

High School row: Captain joins in

The Captain of Chichester High School for Boys, 17-year-old Philip Popham, of Willowbed Drive, Chichester, has sprung to the defence of staff in the public debate about the school's performance.

It was sparked off by a critical letter from a sixth former, and the subject of comprehensive schooling in the city has excited much comment.

"Staff put much work into the school to promote its smoother running, and I would not wish to detract from this for one moment," says Philip.

"They are, however, faced with the difficulty of trying to make the best of what was essentially a bad job — the compulsory amalgamation of the two schools on the present site in 1971.

"I am certain the majority of boys appreciate this work.

LONG-TERM

"This type of long-term project is not one which may be judged after such a short period. One cannot hope to make any unbiased views on its success, or lack of success, before the first intake of the comprehensive school has finally left.

"Then, perhaps, one may successfully investigate the effects of compulsory comprehensive education," he says.

Commenting on some of the points raised in correspondence, Philip points out that Latin has not, as yet, been cut as an "O" level course.

Some "O" level courses had been cut and pupils were now permitted to take a maximum of eight "O" levels in the fifth year.

Interest in sport had been sustained, and the school was now able to put out more teams than ever before.

"However, the interest in sporting activities does not necessarily imply a greater sense of belonging to the school.

"Indeed, this is now much reduced, and is evident in the non-conformity of many boys in not wearing the school uniform," claims Philip.