

## **INSPECTION REPORT**

**Ercall Wood Technology College**

Telford

LEA area: Wrekin and Telford

Unique reference number: 123595

Headteacher: Peter Rubery

Reporting inspector: Paddy Orr  
16007

Dates of inspection: 19<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2000

Inspection number: 223798

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school: Comprehensive

School category: Foundation

Age range of pupils: 11 to 16

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Golf Links Lane  
Wellington  
Telford

Postcode: TF1 2DT

Telephone number: 01952 417800

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr J Ferrington

Date of previous inspection: 02.02.96

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Erccall Wood is a comprehensive Technology College for 846 girls and boys aged 11 to 16 situated in Wellington on the outskirts of Telford. It has been a Technology College since 1995, and from 1993 to 1999 was grant-maintained. Pupils come from the full range of social and economic backgrounds and the school is heavily over-subscribed. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is slightly higher than the national average and in line with the average for Telford. Boys outnumber girls by a greater margin than is the case nationally. About nine per cent of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, most with family origins in Pakistan. Although almost all speak English as an additional language, very few are in the early stages of learning English. The school has a Unit, mainly for seventy-three pupils who have a statement of special educational need, a proportion well above the national average. The Unit caters primarily for pupils who have language difficulties ('dyslexia'), but various other forms of moderate learning difficulty are represented. Pupils' attainment when they join the school covers the full range from very high to very low, with an above-average proportion of low-attaining pupils, as a result of the presence of the Unit, and a slightly lower than average proportion of pupils of the highest attainment. The profile of the intake varies from year to year but is, overall, below average.

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

Erccall Wood is a very good school. Leadership and management of high quality ensure that the teaching is good, that pupils have very positive attitudes to the school and to their learning, and that they achieve well. Staff work very well as a team. The school provides good value for money.

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

- Outstanding leadership by the headteacher and management that is of high quality overall have enabled the school to build on strengths and raise standards even further.
- Teachers expect pupils to do well; as a result of good teaching they learn effectively, particularly in Years 9, 10 and 11, where they make very good progress.
- The school provides a broad-ranging curriculum that, in most respects, interests and meets the needs of all pupils, including those who find learning difficult.
- Excellent pastoral care and very good relationships between teachers and pupils make a major contribution to the school's success.
- The school makes very good use of the opportunities it gains as a Technology College, but also maintains strengths in languages and the arts.

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

- Although the school does a great deal to try to ensure that pupils benefit from the full range of opportunities it provides, there are areas, including the achievement of boys and of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, where further improvement is needed.
- The accommodation, despite extensive and ambitious improvements in recent years, still has a number of weaknesses.

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

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

The school has continued to make good progress since it was last inspected in 1996. GCSE results have risen in most subjects. The quality of teaching is better. All the areas identified as needing attention in the last inspection, including inadequacies in the leadership and organisation of physical education, have been dealt with effectively, except for the requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship. As a result of careful planning, some major improvements have been made to the accommodation. The school has made increasingly effective use of its status as a Technology College, and in particular of its good provision for information and communications technology. As a result of careful planning, monitoring and setting of targets for improvement it has raised standards in

mathematics, science and design and technology. Existing strengths in English, modern languages, music and the creative arts have been maintained. These and other improvements have been made possible by strong, well-informed and clear-sighted leadership by the headteacher and deputy head, effective collaboration with governors and very good teamwork across the staff. Teachers are enabled to work to their strengths, and to overcome weaknesses and reinforce strengths in their teaching. The curriculum has been developed further, in line with national priorities. The role of tutors and others providing pastoral care, which is of excellent quality, has been strengthened. The school has already identified most of the areas where further improvement is needed and is well placed to make the necessary improvements.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 16 year olds based on average point scores in GCSE

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
GCSE examinations	A	B	B	A	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E

Overall, between 1996 and 1999 GCSE results improved in line with the national trend. The provisional results for 2000 show a further, and marked, improvement, particularly for boys. GCSE results are good across the attainment range and, despite the high numbers on the school's register for special educational needs, almost all pupils achieve a good measure of success at GCSE. The school exceeded its targets for GCSE in 1999 and 2000. Above average results in English have been maintained. There has been continuous, if relatively slow, improvement since 1996 in mathematics, and results are now above national figures. Science results were weak at the higher grades in 1998 and 1999, but improved markedly in 2000. In 1999 the GCSE results, when compared with those achieved nationally by pupils of similar prior attainment in Key Stage 3 national tests, were very high and in the top five per cent of schools nationally. In the work seen during the inspection there were considerable strengths in information and communications technology, modern languages and the creative arts subjects, and no marked weakness in any subject. Overall, standards in the work seen towards the end of Key Stage 4 were above those expected nationally.

Between 1996 and 1999, the trend in the school's national test results at the end of Key Stage 3 was broadly in line with the national trend. The 1999 results were close to national figures in mathematics and science and above them in English. The provisional results for 2000 show a sharp dip in English. These English results echo the relatively low attainment of the same pupils in reading tests on entry to the school. The 2000 results in mathematics and science improved slightly over those in 1999.

The gap between girls' and boys' attainment, despite recent improvement, is wider than it should be, as is the gap between the attainment of pupils from minority ethnic groups and other pupils. Nevertheless, given overall attainment on entry to the school, pupils achieve well in the Key Stage 3 tests and very well in GCSE.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are loyal to the school and anxious to learn in all age groups.

Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils move around the school in an orderly way, even when the corridors and entrances are awkward and narrow. Occasionally, small numbers of pupils, mainly boys, behave in a mildly disruptive fashion in lessons, but they are dealt with quickly and effectively.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils grow in confidence and maturity and are often eager to help one another. Pupils of different ages, genders and ethnic backgrounds get on well together.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance is close to the national average and punctuality is good. There are some signs of improvement as a result of the introduction, recently, of measures designed to improve attendance.

### TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged 11-14 years	aged 14-16 years
Lessons seen	Good overall and often very good	Good overall and often very good

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

Seventy-four lessons were observed. The teaching is mainly of good quality across the curriculum and age range. This bears testimony to the models of good teaching provided by senior managers and the effectiveness of their monitoring of the quality of teaching. The teaching is clearly focussed on improving pupils' performance, is based on very good relationships and supported by good resources that are mostly well used. The teaching was very good or excellent in a third of the lessons seen and good or better in three-quarters. It was at least satisfactory in all but one lesson. Overall, the teaching meets the needs of all pupils satisfactorily, but the most able are not always challenged, particularly in the mixed-ability classes in Years 7 and 8, and lesson planning sometimes takes insufficient account of the range of ability in a class. The lowest-attaining pupils are mostly well taught: and the quality of in-class support is consistently good. The most effective teaching is in information and communications technology and the creative arts subjects, but there is much very good practice elsewhere. The teaching in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is effective. Numeracy is taught thoroughly through mathematics and some related subjects. The teaching of literacy has many good features, but lacks consistency across subjects. The quality of pupils' learning across the curriculum matches and occasionally exceeds the good quality of the teaching they receive. Teachers want pupils to do well and pupils' response is mostly very good. Priorities for further development, on the basis of already good practice, include the teaching of literacy, the use of questioning to make pupils think, higher expectations of boys' achievement and consistent challenge for the most able.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The curriculum is carefully designed to meet the needs of all pupils, and is largely effective in doing so. There are a few weaknesses in implementation, for example in the coordination of different elements of the curriculum at Key Stage 3.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good overall. Pupils' needs in literacy are carefully identified and provision well planned by the coordinator to meet these needs. Teachers' knowledge of and concern for pupils with learning difficulties are exemplary. The teaching in the learning support department is good overall although it sometimes lacks clear purpose and direction.

Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There are good features in some specialist teaching and in concern that pupils should make good progress, but there is insufficient coordination and a lack of awareness among staff of the language learning needs of pupils with English as an additional language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal development is good although weaker for spiritual development than in other respects. Many pupils benefit greatly from a wide range of curricular and extra-curricular opportunities in music, drama, art and sport. There is an excellent prefect system. Much is done to promote pupils' social, moral and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Standards of care are excellent. Pupils are very well known to staff: their difficulties are anticipated and their successes celebrated. The pastoral system is regularly reviewed and is very effective. Assessment of pupils' progress is of good quality.

The school's strong links with industry provide important extra dimensions to pupils' experience, as do international links with schools in Europe and beyond. Links with the community are good and the partnership between the school and the local Muslim community, from which a significant number of pupils come, is being strengthened. Although provision for religious education does not fully meet statutory requirements, plans are already being implemented to rectify this.

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

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher's leadership is of very high quality. Management by key staff is secure. The school has a strong culture of team work, shared purpose and concern for individual pupils. In general, senior managers are very good role models for teaching, and some are excellent.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors provide very good support for the headteacher, know the school and its locality well and ensure that planning is thorough and forward-looking.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and the standards achieved by pupils are very good.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. In almost all respects, the school makes very effective use of the money it has. Priorities are identified carefully and financial controls and reviews are thorough.

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

What pleases parents most	What a few parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school expects pupils to work hard and they make good progress</li> <li>• It is easy to approach the school with problems</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed</li> <li>• The teaching is good</li> <li>• Parents are well informed about their children's progress</li> <li>• Pupils' personal development is good</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The setting of homework is inconsistent</li> <li>• Able pupils in Years 7 and 8 are not challenged sufficiently</li> <li>• There is disruptive behaviour by a very small minority of pupils</li> <li>• There are variations in the quality of teaching</li> <li>• The timing of parents' evenings late in the school year is awkward</li> <li>• There are insufficient extra-curricular activities</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is an interesting range of activities outside lessons</li> <li>• Pupils like school</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">after school</p>
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The inspection team agreed with most, but not all, of the parents' opinions. They agreed that there are variations in the quality of the teaching, although these are not marked. They agreed with the few who pointed out that the most able pupils are sometimes not challenged sufficiently, but felt that the school is concerned about this possibility and has introduced several successful initiatives to raise standards among the most able. They recognised that there may be occasional bad behaviour by a small minority of pupils, but found very little evidence of unsatisfactory behaviour during the inspection. Inspectors felt that the range of extra-curricular activities after school is sometimes limited, but they recognised the difficulties in making provision when many pupils live at some distance from the school. Inspectors did not have sufficient evidence to comment on the timings of parents' evenings. They felt that, overall, homework is well managed.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

**Outstanding leadership by the headteacher and management that is of high quality overall have enabled the school to build on strengths identified at the time of the last inspection and raise standards even further.**

1. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school's development. He makes good use of current research findings about effective schooling to inform an agenda for change and has a thorough knowledge of national priorities for educational development. These qualities are extended and reinforced by very good organisational skills and a sensitive concern for the individual needs of pupils and staff. The headteacher is strongly supported by a core group of experienced governors with good financial and managerial expertise, a thorough knowledge of the locality and well-established contacts with many of those who hold significant positions of responsibility within it. The deputy headteacher brings important personal and professional qualities to the management of the school. He works very well with the headteacher. Together with senior and middle managers, they seek to implement a vision of education as all-round achievement, to be realised through well-organised support and monitoring systems, good leadership at all levels, agreed targets for improvement and teaching and learning of high quality throughout the school.
2. The school's considerable success in achieving these aims is exemplified in rising test and examination results, very good attitudes towards the school among the great majority of pupils, excellent pastoral care, a strong sense of teamwork, good morale amongst staff, and good teaching across the curriculum. There are weaknesses, but these are almost all recognised by senior managers and subject to carefully thought-out programmes for continuous improvement. There have, for example, been recent successes in raising standards and improving the quality of work in mathematics and science.
3. Management of high quality is associated with very good financial planning and control. Over a number of years governors and the headteacher have generated and used appropriately, to the benefit of pupils, additional funding from a wide variety of sources. They have, in consequence, been able to make ambitious improvements to the accommodation, extend the curriculum, increase resources and develop a capable and flexible senior management team with clear and accountable responsibilities for improvement and the maintenance of high standards in all the central areas of the school's work. Although the cost of educating each pupil is higher than in the majority of similar schools nationally, the school provides good value for money.

**Teachers expect pupils to do well; as a result of good teaching they learn effectively, particularly in Years 9, 10 and 11 where they make very good progress.**

#### *The standards achieved*

4. The headteacher, governors and staff see teaching and learning of good quality as the crucial qualifications for the school's success. Local Education Authority (LEA) and other analyses of the 'value' added to pupils' learning by the school consistently identify the successes of Ercall Wood compared with most other schools in the LEA. The results of National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 3 and of GCSE at the end of Key Stage 4 indicate that, overall, pupils make good progress between the ages of 11 and 14, and very good progress between 14 and 16. From Year 9 onwards, as pupils and teachers become more conscious of the need to prepare for tests and examinations, expectations are raised and pupils' progress accelerates.
5. Between 1996 and 1999 the GCSE results improved broadly at the same rate as national results. In 1999, the proportion of pupils gaining five or more grades A\*-C was above the national average. There are variations in subject results at GCSE, but the consistency across the

curriculum is greater than in the majority of schools. Pupils also achieve well in GNVQs. The provisional GCSE results for 2000 show a marked improvement over those for 1999, particularly in the proportion of high grades. However, pupils in Year 11 in 2000 had attained better than usual scores in the 10+ tests when they entered the school, and in the National Curriculum tests they took at the age of fourteen. The work seen during the inspection at Key Stage 4 was good and above national expectations overall, but not to the same extent as is suggested by the 2000 GCSE results.

### *The quality of teaching and learning*

6. One of the reasons why the teaching is good is that teachers have agreed - through collaborative discussion, and drawing on research findings – on five elements as the basis of an Ercall ‘code of good practice’ for teaching:
  - high expectations;
  - clear objectives for learning;
  - time ‘on task’;
  - teacher ‘warmth’;
  - gender balance and use of questions.
7. There was clear evidence in the lessons seen that these criteria are widely observed. The school plans carefully to improve the quality of teaching and learning. The features form the basis of well-managed departmental reviews that take place on a bi-annual basis, and of ‘action plans’ that follow them. Most teachers have high expectations of pupils and seek with much success to ensure that pupils have similar expectations of themselves. Much of the teaching exemplifies good practice in ‘inclusion’, that is, the teaching enables all pupils to be thoroughly involved in the learning. For example, in a Year 10 science class of low-attaining pupils, the teacher made very good use of language to ensure that every pupil understood the topic of the lesson – different types of energy. Explanations were repeated when necessary and questions well used to test understanding. Printed sheets gave clear and brief explanations of the ideas under consideration. A learning support assistant working with pupils with statements of special educational need made sure that every pupil - not only those she was supporting - had the required notes to work from. Throughout the lesson the teacher responded patiently to individual needs, for instance by giving pupils time to think while their questions were answered. Because of this very good practice, the pupils made very good progress in a science course that would lead to the full GCSE examination in double science for all pupils. Pupils’ were clearly interested in the work and their relationship with the teacher was excellent.
8. Lessons in both key stages are planned carefully. Teachers have clear objectives for pupils’ learning, which are usually explained to pupils; in English they are often reinforced - as part of the department’s strong emphasis on preparation for tests and examinations - by explanations of what is required in the type of work being done to achieve a particular level in Key Stage 3 tests or grade in GCSEs. In the best practice, the learning objectives form the basis of continuous review during the lesson and reinforcement beyond it, through homework or recapitulation at the start of the following lesson. This very often happens. Nevertheless, in many lessons seen, teachers missed opportunities to round the lesson off properly by summing up what had been learned, and indicating where further progress was necessary.
9. A very good feature of the school is the extent to which pupils accept the need to do well. Most pupils concentrate hard and remain ‘on task’: many instances were observed where, as a result of pupils’ good attitudes and maturity, productive learning continued without the close supervision of the teacher. The school sets great store by ‘teacher warmth’ as a necessary prerequisite for successful learning. Senior managers go to considerable trouble to ensure that, as far as is feasible, good relationships between the teacher and pupils underpin the teaching in every

classroom. Pupils interviewed almost all cited the friendliness of teachers and teachers' concern for their welfare as central strengths of the school. Parents echoed this view in their comments. Implementation of the last criterion – 'gender balance and use of questions' – is in some respects less successful. There is much good use of questioning, where pupils are helped to think, to extend their answers or even, in a few cases, rephrase them to achieve greater clarity and precision, but such practice is not as widespread as it should be. Nor is it entirely clear what teachers understand by 'gender balance' as an element of good practice. There were many examples of questions being directed to boys more frequently than to girls; and almost all the work seen in lessons was done individually, or in single-sex pairs or groups.

*Literacy, English, mathematics and science*

10. The school has developed a policy for the teaching of literacy and, although much has still to be done in the implementation of this policy, there is good practice on which to build. Most pupils read fluently and with understanding and are good at retrieving information from texts in class and from a variety of other sources, including the Internet. Low-attaining pupils often make good progress in basic reading, although a few have continuing difficulty throughout their time at the school. Even the weaker readers in one of the lowest Year 10 groups could cope satisfactorily with the text of a Willy Russell play, recognising their own errors, correcting them and reading convincingly despite some hesitation. All had a detailed knowledge of the play and some could comment perceptively on the characters involved. One girl, ahead of the others in spoken English, was particularly confident and fluent in her description of a character: "He's got a natural instinct to wander about and get into trouble". Pupils' progress in writing is weaker than their progress in reading although, again, there is much good practice on which to build. For instance, the many Year 10 pupils – over 60 in all – who wrote letters of application to the headteacher to become prefects, showed that they had, for their age, a good grasp of the style required for this purpose, and were also able to write in an interesting, convincing and accurate way about their personal qualities and aspirations.
11. There is much good work in English and the standards reached at Key Stage 4 are above those expected nationally. It was not possible to evaluate the full range of work because of accommodation difficulties currently affecting the department, but the good results of careful and thorough planning, teaching and assessment were widely evident. Some imaginative teaching was seen involving role-play, group and class discussion and well-informed explanations by the teacher. Higher-attaining pupils at Key Stage 4 presented views cogently and showed a developing awareness of imagery and ambiguity in spoken and written language. However, some of the written work and a few of the lessons seen suggest that test and examination preparation, where the department has high expectations and is very effective, may in some classes restrict the breadth of pupils' learning in English. For example, relatively few pupils from Year 9 onwards read widely and one pupil, identified as one of the highest attainers at Key Stage 4, had not heard of any books, other than the current class reader, by the well-known author the class was studying.
12. In recent years, the school has devoted considerable energy to raising standards in mathematics. As a result of careful planning and associated monitoring, good progress has been made at the higher grade levels at GCSE. In the provisional GCSE results for 2000 the improvement for boys is particularly obvious, since for some years beforehand boys' mathematics results - against national trends - had been weaker than girls'. The department adopted single-sex grouping as part of its strategy to boost boys' achievement. The success of this strategy cannot, however, be gauged accurately, since boys in this year group had already achieved well in the Key Stage 3 tests two years previously. Nevertheless, the attainment of all pupils in GCSE mathematics in 2000 continued the mainly upward trend from earlier years, and teachers, under the well-informed leadership of the head of department, gave much thought to the teaching approaches likely to be most effective with boys.

13. The weakest pupils make satisfactory and often good progress in mathematics. For instance, two Year 8 pupils withdrawn for help in numeracy were making good progress as a result of sensitive and expert teaching, well structured to meet the needs of these pupils. One boy was weaker than the other, but the teacher adapted the work well to keep both profitably occupied. The higher-attaining boy was more independent and might well have benefited from mainstream work with in-class support. The teacher made good but not extravagant use of praise throughout and drew the lesson to an appropriate close by emphasising learning skills and how the pupils could improve their recall of earlier learning. She set homework that both pupils seemed anxious to do.
14. The school has devoted time and effort to raising standards in science, and the provisional GCSE results for 2000 show a marked improvement, particularly at the higher grade levels, over the previous two years. Teaching and learning are good, with pupils predominantly well motivated, including the weakest academically. A particular strength of the department is the provision of an 'inclusive' curriculum at Key Stage 4, in that all pupils are prepared for the double award at GCSE. In addition, there are opportunities for the most able to work towards the highest levels in the Key Stage 3 tests, and to prepare for three separate sciences at Key Stage 4. All science is now taught in specialist accommodation. Lessons are well prepared, and technicians provide good support. Areas for further development include the attention given to language and literacy, although there is already some good practice in this regard, the quality of questioning, which sometimes lacks challenge, rigour and persistence, and the need to plan consistently for the full range of attainment in each class.

#### *Other subjects*

15. As a result of teachers' high expectations, pupils make very good progress and achieve consistently high examination results in a range of subjects – religious education, modern languages, information and communications technology (ICT), and music - where, nationally, performance is often very uneven. In religious education in recent years, large groups of pupils opting for the subject have achieved better GCSE results than in most of the other subjects they have taken. During the inspection it was clear that, by Year 9, pupils have good attitudes to the subject, can draw appropriately on earlier learning and have a good understanding of what they need to do to make further progress. In a lesson about 'rites of passage' pupils were anxious to learn and answered, and asked, questions readily. They could explain baptism, what godparents are for and the significance of the Cross as a symbol. They drew on a good range of general knowledge about birth registration procedures. A Year 10 German lesson illustrated well the good progress most pupils make in the languages course they follow. Standards in this lesson showed that a good momentum for learning had been generated in Years 8 and 9. The teacher knew just how far he could push these higher-attaining pupils without losing their interest. The tone of the lesson, and the excellent relationships and class control all contributed to the fast pace of pupils' learning about the importance of syntax to gaining high grades at GCSE. Grammar was taught in German by a confident and experienced teacher. The pupils were able to practise structures while developing good accents and fluency.
16. Much of the teaching of ICT is of high quality: pupils make very good progress across the attainment range, and learn a wide range of appropriate skills. Most low attainers are fluent in basic operations and pupils with special educational needs often develop real confidence through the use of ICT. High attainers develop the ability to explore unfamiliar software and databases and to interpret output intelligently. ICT makes important contributions to good standards of work in a range of subjects including English, science, mathematics, modern languages, design and technology, drama and music. Examination results in ICT at Key Stage 4 have improved in recent years and are now consistently good. Standards of music are good throughout the age range and take up at Key Stage 4 is high compared with most schools. Many pupils make very good progress in performing, composing and appraising. Boys' and girls' attitudes to the subject are very positive - and even the lower attainers gain a satisfactory grounding at Key Stage 3 in musical terminology and key structure.

17. Standards have recently improved, as has take up of the subjects at Key Stage 4, in geography and the GCSE course in physical education. Standards in art and theatre arts are consistently high. Standards in most aspects of design and technology have risen since the last inspection, as they have in the GNVQ courses. There are some weaknesses in the resistant materials course where, in the lesson seen, pupils clearly enjoyed the work, but were allowed to set too slow a pace for what they had to do, and made less progress than they should have done in consequence. In history, teachers have good subject knowledge, standards at Key Stage 4 are above those expected nationally and the teaching is enthusiastic and interesting. However, numbers taking history as an option at Key Stage 4 are low.
18. The quality of teaching and learning in personal and social education varies widely, but the best is excellent and demonstrates how pupils' willingness to learn can generate high standards. Pupils showed their commitment to learning in a Year 9 lesson that followed up the theme of an assembly dealing with the moral dilemmas in a decision about the future of a pair of Siamese twins. The teacher led discussion about complex ethical issues sensitively and constructively, and challenged pupils to clarify their arguments and justify their opinions. The teacher drew on a detailed knowledge of individuals to ensure that all contributed. The lesson was drawn to a close skilfully when the principles of ethical decision-making were related to the pupils' own relationships. In the quality of their responses the pupils belied their real age and showed considerable maturity. They were able to disagree and advance forceful views while remaining polite, considerate and willing to listen to others' views. The lesson brought out the best in the pupils and made an important contribution to their moral and social development. They developed debating skills and made very good progress in knowledge and understanding, as the teacher introduced quite advanced ethical ideas in simple language. All the pupils responded well – variations in ability were largely irrelevant in this lesson.

**The school provides a broad-ranging curriculum that, in most respects, interests and meets the needs of all pupils, including those who find learning difficult.**

19. Ercall Wood is a 'thinking school' that has a clear philosophy for the curriculum it provides. The school aims to 'create a culture of achievement that is scientific and technological, vocational and international and in which ICT enhances learning across the curriculum.' The central importance of preparation for working life is recognised, through good progress in communication skills, and in mathematical, technological and scientific knowledge and understanding. In addition, the wide variety of pupils' needs is recognised. The school intends that pupils with all sorts of 'intelligences' should experience success, and that this success should be celebrated. Furthermore, the school seeks to ensure that the curriculum will be so interesting and well structured, and relationships between teachers and pupils so good, that pupils will feel able to make genuine choices that meet their particular needs.
20. The school provides a curriculum at both key stages that is seen by staff, pupils, parents and carers alike to be relevant, and to provide the flexibility that enables all pupils who have a mind to do so to achieve well. A curriculum review group meets regularly to monitor the implementation of the curriculum, anticipate the need for revision to meet national priorities, and consult with staff and pupils about possible changes. The curriculum is extended and enriched by a varied range of extra-curricular opportunities, many of which, such as the drama productions, are the more effective for being closely linked to mainstream curricular provision. Additional and pertinent opportunities are provided for the highest attainers. This is all very good practice, although a few parents and pupils regretted that there were not more extra-curricular activities after school. Provision is more limited at this time than, ideally, it should be, but there are difficulties because so many pupils have to travel some distance to come to school.
21. In most respects, timetabling and curricular organisation match the school's curricular objectives. A few weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection have been, or are being – as in the

case of inadequate provision for religious education at Key Stage 4 – overcome. The school manages its funding effectively to support a flexible curriculum. Classes are, with a few exceptions, kept to a reasonable size throughout the school, and where necessary small groups are formed to make it possible to target learning support accurately. Setting by attainment is, for the most part, well used to enable teachers to match work more closely to pupils' needs, although instances were found where teachers made unwarranted assumptions about the homogeneity of a class merely because it had been set. There are a few anomalies in timetabling. For example, at Key Stage 4 lessons in a range of subjects are sometimes timetabled in 'triple' periods of one and a half hours in length. This is helpful in providing blocks of time for practical subjects, but is less useful for modern languages. Occasionally, the situation is exacerbated in modern languages when all the lessons in a week are timetabled on two successive days. However, a few pupils spoken to did not find these circumstances to be a particular problem. They pointed out that the 'triple' periods were timetabled across the morning break or lunchtime, which provided opportunities for a new start in the third half-hour lesson.

22. The curriculum at Key Stage 3 is largely conventional in structure, except for three features: first, a range of mostly well-used opportunities is provided for the withdrawal and teaching of literacy and numeracy in small groups to pupils with learning difficulties; second, carefully planned modules are introduced in each year to ensure continuity throughout the key stage in drama and ICT, to provide extension and differentiation in some subjects and to give the most able additional challenges; third, in some subjects – for example ICT – GCSE courses are started in Year 9. Setting by attainment is introduced in modern languages in Year 8 and extended to English, mathematics and science in Year 9 where, in most classes, it has a positive effect on pupils' progress as work is matched more closely to pupils' needs. At Key Stage 4, considerable flexibility is introduced, and profited from. Pupils can take two modern languages to GCSE, and the number doing so is larger than usual. The curriculum is so arranged that a pupil can, if she or he wishes, mix and match A-level and GCSE study with accredited or school-devised vocational courses. The school seeks to ensure that the differing needs of pupils of all aptitudes and abilities are met adequately. Courses with a practical bias are scheduled, both at the school and at a local further education college, in addition to the full range of GCSEs, the more popular GNVQs (which are well supported), and an A-level course in ICT. Additional opportunities for gifted or talented pupils include after-school 'master-classes' at both key stages and participation in a wide range of demanding activities in music and drama. In many areas, the most able achieve very well, both academically and in terms of personal development. Although there are a few weaknesses in curricular provision (see, for example, paragraph 41) the school goes a long way towards providing at both key stages a curriculum that is both 'inclusive' and inviting. The results are evident in high levels of course completion and success, both at GCSE and in GNVQs.
23. Provision in the school's Unit for special educational needs is of very good quality overall, with well-informed management, a good range of specialist staffing, appropriate accommodation designed in collaboration with the school, and resources that are mainly of high quality. Parents are very complimentary about the school's work in this area: they feel that pupils are well integrated into the school and very well cared for. The quality of teaching is predominantly good, and pupils with special educational needs make good and sometimes very good progress, although a number have continuing difficulties throughout their time at the school.

**Excellent pastoral care and very good relationships between teachers and pupils make a major contribution to the school's success.**

24. The quality of pastoral care is excellent and relationships between teachers and pupils are very good. Tutors, heads of year and coordinators maintain a strong, well-established framework for how pupils are to work and behave. They use sanctions and rewards consistently and help pupils to manage their time effectively and develop good habits of work. Through regular collaboration with their teachers, pupils are encouraged to assess their own strengths, weaknesses and progress and to set themselves targets for improvement. This process is well managed.

25. Pupils are very well cared for. For example, pupils in Year 7 said how well, and quickly, they had been helped to settle in to their new school at the start of their first term. They were supported in this by the school's system for attaching Year 11 prefects to each Year 7 class. Fourteen Year 11 pupils adopt this role, two to a class. The arrangement wins the strong approval of form tutors, and of the prefects themselves, who enjoy the responsibility and find it rewarding. The school nurse is also involved in monitoring the welfare of recently-arrived Year 7 pupils. The school has appointed a counsellor. Pupils do not see counselling as a stigma – but essentially as an extension of the very good support already provided through year teams. Pupils themselves take on some counselling roles. A recently introduced system, working within strictly defined limits, has involved training from the NSPCC. A condition of return to school after exclusion is to have some counselling sessions. One Year 11 pupil is counselling a Year 7 pupil in this context. The school is trying hard to involve some Muslim boys in the mentoring and prefect systems, and several staff feel that it might be appropriate to have a member of the Muslim community helping with counselling. Some issues affect pupils of Pakistani background disproportionately. For example, the percentage of fixed-term exclusions in the last twelve months has been much higher for boys of Pakistani background than for other groups. A similar situation obtained at the time of the last inspection. The school is exploring possible reasons for this imbalance.
26. There are particular strengths in teachers' support of individual pupils. Year 9 pupils spoken to said they felt privileged to have access to so much learning support in lessons – a few high-attaining pupils mentioned this as well as others. During the inspection, instances were seen when teachers identified pupils who needed help or advice, and were able, sensitively, to make sure that other staff were aware of the circumstances.
27. Personal and social education (PSE) is well received by the majority of pupils, who see the programme as providing opportunities to deal with important issues that are not normally encountered in lessons. The programme is organised by a senior teacher, who arranges for some specialist topics to be covered by visiting speakers, and who also coordinates the school's ambitious Year 11 work experience programme, which is prepared for and followed up in PSE. Well-established links with local industry contribute to a good programme of careers education and guidance. PSE is taught to the whole school at the same time each week, primarily by form tutors, who take their responsibility for teaching the subject seriously. Arrangements for child protection are very thorough, with all necessary procedures in place and applied consistently.
28. The school plans for the development of pupils' social skills. Consistent expectations are achieved through good staff training and communication. In addition to the prefect system, which involves pupils at all levels of attainment, there is a well-organised school council. Pupils have many other opportunities to take responsibility, for example as stage or lighting managers in school productions, as members of sports teams, or as representatives of their house in extra-curricular activities. Teachers provide good role models for pupils except that there are very few women in positions of senior responsibility. However, three of the six appointments made at middle management positions or above by the headteacher since his arrival at the school have been of women.
29. Links with the community are good, and contacts with parents are a central element in pupils' good progress. Parental attendance at a meeting concerning GCSE held during the inspection was high, except that there were very few parents from the local Muslim community. The school is making a coordinated effort to strengthen links with the parents of Muslim pupils. Regular opportunities for ICT training and literacy teaching have been introduced, primarily for the mothers of Muslim pupils. These are well attended, valued, and supported by a crèche. The intention is to raise the expectations of Muslim parents for their children. Every family of a Muslim pupil has been visited by one of the teachers, and further initiatives are being developed, including closer links with the junior school from which most Muslim pupils come. A member of the governing body provides some support for English as an additional language and teaches Urdu at Key Stage

4. The headteacher, with the help of an interpreter, has held afternoon meetings for Muslim families to explain the school's policies and objectives. There is much to do, but a good start has been made.
30. Pastoral care is supported and extended by good approaches to assessment, which make a major contribution to setting expectations for and raising standards in pupils' learning. Arrangements for monitoring the progress of individual pupils are of above average quality, and are used effectively to identify and deal with under-achievement. Senior managers and pastoral staff monitor progress very carefully and inconsistencies between subjects are investigated in considerable detail. The information gained by these and other procedures is used to set targets for subjects and individual pupils. Pupils are involved in assessing their strengths and weaknesses and in setting their targets. Key Stage 4 pupils spoken to during the inspection expressed clear appreciation of the arrangements and recognised their value in helping them improve.

**The school makes very good use of the opportunities it gains as a Technology College, but also maintains strengths in languages and the arts.**

31. The school gained Technology College status in 1995 and this has brought real benefits to pupils, staff and the local community.
32. The benefits are most obvious in the many examples of good teaching of ICT, both as a separate subject and within other subjects. ICT is used not only to enhance presentation, as in the work of pupils taking the leisure and tourism course for GNVQ, or to increase motivation (particularly for boys) as in modern languages, but also, and most significantly, to raise standards across the curriculum and enable pupils to develop a wide range of computer skills. The school is unusually successful in ensuring that teachers make profitable use of ICT within their subjects. For example, the teaching of modern languages is extended and enlivened through the use of ICT, pupils are given access to high quality notation in music, and in theatre arts they can use software to control light and sound in ambitious preparation for productions. ICT is used imaginatively within art. In a Year 11 science lesson, a high-attaining class made competent and independent use of computers in studying factors affecting the rate of descent of parachutes. Technology College funding has enabled the school to extend ICT facilities in science. In another science lesson, in Year 10, the teacher made good use of a Powerpoint presentation to review and summarise earlier learning about thermal energy transfer. This use of good quality equipment aided pupils' concentration.
33. ICT is well used with younger pupils. A lesson in Year 7 was structured effectively to enable pupils to make progress despite their widely varying previous experience of ICT. The tasks set were sometimes too straightforward for those with computers at home, but the teacher used these pupils well to assist others who were struggling. This arrangement for mixing pupils helped to overcome the disadvantage affecting those without access to appropriate machines at home. A support assistant worked effectively with two pupils with statements of special educational need, who made good progress with the help of pre-prepared files. The class teacher had a very good knowledge of pupils' competence in ICT although they had been in the school for only three weeks.
34. The recruitment of key staff has been aided by Technology College status. The school reports that, because of the funding, curriculum development and other initiatives associated with being a Technology College, there is less difficulty in attracting subject specialists and teachers with broad experience and aptitudes than is the case in many schools.
35. The school's profitable approach to target setting and monitoring, and that of senior staff in particular, has been much influenced by the Technology College 'quality audit'. Ercall Wood has been able to find out about the priorities identified by other Trust schools, and the approaches adopted to meet these priorities. This has helped to establish monitoring routines at the school, and

provided information about the relative performance of Ercall Wood in a broader context than that provided by the LEA alone. There has also been access to relevant in-service training and other forms of expertise. In addition, the school has been encouraged to look more closely at achievement across mathematics, science and technology, and the inter-relationships between these subjects. In the school as a whole, well-established strengths in languages and the creative arts subjects form a nice balance to the work of good quality that has developed in the specialist areas associated with Technology College status.

36. Technology College status has benefited the local community, and is likely to do so increasingly through the availability expertise in ICT and other areas of technology. A particular example of good practice is the provision of classes in literacy and in the use of computers for parents of pupils from the local Muslim community.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

**Although the school does a great deal to try to ensure that pupils benefit from the full range of opportunities it provides, there are areas, including the achievement of boys and of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, where further improvement is needed.**

37. The provisional GCSE results for 2000 show a considerable improvement in boys' performance. Among those gaining five or more passes at grades A\*-C, although boys did less well than girls, the difference was much smaller than in previous years. In mathematics and science, boys' results were slightly better than girls'. This better performance by boys had been anticipated in the results of the same pupils in the national tests at Key Stage 3 in 1998, when boys outperformed girls in mathematics and science. However, boys did less well than girls in English and this weakness persisted in the GCSE English results in 2000, where 17 per cent more girls than boys gained grades A\*-C in English language. Boys' GCSE results were also much weaker than girls' in modern languages.
38. The school has gone to considerable trouble to try to improve boys' performance. In particular, there is good practice in the mathematics department, which has introduced well-planned projects in this context. Boys' under-achievement has been a focus of attention in English, modern languages and other subjects generally, but the school reports that initiatives in these areas have benefited girls as much as boys, and that test and examination results at age fourteen and sixteen tend to replicate differences between boys' and girls' performance that are already evident on entry to the school. While this may be the case, the gap between girls' and boys' achievement remains wider than it should be, and there was little evidence during the inspection that, for example, specific and coordinated attention is given across the curriculum to overcoming weaknesses in boys' writing or reading. The written work of lower-attaining boys is often unnecessarily inaccurate. At all levels of attainment, in line with national trends, girls' writing is considerably more assured than boys'. Their reading experience also differs widely.
39. Practice in assessment at Ercall Wood is better than in most schools. Sophisticated systems exist for monitoring the academic and personal progress of individual pupils after they come to Ercall Wood. These are used very effectively to identify improvement or under-achievement, to set targets and inform parents and carers about pupils' progress. Attainment on entry has until recently been assessed by the LEA through reading tests. The LEA tests on entry have now been replaced by Key Stage 2 test data, and the school has access to detailed information for every pupil, including sub-divisions in the National Curriculum Levels reached at Key Stage 2. However, the data are not analysed to reveal differences in reading and writing attainment within English. In addition to the Key Stage 2 data, the school sets standardised tests to monitor attainment and identify potential in various other areas including non-verbal reasoning and mathematical ability. The results are made available to staff. Nevertheless, during the inspection there was evidence that teachers are not sufficiently aware of the possibilities offered by these

various sets of data for setting expectations for, and monitoring the progress of, different groups of pupils, including boys and girls.

40. The school also receives information about the examination results of former pupils in local colleges after the age of 16, and often celebrates students' successes in this context. A few parents suggested that the A-level results of former pupils were sometimes disappointing when compared with their earlier attainment at GCSE. The inspection team did not have the evidence needed to decide whether or not parents were justified in this perception. The information received by Ercall Wood staff is not sufficiently detailed for the school to be able to judge the extent to which former pupils may, or may not, add value to their GCSE achievements. This is an important omission, since such information might contribute to the school's thinking about the preparation of pupils for post-16 study, and supplement the good practice that already exists through contacts with the colleges, such as 'taster days'. Ercall Wood pupils do very well at GCSE and most continue in full-time education after 16. The proportion doing so in July 2000 approached 80 per cent, well above the national average.
41. The curriculum, although it is of very good quality overall, is affected by a few weaknesses that restrict access. The school is beginning to take account of national developments in literacy and numeracy in primary schools, and the effects these are having on curricular experience in the primary school. Staff from Ercall Wood visit primary schools to observe, discuss and take part in teaching. They make important contributions to the teaching of ICT. However, more needs to be done to establish continuity that is fully effective, in mathematics in particular. For example, the mathematics department handbook stresses the need for Ercall Wood pupils in Years 7 and 8 to have 'the opportunity (in mixed-ability groups) to work on identical work in an identical situation and thereby start afresh with an equal opportunity of success.' This overlooks the possibility that many pupils may, as a result, repeat work they have already done at primary school. Literacy classes in Year 7 have been introduced at Ercall Wood to follow up work done at a summer literacy school. The lesson seen followed the pattern of the National Literacy Strategy, but bore little relation to the English taught to the same pupils in their mainstream English lessons. The mismatch is understandable since the school's literacy policy is in the early stages of implementation.
42. Links between English and drama are relatively weak, mainly because drama is taught (very well) as an expressive art rather than in line with the National Curriculum requirements for English. The English handbooks for Key Stage 3 give detailed and helpful administrative support to teachers, but do not set out the curricular principles for teaching English to this age group: there is, therefore, no clear indication of how National Curriculum requirements for spoken English are to be met.
43. Although in-class support for pupils with special educational needs at Key Stage 3 is well organised and effective, and although the curriculum in Year 10 has been carefully adapted to reduce class sizes and so make it easier for teachers to meet pupils' individual needs in a potentially difficult year group, there are a few weaknesses in the provision of support across the school. Despite the good work in Year 10, there is still a need for some additional in-class support at Key Stage 4. There are large numbers of pupils throughout the age range on the first stage of the register of pupils with special educational needs. It is not clear when or if these pupils are removed from the register once they have been placed on it, and their difficulties are often described in very general terms, such as 'mild spelling', for example. Whether this sort of designation is of much help, in isolation from other information, is open to question. By contrast, the quality of the individual education plans (IEPs), which are produced by the learning support department for pupils at higher stages of the register, is very good.
44. Provision for pupils learning English as an additional language is less effective than for special educational needs. In particular, staff awareness of how these pupils should be taught to read and write English is low across the curriculum. There was little evidence in lessons of strategies to

group pupils according to both learning needs and language development. Often pupils with English as an additional language are subsumed under the general heading of special educational needs and, in proportion to their total numbers in the school, they are over-represented on the register, and in low-attaining classes generally. The school has established that pupils with family origins in Pakistan perform less well than their peers in the Key Stage 3 tests and at GCSE, as they do on entry to the school. Possible reasons for this under-achievement are being considered in a sensitive way, with good advice from outside the school. The progress of pupils from minority ethnic groups is monitored with some care. Imaginative initiatives have been taken to improve matters in the longer term and some well-informed help is being provided in the classroom. As yet, however, there has been little liaison with the main contributory junior school over these matters.

45. The school has recently produced a carefully prepared and thoughtful policy for the teaching of literacy and spoken English. It contains much helpful advice, but in implementation will need extension so that it can be applied consistently through subjects. At present, there are no precise objectives for the teaching of reading and writing in each subject. Nor are the implications of the National Literacy Strategy for continuity in teaching recognised. Although a new school marking policy has recently been drawn up, there is no specific guidance to show subject specialists how to mark and comment on written work in their subject. There are no suggestions for in-service training in the teaching of language and literacy; nor is there sufficient emphasis on the need for all teachers to have a shared awareness of the ways in which pupils' literacy skills are to be developed. Nevertheless, the policy represents a very good starting point, and there are arrangements to ensure that in implementation it will be monitored carefully across the curriculum.
46. At present, although there are examples of very good practice, in most subjects not enough attention is given to the teaching of writing and reading, spelling and the meaning of new words. Pupils' progress is not helped by a lack of consistency in teachers' responses to weaknesses in writing. The quality of marking varies across the curriculum. Although it is regular, careful and positive in tone, except in English it too rarely gives specific advice about how improvement should be achieved in style, accuracy and use of vocabulary. There are also weaknesses in some lessons in the quality of questioning, when it lacks challenge, persistence and is too often boy-focussed. Although there is much good practice, questioning and discussion are not used as well as they might be to develop pupils' ability to speak at length and for different purposes. In the lessons seen at all levels of attainment, pupils were relatively rarely asked to extend answers or re-phrase them in different ways. Nor did teachers take enough opportunities to pose questions, or give explanations, at different levels of complexity to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities.
47. The need to ensure that work is well matched to pupils' needs is a focus of much school thinking about the quality of teaching, although this does not figure as a separate heading in the school's criteria for good teaching. In the majority of lessons seen, the teaching methods and organisation engaged all pupils. There were exceptions, as is noted in the previous paragraph. Furthermore, a small number of parents expressed concern that able pupils were not challenged sufficiently in Years 7 and 8. The inspection team did not find this to be a major problem, although there were lessons when this occurred. Lack of challenge for the most able was also evident at both key stages in some classes set by attainment, when the tasks were not planned well enough to cater for pupils of all abilities. Nevertheless, the school has had considerable success in raising standards among the most able, as is exemplified in the GCSE results for 2000.
48. The school rightly sets considerable store by its many successes in meeting the broad range of needs in the school population. The areas for improvement identified above are far from the dominant theme, but require attention nonetheless.

**The accommodation, despite extensive and ambitious improvements in recent years, still has a number of weaknesses.**

49. Inspection reports from earlier years make it clear that, since the headteacher came to the school, the accommodation has been radically improved from an extremely low base. Further improvements, mainly in English and drama, were being completed at the time of the inspection. This building programme follows others that have involved refurbishment inside and outside the school. All have improved the built environment and extended curricular opportunities for pupils. Pupils spoken to recognised the importance of these developments and their implications for maintaining good morale and positive attitudes towards learning. The accommodation now supports the curriculum and pupils' learning well in most respects, although there are a several continuing weaknesses.
50. Two areas require early attention, both of which affect learning in physical education. The changing rooms for physical education are sub-standard, and some of the toilets are unsatisfactory. In addition, the dining room is barely big enough and the school still has to make use of twelve mobile classrooms.
51. Narrow corridors and awkward entrances make for difficulties in movement in certain parts of the school, and some of these areas can be a danger to pupils' safety when ground surfaces become wet and slippery. The main entrance area to the school is relatively cramped and it is difficult for the school to use display to make it welcoming and attractive for visitors. Nevertheless, more could be done to this end. A few parts of the school are in poor decorative order and contrast strongly with the areas that have been refurbished. Despite its status as a school offering specialist provision for certain aspects of special educational needs, there are no adaptations to allow access for wheelchairs.
52. The strengths outweigh the weaknesses and the accommodation, overall, is well managed.

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

In order to build on existing good practice the school should:

1. In the context of its priorities to raise standards, continue and extend good work being done to raise achievement among boys, pupils with English as an additional language and the most able, by paying attention to:
  - teaching methods, and in particular the use of language, questions, pupil groupings, tasks set and resources used;
  - assessment, so that staff are more aware of ways in which available data can be and are used to monitor the progress of, and set targets for, different groups of pupils.
2. Improve continuity in pupils' learning by paying particular attention to:
  - links with the contributory schools, to ensure that the curriculum at Ercall Wood builds on and extends pupils' experience at primary or junior school in literacy and numeracy;
  - links with the receiving post-16 institutions so that, in collaboration with the local Learning Partnership, it is possible to establish how well pupils are prepared for the demands of post-16 study and how well they build on their achievement at GCSE.
3. Overcome continuing inadequacies in the accommodation.

**PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS**

***Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection***

Number of lessons observed

74

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

26

***Summary of teaching observed during the inspection***

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	27	43	25	1	0	0

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

***Information about the school's pupils***

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Y 7 – Y 11
Number of pupils on the school's roll	846
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	171
<b>Special educational needs</b>	Y 7 – Y 11
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	73
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	223
<b>English as an additional language</b>	
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	68
<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	22

***Attendance***

**Authorised absence**

	%
School data	8.5
National comparative data	7.9

**Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	1.1
National comparative data	1.1

*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for 1998/9, the latest complete reporting year*

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	2000 [1999]	89 [89]	58 [82]	147 [171]

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	42 [59]	61 [55]	56 [49]
	Girls	37 [67]	38 [54]	32 [47]
	Total	79 [126]	99 [109]	88 [96]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	54 [74]	67 [64]	60 [56]
	National	n/a [63]	n/a [62]	n/a [55]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	23 [35]	41 [35]	26 [25]
	National	n/a [28]	n/a [38]	n/a [23]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	53 [48]	63 [54]	58 [51]
	Girls	43 [59]	37 [52]	37 [47]
	Total	96 [107]	100 [106]	95 [98]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	65 [63]	68 [62]	65 [57]
	National	n/a [64]	n/a [64]	n/a [60]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	31 [29]	42 [33]	30 [30]
	National	n/a [31]	n/a [37]	n/a [28]

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4

Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000 [1999]	86 [79]	80 [65]	166 [144]

GCSE results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A*-G	1 or more grades A*-G
Numbers of pupils achieving the standard specified	Boys	49 [34]	79 [71]	84 [76]
	Girls	55 [50]	77 [62]	78 [64]
	Total	104 [84]	156 [133]	162 [140]
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	63 [58]	94 [92]	98 [97]
	National	n/a [46.6]	N/a [90.9]	n/a [95.8]

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	47 [43]
	National	n/a [38]

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

Vocational qualifications		Number	% success rate
Number studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all those they studied	School	37 [31]	86 [100]
	National		N/A

### Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	3
Pakistani	66
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	772
Any other minority ethnic group	2

### Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	10	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	37	2
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

## ***Teachers and classes***

### **Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y11**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	52.64
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16.1

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Education support staff: Y7– Y11**

Total number of education support staff	20
Total aggregate hours worked per week	481

### **Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y11**

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	78
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### **Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y11**

Key Stage 3	21.2
Key Stage 4	19.8

## ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	2263881
Total expenditure	2301389
Expenditure per pupil	2724
Balance brought forward from previous year	89055
Balance carried forward to next year	51547

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	846
Number of questionnaires returned	154

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	46	49	3	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	51	44	1	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	35	55	1	0	9
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	58	5	0	3
The teaching is good.	53	43	0	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	48	4	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	48	49	1	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	43	1	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	25	69	1	0	5
The school is well led and managed.	56	37	0	0	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	42	51	2	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	38	55	3	0	4

### Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Mainly because of the fuel crisis at the time of the inspection, it was difficult to achieve a comprehensive analysis of parental opinions. Nevertheless, it is clear that, overall, parents have very positive views of the school.