able to display their understanding because planning places an appropriate emphasis on applying their developing mathematical knowledge and using and handling data. Therefore, by Year 9, the higher attaining pupils are confident with calculations involving the four basic processes of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They know place value up to four digits and understand the concept of less than one shown, for example, as they fill in the missing numbers on a decimal number line and calculate fractions of regular shapes. Pupils name and know the features of two-dimensional shapes. They understand the idea that angles

measure the degree of turn, and identify angles that are bigger or smaller than a right angle. They know the vocabulary of measurement for length and mass, measuring lines and reading scales accurately, and record their measurements using appropriate units. Lower attaining pupils are still developing their knowledge of mathematical vocabulary and comparative values, but they understand terms such as 'longer' and 'shorter', 'heavier' and 'lighter' and positional language such as 'between', 'above' and 'below'. Pupils use their mathematical skills in problem-solving tasks, like recognising simple patterns and activities associated with everyday situations. For example, they calculate the costs of meals from a menu. They show their ability to handle data by collecting and recording information, such as the number of cold drinks that their classmates consume in a day.

81. Pupils in Years 10,11 and 12 undertake projects that promote investigative skills as they work towards Certificate of Educational Achievement Entry Level examinations. Pupils are successful in these examinations and a number achieved distinctions and merits in 2002.

82. The highest attaining pupils work with positive and negative numbers, calculate percentages and apply this knowledge in real life situations such as calculating the deposit on a new bicycle. Pupils also demonstrate their understanding of applying mathematics by using tape measures and trundle wheels to measure the perimeters of everyday objects such as school tables and the basketball court. These higher attaining pupils also display and extract information from charts and graphs. They read railway timetables and answer questions that require them to interpret line graphs, such as the number of traffic accidents over a period of time. Investigative activities, such as comparing different makes of mobile phone and networks, further develop pupils' ability to display data. Therefore, by Year 11 and 12, pupils collect information, tally results, display data, make comparisons and draw conclusions from their findings. These investigations also encourage pupils' skills in using modern technology so that they display the information as graphs and pie charts.

83. Overall, the teaching of mathematics is satisfactory, but some unsatisfactory teaching and lessons with unsatisfactory features were also observed. Good teaching is associated with teachers' good subject knowledge and the provision of suitable activities that match pupils' needs and extend their learning. Pupils work with a good understanding of what they are required to do, and have suitable resources to support their learning. Relationships are good, and pupils are well managed on these occasions; the maintenance of good pace and effective one-to-one support from teachers and learning support assistants further enhances learning. These lessons are well planned and structured, with a variety of activities that maintain pupils' interest so that they work hard, independently and collaboratively, showing a good attitude to their work. Pupils make good progress at these times, such as the group of Year 7 pupils who reinforced their understanding and use of the vocabulary associated with length, and developed their skills in making measurements. Questions were well used to challenge them to explain which would be the most efficient measuring tool, such as tape measures and rules, for different objects, and the most appropriate unit of measurement; they were also required to predict some measurements. Good practical activities promoted pupils' collaborative working, with very effective and active support from the learning support assistant, and pupils recorded their measurements on prepared sheets. The final plenary session was well managed, and provided a good assessment opportunity, as pupils had experienced success and were therefore able to demonstrate the good gains in knowledge they had made.

84. At other times, pupils do not make sufficient progress because lessons are unsatisfactory or have features that restrict learning. As a result, learning opportunities are missed and pupils' needs are not met, particularly the needs of higher attaining pupils, who are not sufficiently well challenged. On these occasions, teachers' inadequate subject knowledge is clearly evident. Pupils are given inaccurate information, and teachers do not

have the skills to assist pupils to develop learning strategies. In addition, there are weaknesses in aspects of classroom management and organisation that limit progress. For example, teachers provide worksheets that do not meet pupils' needs, and resources and activities are not appropriate for pupils' ages. In one lesson, plastic money was provided for fourteen year-old pupils, who were using a classroom 'shop' as part of a lesson on coin recognition.

85. The overall management of mathematics is unsatisfactory. The subject co-ordinator has a good understanding of the weaknesses in subject provision. This is evident in the perceptive and detailed report she produced last term, which highlighted many of the subject's shortcomings that were identified during the inspection. Unfortunately, these findings were not acted upon by the senior managers, and the problems persist. In particular, the subject co-ordinator still does not have opportunities to monitor the work of colleagues and to contribute effectively to improving the inconsistencies in teaching in different classes. The current timetable arrangements mean that careful and rigorous monitoring of classroom practice is increasingly essential if standards are to be raised, as nine different teachers teach mathematics and one class is taught by three different teachers each week. Although current assessment procedures are satisfactory, their inconsistent use and the lack of informative marking means that the overall procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' progress are unsatisfactory.

86. The school's overall strategy for teaching numeracy skills is satisfactory but its effectiveness in some mathematics lessons is reduced by the fact not all staff have embraced fully the lesson format and content of the National Numeracy Strategy. Other subjects of the curriculum make a good contribution to developing pupils' numeracy skills. These are encouraged well in some subjects, such as science and design and technology lessons that reinforce pupils' skills in measuring length and mass. Other examples observed during the inspection included the promotion of number recognition in history through considering key dates associated with World War II, and work on Roman numerals when studying Henry VIII. Opportunities in English lessons are also used well, such as developing sequencing skills and the use of a time line when studying *The Diary of Anne Frank*.

SCIENCE

87. Provision for science is good in Years 7 to 9, but unsatisfactory in Years 10 and 11. As a result, achievement is good in Years 7 to 9, but unsatisfactory in Years 10 and 11. The achievement of the Year 12 pupils is satisfactory.

88. Across all years, pupils have good attitudes to science, which helps to promote their achievement. They tackle tasks with enthusiasm, are keen to answer questions, and try hard to complete written work well. Teaching in Years 7 to 9 is good, but in Years 10 and 11 it is unsatisfactory overall. Here, teaching does not sufficiently challenge higher attainers and as a result, these pupils do not achieve well enough. Pupils in Year 12, who are lower attaining, are taught well enough, as they are provided with suitably challenging tasks.

89. There are many strengths in the teaching of science. Relationships between staff and pupils are good, and pupils are well behaved throughout lessons. As was the case at the last inspection, teachers plan practical tasks that enable pupils to find scientific facts out for themselves. These activities appeal to pupils, quickly get them involved, and hold their interest throughout lessons. In a Year 7 lesson, measuring skills were carefully taught, and good support from the teacher and a learning support assistant ensured that pupils were guided well in learning to measure fluids, using a measuring cylinder, a syringe and a pipette. A homework task provided suitable reinforcement, and a means of assessing pupils' skills.

90. In a very good lesson in Year 8, there were clear demonstrations of what to do, and thorough checking of understanding through questions pitched at the different ability levels of individual pupils. These factors, combined with a cracking pace, enabled pupils to make very good progress in placing a set of rock samples in the correct order of hardness. By the end of this lesson, all pupils were able to give examples of hard and soft rocks; higher attainers could describe fairly clearly how to test a rock for hardness. In a good lesson about magnets in Year 9, pupils made good progress in finding out how the strength of a magnet can be tested; activities were well designed to achieve the learning objectives, there was good support for pupils, who quickly moved on from one activity to another. By the end of Year 9, pupils understand that only certain metals will be attracted to magnets; higher attainers know that like poles will repel, whereas unlike poles attract one another.

91. Numeracy skills are taught and reinforced well through science: there is careful teaching of measuring skills, and pupils are encouraged to represent their findings graphically, as bar charts, for example. There is satisfactory reinforcement of literacy skills: teachers identify key words in every lesson, and pupils write reports of their investigations. In many lessons, good use is made of electronic projection of written text, including instructions, and pupils focus on these well, improving their ability to read in the process. However, marking of pupils' work is inconsistent, and spelling mistakes are not always identified. As a result, pupils do not always learn to spell scientific terms correctly. Information and communication technology skills are given a satisfactory emphasis in science. Pupils have begun to use data logging equipment in Year 8, and there are firm plans to extend this to pupils in Year 7. Internet facilities are not yet available, but there are several CD-Roms for pupils to use, on topics such as the human body.

92. Many of the strengths of teaching seen in Years 7 to 9 are also in evidence in Years 10 and 11. However, the weaknesses in planning for pupils of all abilities outweigh the strengths. In the present Year 10, almost half of the pupils have already reached National Curriculum Level 3 in science, as shown in their end of Year 9 assessment results. Of these pupils, a few have reached Levels 4 and 5. However, the school is providing them with an examination course that does not assess achievement above Level 3, and the content of this course is not challenging enough for these pupils. Although the school's results for science in the summer of 2002 suggest that pupils did well, the work these pupils completed shows that they did not cover as much as had been planned, and they therefore did not achieve as well as they might have done. One group of lower attaining pupils completed very little new work in the summer term, as it was necessary to revise much of the programme already covered to ensure that they were able to obtain a pass. The school recognises that loss of coverage resulted from the number of school journeys that took place in the summer term, combined with the fact that the science co-ordinator led some of these trips.

93. Leadership of the subject is unsatisfactory. There has been some limited improvement in monitoring of the subject, identified as a weakness at the last inspection. Although the policy identifies broad areas for development, there is no subject development plan. The co-ordinator does not have the time or the skills to monitor teaching by direct observation, but he does support teachers well informally. He monitors pupils' work, and teachers' planning is checked. Some action has been taken to rectify weaknesses identified. For example, it has been noticed that not all teachers make use of visits in teaching the subject, and this is to be addressed. However, telling weaknesses, such as loss of teaching time in the summer term and the mismatch between pupils' abilities and the examination course, have not been considered well enough by the senior management team, with a view to a solution being sought. Overall, improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. At that time, all pupils made good progress, as teaching was good across the school.

ART AND DESIGN

94. Art and design is a strength of the school as many pupils are producing work that reaches national expectations by the age of 16. In 2002, the majority of pupils gained B or C grades in GCSE examinations. Pupils' achievement is therefore very good overall. The standards found during the previous inspection have been maintained.

95. By Year 9, pupils are developing an awareness of shape and colour, which is presented in a range of interesting forms, such as portraits or clay masks. For instance in Year 7, pupils begin to make close observational drawings of faces. They learn to work with pastels, smudging colours to demonstrate depth and skin tones. Pupils in Year 8 build on their knowledge of colour when exploring shape. They 'take a line for a walk', colouring the resulting patterns with a choice of primary and secondary colours, and showing a growing awareness of hue, tint and harmony. Older pupils have a wider understanding and awareness of a range of styles, as well as an appreciation of how colour and shape can be used to generate an effect. For instance, Year 9 pupils begin designing logos, building clearly on their previous skills and knowledge. They use a light box to trace their first attempts when developing the initial design. A computer program is also used to explore and experiment with name designs.

96. All pupils are familiar with the work of other artists, for instance, in Year 10 they explore the work of the Post-Impressionists such as Van Gogh and Gauguin. They develop similar techniques, matching colour and form. Higher attaining pupils work independently and use more complex techniques, for instance using base colours and layering paints. By Year 11 and 12, pupils' drawing skills are developing well. They make careful observations of bottles and glasses, incorporating reflection and a wide range of shapes, colour and decoration in their work. Lower attaining pupils have a fluent but naive style, whilst higher achievers use perspective and proportion confidently.

97. Overall teaching and learning are very good. The teacher has a very good knowledge of the requirements of the National Curriculum and accreditation courses, and has developed a great deal of expertise in modifying learning activities and outcomes for pupils with a range of learning difficulties. They create some high quality two and three-dimensional work. The high quality displays of this work show the care taken and value that is placed on pupils' work, and the desire to give them encouragement. In the art room and corridors there are good displays of work in the style of famous artists, together with vivid experimentation with shape and colour. The very good quality teaching enables pupils to produce this high quality work.

98. Planning for lessons is clear and the activities are varied. Pupils are keen to work, and resources are used very effectively to enhance learning. For example, copies of pictures painted by a range of other artists are regularly shown to demonstrate style and technique. Through this, pupils develop good understanding of how to show perspective through the use of light and shade. Very clear demonstrations and explanations enable pupils to achieve well. For instance, the efforts of a Year 7 group to draw facial features were enhanced when they were encouraged to observe closely and follow the instruction of the teacher. Pupils' ability to access previous experimental work is limited by the lack of sketchbooks to use as a reference.

99. Pupils are given helpful and regular feedback about their progress during every lesson. Due to this very good teaching, pupils' attitudes to their work are very good. They are eager to start their art projects, listen well and complete tasks with enthusiasm. They behave well. All of them enjoy art and are very proud of their finished results. The relationship pupils have with the teacher is very good and as a result pupils' achievements are high. Pupils use materials and equipment well. They help to clear up and put things away.

100. The curriculum is good. Planning of individual lessons is very good, and activities are well matched to pupils' different abilities. Good links with other subject areas, for instance, with textiles and ICT, enhance provision. The subject provides well for pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development through the study of other artists and the use of visits and visitors. There is input from artists in residence and visits to galleries such as the Tate Modern.

101. Art and design is very well managed by the enthusiastic and knowledgeable art specialist, who places an appropriate emphasis on the quality of pupils' work. Assessment information is gathered from observations of lessons and pupils' work and used to inform planning for individual pupils. Achievement is celebrated in assemblies and appropriately encourages pupils. There is a wide variety of resources available and a collection of pupils' work provides a good ongoing portfolio of ideas for demonstration purposes. Good use is made of available space for teaching and display, although the size of the art room can be somewhat restrictive for larger groups. ICT is used very well, often to create and develop designs. Programmes such as Corel Draw and Photo Paint are used extensively to develop ideas and designs. The co-ordinator scans and stores pupils' work on computer, effectively creating portfolios for each pupil, demonstrating their progress and achievement.

CITIZENSHIP

102. The school's provision for citizenship is at an early stage of development, but is satisfactory overall. A co-ordinator has been nominated for the subject, and has carried out an audit to identify gaps in provision. In Years 7 to 9, the subject rests mainly in provision for personal, social and health education; in Years 10, 11 and 12, work that pupils carry out for the Youth Award Scheme, and accredited by ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network), covers many of the required areas. In addition to this, pupils participate in the organisation of the school through the School Council. There are no weekly lessons on citizenship, but the school has identified a number of days and occasions when topics are to be covered. For example, during the inspection week, a member of the local police force visited school to lead sessions for Year 9 pupils on the emergency services. There is insufficient evidence at present to make judgements on teaching, learning and achievement in the subject.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

103. Provision for the subject is good. Teaching of resistant materials, food technology and textiles is good, and achievement is good in all three areas. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, when achievement in resistant materials was poor. Since then, a new co-ordinator has been appointed for resistant materials, and there has been good improvement in this strand of the subject. There is effective teamwork between the two members of staff who teach the three strands between them. A member of the support staff is very well informed about resistant materials, and provides highly effective support for this aspect of the subject. The subject is well led and managed.

104. A particularly successful aspect of teaching, much improved since the last inspection, is the range of effective stimuli provided for pupils, which enables them to generate design ideas. Teachers make excellent use of visits, and other sources such as magazines, catalogues and artefacts to provide pupils with design ideas. Pupils are encouraged to look critically at different designs, and to consider criteria such as cost and purpose. This approach is very successful in giving pupils the confidence to come up with ideas of their own. They work busily in lessons, drawing their ideas, and discussing the relative merits of these with assurance. Pupils are well behaved in lessons, and their positive attitudes towards the subject make a significant contribution to their achievements.

105. In Year 7, lower attaining pupils still find it difficult to generate design ideas, but by the time they reach Year 9 they have increased their confidence and ability in this skill. By the end of Year 9, lower attaining pupils have clear ideas about what they want to do, and they use words, pictures and models to communicate their ideas. In a project on structures, higher attaining pupils showed they understood different forces, such as torsion and compression, and gave examples of each. They tested model bridges they designed, working well with one another, and suggested ways of improving their designs, such as putting barriers on the bridge.

106. Teachers plan a good range of learning experiences, which appeal to pupils, and provide good opportunities for them to develop their cultural awareness. For example, in Year 8, pupils follow a unit on multi-cultural foods in food technology; in Year 11 and 12, pupils tackle batik projects in textiles. Within design and technology, teachers make good links with other subjects, which helps to make the subject coherent to pupils. For example, when designing a toy in Year 9, pupils made use of an electric circuit, and higher attaining pupils explained how the toy works.

107. The skills of literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology are taught well through design and technology. Pupils soon realise that they need to listen carefully to instructions to carry out practical tasks, and new vocabulary is introduced carefully and explained well. There is clear guidance about the presentation of their written work, prominently displayed in the resistant materials room. Pupils follow this well, taking pride in neat work. Information and communication technology is used well to help pupils present their work in a professional way. For example, pupils make extensive use of clip art, and keep design folders showing the progress of their efforts, from design idea to finished product. Their work is marked carefully, with spelling mistakes indicated. This helps them to learn the correct spellings for terms. In textiles, pupils in Year 9 have used computer-assisted design to produce a design on a T-shirt.

108. Pupils have many opportunities to weigh and measure, and skills are carefully taught. For example, in a food technology lesson, pupils were shown how to use the scales to weigh out flour. Staff have started to involve pupils in assessing their work at the end of each session, and pupils award themselves a grade for their effort. This is good practice, and could be further improved by sharing learning objectives with pupils at the start, then inviting them to assess their progress against these. Good records are maintained of pupils' progress through National Curriculum levels, but there is no record, as yet, of pupils' performance against the specific learning outcomes associated with each unit of work. However, further development of assessment is identified in the good quality subject development plan.

109. Pupils steadily become more skilled at evaluating their design ideas as they progress through the school. For example, pupils in Year 11 and 12 have visited the Victoria and Albert Museum, to research designs of boxes. They have learned about the different types of joints that can be used when working with wood, and the skills needed, such as marking up, chiselling and sanding. They have designed, made and evaluated their boxes. Higher attainers have identified quite detailed improvements that could be made, such as the use of a stopped housing joint for dividers within the box. In the summer of 2002, six Year 11 pupils obtained distinctions in design and technology in the Certificate of Achievement, five obtained merits and one a pass. The majority of pupils who attended the college's nationally accredited course were awarded a Food Hygiene Certificate.

GEOGRAPHY

110. Provision in geography is satisfactory overall, as are pupils' achievements. This is a satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. There have been a number of successful projects recently and these have raised the profile of the subject, especially in lessons seen in Year 7.

111. By the time that they are in Year 9, pupils are able to consider world-wide issues. They build on their previous work on basic mapping in and around the school to construct maps of villages in India. The youngest pupils can measure the furniture in their classrooms and discuss the principles of scale and then draw simple maps using centimetres. These pupils understand the maps of the school and the surrounding streets; they use the correct keys and symbols to make their maps clear and meaningful. As well as understanding the rules of mapmaking, pupils know how to behave when on expeditions to the ends of the street and can identify features like other schools and nature gardens.

112. The older pupils are beginning to appreciate the problems of having no water, and they know about the link between dirt, disease and death. When considering life in India, pupils understand the importance of wells, and why wells are looked after. They can find the USA and India on the globe. When studying the themes on water, pupils know why water from an underground source is cleaner than that in a river. They also know how difficult it is to carry water any distance; they tried to carry full buckets in the classroom. This exercise was very effective in demonstrating the difficulties.

113. Teaching and learning in geography is satisfactory overall, although some good and very good teaching was seen during the inspection. The very good teaching excited pupils and properly captured their interest. Lessons in which support staff are properly involved enable all pupils to access every aspect of the lesson. The pupils practise the basic skills of reading, speaking and listening during lessons. On visits to develop mapping skills, pupils also learn how to behave safely. Where teaching is good, teachers assess pupils' progress in lessons, and they prepare pupils well for the next steps in learning. The higher attaining pupils have work matched to their needs and equally, pupils with greater difficulties are also supported, for example in one class a pupil with physical difficulties was helped by support staff to enable him to complete the task. In lessons where teaching and learning is good, teachers have clear objectives and ensure that these have been met by asking searching questions. Teachers introduce and use key words. For example, pupils in one lesson were introduced to the term *tundra*, as well as street names in the locality. In the best lessons standards are high, in less good lessons a lack of subject expertise hinders learning. Pupils learn best in well-planned lessons as their concentration is maintained. In less effective lessons, pupils' interest tends to wander. Analysis of pupils' work over the past year shows that an appropriate range of topics and themes has been covered. However, at times, work is unfinished or unmarked which limits pupils' learning. When teaching is good ICT is well used to support learning but this is not consistent across all classes.

114. The subject is managed by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator who is aware of the need to establish effective monitoring and assessment procedures, which match the school policies. However, the co-ordinator has not been given time to monitor teaching and learning directly, and this has prevented a consistent approach to the subject being established. A revised assessment process has recently been put in place which will contribute towards making pupils' individual targets more specific. At present, their individual education plans are too vague to enable effective planning to promote individuals' progress.

115. The current co-ordinator has established a rich collection of resources. These resources are carefully matched to pupils' different levels of attainment, and to the National Curriculum. Geography teaching is enriched further by the use of a very good range of activities which take place outside the school. For example, work on rivers and land use is

illustrated very well when pupils go to camp. Pupils appreciate the connections with Holland when they visit children in Haarlem.

HISTORY

116. Improvement in history has been satisfactory. Since the previous inspection, the QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) schemes of work have been adapted and this ensures a broad subject curriculum that is balanced in terms of the different periods of history that pupils study. The achievement of the majority of pupils is satisfactory. During the inspection, lessons were observed only in Years 7, 8 and 9. Further evidence regarding pupils' achievement and progress was obtained from scrutiny of pupils' work, planning documents and discussion with pupils and with the humanities co-ordinator. Pupils in Years 10, 11 and 12 work towards the Certificate of Achievement and the ASDAN award.

117. By Year 9, pupils have increased their knowledge of a number of different periods of British history. They know about Medieval and Tudor Britain, and have also developed some understanding of the characteristics of other societies of the past. For instance, they know about aspects of everyday life during the Roman occupation of Britain, and details of the Roman Empire. In Year 7, pupils begin to learn how to locate information about the past, and what *sources of evidence* are. Pupils in Year 8 build character profiles of Henry VIII whilst studying the Tudors, and use book resources to discover facts about Henry's life. Links are made to numeracy when pupils incidentally investigate Roman numerals. They develop knowledge of world studies through the study of the Plains Indians, and topics such as this make a contribution to pupils' moral and cultural development. Older pupils demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of aspects of the recent past when answering written questions on life during the Second World War, describing how people lived and how it differed from present day life. By considering evacuation, they develop an awareness of what it must have been like to be evacuated and the problems involved, including the awkwardness of living with strangers. A range of visits enhances the curriculum, for instance pupils visit the Tower of London and Hampton Court to support their study of the Tudors.

118. In Years 10, 11 and 12, pupils build on their knowledge of the Second World War whilst working towards accreditation. They reflect on Hitler's Germany, considering the effect of propaganda and, by examining a range of sources such as posters, leaflets and books, they begin to understand how children were taught to hate the Jewish people. They consider *The Diary of Anne Frank*, and some pupils can talk about the difficulties she encountered whilst hiding from the Germans.

119. Teaching is satisfactory overall. In lessons where teaching is good, work is planned to meet the needs of different groups of pupils and the presentation is enthusiastic and motivating. In less successful lessons, tasks do not offer sufficient challenge and there is an over-reliance on the use of printed worksheets. Relationships are good in all lessons and pupils usually apply themselves well. Support assistants are used well in lessons to encourage and assist lower attaining pupils. There is not enough use of ICT to enable pupils to record their own research into documents and other sources, so limiting the development of higher level skills. Presentation of work is generally unsatisfactory. Marking of work varies, but in general there is too little constructive or evaluative comment. Most pupils' books show that the work is too reliant upon worksheets, some of which are too difficult for the pupils to read. Pupils' books contain little original written work.

120. Subject co-ordination is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has revised the schemes of work, which have been suitably adapted from those provided by QCA. The schemes of work ensure that all pupils will cover a broad and balanced curriculum by the end of Year 9. Accreditation for older pupils is available through the Certificate of Achievement and elements

of the Youth Award Scheme. Subject monitoring and evaluation have been very limited. Newly updated procedures for assessment more clearly identify attainment and progress, but it is too early to see the impact of the use of this on learning. There is little evidence of assessment over time being used to guide curricular planning, although new procedures will assist planning and target setting. Accommodation is satisfactory, and the range of books and artefacts available for pupils' own research is satisfactory. The school does not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to use new technology as part of historical investigations.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

121. Pupils' achievement in ICT is good. This is good improvement since the last inspection. This improvement reflects the increased emphasis on ICT by many staff, and their improved levels of knowledge. ICT is used well to support learning in some subjects. For example, in art, pupils use computers to generate art work, and in music, keyboard skills are used in computer-linked compositions.

122. By the time that they are in Year 9, pupils create colourful and interesting posters and menus. They know the names of the parts of the computer set-up and can label diagrams correctly. Every pupil has access to the computers in the ICT suite and they develop an understanding of good practice. Most are able to *log on* without help; they underline text, and copy, paste and follow sequences. Pupils know how to transfer these skills to help them produce very attractive work, changing the appearance of written work when copying poetry, for example. They use colours and different styles of writing to enhance their work. The higher attainers understand complex language, like the meaning of *default*. Pupils can find their way around the computer to open programs to help with design. Clip art is used extensively to add illustrations to letters or descriptive writing. Pupils mix text and graphics well, choosing from a bank of pictures to personalise their work. They discuss quality when working on brochures.

123. Pupils in Years 11 and 12 understand the importance of attractive presentation of their work. These pupils are working for Certificates of Achievement, and they produce good examples for their collections, or to put in their coursework. They are able to improve on their skills when asked to develop databases. These databases are used most effectively; pupils can insert information, change fields and carry out complicated searches. They save their work and print it when needed. Pupils studying for the Youth Award Scheme use their knowledge to make posters for road safety projects. The higher attaining pupils use a series of commands to control devices that will draw a range of geometric shapes. Other pupils draw graphs, some with a three-dimensional appearance, when working on projects. When following their themed work, pupils can develop an advertisement for a restaurant and invent very interesting menus. Pupils are beginning to use the Internet under supervision; they know how to research foreign lands such as Holland and how to shop on line.

124. Teaching and learning in ICT was good during the inspection but analysis of work over the last year indicates it is satisfactory overall. In very good lessons, teachers use many illustrations and applications of computers to interest and motivate pupils. Lessons are well organised and planned to address basic skills. As a result, pupils learn how to select work and improve it. Teachers ask good questions to discover what pupils understand and can do and then reinforce it. Pupils learn to watch and listen. They begin to evaluate their work and build confidence when they are successful. Behaviour is usually good, but on occasion it is necessary for the teacher or support assistant to intervene in classroom incidents. They do this well, using the school's agreed system and little time is lost through disruption. Good teachers know their subject and their pupils' abilities and match the work to pupils' needs so that they learn effectively. There are good relationships between staff and pupils, which creates a relaxed atmosphere that promotes learning. Good teachers make their

expectations of the lesson clear and learning is supported well by discussion. Learning support staff are used well in these situations.

125. Teachers' planning is satisfactory, although pupils' individual education plans are not used effectively, and so lessons are not always planned to meet pupils' individual needs as efficiently as they might. Improvements in planning have been made but this is not consistent across the school. Good teachers plan well for pupils of different abilities whilst less effective teachers do not, which limits how well they learn. Marking is not always helpful to pupils.

126. Pupils generally behave well, and most understand the rules for working with computers. However, when pupils arrive late they can be disruptive and a small number of pupils can play up, for example switching machines on or off and delaying others' printing. Usually, lessons proceed smoothly, even when machines are shared. Pupils help each other and relationships are good.

127. The ICT co-ordinator is developing the subject well. ICT has been taught as a discrete subject across the school for only a short period. Curriculum documentation is good and lesson planning is being developed. The courses provided are accredited, and pupils are responding well. However, the role of the co-ordinator is not yet fully established. There are no opportunities to monitor teaching and although procedures exist, assessment and recording are unsatisfactory and not used for planning. The co-ordinator teaches the greatest proportion of the subject but needs to have sight of others' teaching, planning and assessment to promote consistency in teaching and good achievement. Good practice is not shared freely, which is unfortunate, because there is some excellent use of ICT in presenting written work and displays. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and forward looking and is ready to build on the improvements that have already been made. Resources are being developed; the ICT suite is adequate for the small groups who use them. The whole school networking is in place but not yet connected

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French

128. Three lessons of French were observed during the inspection in Years 7 and 8 and in each lesson, teaching and learning were satisfactory. Pupils generally enjoy speaking the target language although many are still embarrassed when speaking French in front of their friends. However, a few minutes into the lesson, most pupils have set aside their reluctance and they try hard to do well.

129. All pupils in Years 7 to 9 greet each other and use simple greetings in French such as 'Ça va?' and 'Ça va bien merci'. Many can count up to ten, and by Year 9 pupils are able to make connections between similar words in English and French such as 'cinema' and 'discotheque'.

130. Teaching in French is satisfactory; it provides pupils with important opportunities to speak another language and to understand that in other cultures languages have characteristic sounds. On occasions, there is limited use of the target language. For example, in one lesson the main instruction from the teacher was 'Ecoutez moi'. Teaching is very effective when pupils benefit from practical resources such as a range of display material. For example, in a lesson about clothes with Year 8 pupils, the teacher focused the pupils' attention on the language by a giving them items of clothing to match her information cards. This helped the pupils link the French and English together by concrete means. They tried very hard to remember the names of such things as 'la jupe' or 'les pantalons', with considerable success.

131. Learning support assistants vary in the quality of guidance they provide and in their effectiveness in managing pupils' behaviour. Where they are most effective, they join in speaking the language and encourage pupils to do the same, pre-empting any off-task or inappropriate behaviour by placing themselves judiciously between pupils. However, in some lessons such techniques are not employed, and the support assistants are not always alert to pupils' emerging difficulties. When they do not intervene successfully, pupils lose their motivation.

132. The school sensibly focuses its curriculum around speaking and listening and uses a relevant variety of activities to support its work. Teachers make good use of real materials, pictures, vocabulary cards, ICT and excerpts from videos. There is a regular trip to France, which enables pupils to hear the language spoken. However, there is very little evidence of authentic French resources being used to inspire and influence pupils' motivation and understanding, and this is an area for development. Despite this criticism, pupils widen their vocabulary and ability to speak, albeit within a fairly narrow focus. Given the difficulties many pupils have with self-confidence and communication, their achievements, their levels of progress, their willingness to speak and their ability to remember some basic vocabulary are appropriate.

133. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

MUSIC

134. Provision for and teaching of music are very good with outstanding features. Music is a strength of the school and enables pupils to do their very best in all aspects of the subject. The highly skilled specialist teacher plans very carefully to meet the individual needs of the pupils. As a result, pupils make very good progress and their improvement in playing, and understanding musical concepts, is clearly demonstrated in each lesson.

135. In all year groups, pupils are enthusiastic and determined to succeed in playing the very good range of instruments available. By the end of Year 9, all pupils follow a musical score simplified by the teacher. They practise individually to ensure that their performance is as accurate as possible. Pupils then gain great benefit from joining together to perform as a team or group. The teacher knows his pupils very well and plans activities that challenge them individually and appropriately. He is also continually seeking ways of making music more accessible. For example, he rearranged his plans to accommodate a pupil with hearing difficulties more effectively when he realised that by moving her to a base drum and larger foot pedal she could play more easily. By the end of the lesson, the pupil was playing in partnership with another pupil on the high hat cymbals for the first time.

136. Where pupils enter lessons showing signs of reluctance or disturbance, the individual tasks planned for them very soon capture their interest so that they concentrate for extended periods. For example, one pupil who is known to have a very short attention span doggedly practised a popular song on the keyboard until he was able to join the rest of the class, who had been practising the other parts together. Older pupils in Years 10, 11 and 12 build on their musical skills very successfully by playing the guitar, drumming, playing the keyboard, piano or the very comprehensive range of percussion instruments. The standards achieved by these pupils are very good and often outstanding, and are acknowledged by their success in entry-level Certificate of Achievement. Pupils make considerable gains through the excellent range of opportunities available to them to broaden their experience of performance.

137. High standards are reached by pupils through the excellent opportunities for them to contribute to musical festivals and other performing arts activities in the wider community. The school has received much recognition for its high standards in music, and pupils

regularly take part in musical activities within the local community and in national venues such as the Purcell Room on the South Bank.

138. The specialist teacher and co-ordinator is also a highly skilled performer, with very secure musical knowledge and understanding. He uses his skills very effectively to motivate the pupils and to promote the status of music within the school and further afield. Pupils gain early experience of performance by playing at school assemblies, concerts and other performances to parents and friends. The challenge of such performance is sometimes difficult to meet. When one pupil had difficulties with his nerves, staff were subtly and swiftly supportive, so that by the end of the day the pupil had regained his composure and his determination to try again. Assessment is good, and a focus for further development as the teacher seeks ways of identifying pupils' progress and achievements more effectively.

139. The music curriculum is very good and highly appropriate to the pupils' needs. The teacher includes excellent opportunities for the promotion of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills during lessons, by using specific vocabulary such as 'texture', and 'genre'. He also ensures that the mathematical concepts of music are understood by work on time signatures and rhythm so that pupils get used to counting for various purposes such as reading the score, calculating beats in a bar or counting to ensure that they start playing at the correct time. Pupils rapidly become at ease with such language and use it naturally themselves.

140. The subject meets National Curriculum requirements and a further strength is the opportunity for higher attaining pupils to extend their instrumental skills through guitar and drum work with visiting specialist tutors. Pupils also benefit from extra help during the weekly music clubs, in which they have the valuable opportunity to play with pupils from other classes. The school has successfully built upon the high quality provision found at the last inspection, and continues to provide highly motivating and challenging opportunities which equip pupils with skills of use and interest to them in their lives after school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

141. Provision for physical education is good and pupils, including those with additional special educational needs, make good progress in the development of their skills. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when progress was judged to be satisfactory. The good planning and continual assessment in lessons of their developing skills has a positive impact on learning, as does the focus in lessons on pupils with different skills being given suitable targets. The planning also includes the promotion of pupils' social and moral understanding, including working as teams and good sportsmanship, which has a positive impact. Healthy competition is encouraged, alongside the need to co-operate with partners.

142. The pupils in Year 7 make good progress in movement, learning to move their bodies in different directions using a variety of movements and speeds. Pupils in Year 8 develop passing skills in football, are able to stop a ball and pass it confidently; the more physically able can do this over a distance of five metres while the less physically able practise over shorter distances. The accuracy of passing improves with practice during the lessons. Year 8 pupils are confident in the swimming pool; higher attainers swim for 12 metres independently, while lower attainers use floats and increase their confidence. Pupils in Year 9 build on previously learned skills in ball control and are able to dribble a ball and offer solutions to problems in dribbling the ball to avoid an opponent. The pupils in Years 10, 11 and 12 are able to dribble a basketball across the hall confidently, looking ahead rather than at the ball, which they learn to control by touch. They remember ball handling skills and travel, stop, pivot and pass with accuracy. Higher attainers do this with confidence and have good control skills, whilst lower attainers put a lot of effort into controlling the basketball. They are able to 'lay-up' shots at the basket, and understand the sequence of skills needed to do this.

A good display of photographs in the hall shows the pupils involved in a variety of activities during the year, including athletics, football and basketball matches with other local schools, indicating good progress in all areas of physical education. There are good opportunities for them to develop skills in a wide range of physical activities other than those seen during the inspection.

143. Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are well planned to cater for pupils' different abilities, and pupils' work is assessed both during and after the lesson. The teacher's good subject knowledge and very good demonstrations of skills enable pupils to learn and they practise their skills with confidence. The high expectations of behaviour and conduct, with a suitable emphasis on safety, as well as the brisk pace of the lessons, all ensure that pupils understand what is expected of them, and they behave well. They are enthusiastic and the teacher creates a purposeful atmosphere as they begin the lessons. All pupils are suitably dressed for physical activity and the teacher sets a good example in this aspect. The good demonstration and clear explanations about new skills, or building on previously learned skills, helps pupils to learn with confidence as does the good feedback and use of praise by the teacher. The teacher places good emphasis on pupils' need to improve their own performance, not just beating the opposing team. The good teaching encourages pupils to practise, to ensure that skills, such as dribbling a football, are maintained and improved. When the teaching is good, and sometimes very good, the use of additional staff to support individual pupils is well done. When teaching is less successful, the lesson loses pace and the pupils are less attentive.

144. The leadership and management of the subject are good. There is no judgement in the previous inspection on this aspect of the subject with which to make comparisons. The co-ordinator is a subject specialist who brings his enthusiasm to the subject, ensures that pupils' work is assessed and plans carefully to enable all pupils to extend their learning in each lesson. The scheme of work is good, linked to the National Curriculum programmes of study, and ensures that all aspects of the curriculum are taught. The resources for the subject are good and continue to be well maintained and stored. The accommodation is unsatisfactory because of the limitations of only having a hard surface at the school to play outdoor games, such as football, cricket or to practise athletic skills. The school hall is also limited by its shape; it narrows at one point close to the edge of the basketball court, and it lacks accessible walls to practise ball skills. However, within the confines of the accommodation, the co-ordinator ensures that these effects are minimised and the pupils do have a good range of opportunities for physical education.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

145. The provision made for religious education is satisfactory as is the progress made by the pupils throughout the school; this is in line with the findings of the previous inspection. However, there are weaknesses in the co-ordination and assessment of the subject, which is why it has not improved since the last inspection. The range of stories and information about different religions supports pupils' development of multi-cultural understanding and their ability to make moral decisions. Assemblies support the teaching and learning of religious education and are linked to Christian beliefs and the shared human experience through prayers and reflection.

146. The younger pupils in Years 7 and 8 know about the symbols used by different religions, for example the five symbols of Sikhism and the layout of the Gurdwara. They are beginning to understand the different celebrations in Christianity, for example Lent and Easter, about Jewish family life and kosher food, and the celebration of Eid at the end of Ramadan. They are beginning to develop their understanding of the world religions and to know what the major religions hold in common. Pupils in Year 9 are beginning to understand what it means when you pray and have some knowledge of the Christian belief in resurrection and death. They are able to talk about Islam and some aspects of Islamic belief; their knowledge is not totally secure but they do remember with some prompting. As part of the accredited humanities course, pupils in Years 10, 11 and 12 learn about Christianity and other world religions. They are able to describe the Five Pillars of Islam, and what the meaning of each is, for example, prayer, charity and fasting. They increase their understanding of world religions and know the values and beliefs of these. They are able to use the Internet for research to support their studies of different religions. They know the Qur'an is written in Arabic and how many books it contains. They have an understanding and knowledge of the differences and similarities between Islam and Christianity.

147. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The teachers' planning supports a curriculum that is well structured, and this ensures that pupils build on previously learned work. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed during the inspection. In good lessons, previous work is reviewed well and the good questioning involves pupils immediately, which has a positive impact on their behaviour and attention. Pupils who need additional support are planned for and supported well by the classroom assistants. Lessons which are well planned make good use of resources to illustrate different aspects of a religion. For example, there was good use of a video on Islam and the foundations of faith which helped the pupils to understand and contribute to discussion. Pupils take a pride in their work and present it well. When the pace of lessons is good, this helps to maintain pupils' interest and concentration. Pupils' behaviour is good overall, but on occasions a minority of pupils can be disruptive, which disturbs the other pupils' opportunities to learn. Good lessons have a spiritual element that encourages pupils to develop empathy with others. For example, pupils have developed an understanding of the value of prayer in frightening and lethal situations, such as one of the planes involved in the terrorist attacks in America.

148. A weakness in the teaching is the over-reliance on photocopied work sheets. At times, work is set that is not suited to the ages of the pupils, such as cutting out, sequencing and sticking a series of pictures about the first Christmas. In such lessons, pupils' learning is not extended well enough. Marking is not consistently used to help pupils understand and learn. There are some good opportunities for pupils to use ICT, for example, in one Year 9 lesson, some of the pupils used a word processor to draft and write a prayer, and this supported their work in English. However, there are missed opportunities for pupils to develop their extended writing skills.

149. Co-ordination is unsatisfactory because pupils' work is not monitored and assessed, and neither is teachers' planning. The co-ordinator is not a subject specialist and has taken over the role since the last inspection. Although the scheme of work is suitably linked to the Southwark Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education and the Certificate of Educational Achievement, there is not a suitable structure for recording or assessing pupils' learning and progress, particularly in Years 7, 8 and 9. However, discussion with pupils and looking at their work during the inspection does indicate that they make satisfactory progress over time in their knowledge and understanding. There are insufficient resources to support pupils' learning; they are limited in number as well as range, although those for teaching and learning about Islam and Christianity are satisfactory. Since the last inspection, there has been little improvement in resources, particularly artefacts to support pupils' learning, and this is unsatisfactory.