

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS COUNCIL
(ISC)**

INSPECTION OF

CHIGWELL SCHOOL

By the

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE
(ISI)**

on

10th-14th May 2004

MAIN REPORT

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INSPECTION REPORT ON

Chigwell School

Chigwell Junior School was inspected in the same week and is the subject of a separate report

Full Name of the School	Chigwell School		
DfES Number	881/6006		
Address	Chigwell, Essex IG7 6QF		
Telephone Number	0208 501 5700		
Fax Number	0208 500 6232		
E-mail Address	hmsec@chigwell-school.org		
Name of Principal	Mr David Gibbs		
Proprietor	Mr Colin de Boer		
Age Range	7-18	Gender	Mixed
Number of Pupils	726	Number of Boarders	26
Inspection Dates	9-14 May 2004		

This inspection report follows the framework laid down by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI). The inspection was carried out under the arrangements of the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership. It was also carried out under Section 163(1)(b) of the Education Act 2002, under the provisions of which the Secretary of State for Education and Skills has accredited ISI as the body approved for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to ISC Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003.

The school must not quote the report selectively in the school prospectus or other promotional literature.

The inspection was not carried out in conjunction with the Committee for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) and the report does not contain specific judgements on the National Minimum Boarding Standards. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and evaluates the quality of the boarding experience and its contribution to pupils' education and development in general.

The inspection does not examine the financial viability of the school or investigate its accounting procedures. The inspectors check the school's health and safety procedures and comment on any significant hazards they encounter: they do not carry out an exhaustive health and safety examination. Their inspection of the premises is from an educational perspective and does not include in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features.

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1. MAIN FINDINGS

Overall Summary

- 1.1 Chigwell School enjoys a fine environment and is largely successful in achieving its aims. Examination results are generally good for the ability of the pupils, above the average for selective maintained schools at the General Certificate of Education Advanced Level (A level) and similar to the average for these schools up to the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE). Academic achievements are considerable, and particularly so in the sixth form. Chigwell contributes very well to the personal development of the pupils, not least through very good pastoral care. The spiritual development of the pupils' within this multi-cultural community is notable and this contributes to very good relationships between pupils and with the teachers. Teachers are hardworking, caring and committed and their teaching is good, not least because of the preparation and enthusiasm evident in the lessons. The pupils respond with exemplary attitudes and behaviour and these contribute to very good learning, though even more independent learning and use of ICT is to be encouraged. Independence is developed through a wide-ranging and successful activities programme and through opportunities for leadership within the houses and elsewhere.

What the School Does Well

- 1.2 The school has many strengths and the most notable are listed below. The school:
- promotes the exemplary learning, attitude and behaviour of the pupils;
 - provides very good pastoral care and supports very well the personal development of the pupils;
 - benefits from the hard work and commitment of the staff;
 - achieves high academic attainment and progress in the sixth form;
 - has a very good activities programme, in which sport and music are particularly strong;
 - possesses and maintains grounds which contribute greatly to the excellent ambience in which the pupils develop.

What the School Should Do Better

- 1.3 The school has no major weaknesses but it is aware that the following could be further improved.
- More helpful comments are needed on assessed work.
 - Pupils need better careers and special educational needs (SEN) support.
 - More effective use and development of information and communications technology (ICT) across the curriculum would help pupils' learning.
 - The library is not used sufficiently for research and independent learning, nor is it well enough stocked in several subjects.
 - Academic attainment and progress could be greater in Years 7-11.

Standards of Attainment and Progress in Subjects

- 1.4 Pupils throughout the school achieve good and often very good standards for their age, ability and circumstances. Attainment in public examinations displays some unevenness in

the GCSE but is often good and sometimes very good, especially at A level. Progress throughout the school, for both boys and girls and for pupils on learning support is good at all stages.

The Quality of Pupils' Learning, Attitudes and their Behaviour

- 1.5 The quality of pupils' learning, attitudes and behaviour is very good. Pupils are very well motivated and positive about their lessons. The school's claim to be "a diverse yet inclusive learning community" is entirely justified. This is a notable strength of this coeducational and multi-ethnic school.

The Quality of Teaching

- 1.6 At all stages, the quality of the teaching is good and often very good, especially in the sixth form. The very good relationships between teachers and pupils, careful lesson planning and teachers' good grasp of their subject are contributory factors.

Other Aspects of the School

Attendance

- 1.7 Attendance is very high. The operation of the computerised registration system is effective. Absences are quickly identified and followed up after the twice-daily registrations. Small changes have been introduced to the format and storage of the admission register in order to comply with the statutory regulations.

Assessment and Recording

- 1.8 Assessment is good. A new system is helping to promote good assessment and monitoring of attainment across departments. A range of different assessments is used regularly and the marking is thorough in most departments, though more helpful comments are needed. Pupils and parents understand the grading system.

Curriculum

- 1.9 The curriculum is sound overall. A good, broad and balanced education is provided across the age and ability ranges but the provision for developing ICT skills and understanding is insufficient and use of ICT poorly implemented.

Teaching and Non-teaching Staff

- 1.10 The qualifications and experience of the teaching and non-teaching staff are very good. They are committed and hard working and contribute greatly to the well-being and success of the pupils. Good policies are in place for teachers' induction, appraisal, and professional development but in some cases practices could be improved.

Resources for Learning

- 1.11 The quality and quantity of resources are good. Books, equipment and materials are sufficient to support teaching and learning and these resources are well managed. While the provision of ICT equipment is good, its use is not sufficient.

Libraries

- 1.12 Library provision is currently less than adequate. The Senior School library is too small to meet all the needs and the range of books is too limited for some subjects. Departmental libraries do not compensate for these deficiencies.

Premises and Accommodation

- 1.13 The school's grounds are excellent and the buildings, overall, are good in terms of provision, quality and condition. They help to enhance and enrich pupils' educational experience. Pupils enjoy the space and make good use of it. Some departments are less fortunate and lack of space puts some constraints on teaching and learning.

Links with Parents and the Community

- 1.14 Links with parents and the community are sound. The school works hard to keep parents well informed about their children's progress and developments at the school. Of the responses to the parental questionnaire, almost all were favourable but there were some complaints. Links between the school and the community are varied and include charitable fund raising. Parents were informed subsequent to the inspection that policies relating to the curriculum are available on request.

Pupils' Personal Development

- 1.15 The personal development of pupils is very strong. Pupils of all ages take the opportunities provided to enable them to enrich their personal, social and cultural development. Pupils are actively encouraged to find their own spiritual commitment and to develop a caring, realistic and well-informed moral code. They develop into fine young people.

Pastoral Care

- 1.16 Provision of pastoral care is very good, and contributes greatly to both the personal and academic development of the pupils. Support and guidance are good overall but only sound for pupils with special educational needs. Some measures have recently been taken to enhance careers education and guidance but there remains scope for further improvement. Guidance on higher education choice is good. Measures to promote good discipline and behaviour are very successful, and contribute very well to the ethos of the school.

Welfare, Health and Safety

- 1.17 Appropriate measures are taken to safeguard and promote pupils' welfare. Child protection measures are in place and proper efforts are taken to reduce fire risk and other hazards. The school endeavours to ensure that the environment is as safe as possible for pupils and staff. The premises are mostly kept in a good state of repair, cleanliness and hygiene.

1.18 Standards of boarding

No Commission for Social Care Inspection team took part in this inspection but the school has implemented most of the recommendations of the last report. Standards of accommodation for the small number of boarders are sound and the contribution which boarding makes to pupils' personal development is good.

Governance and Management

- 1.19 Governance and management are good. Good cooperation between the chairman of governors and the headmaster, and the loyal support of other governors ensure the school is

governed effectively. Changes are underway to increase efficiency on the financial side and attention is now needed for the monitoring of the education. The senior management team supports the headmaster in providing vision and direction. Together they ensure the school is managed well.

Achievement and Quality in Activities

- 1.20 Provision of activities is good and the programme is extensive, particularly in games and music. Visits and expeditions broaden and complement the curriculum. Activities enhance pupils' personal development, though cultural activities receive less attention than sport or academic extension activity. The new drama centre may reverse that situation.

Progress Made by the School since its Last Inspection

- 1.21 Good progress has been made. Relationships between Senior and Junior School are better but need further improvement. The variety of teaching methods has been extended but more use of ICT would help. Most departments support school marking policies in principle but less so in practice. Academic excellence is recognised and praised but even with the new drama centre more could be done to raise the profile of cultural pursuits. The induction programme is effective but the quality and variety of training could still be increased. Coeducation is now established though boys outnumber girls and few women work at senior management level.

Compliance with the Regulations for Registration

DfES Standard		Does the school meet the regulatory requirements?
1. Quality of education:	1.(2) Curriculum	Yes
	1.(3)-(5) Teaching	Yes
2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils		Yes
3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils		Yes.
4. Suitability of proprietors and staff		Yes
5. Premises and accommodation		Yes
6. Provision of information		It meets almost all of the requirements
7. Manner in which complaints are to be handled		Yes

Actions Required for Compliance with the Regulatory Requirements

- 1.22 In order to meet all the requirements, the school must
- (1) inform parents that policies relating to the curriculum are available on request. [This has been included in the subsequent newsletter.] Regulations 6.(2)(g) and 6.(10)
- 1.23 In addition to the actions set out above, the school is asked to address any issues highlighted in *What the School Should Do Better*. These are set out as recommendations for the school in Section 2 of the report.

2. MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

The report contains a number of points for action but the following are the main recommendations that follow from the shortcomings identified in paragraph 1.3. The numbers in brackets refer to the relevant paragraphs in the body of the report.

- R1 The school should continue to develop strategies to raise standards in Years 7 to 11 to the high levels which apply in the sixth form. (1.2, 1.4, 4.3, 4.5)
- R2 More helpful comments are needed when assessed work is marked. (1.8, 5.7, 5.9)
- R3 Support for pupils with SEN and careers guidance should be developed further. (1.16, 6.13)
- R4 Support is needed for teachers in their use of ICT across the curriculum. (1.11, 5.27-5.30)
- R5 Pupils must be encouraged to use the library for research and independent learning and, for this purpose, all subjects must be appropriately stocked. (1.12, 5.32-5.36)
- R6 Meet the regulatory requirement noted in the previous section. (1.22, 5.44)

3. INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the School

- 3.1 Chigwell school is a coeducational, day school with some boarders and educates 740 pupils between the ages of 7 and 18. It stands in 70 acres of green belt playing fields and woodlands midway between Epping and Hainault Forests. The school was founded in 1629, and William Penn was at one time a pupil. The school became coeducational in 1997. The original building is still in use and houses the school library. Buildings have been added over the years and many in the last decade, including the drama centre, sports hall, design and technology centre, various departmental rooms and a classroom and office extension for the Junior School. The buildings are set in beautiful grounds and well-kept gardens.
- 3.2 The Christian ethos of the school remains strong although many of the pupils are from ethnic backgrounds and have different cultures and religions. The long-standing and close association with the neighbouring parish church is maintained, though the school has its own chapel and a chaplain. The boarding element is small but it influences the atmosphere of the school, which has activities in the evening and at weekends. Two small boarding houses for girls and a larger one for boys provide ample accommodation. The headmaster and several of the staff live on the campus.
- 3.3 While the school curriculum is based on pupils' ability to cope with around nine GCSEs and three A levels, demand for places at age 7 is less intense than at 11 and pupils admitted to the Junior School aged seven are usually allowed to progress to the Senior School. Competition in the area is very strong, coming from other independent schools and maintained selective schools. Pupils travel from a wide area in this part of Essex and East London for which the communications are good.
- 3.4 In comparison with other independent schools over a third are in the top quartile of ability and half are in the second and third quartiles, according to the results of standardised tests administered in Years 7 and 9. The standards against which results have therefore been measured are those for all independent schools and the average for maintained selective schools. Some of the pupils who are less suited to academic courses in the sixth form leave after GCSE and are replaced by more able pupils, including some East European scholars in Year 12. Expectations are therefore higher for the sixth form, where examination results have been compared with the results for all candidates.
- 3.5 The school is divided into Senior and Junior Schools but is administered as a single unit. The master of the Junior School is responsible for pupils' personal development and pastoral care in Years 3 to 8 and for their academic development in Years 3 to 6. All facilities and grounds are used by junior pupils. The senior school in Years 9 to 13 is divided into four houses, which have responsibility for pupils' personal and academic development. Senior School departments are responsible for teaching in Years 7-13.
- 3.6 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum (NC) equivalence are shown in the following table:

School	NC
IIIrd Form	Year 7
IVth Form	Year 8
Removes	Year 9

School	NC
Lower Fifth	Year 10
Upper Fifth	Year 11
Lower Sixth	Year 12

Key Indicators.

3.7 GCSE

Percentages	Most recently completed Year 11			Average for the last <i>three</i> Year 11s		
	Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls	All
Entered for 5+ subjects	100	100	100	100	100	100
Achieved 5+ @ A* - C	95.5	100	96.5	97	100	98
Achieved 5+ @ A* - G	100	100	100	100	100	100
Average score per candidate*	59.7	61.9	60.2	59.7	60.9	59.9

* Scoring is 8 for GCSE grade A*, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 for grades A – G.

3.8 A Level and AS

	Most recent year group			Average for the last <i>three</i> years		
	Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls	All
Average score per candidate	29.6	32.5	30.4	27.1	27.2	27.1
Average score per subject entry	8.1	8.3	8.2	7.8	7.6	7.8

Scoring is 10, 8, 6, 4, 2 for A level grades A – E, and 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 for AS grades A to E.

3.9 Attendance for First Half of Summer Term 2004

	Authorised	Unauthorised
Percentage absence	3.3	0

3.10 Exclusions Over the Previous 12 Months

Temporary exclusions	Permanent exclusions
15	1

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and Progress

- 4.1 Pupils throughout the school achieve good and sometimes very good standards for their age, ability and circumstance. Given that most pupils are in the upper quartiles of ability when compared with other independent and selective schools, attainment in public examinations displays some unevenness; however, it is often good and sometimes very good, especially in the sixth form. Some pupils in the lower quartile of ability bring down the overall level of performance at GCSE.
- 4.2 Attainment in lessons is good and often very good. In one fifth of lessons observed it was in line with pupils' abilities while in over a third of lessons it was good and in a similar proportion it was very good. Attainment and progress in written work are mostly good, and often, as in the understanding of key conceptual elements in sixth form history essays, it is very good.
- 4.3 In public examinations, many pupils throughout the key stages achieve good and often very good results for their age, ability and circumstance. In the last three years, almost all pupils achieved at least five A*-C grades at GCSE. In two of the last three years, the percentage of pupils gaining A* or A has been above the national average for maintained selective secondary schools. However, results have been declining in the last three years, so last year pupils did not perform to the levels expected in most subjects and results were below those achieved by pupils of similar abilities in independent schools. Results at A level have been well above the national average particularly for grades A and B, and overall about half a grade higher than those for maintained selective schools. Almost all pupils leave school with the qualifications they need for the next stage of their education.
- 4.4 Progress to GCSE is good overall but below the average for independent schools and the school has developed strategies to improve attainment at GCSE. Many of these are based on analyses from a standardised sample of pupils of similar ability from independent schools. The reasons for GCSE achievement being below that expected of pupils of these ages and abilities in independent schools, and compared to the school's own A and AS performance, include comparatively low aspiration in the years leading to GCSE, deficiencies in the quality of some teaching in Years 7 and 8, insufficient match of task to ability in the Year 10 and 11 lessons and the limited ability and attitude of some Year 11 pupils. The difference is also partly explained by some pupils of weaker ability leaving at the end of Year 11 and being replaced by new arrivals who are academically stronger, and also because sixth form pupils can choose subjects, such as economics, which they innately find more congenial.
- 4.5 Progress is good in most lessons; in nearly a third it was rapid, and in just over a fifth it was sound. At a time when preparation for public exams necessarily dominated the lessons of the senior year groups, pupils were observed developing their confidence, sharpening their examination skills, and consolidating their knowledge. A Year 11 drama lesson provided a very good example of this. A substantial contribution to this attainment and progress comes from the strong school ethos, and the attitudes and behaviour of pupils, which in no small part derive from it.
- 4.6 No significant difference is evident between the progress of girls and boys, nor between pupils of high, average and low ability, though inevitably difference in examination grades occurs. Most of those with learning support, or of a different ethnicity, and those for whom English is an additional language, progress at least in line with other pupils, but even more

learning support is needed. Parents express considerable satisfaction with attainment and progress at the school and the good quality of these aspects of school life was evident during the week of the inspection.

- 4.7 Improvements in both attainment and progress have been made since the last inspection, and the school is now making further improvements in its systems for assessing progress. As well as information from long-term progress to GCSE, a system for judging progress to A level has been adopted: these are contributing to a new database, and a clearer grading policy. Junior School pupils entering Year 7 do not take the Senior School entrance examination and this in part limits available data. Consideration should be given to extending such data, by use of National Curriculum tests, verbal reasoning (VR) scores, and rank orders, as well as by greater exchange of information between the Junior and Senior Schools.

Quality of Pupils' Learning, Attitudes and Behaviour

- 4.8 The quality of pupil's learning, attitudes and behaviour is very good. Pupils are very well motivated and positive about their lessons. The school's claim to be "a diverse yet inclusive learning community" is entirely justified, and this is a notable strength of a coeducational and multi-ethnic school.
- 4.9 Pupils enjoy very good relationships with the teaching staff, with high levels of cooperation and mutual respect. Pupils acknowledge the dedication of their teachers, admire their professionalism and scholarship, and speak warmly of their personal concern.
- 4.10 Attitudes and behaviour in the classroom are very good. Pupils are highly motivated, willing to ask, respond to questions and prompt to undertake tasks. They apply themselves very well to their work, sustain concentration, acquire ICT skills, and, as they progress up the school, increasingly develop into competent, articulate, industrious and independent learners. They flourish most in the sixth form, where attitudes to learning are particularly strong in economics, geography and RS.
- 4.11 Pupils also enjoy very good relationships with each other and, as at the time of the last inspection, a commendable blending of racial groupings was noted; no issues of creed, ethnicity or gender were observed. Pupils are noticeably tolerant and respectful of the feelings, values and beliefs of others. They are engaging, open, honest, on many occasions courteous, and at all times noticeably lacking in arrogance. They respect their environment: little graffiti was evident, and less litter. On the first day of the inspection, indeed, only a dropped apple was observed, a lonely yet reassuring reminder of the irresistible forces of gravity and original sin. The many opportunities for responsibility are maturely exercised. Old and young relate very well to each other. They behave excellently, in class, in assemblies, in the dining hall and at most times around the school. The pupils' great enjoyment of each other's company and their environment was said by some sixth formers to make them reluctant to go home.
- 4.12 Many factors combine to produce the very good relationships; in particular, the school grounds provide a quiet refuge from the neighbouring urban environment, and the ethos of the school, carefully nurtured by the headmaster and staff, enables considerable diversity to flourish through the provision of a widely accepted and highly effective moral and disciplinary frame. Parents expressed a high level of satisfaction with the standards of behaviour at Chigwell and a particularly high level of satisfaction with the school's values. The quality of pupils' learning, attitudes and behaviour is a notable strength of this coeducational and multi ethnic school.

Attendance

- 4.13 Levels of attendance are very high, approaching 97 %. Unauthorised absences are extremely rare and usually only temporary until the parents have replied and their notes have been logged. Registration takes place twice each day, firstly, at 8.20am by the tutors in the respective houses. The second registration occurs between 2.35 and 2.45 pm and involves the pupils reporting to their tutor at the chosen location. All data is entered electronically into the system. Five minutes travelling time is permitted between lessons and sometimes this is not sufficient. Not all teachers take registers at the start of lessons and if they do any absences are not always relayed to the tutors. Whilst the system relies heavily upon trust between the pupils and their teachers it does work in practice and meets the regulations. The absence returns to the DfES comply with the requirements.
- 4.14 The admission register was not in the format specified in the regulations, nor has it been since at least 1987. The regulation, which specifies that the register should, even if computerised, be printed out at least annually and kept for three years after the date of the last entry, has not been followed. Prior to computerisation the admissions register existed unacceptably as a series of file cards. The register's format has recently been changed to that specified and a printout made. However, in order to maintain full compliance, the school must ensure that it continues to make annual printouts and keep them for three years.

Does the school meet the regulatory requirements for admission and attendance registers?

Yes

4. QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

- 5.1 At all stages, the standard of teaching is good and often it is very good, particularly in the sixth form. The very good relationships between the pupils and teachers, careful planning and good grasp of the subject are the main contributing factors. Due to the relationships between the teachers and pupils the management and control of the pupils is very good as is the discipline in the classroom.
- 5.2 At the time of inspection most of the examination classes were engaged in revision and this showed some of the teaching at its best. Teachers use methods and set a range of tasks suited to the differing needs of the pupils. Those pupils with SEN or equivalent problems are few in number and teaching styles tend towards pupils with no diagnosed learning difficulties. Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) showed no signs of learning difficulties that required special approaches by the teacher. With some exceptions the teachers display high expectations of their pupils and challenge their learning by limited, but effective, teaching strategies. Variations in pace led to some weaker students experiencing difficulties in understanding.
- 5.3 The teachers have a very good command of their subject, are enthusiastic and possess experience of the preferred style of answering favoured by examiners. Additionally, they field questions with confidence and often extend into related areas. Science teachers posed questions that varied in style and difficulty allowing pupils of varying ability to answer confidently.
- 5.4 In most subjects the teachers maximise the pupils' learning by careful time management and appropriately used resources. Occasionally, teachers rely too heavily upon "talk and chalk" at

the expense of pupil interaction and do not correct this by use of modern teaching aids. The younger teachers are generally more adventurous in trying newer teaching aids and approaches than older colleagues, some of whom are unsure or simply lack the skills needed to employ the new technologies efficiently. Although the use of ICT, including data projectors, has increased since the last inspection more is needed to make the most of this medium. Noticeable differences in the quality of teaching are evident in different parts of the school, especially in Years 7, 8 and 9, partly because of the deployment of fewer specialist teachers. Senior school teachers engaged with Years 7 and 8 pupils often have to cope with more fidgety pupils and may spend more time in controlling their behaviour.

- 5.5 The quality of handouts is good and in the sciences the production of in-house worksheets detailing experimental techniques reduces the time needed for explanation. The balance between over reliance on photocopied or hand written worksheets and pupils writing their own notes varies between subjects and teachers. The results of all assessed work in the sciences is logged onto the computerised database.

Does the school meet the regulatory requirements for teaching?

- 5.6 Yes.

Assessment and Recording

- 5.7 Assessment is good overall. A good academic development plan on the use of assessment was completed early this year with clear strategies for the future and now systems for assessing and monitoring pupils' attainment are very good across all departments. The systems are efficient, thorough and appropriate for the ages of the pupils, their particular needs, including SEN, and their stages of development. The use of baseline assessment, including testing to find out the ability of pupils on entry to the school and subsequent value-added data, is consistent across departments. Much good work has been done on assessment since the last inspection.
- 5.8 All pupils take standardised tests in Years 7 and 9. The data is fed into the school database and is used by all departments as objective evidence in establishing their expectations and in monitoring the performance of the pupils. The baseline for pupils' performance in the sixth form is calculated from pupils' average points score at GCSE and then used as a base for monitoring performance. This tracking of progress is used to identify areas of concern about individuals or whole classes for target setting and examination analysis. After the whole-school analysis of GCSE and A level results, each department is required to analyse its own results. Despite the lack of analysis by ethnic grouping, from evidence in the classroom and conversations with pupils and teachers, no suggestion is made that any one ethnic group does worse than any other.
- 5.9 Most departments have their own marking policies which are in line with the school marking policy. At best, such as in geography and RS, sensitive and specific marking related to pupils' ability provides constructive and detailed comments and these comments enable further progress to be made. At worst, marking is mechanical and unhelpful in supporting learning. Pupils understand the criteria by which their work is being assessed. In ICT in Years 7 to 9 regular assessments are based on practical assignments, but feedback is verbal and no written marking exists.
- 5.10 Full school reports are written twice a year. These reports are detailed and include a helpful comment by the tutor on personal development and contribution to the life of the school, involvement in extra-curricular activities and the subject comment. Some of the subject reports do not give any constructive comments to help pupils' improvement. To help with

monitoring pupil progress the attainment grades on school reports are averaged across all subjects for each pupil and this score is compared to the standardised test score.

Curriculum

- 5.11 The curriculum is sound. A good, broad and balanced education is provided across the age and ability ranges but the provision for developing ICT skills and understanding is insufficient and the use of ICT poorly implemented.
- 5.12 The school's curriculum policy aims for breadth, balance and progression through the school, to match pupils' abilities and aptitudes, and it is largely successful in these aims. Appropriate opportunities are available for the most able pupils. To ensure equal access to learning for pupils of all abilities, the school assesses all pupils for special needs and monitors their progress regularly. The school does not provide specialist help, but teachers are informed of ways to support special needs. The one statemented pupil in the school receives education in line with his needs, with special provision for games, and his individual education plan is being drawn up. A qualified teacher takes pupils for extra lessons in EAL.
- 5.13 The curriculum is generally well planned to provide continuity and progression of learning. The core subjects of English, mathematics and science have adequate teaching time and in addition to the usual subjects, classics is taught to all pupils in Years 7 and 8. The breadth of study is appropriate within most subjects but the provision of only one period a week for ICT and three periods a fortnight in music and religious studies (RS) in Years 7 to 9 is not adequate for balanced curriculum coverage in these subjects.
- 5.14 GCSE choices allow all pupils to take nine or ten subjects. All pupils take a balanced science option, and for the examinations they are allowed to choose either dual award or three separate sciences. The number choosing dual award is currently significantly higher. All take at least one modern foreign language from French, German and Spanish and a further three subjects from a good range of options, though ICT is not available at GCSE. Pupils are encouraged to choose balanced options but also to pursue their interests. This can lead to an unbalanced choice for those with special interests in languages or humanities and 20 pupils last year did not take any aesthetic, creative or technological option.
- 5.15 At AS level, pupils choose four subjects, with economics, government and politics and ICT added to the GCSE subjects, and almost all pupils select a well-balanced range. The majority of pupils take three subjects at A level. Able students have the opportunity to take four subjects, or even five for those taking the further mathematics option.
- 5.16 The allocation of double periods is appropriate, except for PE lessons in Years 7 and 8 and DT in Year 11 where single periods reduce effective teaching time. Grouping pupils by ability for mathematics and languages from Year 7 and science from Year 10 helps pupils of all abilities to make progress. Very small groups enable teachers to provide further support for weaker pupils.
- 5.17 Provision for pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. A worthwhile PSHE programme runs through to Year 11, although one period a fortnight in Years 7 and 8 is not adequate. Careers education, through lessons in Year 10 and special events in Year 12, and guidance for university entry together provide a basic preparation for the world beyond school. The school makes no provision for work experience during school time.
- 5.18 The curriculum is enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities. Provision for sport, music and drama substantially enhances the physical and cultural education

Does the school meet the regulatory requirements for the curriculum?

5.19 Yes.

Teaching and Non-teaching Staff

5.20 The qualifications and experience of teaching and non-teaching staff are very good. They are committed and hardworking and contribute greatly to the well-being and success of the pupils. Good policies are in place for teachers' induction, appraisal and professional development but in some cases practices can be improved. The non-teaching staff make a substantial, valuable and widely appreciated contribution to the life of the school.

5.21 The age profile of the teaching staff is well balanced, enabling pupils to benefit from the continuity and stability offered by long-serving teachers and from more recent appointments that broaden the range and experience of the pupils. Turnover in some departments has been high. The relative lack of experienced subject specialists teaching at Key Stage 3 is having an impact in some subjects. Teaching loads allow time to contribute to activities, and those with posts of responsibility are given a fair allocation of timetable remission.

5.22 The school is fulfilling its obligation to ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, who have contact with pupils, have Criminal Record Bureau checks. Appropriate checks on foreign staff are also made.

5.23 The induction programme for new teachers is thorough. It includes opportunities to meet other staff and to discuss all aspects of the school on a weekly basis throughout the first term. The school is meeting regulatory requirements for the induction of newly qualified teachers (NQTs) and it has also made provision for the Graduate Teachers Programme and for some initial teacher training.

5.24 A valuable system of continuing professional development (CPD) for all teaching staff is in place. The CPD process aims to recognise individuals' abilities and contributions to the school and to identify staff development needs. The appraisal system operates with reasonable effectiveness on a two-year cycle; in one year teachers choose from a panel of appraisers, in the next they have an informal meeting with the headmaster. His appraisal is preceded by lesson observation. Teachers see the appraisal and CPD process as a positive and effective experience but its application across departments is not always consistent.

5.25 The provision for in-service education and training (INSET) is satisfactory. Recent subjects for discussion at annual in-house staff-training sessions have included pastoral issues and dyslexia. Teachers have attended a variety of useful courses, including those provided by examination boards to aid in the teaching of subject specifications. A programme whereby teachers visit another school, university or an industrial establishment to broaden their professional horizons, with a requirement to feed back their findings to relevant colleagues, is firmly established.

Does the school meet the regulatory requirements for the suitability of proprietors and staff?

5.26 Yes.

Resources for Learning

5.27 The quantity and quality of resources are good. The books, equipment and materials are sufficient to support teaching and learning and these resources are well managed. While the provision of ICT equipment is good, its use is not sufficient.

- 5.28 The provision of around 100 computers for pupil use is appropriate at one per 5.5 pupils in Years 7 to 13, in addition to the laptops provided for each teacher and eight computers within the boarding houses. An ICT suite with 15 computers is heavily used to teach A level ICT and computing. The second ICT suite of 25 computers is an excellent resource for use by all departments in their teaching, but few departments make regular use of it at present. Both rooms are in frequent use by pupils in lunch breaks. Further suites within the art and the DT departments are used effectively for graphic design work. Computers in the music department are used for compositions for coursework. The science department has six laptop computers in the laboratories. Many departments now have digital projectors in classrooms; these facilitate presentations by teachers and occasionally by pupils. Digital video cameras in science and ICT are used in teaching, for example, in an interactive presentation prepared by science pupils. However, these facilities are not widely used: some departments, such as history, still make little use of ICT.
- 5.29 The ICT committee effectively manages the provision of the ICT service through the director of ICT with the support of an experienced team of the systems manager and two technicians. A pupils' ICT committee discusses pupil access to computers and issues relating to school and home use of computers and acts on the pupils' suggestions where possible. An academic user group provides a forum for departments to exchange ideas on the use of ICT in lessons.
- 5.30 More effective use could be made of these ICT resources to support learning. A few examples of specially designed educational software were seen in use in departments, but these aids to teaching and learning could be used more widely, especially within science and mathematics. Data logging equipment is urgently needed within the science department, and provision is planned for next year. Little use of spreadsheets or modelling software was observed.
- 5.31 Nearly all areas are well supplied with appropriate textbooks and videos to support learning. The extensive photocopying facilities are heavily used to provide worksheets for teaching. Ample resources are provided for all practical subjects including science laboratories, geography fieldwork, art and DT. A fine supply of musical instruments is available and the PE department is well resourced. The language laboratory is under-used. The two minibuses are in frequent use for games and other outings.

Libraries

- 5.32 Library provision is currently less than adequate. The Senior School library is too small to meet all the needs and the range of books is too limited for some subjects. Departmental libraries do not compensate for these deficiencies.
- 5.33 The Swallow Library, for the use of Year 9 and above, is located in the original school building but this is not central to teaching areas. The accommodation is just about adequate for reading but does not provide a suitable resources centre. Only two computers are available as a limited resource for research using CD-ROMs and the internet, and these are much used by pupils during morning and lunch breaks. Two computers are available for staff. Sixth form pupils use the library for private study throughout the day. One larger room holds the main stock and it is open all day for borrowing. A smaller reading room houses special collections.
- 5.34 A separate science library is located in the science block. It is used for sixth form study and its stock is geared to that age range. More general science books are in the Swallow Library. The science library is currently manned for only two half-hour periods a week, limiting borrowing, but there are plans to open it for longer hours. The staff common room houses a small library. The Junior School library is available for pupils in Years 7 and 8 but it is not

adequately stocked with books for this age group and the Junior School librarian is only available for parts of the day. All these libraries are managed effectively by the senior school librarian.

- 5.35 In terms of quantity, the 12,500 books in the Swallow Library and the further 1000 in the science library represent a reasonable provision at over 30 books per pupil in Years 9 to 13. It is not possible to monitor the book usage because the stock is not yet fully catalogued but borrowing is low overall at an estimated maximum of 10 to 15 books a day. A dual system operates for loans. Non-fiction accounts for 65% of borrowing and 80% of loans are to the sixth form.
- 5.36 In many areas books are out of date, and provision for the younger years is inadequate. The stock is being reviewed as books are catalogued, with 30-40% completed so far. The librarian works with heads of departments when restocking to ensure that new books are appropriate to the curriculum and support independent reading. Those sections that have been reviewed have much higher usage, with half of the new economics stock currently out on loan. Stocks of fiction are good, as are the books for mathematics, RS and philosophy. Sections for English, classics, modern languages, history and geography are unsatisfactory. The budget for books for the science library is just about sufficient for stock to be replaced. The allowance for periodicals is good. In addition, RS, drama, art and DT have useful departmental libraries and the economics department has a good stock of periodicals.

Premises and Accommodation

- 5.37 The school's grounds are excellent and the buildings, overall, are good in terms of provision, quality and condition. They help to enrich and enhance pupils' welfare, behaviour and educational experience. The pupils enjoy the space and make good use of it. Some departments are less fortunate and lack of space puts some constraints on teaching and learning.
- 5.38 The pupils enjoy the extensive and very high quality grounds and make good use of them. The buildings are suitable for their purpose and the site is clean and refreshingly free of litter and graffiti. The gardens are laid out to a very high standard; the excellent planting adds much to the communal areas. The ground staff work hard to create an excellent environment. The 70-acre site with its backdrop of 763 trees provides a remarkable rural setting within a Greater London location.
- 5.39 The school is constantly improving its accommodation. Recent developments have included improvements to the staff common rooms and the boarding houses; a new reception area has been created and a new school shop. The Walde Music School has been extended and refurbished, although it is still too small to meet demands, not least for instrumental lessons, for storage and for recitals. The medical centre has been moved to a more accessible location. The new drama centre provides numerous opportunities for teaching and for performance and has been designed to a very high standard. The pupils clearly enjoy using this space. The two ICT rooms are well equipped and spacious. The laboratories are of a good size and suitable for purpose, and storage facilities are good.
- 5.40 In departments like English and mathematics, where the provision is good or very good, the premises and accommodation are appropriate for the numbers and ages of the pupils and enable the curriculum to be taught effectively. Where the accommodation is limited, as in history, RS and music, constraints are made on the teaching. Lack of space inhibits teaching and learning in an otherwise successful department. Apart from classics, all departments have office space and nearly all have sufficient storage for resources. The DT workshop, although large, is an unsatisfactory space for accommodating the large numbers that occupy

the workshop on several occasions a week. Classrooms are light and airy and well maintained. Pupils' work is displayed to good effect in some areas and subject specific displays are good. Overall, the furnishings are sufficient and practical. The music room does not have enough space for desks and pupils have to balance their work on clipboards.

- 5.41 Facilities for outdoor sport, and the size and quality of the playing fields, are generally excellent. The grounds are very well maintained. Recent valuable additions include a pavilion and cricket nets. Improvements have been made to the tennis courts but an all-weather area is needed for hockey. While changing facilities in the sports hall for both girls and boys are adequate, no facilities are provided for girls in the gym. The gym and sports hall are too small for some activities and the flooring in the gym is poor. The outdoor pool can be used for only restricted periods of the year.
- 5.42 The school plans to replace the inadequate dining hall, which has poor access to the serving area and lengthy queues. Pupils in one year group each day eat lunch in an adjoining room with a limited selection of food. Entrance to the English department passes a toilet which often has a very unpleasant smell. Pupils argued strongly for better toilet conditions.

Does the school meet the regulatory requirements for premises and accommodation?

- 5.43 Yes.

Links with Parents and the Community

- 5.44 Links with parents and the community are sound. The school works hard to keep parents informed about their children's progress and developments at the school. Of the responses to the parental questionnaire, almost all were favourable but there were some complaints. Links between the school and the community are varied and include charitable fundraising.
- 5.45 Of the responses to the parental questionnaire, the vast majority were favourable but there were a few complaints. A small number of parents raised particular issues, most notably about the school's handling of concerns; some wanted more choice within the curriculum, others referred to some poor teaching, negative marking and the need for more time for consultation with teachers. The inspectors found that the school meets the regulatory requirements for the manner in which complaints are handled and the other issues are dealt with in the relevant sections. The regulatory requirements for the provision of information were being met with the exception of notifying parents that policies relating to the curriculum are available on request. The school has included this information in a subsequent newsletter.
- 5.46 Parents receive good information in two full reports each academic year with comments from all of who teach their children, their tutor, housemaster or housemistress and headmaster. Reports are clear and informative, and not only indicate past achievements, but also offer guidance for the future. Parents and pupils are invited to respond to comments and returns are collated by the tutor.
- 5.47 Appropriately, the school holds a meeting for each year group, which enables parents to meet their child's teachers, to discuss academic progress and to consider plans for the future. Most parents consider the arrangements satisfactory but some would like more time. However, parents are encouraged to make regular contact with tutors to check on their child's progress.
- 5.48 Most parents say they are kept very well informed about day-to-day and termly activities. Information about school activities is provided through regular mailings to parents including *News From Chigwell* and the headmaster's twice termly newsletter. An excellent school magazine, *The Chigwellian*, provides a full and lively record of the school year. The

school's website is an important source of information for pupils, parents, former pupils and others interested in the school.

- 5.49 The school has many very good links with the local community which results in the school's indoor and outdoor facilities being used by local organisations, including reciprocal arrangements with St Mary's Church. An effective charities committee co-ordinates fund raising for charitable purposes. A major recent recipient has been the Ashram Project in India with which the school has developed a close link. Sixth form pupils are encouraged to use their initiative for organizing fund-raising events and they have the opportunity of working for local care agencies through a local volunteer bureau. Parents are involved in social and fund-raising activities through the Friends of Chigwell.

Does the school meet the regulatory requirements for the provision of information?

- 5.50 The school meets almost all of the regulatory requirements. In order to meet all the requirements, the school must

inform parents that policies relating to the curriculum are available on request. [Regulation 6.(2)(g) and 6.(10)]

Does the school meet the regulatory requirements for the manner in which complaints are to be handled?

- 5.51 Yes.

5. PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND PASTORAL CARE

Pupils' Personal Development

- 6.1 The personal development of pupils is very strong. Pupils of all ages take the opportunities provided to enable them to enrich their personal, social and cultural development. Pupils are actively encouraged to find their own spiritual commitment and to develop a caring, realistic and well-informed moral code. They develop into fine young people.
- 6.2 The spiritual development of the pupils is very good, being focused around the chapel and church assemblies. All pupils are expected to attend chapel and church regardless of religious persuasion. This practice is widely accepted by pupil and parent alike for it gives broad religious experiences for the whole school at set times in the week. The school chaplain carefully and successfully plans the assembly programme and leads much of the worship. A variety of thought-provoking assemblies was observed, including an uplifting spiritual dialogue for Years 9 to 11 between a Sikh pupil and the school chaplain, and an intellectually challenging address from a member of staff for the departing Year 12 and 13 pupils. Academic departments also play a role. In history, pupils reflect on the Reformation and in Year 10, pupils study various effects of the Holocaust. The art department encourages its pupils to appreciate the spiritual, in mediaeval Italian art, for example. A major contribution to spirituality comes from religious education, whose syllabus reinforces the deeper spiritual awareness of all pupils, both in the classroom and in their independent learning. The prospectus claim that "Chigwell fosters an environment where children can discover and nurture spiritual values" is well met. The school is not focussed on just one religion; each religion is given valid and equal expression, valued by all. The inter-faith forum also serves spiritual development
- 6.3 The chaplain has responsibility for the personal, social, health education (PSHE). This course runs from entry to the school until the end of Year 11. It is a well thought-out course, with a rich and varied content; taught by a variety of staff and visitors, offering a wide diversity of talent. The course content is good, including health education, sex, drugs, personal health and hygiene, alcohol, smoking and diet. In addition PSHE provides for moral education, concepts of right and wrong; good and bad; attitudes, behaviour and healthy relationships; concepts of trust, loyalty, respect and consequences of certain behaviour. The social education element successfully investigates the person's place in society, a sense of values, decision making and communication skills. Appropriately included in citizenship are contemporary society, political and social responsibilities and rights; careers advice also comes under the PSHE umbrella. Thus, moral, cultural and social education is good; it is seen as an important and highly worthwhile aspect of the school's curriculum. However, the time allocated for PSHE on the timetable is rather sparse in certain years, one lesson every two weeks in Years 7 and 8 and one per week in Years 9 and 10, and this undervalues the PSHE course and lessens its credibility.
- 6.4 Very good cultural development is also to be found outside the curriculum. The pupils come from diverse cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds, and this enriches cultural awareness in the school. Boarding school pupils from abroad also add to this enrichment. Charitable awareness is fostered by coordinated fundraising activities to donate substantial sums to assist in three initiatives in India. A school trip for both parents and pupils was recently organised to make cultural and social contact with the people in India. Some academic departments strive to contribute to the cultural development of their pupils, for example a very good lesson in the English department on Jacobean witchcraft, as an introduction to Macbeth. Other departments, like modern languages, could do more: whilst it is easier in the humanities, a worthwhile input is possible from the sciences.

- 6.5 The school provides valuable training for pupils in listening skills and Year 13 pupils volunteer in large numbers. The course is designed to provide a means of communication and support for younger pupils who might not wish to approach a member of staff. These pupils act as buddies and work closely with the senior anti-bullying committee. Ironically, one Year 13 pupil interviewed on his last day regretted that his listening skills have not been needed.
- 6.6 Part of the Year 9 PSHE healthy eating course is to plan, prepare and serve an evening meal, under the auspices of the contract caterers. This highly-praised activity encourages understanding and cooperation with the cooks and domestic staff who give their help willingly and freely. The pupils value this important contribution.
- 6.7 Standards of accommodation for the small number of boarders are sound and the contribution which boarding makes to pupils' personal development is good. The boarders engage in a weekly activity programme, including visits to concerts and plays. They are very supportive of each other in their varied ethnic backgrounds, an empathy actively encouraged by the school ethos. Social development is further encouraged by community service, an important part of both the scouts and the Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme, in this way help is provided to those in the wider community outside the school.

Does the school meet the regulatory requirements for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils?

- 6.8 Yes.

Pastoral Care, including Welfare and Health & Safety

- 6.9 Provision of pastoral care is very good, and contributes greatly to both the personal and academic development of the pupils. Support and guidance are good overall, but only sound for pupils with special educational needs. Some measures have recently been taken to enhance careers education and guidance, but there remains scope for improvement. Guidance on higher education choice is good. Measures to promote good discipline and behaviour are very successful, and contribute very well to the ethos of the school.
- 6.10 Pupils remain attached to the Junior School for pastoral care in Years 7 and 8 and, whilst this is unusual because their teaching is in the senior school, it appears to assist their transition to the Senior School where, from Year 9, they are allocated to one of four large houses, and generally receive close support and monitoring from a tutor and housemaster or housemistress. A strong sense of house loyalty and healthy competition is engendered, and this contributes to the feeling of community. The small number of boarders are predominantly in the sixth form and they belong to one of three boarding houses. Inspectors endorse the recent findings of the National Care Standards Commission (NCSC) report that they are well cared for. Many boarders are very able, and enhance the school's ethos through an international dimension.
- 6.11 Pupils meet their tutors daily and the quality of care is high. The content of the longer tutor periods is not prescribed but a tutors' handbook already offers useful advice and is being developed. Termly formal tutorials have recently been introduced, and designed to ensure closer monitoring of a pupil's progress. Pupils feel confident about approaching staff for additional support. Appropriate care and guidance are readily available. Various handbooks, including a comprehensive parents' handbook, advice on Year 10 and Year 12 subject choices and a sixth form handbook, provide a good level of guidance. Email contact with staff is appreciated by pupils and parents

- 6.12 The chaplain is responsible for the school's counselling provision. A qualified psychotherapist (the independent counsellor) visits each week and the chaplain may contact other professional counsellors and therapists as necessary in addition to referring pupils to an independent listener (one male, one female) designated by the school. The chaplain also liaises with the sanatorium sisters, housemasters and housemistresses. Over half the pupils in Year 13 have benefited from the voluntary 12-hour 'Listeners' course. Although younger pupils do not regularly approach them for support, they have learned valuable personal skills, and have high praise for the scheme. The school is working successfully on a pastoral development plan which sets out laudable aims for pupil development.
- 6.13 The level of support is generally good but more pupils could benefit from the voluntary study skills sessions which some attend in Year 11. Although pupils with SEN are effectively identified, they receive no specialist support in school. Information and advice are disseminated to staff, and the school has begun to provide some training. Some departments offer lunchtime 'hospitals', and have special resources to support pupils. EAL pupils are given extra English tuition in the sixth form, in preparation for English language examinations required for entrance to higher education. The EAL coordinator liaises closely with the boarding houses.
- 6.14 The overall provision of careers education and guidance is sound, but scope remains for an expanded and improved programme. A new head of careers was appointed in September 2003, but has only limited time to devote to the task. The head of sixth form is responsible for university entry, and the guidance given to pupils is good. A useful series of eight careers lessons is taught to Year 10 pupils as part of the PSHE programme. Whilst Year 11 pupils benefit from an interview with a local careers officer, aptitude is not formally tested. The careers library is appropriately resourced but the location of the careers room is not ideal. The school has decided not to offer a work experience programme for the time being. All Year 12 pupils attend a 'career taster' day-course with independent consultants during 'activities week', and pupils find this enjoyable and beneficial.
- 6.15 A highly effective system of sanctions results in impressive pupil discipline and behaviour. A code of conduct, which is published in the school calendar, promotes respect for others, for self and for the school environment: its effectiveness is evident in the positive and caring way in which pupils relate to one another and to staff. The school's sanctions policy is clear, and more serious sanctions are rarely invoked; 15 pupils were suspended and only one excluded last year. Pupils regard the policy as fair and consistently applied. A commendations system has been introduced too recently for comment on its effectiveness.
- 6.16 Appropriate measures are taken to safeguard and promote pupils' welfare. Child protection procedures are in place. Checks are made on all employees with the Criminal Records Bureau. The senior mistress is the designated child protection officer with a deputy in the Junior School. All new teachers, prefects and senior boarders are made aware of child protection policy during induction training. A senior anti-bullying committee (ABC) meets once or twice a term under the chairmanship of the deputy headmaster. Proper efforts are taken to reduce the risk from fire and other hazards. The school endeavours to ensure that the environment is as safe as possible for pupils and staff. The premises are mostly kept in a state of good repair, cleanliness and hygiene. The staff handbook contains sections on: child protection, counselling, the complaints procedure, anti-bullying policy, learning support, medical facilities, substance abuse, equal opportunities, and sexist and racist behaviour. The parents' handbook also contains much of this material.
- 6.17 The Children Act inspection of boarding by NCSC took place in July 2003. The findings were generally positive and the few recommendations arising have since been implemented by the school.

- 6.18 The provision for safeguarding and promoting health amongst pupils is very good with a medical centre open from 8.30 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. during term time and a registered nurse on duty during those hours and for Saturday games and activities. A deputy attends when she has her day off. Out of hours a nurse can also be called upon and the matron of Hainault House is available for first-aid emergencies. She also helps with the PSHE programme. The school doctor visits the boarding house once a week and a female doctor is available for girls. The new medical centre has separate rooms for boys and girls and suitable arrangements for the storage, administration and recording of medication. In addition the old sanatorium, retained as a requirement under boarding care standards, is used for sick boarders. Every attendance at the medical centre is recorded and the accident book completed for more serious injuries. At least 16 members of the teaching and non-teaching staff are trained in first aid. Regular first-aid courses are offered to staff. Good provision of first-aid boxes is made throughout school and these are checked and replenished at the beginning of each term and as required.
- 6.19 The school caterers provide lunch for all pupils. The dining room is small and cramped but the school is aware of this and plans exist to remedy the situation. With a cafeteria system pupils have a choice from a variety of hot and cold food including vegetarian dishes. Special arrangements are made to cater for particular dietary requirements. Sandwiches and tea are available to pupils at the end of the school day. Most pupils expressed satisfaction with the meals and the inspectors judged them to be good, balanced, nutritious and available in quantity. Separate catering committees exist for boarders and day pupils. These committees meet each term.
- 6.20 Arrangements for implementing health and safety matters are satisfactory. While overall responsibility for health and safety is vested in the governing body, authority is delegated to the headmaster and bursar for day-to-day implementation of the policy. The bursar is the school's health and safety officer. He is well supported by the health and safety committee comprising a governor, bursar, deputy head, heads of PE, DT, chemistry and science, deputy head of the Junior School, technicians from ICT and science, the nursing sister and director of boarding. They normally meet termly and full minutes are kept.
- 6.21 The school has a full, well-documented and appropriately upgraded health and safety policy aimed at providing and maintaining safe and healthy working conditions for all in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. Specialist health and safety consultants are employed by the school and last reported in July 2003. Departmental safety procedures and documentation are very good particularly in the important areas of: games and PE, DT and science. Full risk assessment is carried out in these areas and on all school trips. A member of the Institute of Advanced Motorists checks the competence of all minibus drivers.
- 6.22 Electrical testing is carried out on all portable electrical appliances yearly. Emergency lighting is checked regularly throughout school and termly in the boarding houses. Measures have been taken to reduce the risk from fire and other hazards, including procedures for emergency evacuation of buildings. Since the last inspection, fire evacuation notices have been put in place, inspected by the external safety advisors and by the local fire service and deemed satisfactory. Planned fire practices organised termly, including one in the boarding house during the hours of darkness, are fully logged and registers are taken. A contractor services the fire fighting equipment. Regular training is given in the use of appliances. The Health and Safety Executive conducted a full inspection last year and recommendations have been implemented.

Does the school meet the regulatory requirements for the welfare, health and safety of pupils?

Yes

7. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Governance and Management

- 7.1 Governance and management are good. Good cooperation between the chairman of governors and the headmaster, and the loyal support of other governors ensures the school is governed effectively. Changes are underway to increase efficiency on the financial side and attention is now needed for the monitoring of the education. The senior management team supports the headmaster in providing vision and direction. Together they ensure the school is managed well and this is reflected in the good attainment and very good personal development of the pupils,
- 7.2 The seventeen members of the governing body provide good guidance and support, though not all are in regular attendance at meetings. The membership covers most of the relevant professions – accountancy, law, church, medicine and academe, though only one with experience of education in schools, only four women and only two from the ethnic minorities. Three governors are old boys and four are parents; however, no one has specific responsibility for Junior School governance. Procedures for recruitment and retirement of governors are properly under consideration. The headmaster offers advice on possible recruits.
- 7.3 The governors meet termly and proper agenda and minutes are produced. Appropriate paperwork to support the agenda is produced by the headmaster and his colleagues. The only formal committee is finance and general purposes and this meets four times a year. Ad hoc committees are set up to deal with special projects and salaries, and a governor is on the health and safety committee. However, in the absence of an education committee, monitoring of educational performance has to be done by full governors. Support for the academic, creative and sporting events is quite good but governors do not find it easy to do more.
- 7.4 A major review of the financial side has been undertaken. A bursarial inspection and an external audit of processes have been undertaken. As a result considerable changes in financial administration are being made. Success has been achieved in providing funding for development, and several valuable additions to school buildings have resulted. Most parents say that the governors have spent wisely on development. Plans have been drawn up for the next stage, which, after academic and cultural projects, will improve pupil welfare, namely a new dining hall. Some additional sporting and classroom provision is needed.
- 7.5 The large senior management team (SMT) is hardworking and effective. However to have a team of 10 in a school of this size, and only two women, does not promote equal opportunities or great efficiency. Job descriptions are accurate and help to avoid most overlap and confusion, though quite properly they are amended from time to time. Pastoral leadership and management are very effective, and house staff play an important part in this. Academic performance is being well monitored and reviewed by the academic working group under the lead of the director of studies. New policies, practices and databases are being developed. Senior managers play an important part in the professional development of staff not least in the appraisal system. The headmaster knows his school very well and uses his experience to guide policies and practices in the right direction. He does not duck

difficult issues and makes his high expectations clear to teachers, pupils and parents. Parents appreciate his support for the many activities but some believe that complaints could be better handled.

- 7.6 The master of the Junior School is a member of the SMT and he reports annually to the governing body, but communication between Junior and Senior Schools is not always satisfactory, despite weekly meetings between headmaster and master. Given the two stage process of transfer from Junior to Senior School cooperation is essential if pupils in Years 7 and 8 are to receive the best support: a specific responsibility for this role must be assigned.
- 7.7 Much of the middle management at the school is good. Pupils and parents say that houseparents are very supportive. The quality of the management by heads of department in some departments is very good, providing strong and enthusiastic academic leadership and support for the professional development of colleagues. In others, the management is not always effective and little part is played in development planning and in the professional development of teachers. Middle managers need more training in their role. The common practice of making internal appointments to head departments restricts the input of good ideas from other schools.

6. ACHIEVEMENT AND QUALITY IN SUBJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

Achievement and Quality in Subjects: Senior School

English

- 8.1 Attainment in lessons and written work is good and often very good, as when a Year 11 class demonstrated articulate knowledge of a wide range of poems in a revision class. At GCSE in the last three years, very few pupils have failed to gain a C grade in both subjects. In the last few years, the GCSE results and the percentages for A* and A*/A for English have been generally in line with pupils' ability but occasionally above in one or other of language or literature. Over the same period, MidYIS results indicate that attainment is well above that for schools nationally but below that for pupils of comparable ability in independent schools. However, three years ago, the reverse was the case. Over the past three years, the AB% at A Level has been around 70% as compared with 41% for all entries.
- 8.2 Progress is good and often very good, as seen in coursework and heard in class discussion in a Year 12 set. Pupils with learning difficulties and EAL pupils progress at least in line with their ability. In the past two years, girls have significantly outperformed boys at A Level and last year they similarly outperformed boys in English and English Literature GCSE. However, no bias was evident in the teaching. Measures of long-term progress to GCSE indicate achievement above that for schools nationally but below that for pupils of comparable ability in independent schools.
- 8.3 The quality of learning and behaviour is very good. Pupils are immediately attentive and apply themselves purposefully. Concentration is sustained and the making of well organised notes impressively habitual. All classes enjoyed close relationships with their teachers, characterised by respect, good humour, and at times evident friendship. Pupils show respect for their peers and relationships between those of different race and gender are admirable. Sometimes pupils could show a greater eagerness to develop their ideas by debate with each other, rather than using the teacher as medium.
- 8.4 The quality of teaching is good and sometimes very good. Lessons are very well prepared and planned, often accompanied by worksheets, which are a strength of the department, and characterised by an easy yet carefully selected variety of activity. The pace of lessons is usually good. Audio visual aids are very well used. Much enlightened interaction occurs between the different demands of literary and linguistic study. Greater attention is sometimes given to the critical than to the creative process, and outlets for creative writing are at present limited: a greater creative focus would have the potential to raise standards of literary criticism and provide a better preparation for long-term literary success. Teachers show considerable scholarly knowledge and undertake much careful and conscientious preparation of examination texts.
- 8.5 The clear policy for assessment and marking encourages good, accurate marking, which is often detailed and encouraging to the pupil. Even so, most marking could benefit from greater adherence to and greater enthusiasm for a departmental policy.
- 8.6 Accommodation and resources are good. Almost all lessons are taught in dedicated classrooms, which are light, appropriate in size, and well equipped with audio-visual aids, though not all of these are properly maintained. The departmental office is not spacious, and the entrance to the department verges on the unprepossessing. The considerable display,

including pupils' work, especially journalism done in cooperation with *The Guardian* newspaper, is of high quality.

- 8.7 The department is well staffed, led and managed. It has undergone considerable changes of personnel in recent years and currently standards are high. A period of increased stability would assist the present staff, for the most part young and very well qualified, to teach with burgeoning assurance. The departmental handbook, which is clear, sensible and judicious, is the work of a recently appointed head of department. In her temporary absence an acting head of department provides light-touch but shrewd leadership. A larger budget is needed for INSET, a larger book stock and departmental library, more ICT equipment, and visits from creative writers. These, in tandem with a programme of extension and enrichment, would enable the staff and pupils to raise attainment levels further.

Mathematics

- 8.8 Attainment is good and at A level very good, as when pupils in a Year 13 lesson were able to recall and use the many different integration techniques. In both oral and written work pupils show good understanding, with Year 8 pupils able to link previous work on loci and bearings in discussion of a problem in mathematical terms. Written work at all key stages shows a good level of attainment, as with work on exponential graphs in Year 10, and even the less able pupils achieve good standards. GCSE results are good for the pupils' abilities and performance in examinations has been improving: 70% of pupils achieved A* or A grades at GCSE over the last 3 years, above the average for maintained selective schools. The A level results are better than the average for all schools, especially with over 80% of pupils achieving A or B grades at A level last year.
- 8.9 Progress is usually good and rapid progress was made in a Year 10 lesson when a stimulating approach to the introduction of direct proportion was used. In some lessons progress was only satisfactory when pupils were held back by the nature of the task set, as in a bingo game in Year 9. Progress of the more able mathematicians is stimulated when pupils are set after half a term in Year 7. The top set takes GCSE a year early. Very good progress is made in the sixth form.
- 8.10 Pupils' learning and behaviour are very good. Pupils respond positively in lessons and attitudes are conducive to good standards of learning and achievement. Pupils are able to concentrate on tasks and to work collaboratively. Homework is set to support the learning and pupils are able to work independently on this. However, insufficient use is made of ICT to enhance the learning in Years 9 to 11. Overall, pupils are well managed with classes being under control and high standards of behaviour expected and obtained.
- 8.11 The quality of teaching is uneven but mostly good. In the very good lessons innovative approaches are used and pupils are engaged and challenged; when teaching was monotonous or a lesson was not well planned, it contributed less to pupil attainment. Pupils benefit when teachers, more experienced in teaching Years 7 and 8, use a greater variety of teaching styles. Teachers have a good relationship with pupils and respond positively to questions and comments. Time in lessons is spent going around the class while pupils are working so that individual needs of pupils are well catered for at all stages.
- 8.12 The department is well staffed and teachers are well qualified and have good subject knowledge. However, the allocation of teaching staff to year groups is unbalanced with a number of teachers having only examination classes. The department includes three teachers who are also senior managers and three teachers who also teach in the Junior School.

- 8.13 The department has a good, clear assessment policy which is in-line with the school policy. Marking is thorough and frequent with the grades clearly understood by the pupils. However, written comments in marked work, which help pupils' to improve, are lacking. Results are recorded on the school database and ongoing standardised residuals are calculated against the predictions for GCSE. Results are analysed thoroughly at all stages and used to make recommendations for future improvement. A member of the department acts as SEN coordinator and some monitoring of progress takes place.
- 8.14 Resources are available and well used in the Years 7 and 8, but are more limited in the Senior School. This is an area the department has begun to develop. The mathematics office is a hub for the department to meet and share ideas. The department's library of books is available for pupils to borrow but the stock is limited; however, a number of good books is available in the mathematics section of the school library. Teaching rooms are light and airy with very good display of pupils' work.
- 8.15 Overall the quality of management is sound. Departmental meetings are held every three weeks dealing with pupil progress, discussion of policies and administrative tasks. Senior School meetings are scheduled concurrently with Junior School meetings. This makes it difficult for the head of department to meet with the full team. The handbook is well organised and contains the aims of the department. Very good guidelines for coursework are included. The schemes of work for Years 7 and 8 are detailed and include clear objectives for each topic but those from Year 9 upwards are at a developmental stage, and a section on resources is planned in readiness for the department's increased use of ICT and other resources in the senior school. A good procedure exists for efficient hand-over of classes to new teaching staff at the end of the academic year. The department is adequately funded.
- 8.16 Some good enrichment activities are provided. A number of mathematics competitions are organised throughout the year including the Hans Woyda quizzes. The department designs a mathematics trail in Epping Forest for Year 8 during the activity week. A clinic for Years 7 to 11 is held every week for those who need extra help. Every year a member of the department gives an after school lecture to the sixth form and interested staff. Other schools could be invited to this high calibre event. However, no mathematics club exists and so a further opportunity to inspire the pupils is missed.

Science

- 8.17 Science is taught as a combined subject in Years 7 and 8. Attainment of pupils in Years 7 and 8 is sound and reflects the abilities of the pupils. In written, practical and oral work the pupils show sound understanding. In Years 9 to 11, biology, chemistry and physics are taught separately and most pupils take GCSE dual award, with about a quarter taking the three separate subjects. Results at GCSE for dual award science have been below the national average for maintained selective schools and below expectation in relation to the pupils' ability but in future examinations some of the more able pupils have chosen this option.
- 8.18 Pupils' progress in Years 7 and 8 is sound. The use of challenging exercises brought the best from able pupils. In one Year 8 lesson, progress was hindered by a lack of understanding of resistors but in another Year 8 class, studying the properties of acids and alkalis, progress was good. The school has a high proportion of pupils of Asian origin but their progress was not affected by language or culture. Pupils with learning difficulties progressed in line with their abilities and the same was true of girls.
- 8.19 The quality of learning and behaviour is good as exemplified by class work and written work. The pupils sustained good concentration for extended periods of intense activity and participated well in class. Pupils are well-motivated learners, cooperating with each other and

the teacher. In a Year 8 science lesson when the underlying theory was patchy their attention to the task wandered and occasionally they distracted others.

- 8.20 Teaching is sound with evidence of constructive, cooperative relationships between the pupils and their teachers resulting in good discipline. The teaching styles observed varied and enabled the pupils to make progress. Work is marked well, with positive comments included, according to departmental and school marking policies. Effective moderation is undertaken by the coordinator of Years 7 and 8 science. Assessment is termly by common examinations taken by all pupils and efficiently recorded on pupils' school reports. The curriculum is comprehensive and it effectively links the stages. The heads of science subjects help to keep the curriculum updated.
- 8.21 Teachers from all the science subject areas, including some experienced teachers contribute to the teaching but the timetable demands of the GCSE and A level prevent the heads of science subjects from participating. The heads of biology. Similarly slight understaffing prevented the usual deployment of experienced physics teachers in Years 7 and 8 during this year.
- 8.22 The department is generally well resourced with appropriate textbooks, worksheets and equipment to support teaching and learning. The department has good ICT resources including digital projectors in several laboratories used frequently in teaching and six laptops for pupil use. The digital video camera is being used effectively to motivate pupils, as in the interactive periodic table prepared by Year 8 pupils. Chemistry has a good budget except for data logging ICT equipment. The accommodation comprises laboratories fitted with ceiling mounted projectors for ICT use, including power-point presentations, and audiovisual equipment such as televisions and video players. The current range of educational software is inadequate to enhance the understanding of scientific concepts. The laboratories and prep room have adequate space for storage and preparation of practical work. Fume cupboards both fixed and mobile are present in the laboratories. In biology improvements are planned for data logging ICT equipment; appropriate textbooks, worksheets and equipment support teaching and learning. In physics, ICT resources are good but equipment for data logging is urgently needed. The laboratories provide a good environment for learning and have adequate storage space. The science library is suitably stocked with books for the sixth form, but facilities for borrowing books are limited as it is manned for only two half hour periods per week. The Senior School library has science books for pupils below the sixth form.
- 8.23 Year groups 7 and 8 use laboratories located within the subject areas and these provide a good environment for learning with adequate space for storage and preparation of equipment. The science department is well managed to ensure effective implementation of school policies, and regular meetings between heads of subject coordinate science issues and ensure a common approach to the separate subjects.
- 8.24 Science is well led and managed by a science coordinator. The comprehensive departmental handbook has good schemes of work for each year group. Health and safety are paramount in the functioning of the department. Extracurricular activities include visits to the Body Worlds exhibition and the Salter's Festival of Science.

Biology

- 8.25 In Years 9 to 13, attainment is good. Pupils of all ages can understand scientific principles and apply them in unfamiliar contexts using correct scientific terminology, generally above the level expected for their ability. They have very good analytical skills and are very good at drawing conclusions from experimental evidence. A Year 13 biology class, for example, engaged in complex discussions centred around examination questions using technical

language correctly and confidently well above expectation for their age. At GCSE very few candidates obtain less than a C grade and results are above those for schools nationally; they were above those for maintained selective schools in 2001 and equal to them in 2002. More boys than girls take the subject at A level but the results show no gender difference and they are above the average for schools nationally.

- 8.26 Progress is good as was seen in a Year 13 class working through an A level examination paper. The school has many pupils of Asian origin but progress was not hindered by language or culture. Similarly, gender differences did not in the main affect progress. The exception being a Year 12 class in which the girls lacked confidence in answering questions verbally. Measures of long-term progress are average by national comparison but below those for independent schools and have been for the past three years.
- 8.27 The quality of learning is good in class and in written work. Attitudes and behaviour are also good: pupils sustain good concentration for extended periods of intense activity and participate well in class. They are well-motivated learners, with good powers of concentration, cooperating well with each other and the teacher. They approach practical work efficiently and thoughtfully. They listen attentively to instructions and move efficiently from one task to the next. They respond willingly to questions, showing good application of scientific concepts.
- 8.28 Teaching is good with evidence of constructive, cooperative relationships between the pupils and their teachers resulting in good discipline. The teaching styles observed were effective in enabling the pupils to make sustained progress. Work is marked regularly with positive comments included. Assessed pieces are marked according to the school's standardised marking scheme and moderated by the head of biology. In line with whole school policy, individual reports are written termly.
- 8.29 The department staff comprises three full-time biologists, with good experience of GCSE and A level teaching and one graduate exchange fellow. This provision is basically sound but creates some difficulties for the specialist teaching of biology across the year groups. The department contributes to science teaching in Years 7 and 8. Appraisal of teachers is formal, by the head of subject, one year and informal, by the headmaster, the next. The non-teaching technical staff are well-qualified and well managed by the head of science. Appropriate professional development is provided through INSET courses. A designated mentor inducts new staff and some lessons are observed with a written report to the appropriate senior manager.
- 8.30 The laboratories are good and fitted with ceiling mounted projectors for ICT use, including power-point presentations and audiovisual equipment such as televisions and video players. The department has access to six portable computers for use by pupils. However, the current range of educational software is inadequate to enhance the understanding of scientific concepts. The laboratories and prep room have adequate space for storage and preparation of practical work.
- 8.31 The department is very well led and managed and has a comprehensive departmental handbook with schemes of work for each year group. Health and safety are also well managed in the department. Extracurricular activities include a recent visit to the Body Worlds exhibition.

Chemistry

- 8.32 The attainment in class and in written work in this subject is at least good though pupils' skills in planning their own practical investigations and independent research are less than

well developed. In examinations the results at GCSE have been slightly above those for maintained selective schools and have been for the past three years. Attainment is better in the sixth form and A level points scores are above the average for schools nationally.

- 8.33 Progress is good at both GCSE and A level. This was evident in written work for Years 9 to 11, with improving graphical and mathematical skills, and a deeper understanding of scientific principles. Year 12 and 13 rapidly develop their practical skills and analytical abilities, displayed in extended writing. Progress was not hindered by the language, culture or gender of the pupils. Measures of long-term progress to GCSE are better than for a national sample of schools but below the average for independent schools.
- 8.34 The quality of learning at A level is very good and at GCSE it is good. Behaviour and attitudes are good as exemplified in class work and written work. The pupils sustain good concentration for extended periods and participate well in class. They respond willingly to questions, showing good application of scientific concepts. When working independently, pupils wasted some time by not asking for help when they were having difficulties. When the underlying theory was patchy their attention from the task wandered and occasionally they distracted others.
- 8.35 Teaching is good for GCSE, and on the A level course examples of very good and varied teaching styles were observed exemplified by a Year 13 lesson in which organic functional groups were revised using staged and varied quiz tasks to consolidate knowledge and rapid recall of reactions. Respectful relationships exist between teachers and pupils resulting in very good discipline and high levels of expectations by the teachers. Good use of the i-book computers was observed in a Year 11 class. Work is marked regularly with positive comments included. Assessed pieces are marked according to the school's standardised marking scheme and moderated by the head of chemistry. In line with whole school policy, individual reports are written regularly throughout the year on all pupils taught.
- 8.36 The department is well staffed by qualified experienced teachers but they are deployed mainly at A level and GCSE; this creates some difficulties in meeting the chemistry needs of the Years 7 and 8 junior science. The non-teaching technical staff are well qualified and well managed overall by the head of science. Throughout the science department opportunities are given for professional development through INSET courses. New staff and some lessons have a designated mentor; their lessons are observed and a written report is sent to the manager with responsibility for new staff induction..
- 8.37 The department is very well managed with input to the Years 7 and 8 junior science curriculum. There is a comprehensive departmental handbook with the schemes of work for each year group outlined. Health and safety is managed well. Extracurricular activities include participation in the annual Top of the Bench competition, the Salter's Chemistry Camp and the Chemistry Olympiad.

Physics

- 8.38 Pupils achieve good standards in relation to their abilities. Pupils of all ages can understand scientific principles and can apply them in unfamiliar contexts using correct scientific terminology, generally above the level expected for their ability. They have very good analytical and mathematical skills and are very good at drawing conclusions from experimental evidence. Their skills in planning their own practical investigations and independent research are less well developed in Years 9 to 11, with less able students copying material directly from the internet for an assignment on optical fibres. Examination results in GCSE physics have been above those for maintained selective schools, and A level results well above the national average, for the last 3 years.

- 8.39 Pupils' progress is good. A Year 9 lesson on moments showed very good progress from simple to more complex balancing problems. Good progress was evident in written work for Years 9 to 11, showing improved graphical and mathematical skills, and a deeper understanding of scientific principles. Year 12 and 13 rapidly develop their practical skills and analytical abilities, displayed in extended writing. Progress in independent research is less well developed.
- 8.40 The quality of learning, attitudes and behaviour in physics is very good. Pupils are well-motivated learners with excellent powers of concentration. They respond thoughtfully to questions. They approach practical work efficiently and thoughtfully. They work well independently and cooperate well in groups, but they could ask for more help when they are in difficulties. They listen attentively to instructions and move efficiently from one task to the next. Pupils in Years 12 and 13 rapidly develop their practical skills and analytical abilities, displayed in extended writing.
- 8.41 Teaching is good. All teachers are very experienced with an excellent knowledge of the subject. Teachers prepare well for their lessons, and manage time and resources effectively. A respectful relationship between teachers and pupils contributes to learning, with very good discipline in class and high expectations from pupils. Pupils are always clear about the task expected of them. Teachers are normally responsive to pupils' individual needs, varying their teaching accordingly. Very good use of a range of teaching techniques was seen in a lower ability class on radioactivity, where an ICT dice throwing model followed by an associated practical assisted understanding of radioactive decay and half life. Examples of inflexibility were observed when a teacher was slow to adapt teaching to problems encountered by pupils, and at times more opportunity could have been taken to elicit responses from pupils and allow them to apply theory learnt.
- 8.42 Schemes of work are well planned to develop understanding of theoretical concepts and mathematical and analytical abilities, but insufficient opportunity is provided for investigations planned by pupils. Greater use should be made of ICT, in particular spreadsheets to analyse and present data, automatic data logging in practical work, and modelling software to enhance understanding of scientific concepts. .
- 8.43 Pupils are assessed regularly using standard tests. Homework effectively consolidates learning. Marking is not always accompanied by constructive comments but homework was commonly reviewed and corrected in lessons to improve understanding.
- 8.44 The department is very well led and managed by the head of science and physics to ensure effective implementation of school policies.

Art

- 8.45 Pupils achieve satisfactory standards in relation to their abilities throughout Years 7 to 11 and high standards in Years 12 and 13. Standards of attainment in lessons and in pupils' work are sound relative to their abilities. Some good work was seen in all years, with particularly interesting water colour work developing amongst a Year 9 group. Much of the work such as the personality boxes and shoe projects in Year 10 is very decorative but lacking in academic rigour. The portfolios and work books produced by the end of Year 13 are often sophisticated, experimental and intellectually challenging. Attainment in public examinations is usually good but AS results in 2001 and GCSE results in 2003 were disappointing. Of 71 GCSE candidates since 2001 31 achieved A* or A grades but about one fifth achieved lower than C grade. This proportion achieving A* to C grades is broadly in line with those achieved in maintained selective schools but low compared with other subjects at Chigwell. A-level results for the same period have included 100% passes and

over half achieving grades A or B; the proportion was 70% in 2003, well above the national average.

- 8.46 Pupils' progress is quite good in relation to their abilities in each year group but expectations at GCSE are too low. Presentation in sketch books and folders shows development over time but the historical and critical content or the acquisition of drawing skills are not as pronounced as might be expected. Progress accelerates in the sixth form when pupils are able to talk about their work and demonstrate growth in understanding and knowledge of art and artists.
- 8.47 The quality of learning and behaviour is very good. Pupils are sensitive, cooperative and keen to learn. The working ethos is good and pupils enjoy art. A feature of the department is the very good relationships amongst pupils of both genders and of different ethnic origin and between staff and pupils. Pupils are often in the studios during activity sessions and in their own time. Learning is encouraged by the introduction of work books from Year 7 and by regular setting of homework.
- 8.48 The quality of teaching is good overall although the scheme of work for Years 7 to 11 needs to be reviewed. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and they are enthusiastic and hard working with a good balance of youth and experience. Lessons are well-paced and have a clear sense of purpose and direction.
- 8.49 The department is well staffed and the two full-time and two part-time teachers and technicians work effectively and happily together. In-service training has recently helped to familiarise teachers with relevant ICT skills. The departmental handbook is beautifully presented and thorough. Effective and widespread use of ICT is an unusual and positive feature of this department. The department has a good range of computers scanners and printers and three digital cameras. In almost all lessons observed in Years 10 to 13, pupils were using computers most valuably amongst the Year 10 and 11 graphics groups. The addition of a photocopier would be of great benefit not just for copying but as a creative tool.
- 8.50 Marking, assessment and recording is very good and includes an element of self-evaluation. Homework relates to current class projects. The art curriculum is good in its coverage of all aspects of painting and drawing, graphics, print-making, three-dimensional work, photography and the history of art.
- 8.51 Accommodation is light airy and attractive. The three general purpose studios and workshop are well used and the gallery and sculpture court make valuable contributions to the over all provision for art and design. Storage space, however, is inadequate for both materials and pupils' work. Books and periodicals are available to pupils through the small departmental library and main school library. Resources are good as is display in the gallery and sculpture court areas but this does not extend throughout the school.
- 8.52 The department is well led and well managed; the budget is adequate for the department's needs and the contribution of the technicians is highly valued by both teachers and pupils.

Classics

- 8.53 Pupils generally achieve good standards in relation to their abilities and in half the lessons attainment was very good. Attainment levels were very good in two-thirds of the lessons observed, and were always at least in line with expectations. By Year 9, pupils display good or very good understanding of grammatical structures, and good recall of vocabulary and verb forms. In a Year 7 lesson, pupils showed comprehensive knowledge of a Mediterranean map. Impressive English to Latin translation skills were observed in the strongest pupils in

both Years 9 and 10, whilst Year 11 pupils have a very good understanding of GCSE examination technique. In a Year 12 Latin lesson, pupils were observed working at a very high level in a Cicero revision class. They displayed astute powers of analysis, and vied for the most impressive use of appropriate stylistic terminology. GCSE results are in line with the average for maintained selective schools. At A-level, the small number of pupils who take Latin or classical civilisation mostly achieve grades A to C.

- 8.54 Pupils' progress was good in two-thirds of lessons, and very good in the remainder. The girls were generally quicker to understand and to respond in a Year 7 class, but all pupils made strikingly rapid progress through some unseen revision exercises in Year 11. The weaker pupils in a Year 10 class took longer to fathom some grammatical constructions, yet, with the close support of their teacher, ultimately triumphed.
- 8.55 Attitudes to learning and behaviour were very good in two-thirds of lessons, and good in one-third. The Year 7 class responded to questions with great enthusiasm, and in a spirit of co-operation. They displayed independence in the use of their verb-revision cards, and worked very constructively in pairs during a verb-quiz. In two lessons, where pupils were working at a different pace or even on a different classical language, they displayed high levels of self-motivation, a prerequisite for pupils who choose to study Greek or classical civilisation in Years 9 to 11 in the midst of Latinists.
- 8.56 The quality of teaching is good, and very good in two-thirds of the lessons. Teachers' knowledge is clearly evident in language, literature and civilisation topics, and an authoritative, scholarly approach was highly prized by pupils in a Year 12 lesson. Teachers are enthusiastic and positive in their approach, and have very healthy relations with pupils. When pupils are working in groups or individually, they circulate effectively, offering support and making good use of open questioning. Smaller class sizes from Year 9 allow teachers to meet individual needs effectively.
- 8.57 Marking and assessment are done thoroughly and constructively and teachers write full reports on their pupils. The curriculum for classics is good and flexible. In Year 9, imaginative timetabling allows some pupils to take a second modern language with Latin, with extra support given off-timetable. Three girls will attempt both Latin and Greek in Year 10 next year, whilst it remains possible for pupils to take classical civilisation GCSE in the same teaching group as the Latinists. In the sixth form, language lessons are shared between Years 12 and 13, and this system is working well. Such flexibility is currently a strength of the department.
- 8.58 The staffing of the department is good with two full-time and well-qualified teachers, a non-specialist teacher in Year 7, a part-time retired specialist in Years 12 and 13, and a PGCE student, whose current assistance with Greek and Classical Civilisation represents a substantial contribution to the department's teaching and development.
- 8.59 Resources are generally good, and the department has chosen to use a rigorously traditional textbook in Years 7 to 11. This is balanced in the earlier years by civilisation topics, and the department may wish to consider combining these into booklets to ensure a more vibrant structure for pupils. A colourful website exists, containing information for pupils, and guidance for staff. The last inspection recommended that consideration be given to improving departmental accommodation, and this remains a need.
- 8.60 The department is well managed. Leadership of the department is affable and collegiate, and teachers' distinct styles are complementary. Regular meetings occur between the head of department and a non-specialist new teacher of a Year 7 class. A Greek club, extra classics, a recently formed classical society, a dinner and a visit to St. Albans all ensure that the

department makes a significant contribution to the development of pupils and to the life of the school.

Design & Technology

- 8.61 Standards of attainment are good in relation to pupils' ability despite the fact that they have been no more than sound in public examinations. Levels of attainment seen in folders, on display and in progress, across all year groups, are in total contrast to the examination results. In the workshop new vitality and excitement are producing very good work even amongst the less able. High levels of neatness and presentation are found in folders. Year 9 pupils were seen to be clearly enjoying the making of their "ball projection" systems and Year 7 pupils had just completed some delightful wind chimes. Many achieve lively and innovative results and it is particularly good to see so many rushing to the department in their own time to complete projects. Girls are enjoying the subject and achieving as much as boys. At GCSE results since 2001 show that below a quarter achieved grades A*- A and that around one sixth achieved below grade C. Of the 20 candidates at A level over the same period two have achieved grade A but three have been ungraded. The average score has been below that for schools nationally. However, new staff have brought new impetus within the department, new programmes of study and increased timetable provision, which may confidently be expected to improve results rapidly.
- 8.62 Progress is very rapid across all years driven by infectious enthusiasm amongst staff and by the sense of enjoyment evident in every class observed. This progress is supported by observed improvements in graphics, both hand drawn and using computer programmes, and skills in designing and making, particularly at Key Stage 3. However, measures of long-term progress to GCSE indicate that candidates have not achieved as well as those of similar ability in other independent schools Progress is less rapid at Key Stage 4 and on into the sixth form because of a legacy of poor timetable provision and rapid staff turnover. Many of these pupils started from a very low knowledge base. Progress is helped by good liaison between senior and junior school staff and through links with Loughborough University.
- 8.63 The quality of learning is good across all key stages. Pupils are conscientious and competent learners. Many want to be in the department and express their enjoyment of the subject. They are exceptionally well-behaved, eager to learn, strongly self-motivated and co-operative.
- 8.64 The quality of teaching is very good at all Key Stages. The young, energetic teachers have very good subject knowledge, excellent communication skills and are attracting pupils into the department. Their success in attracting girls is particularly noteworthy in the absence of food technology and textiles. The projects and activities chosen are imaginative and interesting avoiding many of the stereotypical exercises found in schools and stretching Year 9 pupils into sophisticated areas of packaging, presentation and display. The outcomes could easily be confused for the work of much older children. The department's marking and assessment policy is excellent and very well applied. A very clear system of mark and feed back sheets is used to communicate progress to parents and pupils. Teachers make great efforts to maintain the very happy atmosphere and good working ethos which exists within the department.
- 8.65 Resources are adequate for present needs and good use is made of ICT for the development of skills in computer-aided work and the use of the internet for research. However, accommodation and staffing present great problems which are obstacles to further development. At times up to 40 pupils occupy the workshop as two groups are taught simultaneously. Some teaching is done by an untrained undergraduate, who will leave just as he has become internally trained. The care and maintenance of machines, so vital to safe

practice, makes the employment of a full time technician essential: he currently makes a valuable part-time contribution to the department.

- 8.66 The department is very well led with excellent organization, very full departmental documentation and handbook. This outlines policy on health and safety, ICT, homework, staff training and development.

Economics

- 8.67 Attainment in this subject is very good. Both in class and in examinations pupils are performing above the level typical of this range of ability. With no restriction on entry to this subject some pupils have the minimum number of GCSE A*-C grades, many are from ethnic backgrounds, some have recently joined the school as boarders with EAL needs, and some have learning difficulties. In contrast, the subject also attracts very able East European scholars. Attainment in class reaches very high levels, particularly during this period of intensive revision for examinations. All the lessons were focussed on guiding the pupils towards examination success. Almost all the pupils were well on top of their subject and their responses in question and answer sessions were of a high order, demonstrating good knowledge and understanding. They also applied analytical skills to new situations very effectively. Although some answers were brief, they were able to develop their responses when challenged. On this evidence and from the careful scrutiny of pupils' workbooks these pupils are clearly in line for good grades in both AS and A level examinations. This is in line with examination results over the past three years. At both AS and A level very few failures have been recorded and the proportion of A and B grades is well above the national average. In 2003 89% of the grades were A or B.
- 8.68 Progress in this run-up to examinations is of a different kind: pupils were building their confidence, honing their analytical skills, deepening their understanding and extending their knowledge. They demonstrated rapid progress in their ability to apply these tools to answering past questions. They were reaching a peak in time for the main test. The progress of girls and of ethnic pupils was just as good. Both in class and in their written work, pupils with EAL showed that they had overcome the problems of communication which had affected their earlier progress. Considerable progress was evident in the quality of the written work overall.
- 8.69 The classroom climate for high quality learning was excellent; concentration and cooperation were of the highest order. Pupils were closely focussed on the tasks in hand. The motivation to perform well in the examinations helped them to sustain these efforts. The quality of written work over the year, performance in tests and assignments provide evidence of the effectiveness of pupils' learning. A few good examples of independent learning, of pupils going far beyond minimum expectation, were found in the files, which were generally well ordered and voluminous. However such excellence was not common, even though interest in and enjoyment of the subject is widespread.
- 8.70 The quality of teaching is very good. Individual lessons are well planned within a good overall structure, set out in the work scheme. The careful attention to detail ensures that pupils' individual needs are met. Thorough notes are produced to help pupils tackle practice questions from past papers. Strategies discussed with the examiners are explained to the pupils and this increases their confidence. The excellent working relationship between the teachers and the pupils is one of the keys to success. A common enthusiasm for the subject allows this relationship to be rigorous and challenging, without losing the humour and the enjoyment. A broader range of teaching methods would help to promote even greater interest. While both teachers use question and answer techniques most effectively, in some lessons the opportunities for pupils to play an active oral part are limited, though plenty of

writing practice was seen. Reference material is used well but more employment of ICT and visual aids would help to bring more life to the class.

- 8.71 The quantity of assessed work is high and outcomes are carefully recorded. Much is in the form of past papers and mark books record the considerable progress over the year. The way tests, homeworks, assignments and mock examinations are assessed is well understood by the pupils. The range of assessment is appropriate to the individual needs of the pupils. While the marking is assiduous, the written comments are not as full or as helpful as they could be, though time is taken in lessons to give explanations, and the content of lessons is partly determined by the assessment outcomes. The AS and A level specifications have been carefully chosen to meet the needs of this particular group, many of whom have ethnic backgrounds. The emphasis is on international, European Union, development and transport economics; this and the examination success have helped make economics the largest subject in the sixth form. A programme of visits, foreign trips, speakers and competitions provides valuable enrichment.
- 8.72 Two well-qualified and experienced teachers successfully meet all the departmental requirements. A system of appraisal is in place and the teachers take advantage of appropriate training opportunities. The scope of this training could be broadened if emphasis was less on examinations and more on varying teaching approaches, including the use of ICT.
- 8.73 Resources are well matched to the department's approach to teaching and learning. The library, even including provision in the Swallow Library, is not extensive but the range of periodicals, including those purchased by the pupils, is good. Good use is made of the data projector and both teachers' laptops, which provide internet access. The teaching rooms are adequate for the purpose and have been well decorated with pictures of famous economists and other stimulus material. For the largest sets the accommodation is tight, and the desks are quite small. Both teachers have an office.
- 8.74 This highly successful department is led and managed with great enthusiasm. Cooperation between the teachers ensures that essential duties are carried out efficiently; information is shared and all the teaching sets divided between them. Good teamwork is evident. Meetings are minuted. The handbook contains valuable information, including the scheme of work which guides the parallel working of the sets. The scheme would be even more helpful if specification items were broken into more detail and integrated with notes of appropriate assessment, available resources and possible teaching methods. Good support and guidance are given to pupils who want to study this subject at university

Geography

- 8.75 Pupils achieve very good standards in geography in relation to their abilities. In almost all lessons observed attainment by the pupils was very good. By the end of Year 9 pupils have developed a good range of geographical vocabulary and are using graphical and mapping skills well. Year 11 pupils have developed a good understanding of key concepts and are able to use appropriate geographical terminology. By Year 13, students have an excellent grasp of key ideas and can apply concepts and principles to new situations. In one Year 13 lesson, during a discussion of the Thames Gateway Development Region, the pupils were able to integrate isostasy and dynamic equilibrium into the decision-making process for the location of a new airport.
- 8.76 Results in public examinations at GCSE over the three years 2001 to 2003 have been well above the national average for all maintained schools with 96% of the 180 candidates achieving at least a grade C. In 2003, GCSE results were well above those for all

maintained schools with 62% of candidates gaining A* or A. At A Level, results over the period 2001 to 2003 have been good and above the national average, with 67% of the 78 candidates gaining a grade A or B and 98% gaining at least a grade E.

- 8.77 Pupils' progress in geography, including those who are identified as needing support for EAL, is good in relation to their abilities at all ages and very good in the sixth form. No gender differences are evident. Well-planned schemes of work allow for sequential development of skills and knowledge throughout all stages. Pupil progress is aided by a well-organised programme of investigative fieldwork throughout all stages, starting in Year 7 with local climate and environment surveys and culminating in Year 12 with highly effective residential trips to Field Study Council Centres. Measures of long-term progress to GCSE show achievement in line with that of other independent schools.
- 8.78 Pupils' learning is good across all ages: they are predominantly very responsive in lessons. Most pupils are well motivated, keen to contribute and enjoy debate when the opportunity arises. For example, in a Year 8 lesson the issues surrounding poaching of endangered species were well articulated. The pupils' quality of presentation of written work is usually high. The use of ICT to assist learning is hampered by problems associated with technical aspects of the school intranet and a lack of mapping of ICT skills across the curriculum.
- 8.79 The standard of teaching across all ages is predominantly very good but some excellent teaching was observed. A studious atmosphere is invariably engendered in the classroom. Teachers have an excellent command of the subject and high standards are expected. The department has a strong commitment to the use of a variety of teaching strategies: this was exemplified in a Year 9 lesson where pupils were encouraged to think independently about fieldwork design.
- 8.80 Formal testing is thorough, with centralised records showing the tracking of pupils through all age groups. Marking of pupils' work is very good; teachers' comments are appropriately supportive and aid pupils' progress. Regularly pupils are helped to complete their own self-evaluation of progress and attainment and this is an excellent component of the assessment process. Pupils are continually encouraged to seek guidance and the teachers provide regular opportunities outside the classroom for additional support if required.
- 8.81 The department has two classrooms equipped with a full range of audio-visual and other resources including digital projectors, which are used effectively. A wealth of visual stimuli is on show throughout the department, but more displays of pupil-generated materials would create additional interest. The department has a continually evolving internet site that is being used for some interactive learning.
- 8.82 All the teachers in the department are well qualified, knowledgeable and enthusiastic. They work well as a team and are very ably led by the head of the department. The relatively high number of pupils opting for the subject is beginning to put a strain on the accommodation and resources.
- 8.83 The department is well managed. It has a realistic development plan; meetings are held regularly; INSET requirements are well met and departmental and school policies are adhered to. In addition to the enrichment activities mentioned above, voluntary visits for sixth form pupils are made to the Norfolk coast and abroad.

History, Government and Politics

- 8.84 Attainment in history is good, with pupils at least matching their ability, and often exceeding it. Both in class and in written work evidence was found of pupils achieving high standards.

History is not one of the more popular options at GCSE, with an average of around a third of the year group over the past three years; the proportion of girls is even lower. However, GCSE results are strong with A*/A grades well above the school average and the average for maintained selective schools over the last three years. Although the numbers taking history through to A level are modest the results are consistently well above the national average particularly at A and B grades over the last three years.

- 8.85 Progress is good and evident both from written work and pupils' response to discussion. Consolidation of material and enhanced understanding are achieved by the skilful teasing out of information by teacher-led discussion. No differences were seen in the performance of boys and girls or those from ethnic backgrounds but in every lesson observed, girls and boys sat in separate areas. This gender divide militates against the progress which comes from sharing of male/female perspectives in paired discussions. Measures of long-term progress to GCSE show achievement in line with that of other independent schools.
- 8.86 The quality of learning and pupils' attitudes to work are good. Most pupils are well motivated, concentrate hard and take an interest in their own learning. This was especially evident in a Year 13 class where pupils contributed their own individualised historiographical research for the benefit of the rest of the group. Clear progress is demonstrated by the improved quality of individual pupils' work over time. This is especially pronounced in Years 7 to 9 with the mid to lower ability range. The working relationship between pupils and their teachers is strong. The rapport at sixth form level in particular is genuine. Both pupils and staff employ sophisticated historical terminology. Conceptually demanding ideas are swiftly assimilated.
- 8.87 The quality of teaching is good and expectations are high. Whilst teacher-led exposition is the primary method employed, this was appropriate to the revision content of many lessons. A variety of handouts is used to enhance class notes and they are effective as working documents. Pupils' work is marked frequently and sixth form essays, in particular, are copiously annotated with helpful advice.
- 8.88 The accommodation of the department is barely adequate with two classrooms, in separate buildings, one of which is only suitable for sixth form groups as it can comfortably seat no more than twelve pupils. The larger teaching room requires artificial lighting at all times. The windows are small, above eye level and have iron bars across them. The soulless atmosphere is not conducive to study. The new departmental office is a welcome addition, providing sufficient area to cover the demands of storage and teacher work space. Lessons in Years 7 to 9 take place in a variety of rooms. The lack of a clear departmental identity is a factor in the relatively modest uptake of the subject at GCSE. When resources and circumstances permit, the history department should be re-housed in a dedicated area with space for central displays and the provision of library and study facilities.
- 8.89 Resources are good. The department is satisfactorily equipped and the budget allocation appropriate. However, despite the fact that one classroom has a data projector and all teachers have been provided with laptops, ICT is not regularly used in teaching, nor the internet for research purposes, nor Powerpoint for presentation of lessons. Schemes of work must include an ICT element to enhance and widen the variety of teaching styles currently adopted.
- 8.90 Staffing is good, with well-qualified and experienced teachers but deployment is less satisfactory. Apart from one Year 10 set, all GCSE and A-Level teaching is carried out by the Head of Department and an experienced colleague. There is thus, in effect, a demarcation at the Year 9 stage and little cross-fertilisation.

- 8.91 The management of the department is good and regular departmental meetings are held and minuted. However, some confusion is caused by the existence of two separate handbooks. The handbook for Years 7 to 9 conflicts with the full departmental handbook which also covers, albeit briefly, yearly outlines for Years 3 – 8. Each has a different set of departmental aims and a lack of synthesis on other policy matters. Although the schemes of work follow the general outline of the National Curriculum, the Year 8 scheme of work is overly narrow with the entire year spent in Britain (1500 – 1700) and too great a concentration on one textbook. Between Christmas of Year 7 and January of Year 9, pupils are exclusively subjected to an anglocentric history curriculum. Thereafter, the move to the Great War barely shifts the emphasis. In a school with a significant proportion of pupils from a non-European background, the failure to look far beyond these shores is an opportunity missed and leads to inadequate breadth. Enrichment activities are limited. Whilst a regular programme of overseas visits and conferences takes place for those in public examination years, no opportunities are available earlier. Beyond a Year 13 history cinema club, no further extra-curricular opportunities exist.
- 8.92 Government and Politics, taught by members of the history department, was introduced as an option in the wake of Curriculum 2000 and has experienced mixed fortunes in the past four years. The most recent set of A-Level results in Government and Politics was most encouraging. Seven candidates out of eight achieved A grades in 2003. The subject is not being offered at A level in 2004.
- 8.93 Politics is currently taught to one group of eighteen pupils in Year 12. Politics does not have a dedicated classroom and many of the lessons take place in chemistry laboratories. This location and the size of the set are not conducive to debating requirements and make teaching difficult.
- 8.94 No clear leadership or management structure is evident and the status of Government and Politics as a discrete subject needs to be clearly defined. The appointment of a new member of staff, in September 2004, will help with the development of the subject after the recent hiatus.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

- 8.98 Attainment is uneven and barely satisfactory overall in relation to their abilities. Standards vary between ICT as a separate subject and as a cross-curricular skill. Satisfactory standards are achieved in Years 7 and 8 and in the sixth form. Attainment in ICT by the end of Year 8 for topics covered in class is in line with pupils' abilities. They have satisfactory skills in word processing, searching the internet, presentations, spreadsheets and databases, but have no knowledge of data logging, control and modelling applications. The present Year 9 course does not progress to the independent application of ICT skills expected at this level, so attainment in Year 9 is unsatisfactory, although a few of the ablest pupils used more advanced techniques including macros. Pupils' attainment is in line with their abilities in Years 12 and 13 and project work is good. Pupils in Year 12 show good knowledge of security and back-up procedures. ICT is not offered at GCSE. Examinations results in A level ICT for the last 3 years and in computing, taken for the first time at last year, are below the national average, but in line with the ability of the pupils taking the subject.
- 8.99 Pupils' progress is satisfactory in ICT classes. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 make good progress in practical skills such as searching the internet and constructing databases. Pupils in a Year 8 class displayed good understanding of fields in a database, but pupils in another observed lesson on the same topic made unsatisfactory progress in this ICT theory. Efforts to develop ICT skills are not coordinated in other curriculum subjects, so only enthusiasts make progress beyond topics taught in the Year 8 ICT classes. In Years 12 and 13, despite the lack of

background of GCSE, pupils make good progress in ICT knowledge and understanding of ICT concepts and very good progress in project skills.

- 8.100 The quality of learning and behaviour is good. Pupils are well motivated learners and work enthusiastically on practical ICT tasks. They respond thoughtfully to questions in class discussions. They pursue practical work independently and cooperate when appropriate, for example to explain techniques to others having difficulties. Sixth form pupils worked well on practice questions, and were thoughtful about the most appropriate wording to answer the questions concisely and clearly.
- 8.101 Most teaching is good but some was unsatisfactory: what teachers teach is generally good, but not enough is taught. Unsatisfactory teaching was seen where a teacher had insufficient knowledge to cover theory and respond flexibly to events. Teachers have good relationships with the pupils, creating a relaxed but purposeful atmosphere in the class. An appropriate range of teaching methods promotes learning. In sixth form revision work, these included quiz questions, whole group discussion and practice written questions. The teacher has high expectations of the ablest and provides individual support of the weakest. Work is assessed regularly using standard school grades. In Years 7 to 9, work on the latest practical assignment is assessed, held on disc, and fed back to pupils verbally. No homework is set. In Years 12 and 13, regular tests are used for assessment and constructive comments in marking contribute to learning.
- 8.102 The provision for ICT in the school curriculum is unsatisfactory. In Years 7 to 9, one period a week is insufficient to cover the full range of ICT skills. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 use well devised workbooks to develop their skills in research, presentation, spreadsheets and databases. This approach needs to be extended to Year 9 pupils next year. ICT is not taught in Years 10 and 11, except for its personal and social effects in PSHE. Few opportunities exist to develop ICT skills in other subjects, with the exception of graphic design in art and design GCSEs. Data logging, modelling and control are omitted. It would be possible to teach ICT through work in other subjects, but careful planning, mapping and coordination of its use across the curriculum are required for this to be an effective means of developing ICT knowledge, skills and understanding.
- 8.103 Staffing within the department is insufficient to meet the teaching load. The head of ICT has a heavy teaching load of 33.5 periods a week and, at times, teaches two classes concurrently. As the only specialist teacher, he is also responsible for developing all programmes of work and for carrying out the leadership and management functions. The use of non-specialist teaching adversely affects pupils' attainment and progress.
- 8.104 The department is very well resourced. The accommodation in the two computer rooms is excellent, with ample desk space for study in the sixth form room.

Modern Foreign Languages

- 8.105 Pupils' attainment overall is generally satisfactory in relation to their abilities, but it is variable. In over half the lessons it was sound or good; in a quarter, very good, but in one lesson, not high enough in relation to pupils' linguistic abilities. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 generally display good or very good aural understanding of the language, have good lexical recall and good pronunciation. In a Year 8 French class, they showed particularly impressive skills in their manipulation of new linguistic structures. In Year 9, linguistic competence was more variable. In Years 10 and 11, pupils' attainment is good or very good in French, where pupils in both a middle and top set were confident in speaking the language. In a Year 11 top set, written work was of a high quality, and laudably accurate. In a Year 10 Spanish lesson, pupils' recall and understanding of verb forms were uneven. In Year 13, attainment is in line

with pupils' abilities. Good overall comprehension of a complex reading passage was observed in a Year 12 French lesson, but spontaneous dialogue was limited, both in this lesson and a Year 13 German lesson. In public examinations GCSE results are below the national average for maintained selective schools, particularly in Spanish, where boys' results were well below in 2003. A-level grades are generally good, and above the national average.

- 8.106 Progress overall is good. In virtually all lessons it is at least sound, and in nearly half the lessons it is very good. In a Year 7 class, pupils were already using their third well-presented exercise book, which showed clear evidence of progress throughout the year. Knowledge of grammatical structures and vocabulary steadily increases in the years leading to GCSE, whilst competence in listening and speaking skills also develops. Gains in learning are made in almost all lessons, with some pupils making rapid progress in their understanding of new grammatical concepts, and clearly increasing in confidence in revision lessons. This is true for all pupils, regardless of gender or ethnic background. In only one instance was it evident that pupils had not achieved satisfactory understanding of new lexis by the lesson's conclusion. Measures of long-term progress to GCSE show achievement lower than that of other independent schools for pupils of given ability.
- 8.107 Attitudes to learning and behaviour were overall very good: in three-quarters of the lessons observed it was good or better. Unsatisfactory behaviour was observed only in a Year 9 lesson. Pupils are generally attentive and enthusiastic, and respond well to instructions and questioning. The sense of enjoyment is palpable in many classes, especially in the early years. Pair-work is a positive experience, and pupils take pride in their written work. Some weaker pupils lack initiative and confidence, and in one lesson, levels of engagement and concentration were variable.
- 8.108 The overall quality of teaching is uneven. It was good or very good in a half of lessons, and sound in all but one. Lessons are well planned, and teachers make extensive use of their own materials in addition to textbooks. Teachers' expectations are mostly appropriate, although, in a few instances, lessons are inadequately challenging, both in terms of pace and difficulty. Teachers display a very good command of the foreign language in all cases, and often use it throughout the lesson, providing a very fine model for pupils to emulate; however, inadequate use was made in the sixth form lessons observed. In a Year 8 German lesson, very good and humorous use was made of visual stimuli. Teachers generally maintain a good balance between the four skills areas, but could make more extensive use of pair-work. They are mostly enthusiastic and encouraging in their approach, and have good relations with pupils. They generally respond well to pupils' needs but, in two instances, failed to gauge pupils' level of comprehension..
- 8.109 A departmental policy for the use of marking symbols has recently been introduced, but constructive comments are rarely made on written homeworks. From the beginning of the academic year, Spanish has been offered on an equal footing with German from Year 8, and pupils can continue with their strongest language to GCSE. Imaginative timetabling allows some pupils to take a second modern language with Latin in Year 9, with extra support given off-timetable.
- 8.110 The department is appropriately staffed; teachers are generally well qualified and the mix of experienced and younger members of staff is good. Three foreign language assistants enthusiastically support the work of their colleagues both within and beyond the timetable.
- 8.111 Resources are good, but neither the language laboratory nor ICT was used during the inspection. The department has only three dedicated language-teaching rooms. An efficient system for the sharing and filing of resources has recently been introduced. The exam-style

booklets for all skill areas are a very good resource. Although a plethora of worksheets is produced in Spanish in Years 8 to 11, a new textbook is urgently needed to provide greater structure to the course.

- 8.112 The department is mostly well managed and leadership is consultative, committed and enthusiastic. Comprehensive written guidance is available in the excellent departmental handbook and schemes of work. 'Progress review letters' in Year 11 and a monitoring system at A level have been introduced in order to raise pupils' attainment. However, the department would benefit from increased sharing of responsibility as the staffing becomes more settled. A programme of mutual observation would aid the development of teaching styles. The department continues to develop a valuable programme of overseas visits and exchanges, and very good provision of support and clubs for pupils is made outside the timetable

Music

- 8.113 Overall attainment is good but standards of work in class varies, reflecting the abilities of the pupils: in both Years 7 to 9, and for pupils preparing for public examination, attainment was in line with their abilities, though above in the case of one pupil. Attainment in written work is more difficult to judge as most work in class is marked by practical performance and taped assessment. The department produces and encourages much creative output, but in aural rather than visual form. Pupils' files of GCSE, AS and A level written work indicate levels of attainment in line with ability. In the GCSE over two thirds of candidates have obtained A* or A grades over the last few years, well above the average for selective maintained schools. At A level all results have been at A or B grade over the last two years, above the national average, though numbers taking this subject are too small for realistic comparisons.
- 8.114 Progress in lessons observed was good overall, but only sound in a few lessons. The pupils display a good grasp of the various musical genres and are skilful in putting their abilities to good use. In Years 7 to 9, a range of activities stimulate all pupils regardless of their musical talent, but in a Year 9 lesson, little opportunity was given for pupils to demonstrate knowledge or understanding. In contrast, in lessons with the more proficient musicians in Years 10 to 13 pupils were thriving.
- 8.115 The quality of learning is good. Virtually all pupils show at least sound attitudes and behaviour. They are enthusiastic and co-operative and, in a potentially noisy environment, they are self-disciplined and courteous. The pupils in Years 7 to 9 display mutual respect and strive to listen in silence when recorded assessments are being made. They are alert and interested, although this can occasionally lead to rather excitable behaviour. In Year 10 and above, the pupils are very well focused, responding to stimuli with consistent levels of concentration and enthusiasm.
- 8.116 The teaching is good overall, though some very good lessons were observed, while a few were only sound and only one lesson fell short of that. Variations in teaching methods are employed and all teachers have a fine rapport with the pupils. The lessons are for the most part well planned and objectives clearly stated. In one Year 9 lesson, more use could have been made of class feed-back and criticism of fellow pupils' work: too much inactivity in a recorded assessment session is best avoided. Teachers' knowledge is invariably very good and they show high levels of commitment to the pupils. The two non-specialist music teachers clearly have much talent, skill and enthusiasm for the subject and greatly enhance its provision. From Years 7 to 9, insufficient written work is undertaken to raise the academic profile of the subject.

- 8.117 In the written work scrutinised, assessment at GCSE and A level was sound. At Key Stage 3, no homework can be set and almost all classwork is recorded rather than written so judgements about written work are not possible. The marks for performance assessment are not electronically recorded. The curriculum before Year 9 is heavily reliant upon practical music making and the time allocation of three lessons per fortnight renders an academic programme very hard to achieve. They make music but not many of them understand it.
- 8.118 All the teaching staff are well qualified and suited for the role. A departmental administrative assistant works for 20 hours per week and a dedicated staff of 24 peripatetic specialist music teachers give individual lessons to pupils of all ages. Some of these peripatetic musicians give their time to direct groups or bands.
- 8.119 Resources for learning in classroom music are adequate. ICT was used for a Year 13 revision lesson, but no lessons for younger pupils involved ICT, although a suite of computers with music composition software is used for GCSE and A level coursework. Neither the main nor the departmental library is adequate, nor are they used a great deal.
- 8.120 Accommodation is unsatisfactory. The two classroom spaces are not well suited for their present purposes. The main classroom is too multi-purpose to be good to teach in, having no desks or tables. This department is constantly buzzing with activity and every inch is utilised during lessons and lunchtimes. Extra-curricular music making is a hugely important aspect of the school and provides opportunities grasped by a large proportion of pupils. Lack of space for peripatetic teachers is beginning to restrict the number of pupils able to take up instrumental lessons. One peripatetic teacher gave a French horn lesson in the departmental kitchen space. Pupils would benefit from increased provision of small practice rooms.
- 8.121 The current temporary head of department is managing adequately until September, when a new director of music is joining the school, and stronger leadership is expected. Whilst schemes of work for Years 7 to 9 exist, they carry insufficient detail for lesson planning to be effective. No schemes of work exist for Years 10 to 13; the examination board specifications are used as a guide. Prudently the department is awaiting the new director of music to conduct a departmental audit and put new schemes of work in hand. This hard working and busy department provides very good extra-curricular music. Many enthusiastic choirs, bands, groups and orchestras are in evidence and much music making is to be found, being performed by many pupils of all ages and levels of skill and experience.

Physical Education (PE)

- 8.122 Attainment is at a very good level, beyond what is typical for each age group nationally. Pupils are fully immersed in lessons and achieve commendable results. Those with less natural aptitude still try hard and achieve to the limits of their ability. In one Year 8 lesson, the least athletic pupils still gritted their teeth and kept running for the entire 400 metre course. The standards achieved in curricular PE have a major, positive impact on the high quality of team games evident at all levels in the school. Pupils want to be involved.
- 8.123 Progress is very good and some fine examples were observed. In a Year 8 lesson of thirty-five minutes, pupils began a lesson with no more than a patchy understanding of the mechanics of 400m running and ended the lesson able to make reasonably sophisticated judgements on the tactics to employ in their own running of the distance.
- 8.124 Pupils are well motivated, contribute to the best of their ability and maintain concentration, in one case despite inclement weather and the proximity of break. Pupils encourage and genuinely enjoy each other's successes. They are keen to succeed. In an athletics lesson focusing on the triple jump, further teacher demonstrations were requested so that some

pupils could successfully master the key skill, despite the fact that it was impinging upon the pupils' lunch break. The registers reveal very little absenteeism. Pupils who forget kit, or who are incorrectly attired, are swiftly and fairly cautioned. This ensures adherence to clear departmental rules and expectations.

- 8.125 The quality of teaching is good. Teachers maintain firm discipline but without detracting from the evident enthusiasm of the pupils. Instructions are clear and succinct. Little energy is expended on the peripheral and pupils are encouraged to listen carefully to every word. The pace of the lessons is very good. Inclusion is clearly practised. One pupil with a heart condition was given a 'buddy' who ran at her pace. The teacher ensured that tasks were individually matched to her needs.
- 8.126 Records are meticulously kept and form the basis of regular written reports. Whilst PE is not currently an examined subject, the quality of assessment and the standard of recording are at an appropriate level. An element of subjectivity does however inform the attainment grading system: this could be further developed to include prescriptive level predictors. The school grading system ill fits the modular nature of the PE programme. Where a pupil receives an attainment grade which is an amalgam of two modules, the final judgement could dilute the excellence achieved in one area, because of a weaker aptitude for the other module.
- 8.127 The PE department has good and enthusiastic leadership, well supported by a strong team, who teach girls and boys with equal efficacy. The department is well managed and well resourced. The sports hall is a useful facility, although its modest size precludes some activity, such as full bowler run-ups for indoor nets. The gym is less conducive for the teaching of many elements of the curriculum, for instance, the roof is too low for badminton. Use of the open-air but heated swimming pool is dependent upon clement weather.
- 8.128 A comprehensive departmental handbook contains detailed schemes of work. An index with numbered pages would facilitate finding information. The PE programme is ambitious, with a number of modules covered each year, so pupils are unlikely to become stale with one subject area.
- 8.129 The two single periods allocated to the subject for most forms in Years 7 and 8 would be much better as one double period. The time spent changing under the present arrangements can often lead to no more than fifteen minutes teaching time. Every effort should be made with timetabling to ensure that the PE department receives its curriculum allocation in double, rather than two single, periods. When finances allow, consideration should be given to extending the current sports hall to enhance teaching provision and improve the facilities for curriculum PE, as well as for extra-curricular activity

Religious Studies (RS)

- 8.130 Attainment is good overall. In half the lessons observed it was high, and in the remainder it was good or in line with the pupils' ability. Pupils are able to express themselves accurately, using correct terminology. The ability, at all stages, to ask meaningful questions and their responses in class show a deep understanding of the relevant work. Senior pupils are adept at dealing with abstract concepts. Pupils in a mixed ability Year 8 class debate on euthanasia displayed a very good grasp of the wider issues and fine analytical skills were in evidence. This verbal attainment is borne out by the written work scrutinised. The creative work on display in some classrooms and the responses in A level files indicate good attainment. Attainment in examinations is good. GCSE results show an average at grades A* and A of 51% over the last four years, and results were well above the national average for selective maintained schools in 2002. At A level, grades A and B over the last two years average 69%, well above the national average.

- 8.131 Written work clearly shows good progress. Pupils starting new topics are quickly able to grasp the concepts. In a Year 9 lesson on miracles, the pupils were able to tackle the deeper issues quickly, asking pertinent questions and responding both in depth and laterally to challenges, showing that good analytical skills are being developed and honed constantly. Every pupil, regardless of sex, culture or religious background is at home with the material under consideration and responds with skill and interest. Pupils in Years 11 to 13, some in their last lesson before study leave, maintained good progress during final revision preparation.
- 8.132 The quality of learning and behaviour is very good. The positive behaviour of virtually all pupils observed in every lesson is a striking feature and greatly enhances the learning environment. Concentration remains alert to the very end of the lesson and pupils are active in their responses. In a Year 10 lesson on the problem of evil, there was co-operative interaction in small group discussion, well-focused listening skills and a competitive wish to contribute. The pupils show no hesitation either in challenging the assertions of the teacher or seeking clarification if in doubt.
- 8.133 The quality of teaching is very good overall. It engages pupils through a variety of challenges and expectations of the pupils remain high throughout. Lessons are thoroughly prepared, giving opportunities for the pupils to be actively involved. Teachers show huge enthusiasm for their subject and this proves highly infectious. Much mutual respect between teachers and pupils is clearly in evidence and humour is a valuable tool in just about all lessons. This team of highly professional and committed teachers is very secure in its knowledge base, is actively involved in maintaining up-to-date thinking, and relates very well to the needs of the pupils. Meaningful and relevant homework is set where appropriate and valuable initiatives further independent learning in Years 12 and 13.
- 8.134 The use of lap-top computers by teachers to manage assessment and recording enables clear tracking of pupils and enhances the setting of targets. Marking of written work is realistic, containing relevant and helpful comments. Senior pupils are encouraged to utilise the department's initiative on self-assessment. Reports to parents contain clear judgements and constructive criticism and targets.
- 8.135 The curriculum is well balanced and meticulously planned. All pupils have easy access to the content, regardless of previous knowledge, background or ability. However, the allocation of lessons to the younger pupils is insufficient to enable the pupils to be enriched fully by all this department has to offer. The very large uptake at GCSE and A level attests to the high regard in which this subject is held by pupils and parents. Several of the teachers hold senior positions in the school and need reductions in teaching time; as a result GCSE sets have uncomfortably high numbers of pupils.
- 8.136 The highly efficient and energetic leadership of this department displays a clear mission to enhance the subject throughout the school. Planning, schemes of work and administration are impeccable, and resources for learning are good. Books and equipment are all up-to-date and used regularly. The department library is well stocked and regularly accessed by pupils. However the department has only one classroom and thus lacks a proper base, for many lessons are taught elsewhere in other departments' classrooms. This highly effective department plays a major role in the welfare, pastoral care, support and academic development of the pupils in the school..

Short Subject Reports

Short subject reports contain concise evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning and of provision in the school.

Drama

- 8.137 Three lessons were observed in Years 9 to 12. A small quantity of pupils' work was scrutinised. Two discussions were held with the head of department.
- 8.138 Both the teaching and the learning were never less than good, and were sometimes very good. The variety of lessons, the quality of lessons and behaviour, and the ability for pupils to learn from each other, are strong features of the department.
- 8.139 The newly-built drama centre is an outstanding facility. Much thought has been given to its design, and the whole community supports the centre, not least financially. The department offers excellent opportunities for curricular and extra curricular enrichment. As the school prospectus makes plain, drama has a very high measure of importance and esteem in the school.
- 8.140 As the department, the facility, and the numbers taking the subject as a public exam continue to develop, consideration should be given to more regular meetings of those who teach the subject and to the amount of written work done by pupils of all ages.

Achievement and Quality in Activities

Senior School

- 8.141 The quality of activities observed is good, though provision is uneven across the range of activities, and at its best, it is very good indeed. Parental questionnaire respondents rated extra-curricular activity as very strong, highest level of all the school attributes listed. House competition underpins many aspects of the activities programme. The attainment of pupils in activities is outstanding, especially in sport, music and drama.
- 8.142 For most pupils, the level and extent of their participation in activities make a good contribution to their educational experience and achievement. The scope and breadth of activity enrich the educational life of many pupils. Continued involvement through the Old Chigwellian Club suggests that these activities inculcate a positive experience which lasts beyond a pupil's time at the school. The boarders' weekend activity programme is extensive, offering good cultural provision, as in a visit to Mozart's *Magic Flute*. Uptake from boy boarders is however variable.
- 8.143 An activities co-ordinator, appointed in September 2003, has the remit to ensure that all pupils are well catered for and to improve the organisation of the activity programme. The recording of pupils' extra curricular achievement is in the hands of the tutor and at present, tutors are uneven in carrying out the monitoring of activities. However, an effective registration scheme has been planned and, given full support, this should greatly strengthen the scope of activities and ensure that a consistent number of pupils attend all sessions. Success in this area of school life has also been improved by the introduction of a more systematic reporting process. The expectation that all staff contribute to at least one activity is met. A number of teachers involve themselves far in excess of this minimum expectation, both after school and in the holidays. This commitment is a strength of the school.
- 8.144 The co-ordinator is also responsible for the whole-school activities week towards the end of the summer term, involving all pupils. This excellent initiative has an ambitious range, including extension activities for many of the societies, which meet on a weekly basis.

Sport

- 8.145 Games is a leading contributor to the activities programme and standards are very high in most sports. The school regularly provides players for county teams and the school sides have recently been successful in a number of county competitions. The school's achievements at games are above expectations for a school of its size. Whilst successes with soccer and cricket have a historic pedigree, girls' teams have added to the roll of honour. Girls' games have made impressive strides in the last five years so that now little disparity exists in provision of sporting opportunity between girls and boys. A smaller proportion of girls represent the school partly because fewer skilled, experienced female games staff are available. Elite performers are given every encouragement and some pupils have made progress at regional and national level. Some were involved in a MCC leg spin master class. One cricket net session had three coaches teaching the sweep shot to five pupils. At the same time, provision is made for pupils of more modest standard, with 3rd XI cricket and an even wider range of soccer XIs. Those who do not excel at the major school team sports, have other sporting outlets. Golf has become a popular option for pupils of differing standards. The availability of an on-site pitch-and-putt 5-hole course adds attraction and a school team plays a number of fixtures.
- 8.146 Hockey has also increased its profile and interest among pupils, with some representing the county. Boys and girls alike greatly enjoy this addition to the sporting experiences available at the school. However, further progress will necessitate the provision of a floodlit all-weather surface. Nevertheless, the facilities for games are generally very good. The spacious and attractive campus is a great advantage and the grounds are maintained to a very high standard.
- 8.147 Pupils enjoy their sport, whatever their ability. An athletics afternoon involved both sexes in exciting competition. Pupils need no cajoling to involve themselves in a wide variety of track and field events. The *Sport for All* motto was clearly displayed in a girls' 400m race, where one competitor hobbled around in last place in order to gain points for her house.

Duke of Edinburgh's Award

- 8.148 Over 50 pupils are involved in the bronze and silver Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. A further ten pupils participate at gold level, overseen by the school coordinator. The valuable work achieved in this area includes a community service element and this is complemented by the Year 13 Skills and Activities Scheme which enables around twenty percent of that year group to involve themselves in a plethora of local community projects such as Barnardos, Riding for the Disabled and helping at a special needs school. Further afield, school involvement in the Ashram project in Tamil Nadu, southern India, affords an opportunity for some pupils to visit this less affluent area.

Drama

- 8.149 Drama is growing in quality and quantity, enhanced by the excellent provision of a new drama centre. The rehearsals observed were vibrant, with the pupils self assured and keen to be involved. The involvement of professional groups, like Cambridge Footlights, gives the activity added impetus.

Music

- 8.150 Music is one of the strengths of the school with three orchestras and several age based choirs performing regularly. Other ensembles include genres such as rock and pop, wind, flute and string. The department offers plentiful opportunities for pupils of all ages.

Other Activities

- 8.151 The scout group involves around 45 pupils from Year 6 onwards and explorers from Year 9. An extensive programme of scouting activities takes place involving the local community. A 'camp gadgets' construction lesson on the grounds was particularly good. The group will make an expedition to Switzerland in the summer.
- 8.152 The opportunities offered by the large number of educational visits are a strength of the school. Residential trips include skiing, language exchanges to France and Germany, Wye Valley activities and history trips – mainly to Paris and Berlin. Risk assessments are written by staff involved in leading the trips, but ongoing risk assessments should be undertaken during the trip as appropriate. Distribution of trips is uneven, with, for instance, no history visits scheduled for Year 7 to 9.
- 8.153 A number of class based activities take place, with the following all observed; DT workshops, Christian Union, geography quiz and lecture, 6th Form history cinema club, art and computer clubs. While this is an exciting provision, the lack of an extensive range of clubs and societies with a more cerebral, non-sporting, cultural or academic subject-related core, is less satisfactory. Further societies focused on cultural pursuits and cerebral discussion e.g. debating and European Youth Parliament would help pupil development.

9. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

- 9.1 The inspection was carried out from 10th to 14th May. All subjects of the curriculum were inspected and all members of the teaching staff were observed teaching. However, the size of the team did not permit all subjects to be reported in full. The following subjects do not have full reports in Section 8: drama and politics (this subject is reported under history). The inspectors visited 120 lessons or parts of lessons, examined extensive samples of work by pupils of different abilities in each year and held formal discussions with 20 pupils as well as informal discussions with other pupils. They attended 3 assemblies and 6 registration sessions. They observed 20 extra-curricular and sporting activities. They held discussions with 72 teaching and non-teaching staff at various levels in the school. They made visits to all the boarding houses and to the sanatorium. They analysed the responses of 280 parents to a questionnaire distributed in advance of the inspection and met with 20 sets of parents. They examined a wide range of documentation made available by the school.
- 9.2 A bursar from another school joined the reporting inspector on a preliminary visit as part of the Independent Schools Bursars Association pilot scheme, spending the day with the bursar's department. The principal findings have been included in the relevant sections of this report.

List of Inspectors

Dr Vivian Anthony	Reporting inspector, formerly Secretary HMC, Headmaster of HMC School
Mr Jonathan Belbin	Headmaster, HMC School
Dr Timothy Hands	Headmaster HMC School
Dr Stephen Hoskins	Head of Department, HMC School
Mrs Helen Kay	Deputy Head, GSA School
Mrs Libby Martin	Formerly Head of Department, GSA school
Mr David Stockwell	Formerly Head of Department, HMC School
Mr Andrew Stribley	Head of Lower School, HMC School
Mr John Watson	Deputy Head, HMC School
Mr Richard Willan	Head of Department, HMC School