

INSPECTION REPORT

Canon Lee School

LEA area: York

Unique Reference Number: 121662

Headteacher: Kevin R Deadman

Reporting inspector: Marian Burdon
10179

Dates of inspection: 22-25 November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 708206

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
Type of control:	County
Age range of pupils:	11 to 16 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Rawcliffe Drive Clifton Without York YO30 6ZS
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Winstanley
Date of previous inspection:	25–29 April 1994

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Marian Burdon, RgI	-	Leadership and management Teaching
Alan Waters Eva Mills, Lay Inspector	Geography -	Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community
Avril Ellis David Mason	Music Art	The curriculum and assessment Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Adrienne Carmichael	-	Special Educational Needs Equal Opportunities
Paul Simmons	Modern Foreign Languages	The efficiency of the school Attainment and progress
Kathryn Pink	History	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Brian Dower Chris Savory Mervyn Wakefield John Lewis	English Science Mathematics Design and technology	- - - -
Patrick Smith David Sharpe	Information technology Physical education Religious education	- - -

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London WC2B 6SE

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- Attainment in modern foreign languages at Key Stage 3 is good.
- Attainment in art, history, and modern foreign languages at Key Stage 4 is good.
- Pupils make good progress at Key Stage 3 in modern foreign languages, art and music.
- At Key Stage 4 pupils make good progress in modern foreign languages, history, art, music, and physical education.
- Pupils' skills in speaking, reading and listening are good at both key stages and in writing at Key Stage 4.
- A significant amount of teaching is good or very good.
- Creative arts are good in the school.
- Extra-curricular activities provide pupils with wider experiences.
- Assessment of pupils' progress over time is good.
- Moral and social development is good.
- There is strong pastoral care for pupils.
- Heads of year and pastoral support staff give good support. The nurse is a real asset to the school.
- Parents are kept well informed and communications with parents are good.
- There are good industrial and business links.
- Leadership and management are of high quality.
- Administration is good in the school.
- Financial control is good.
- The ethos in the school is good.
- Staff are hard working and committed.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Attainment is unsatisfactory in religious education and geography at Key Stage 3. Religious education is poor at Key Stage 4.
- II. The behaviour of a significant minority of pupils is poor.
- III. Teaching is unsatisfactory in 10 per cent of lessons.
- IV. The use of information technology (IT) across the curriculum.
- V. Personal and Social Education is poor at Key Stage 4.
- VI. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) are not incorporated into the overall planning of teachers to take account of the targets set to support pupils. IEPs are also not reviewed regularly.
- VII. The curriculum at Key Stage 4 is limited and there is insufficient range of accreditation for pupils at this stage.
- VIII. Provision for spiritual development is unsatisfactory.
- IX. Some of the staff carrying management responsibilities are overloaded.
- X. Arrangements for the professional development of staff are unsatisfactory.
- XI. The management of special needs, humanities, geography and religious education is unsatisfactory.
- XII. Accommodation and resources are unsatisfactory, especially in the library.
- XIII. Annual written reports to parents do not include targets for pupils or information about performance in IT.

The school is an improving school with many more strengths than weaknesses. The governors' action plan will set out how the weaknesses identified during the inspection are to be tackled. The plan will be sent to all parents and guardians of pupils at the school.

• **How the school has improved since the last inspection**

The school has made effective improvements since the last inspection. These are well documented and generally most of the areas in the key issues have been addressed. For example, there has been a review of schemes of work and learning styles in all departments to raise expectations and provide pupils with greater opportunities to take more responsibility for their own learning. The school has also introduced assessment every ten weeks of all pupils, departmental target setting, monitoring meetings to plan actions for under-achieving pupils and has carried out results analysis to ensure appropriate levels of challenge in the work of pupils. The school now has in place some effective monitoring and review procedures but these as yet are not fully consistent across the school. Other key features have also been successfully addressed such as a broader range of clubs and extra-curricular activities.

The very effective leadership of the new headteacher is already having a positive impact in the school. The current work being carried out by the newly appointed deputy headteacher and the support from the senior management team and staff in the school with regard to planning for the school's expansion clearly indicate that the school has the capacity to improve further in the future.

• **Standards in subjects**

The following table shows standards achieved by 14 and 16 year olds in national tests and GCSE examinations in 1999:

Performance in:	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Key
			<i>well above average</i>
			<i>above average</i>
Key Stage 3	C	C	<i>average</i>
GCSE Examinations	C	D	<i>below average</i>
			<i>well below average</i>

• *Key Stage 3*

On the basis of inspection evidence, the attainment of pupils in Year 9 is above national expectation in English, in line with expectation in science and below but close to expectation in mathematics. Attainment is above expectation in modern foreign languages and below expectation in geography and religious education. In other subjects pupils' attainment is broadly in line with expectation.

• *Key Stage 4*

Attainment in the current Year 11 is well above national expectation in history and above expectation in English, drama, modern foreign languages, art and music. It is below expectation in mathematics and well below expectation in religious education. Attainment in other subjects is in line with expectation. Attainment shows an improvement overall in GCSE results in 1999 which were below the national averages for the higher

grades, yet in line with national averages for pass grades. Attainment over time shows no clear trends. It also shows recent improvements in particular subjects: English, mathematics, music and physical education.

Quality of teaching

	Overall quality	Most effective in:	Least effective in:
Years 7-9	Good	English, modern foreign languages, art, music.	Religious education.
Years 10-11	Good	English, physical education, art, music, modern foreign languages.	Personal and social education, religious education, mathematics.
English	Good		
Mathematics	Good		

The overall quality of teaching is good and meets the needs of most pupils. However, there is some unsatisfactory and poor teaching. Teaching was at least satisfactory in 90 per cent of lessons, good in 40 per cent, very good in 15 per cent and excellent in one per cent. There was less than satisfactory teaching in 10 per cent of lessons.

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Increase in exclusions; behaviour satisfactory overall, good in many lessons and poor in a minority of lessons; poor behaviour of a significant minority of pupils in and around the school, mainly boys but not exclusively.
Attendance	Satisfactory, improved since last inspection; rate of unauthorised absence is above national averages.
Ethos*	Positive ethos; relationships are generally good; most staff have high expectations of pupils; caring and supportive learning environment.
Leadership and management	Effective school; well led and managed; strong vision, good strategic management. Some departments not well managed.
Pupils with special educational needs	Good specialist teaching; good support. Individual education plans not reviewed regularly; targets not implemented in all subject planning. Co-ordinator overloaded.
Curriculum	Broad and balanced - reflects school aims; information and communication technology (ICT) not fully implemented across the curriculum; curriculum restricted for some pupils at Key Stage 4; extra-curricular activities good.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Moral and social good; experience of other cultures satisfactory; spiritual development unsatisfactory.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Appropriately staffed; aspects of staff development weak; poor accommodation; poor resources particularly in the library.
Value for money	Satisfactory.

**Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

· **The parents' views of the school**

What most parents like about the school

- XIV. The school keeps parents well informed about pupils' progress.
- XV. The school is approachable and supportive.
- XVI. Children are encouraged to play an active part in the school.
- XVII. Children like the school.

What some parents are not happy about

- XVIII. There are concerns about homework.
- XIX. Some complaints are not handled well.
- XX. Some concern about behaviour at break and
- XXI. Limited opportunities in physical

The parents are very positive about the school. They feel that they are kept well informed about the progress of their children. The extra-curricular opportunities for pupils are good, particularly music. The inspection evidence confirms these strengths. Parents are pleased with the quality of teaching, but they did feel that there were limited opportunities in physical education. Parents recognised that behaviour was generally good but there were concerns about some poor behaviour at break and lunch times. On the basis of inspection evidence, homework contributes appropriately to pupils' attainment and progress. The school uses good procedures for handling complaints from parents.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to raise standards further and continue to improve the quality of education the headteacher and governors should tackle the issues below:

Improve the attainment and progress in mathematics at Key Stage 4 and attainment in geography and religious education in both key stages by:

- XXII. using effective strategies for managing poor behaviour to lessen the impact on the quality of teaching in mathematics (paragraphs 41, 43, 138);
- XXIII. providing a variety of learning resources to improve provision in mathematics (106, 141);
- XXIV. ensuring the requirements for the agreed syllabus for religious education are met at Key Stage 4 (46, 253, 254);
- XXV. using a wider range of teaching methods, activities and resources in religious education and geography (41, 181, 182, 184, 252, 254);
- XXVI. improving the management of geography and religious education (46, 91, 96, 117, 183, 184, 253).

Ensure current expertise and best practice already established in many quarters of school life are extended to strengthen performance in weaker areas, in particular:

- XXVII. the elimination of unsatisfactory and poor teaching (32, 34, 40, 41, 42);
- XXVIII. the management and teaching of personal and social education (32, 34, 41, 42, 51, 64, 91);
- XXIX. the management of special needs - in particular the quality of individual educational plans of pupils with special educational needs by reviewing them more regularly and ensuring that subject departments plan the targets into their lesson planning to make sure pupils' needs are catered for (55, 71, 72, 88, 90);
- XXX. the management of humanities (91, 200);
- XXXI. the use of information technology in all subject areas (46, 49, 107, 204);
- XXXII. the provision of alternative accreditation at Key Stage 4 (50).

Improve the behaviour and attitudes of a significant minority of pupils by:

- XXXIII. continuing to address the high level of fixed term exclusions and employing strategies to reduce the number (19);
- XXXIV. rigorously applying the school's code of conduct and procedures on behaviour (19, 22, 72);
- XXXV. ensuring respect is accorded to temporary staff by pupils (22, 24);
- XXXVI. ensuring the personal and social education programme makes a full contribution to the development of pupils' understanding of behaviour and relationships (20, 51);
- XXXVII. providing staff with problems of discipline and control in their teaching with in-service training in behaviour management (22, 24, 72);
- XXXVIII. taking steps to improve behaviour where it is poor in corridors and open spaces during lunch and break times (22).

Improve provision for the spiritual development of pupils by:

- XXXIX. producing a whole school policy and development plan to ensure that spiritual development is planned into subject planning (63, 64);
- XL. including elements of spirituality in assemblies and providing more opportunities for pupils to reflect on their lives (63, 64).

Improve staffing, accommodation and resources by:

- XLI. implementing the newly planned structure of staffing for September 2000 to ensure that individual staff do not carry an unreasonable number of roles and responsibilities (84, 89, 115);
- XLII. ensuring planned staff development and its monitoring and evaluation meet the requirements of the

new staffing structure (102, 103);

XLIII. ensuring that all departments plan strategically and effectively for staff development, linking individual, departmental and whole-school development priorities (103);

XLIV. ensuring that the building programme is implemented in its entirety to provide adequate accommodation for all subjects (104, 105, 108, 116);

XLV. improving the group sizes and room allocation for some teaching groups to minimise the negative impact on teaching and learning (104);

XLVI. managing resources to ensure sufficient quantity, quality and range across all subject departments; especially in the library (106-108).

· *Statutory requirements*

The governors should:

XLVII. provide a daily act of collective worship for all pupils (87);

XLVIII. ensure the requirements of the agreed syllabus for religious education are met (46, 87);

XLIX. include individual targets for pupils in the annual written reports and report on information technology (80, 87).

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INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. Canon Lee is a mixed 11-16 comprehensive school situated to the north of the city of York. The school draws on a catchment area which combines a social priority area, new private housing and older private housing. The majority of pupils in the school are white. Twelve pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds and six pupils come from homes where English is not the first language.

2. The school is smaller than secondary schools nationally with 639 pupils on roll. The number of pupils entering the school has increased as a result of the planned closure of another local secondary school and considerable new building development in the area. Numbers are set to rise over the next four years to make it average in size. The school is now much larger than at the time of its previous inspection, when there were 474 pupils on roll. Canon Lee is a developing school.

3. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below national averages. The proportion of pupils on the special educational needs register is well above national averages. There are 19 pupils who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs, which is high in relation to the number on roll.

4. The profile of attainment at entry to the school shows a higher proportion of low attaining pupils than in most schools.

5. The school's stated priorities are:

- to raise attainment at GCSE;
- to ensure a smooth transition to the school for the increased numbers;
- to improve building provision;
- to improve provision for pupils with special educational needs; and
- to improve behaviour management.

1. The aims of the school are to:

- strive to enhance the quality of learning;
- provide an outstanding service in order to meet the needs of clients;
- provide a range of educational, cultural and social experience appropriate to age, ability and needs of all pupils;
- maintain consistently high expectations and create opportunities for every pupil to fulfil his/her potential;
- provide resources of the highest quality;
- create and sustain a supportive and challenging learning environment;
- adopt a philosophy of continuous improvement in every aspect of the school;
- maintain the commitment to integrity and responsibility in all relationships, respecting the rights of the individual;
- develop an attitude of respect for the community and for the environment;
- promote confidence and self-esteem; and
- expect young people to continue in education beyond 16 and raise their awareness of the opportunities available to them.

· **Key indicators**

Attainment at Key Stage 3²

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for latest reporting year:	Year 1999	Boys 59	Girls 56	Total 115
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National Curriculum Test		English	Mathematics	Science
Results				
Number of pupils at NC Level 5 or above	Boys	33 (30)	37 (39)	30 (29)
	Girls	41 (18)	35 (19)	29 (14)
	Total	75 (48)	72 (58)	59 (43)
Percentage at NC Level 5 or above	School	65 (48)	63 (58)	51 (43)
	National	63 (65)	62 (60)	55 (56)
Percentage at NC Level 6 or above	School	24 (15)	35 (33)	11 (17)
	National	28 (35)	38 (36)	23 (27)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 5 or above	Boys	21 (32)	31 (33)	39 (38)
	Girls	41 (23)	35 (20)	38 (21)
	Total	62 (55)	66 (53)	77 (59)
Percentage at NC Level 5 or above	School	54 (56)	57 (53)	67 (59)
	National	64 (62)	64 (64)	60 (62)
Percentage at NC Level 6 or above	School	11 (21)	26 (26)	35 (24)
	National	31 (31)	37 (37)	28 (31)

Attainment at Key Stage 4²

Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	45	35	80

GCSE Results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A* to G	1 or more grades A* to G
Number of pupils achieving standard specified	Boys	11 (16)	31 (45)	32 (46)
	Girls	20 (11)	40 (32)	43 (33)
	Total	31 (27)	71 (77)	75 (79)
Percentage achieving standard specified	School	39 (33)	89 (93)	94 (95)
	National	47.8 (46.3)	88.4 (87.9)	93.9 (93.4)

Number studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and percentage of <i>such pupils</i> who achieved all those they studied:	Number	% Success rate
	School	n/a
	National	n/a

.....
 2 Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:			%
	Authorised	School	8.5
	Absence	National comparative data	7.8
	Unauthorised	School	1.27
	Absence	National comparative data	1.1

-
-
-

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:		Number
	Fixed period	60
	Permanent	3

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	56
	Satisfactory or better	90
	Less than satisfactory	10

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and Progress

Key Stage 3 Attainment

1. In the National Curriculum assessments for 14-year-olds in 1999 for the core subjects, English and mathematics results for pupils achieving Level 5 and above were in line with the national average; science results were just below the national average. Results in 1999, as compared to 1998, showed improvement in mathematics and considerable improvement in English and science. Results in 1999 for pupils achieving Level 6 and above in English and mathematics were in line with the national average and in science results were below the national average. The average points scores of pupils in English and in mathematics were in line with national averages; in science the average points score was below the national average. These results, when compared to those of 1998, show a small improvement in mathematics, good improvement in English and a decline in science.

2. The trends over recent years show improvement in English, yet with the girls achieving standards which are lower than the national average to a greater extent than boys, when compared to girls and boys nationally. In mathematics attainment has been close to the national average with boys achieving standards slightly higher than girls which is against the national trend. In science attainment has been below the national average with the same picture as in English of girls achieving standards which are lower than the national average to a greater extent than boys when compared to boys and girls nationally.

3. In comparison with similar schools in 1999, attainment both at Level 5 and above and at Level 6 and above in English and mathematics was in line with the national average; in science attainment was below average for the proportion of pupils attaining Level 5 and above and well below for Level 6 and above. The average points scored by pupils was in line with the national average in English and below the national average in mathematics and science.

4. On the basis of evidence gathered during the inspection attainment towards the end of Key Stage 3 in the core subjects is above expectation in English, in line with expectation in science and in mathematics attainment is below, but close to, national expectation. In most other subjects of the curriculum, pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 is broadly in line with national expectations. In modern foreign languages attainment is above expectation; in geography and religious education attainment is below expectation. The performance of boys and girls at the end of Key Stage 3 in the foundation subjects is not significantly different from the national picture in that girls generally achieve higher standards than the boys. However, in modern languages and history, for example, boys achieve equally as well as girls.

Key Stage 4 Attainment

5. The proportion of pupils gaining five or more GCSE grades A*-C in 1999 was below the national average. These results were also below the national average when compared with similar schools, but in line with the prior attainment of the pupils two years earlier at the end of Key Stage 3. The proportion of pupils gaining five or more pass grades at GCSE was in line with national averages overall, but nearly a third of boys in the year group failed to achieve this standard. The same pattern is evident in the proportion of pupils achieving one or more pass grades at GCSE. When compared to results at Key Stage 3, the results at GCSE of these lower-attaining pupils are below what would normally be expected. The average points score of the pupils overall is in line with the standards they reached at the end of Key Stage 3, but below that achieved in similar schools. This picture covers marked differences between boys and girls, however, with the boys achieving a points score well below the national average for boys and the girls achieving a points score above the national average for girls. Trends over time from 1996 to 1998 show boys achieving an average GCSE points score which was slightly higher than boys nationally and girls achieving an average score which was slightly lower than girls

nationally. The 1999 results have reversed both these trends.

6. Evidence gathered during the inspection from the observation of lessons and the scrutiny of pupils' work shows attainment in the current Year 11 to be at least in line with expectation in all subjects except mathematics, geography and religious education where it is below expectation. The trend over three years in mathematics has been downwards compared to the national trend, which shows results rising. In religious education standards are well below expectation. Attainment is above expectation in English, drama, modern foreign languages, art and music. Attainment in history is well above expectation.

Pupils ' Basic Skills

7. The standards of reading in the school are good. Pupils have opportunities throughout the curriculum to read a variety of texts which make increasing demands as they progress. They read these texts with understanding and are able to appreciate their distinctive forms. Standards of writing are satisfactory at Key Stage 3 and good at Key Stage 4. Most pupils write clearly and accurately in a range of forms. Standards in speaking and listening are good throughout the school, with pupils speaking clearly as the situation demands. In both music and design and technology, for example, pupils are able to talk about their work confidently, using appropriate technical vocabulary. There has been a significant improvement in the use and interpretation of graphical information since the last inspection. Generally, standards of numeracy at Key Stage 3 are in line with national expectations and at Key Stage 4 standards are below, but close to national expectations. The attainment of pupils in information and communication technology skills is in line with expectation at both key stages.

Target-setting

8. The school carries out a sound analysis of results and has set targets for improvement at Key Stage 4 as required. The meetings between heads of department and the headteacher to review examination results help the school to identify specific priorities to raise attainment. Current procedures for analysing results track the results, predictions and targets of year groups as they move through the school and include processes to identify reasons for under-achievement as, for example, in the research study on boys' underachievement. The school's targets are based on ability tests and on the attainment of pupils at Key Stage 3 and are well informed by the local education authority's data analysis project. The school exceeded its target for five or more GCSE grades A*-C in 1999. The targets set for 2000 and 2001 represent a good level of challenge for the school.

Pupils ' Progress

9. In Key Stage 3 pupils make very good progress in music, good progress in English, drama, art and modern foreign languages and satisfactory progress in all their other subjects. In Key Stage 4 pupils make good progress in physical education - for example, the boys in basketball and the girls in trampolining; they make good progress also in history, modern foreign languages, English and art. Pupils make satisfactory progress in nearly all their other subjects, although where provision is well planned, groups of pupils make good progress - for example, pupils following the Certificate of Achievement course in geography. Progress overall is unsatisfactory in mathematics and in religious education.

10. From inspection evidence, pupils' progress is highly influenced by the quality of the teaching, rather than by the level of attainment of the pupils or the overall strength of the department. In modern foreign languages, for example, lower-attaining pupils in one Year 10 class made good progress as a result of the clarity, good organisation and persistence of the teaching, whereas higher-attaining pupils in a different Year 10 class made poor progress in speaking and listening as a result of poor teaching. Unsatisfactory progress in science at Key Stage 4 was due to teaching which was not clear enough and which showed some lack of respect on the part of both the teacher and the taught. In mathematics slow and unsatisfactory progress observed in Key Stage 4 was due in part to pupils working individually at their own pace without sufficient direction from the teacher. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. They make good progress in modern foreign languages, notably in listening and reading, and in design and technology. In one food technology lesson, for example, pupils made good progress in selecting and combining ingredients for a vegetable lasagne. Progress

is closely linked to the quality of the teaching and where specialist learning support is provided progress is frequently good. Examples during the inspection were observed in science, art and in some English lessons. Pupils with special educational needs often make good progress in information technology in Key Stage 3.

School Improvement Action

11. Standards were judged to be sound overall at the time of the school's previous inspection. The school has maintained this position, as standards nationally have risen over the last four years, and in Key Stage 4 improvement has been good. The school has overcome the weakness in mathematics graphical work. Standards in speaking, listening and reading have improved at both key stages and writing skills have improved at Key Stage 4.

12. The school should now:

- raise standards as a matter of urgency in religious education;
- improve the progress which pupils make in mathematics in Key Stage 4;
- raise standards in geography.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

1. Since the last inspection, there has been an increase in the number of fixed-term exclusions at the school and the high standards of behaviour identified in the last inspection report, have not been fully maintained. The challenging circumstances of the school, in terms of the major rebuilding programme and the recent assimilation of pupils from a neighbouring school, have had an impact on relationships within the school, but the school is working hard to foster positive attitudes, relationships and behaviour across the whole school community.

2. The majority of the pupils at the school have positive attitudes, both to the school and to their work in all subjects. A significant minority of pupils have unsatisfactory attitudes to their work and find it difficult to maintain concentration. Where teachers have high expectations, good subject knowledge and maintain good classroom control, pupils respond positively, taking an active interest in their work. For example, pupils enjoy their history lessons, responding well to oral work and taking pride in the presentation of their written work. In modern foreign languages, they pay good attention to detail and take their learning seriously, trying hard to do well. In information technology most pupils are enthusiastic and curious, and willing to use information technology in a number of ways, such as plotting graphs and analysing questionnaires. In both science and geography, pupils respond well when the teaching is lively and challenging. Most pupils maintain concentration during their lessons. For example, in information technology, pupils maintain high levels of concentration and perseverance and in music they concentrate well, particularly when undertaking practical work. Negative attitudes and poor concentration levels are displayed by a minority of pupils across the school, but tend to be shown by lower-attaining pupils. For example, in mathematics and physical education lower-achieving pupils show little interest and do not maintain concentration. In geography, however, a minority of average attaining pupils have poor attitudes to work and a casual approach to achievement, whilst in religious education concentration levels are very low on the Key Stage 4 general course.

3. Pupils develop well their capacity for personal study, when the opportunities are provided. For example, in art good opportunities are provided through sketchbook work, and in music good opportunities are provided through composing, rehearsing and performing. These opportunities are taken advantage of by most pupils and are of benefit to their learning. In design technology pupils develop good personal portfolios as part of their graphics product work. In modern foreign languages pupils complete homework tasks well and make good use of dictionary and reference materials. In English, mathematics, religious education and geography there is, on occasions, insufficient provision for the pupils to develop their capacity for personal study.

4. The behaviour in and around school of the majority of pupils is satisfactory. The behaviour of a significant minority of pupils, particularly at Key Stage 4 and usually but not exclusively boys, is unsatisfactory, however, and is a cause for concern. Behaviour in most lessons is good, and is a direct response to the good role models provided by most teachers. The behaviour of Year 11 pupils in a physical education lesson at the Barbican Fitness Centre in York was excellent. The behaviour of some pupils in some lessons, particularly those taught by supply teachers, is unsatisfactory. For example, poor behaviour was observed in design technology, modern foreign languages and religious education lessons taught by supply teachers, and also in other lessons in science, geography and English. The behaviour of a significant minority of pupils around the school is unsatisfactory, with shouting, running and pushing in the corridors and a lack of consideration for the well-being of other members of the school community. Some of the poor behaviour observed in the corridors and open spaces in the school was not adequately challenged by individual teachers. Most pupils are courteous, both to each other and to their teachers and other adults in the school. A small number of pupils, however, show a lack of respect for teachers and other adults, ignoring reasonable instructions and, in a few cases, being openly rude to the teacher or other adults concerned. There were no examples of untrustworthy behaviour observed during the inspection.

5. Pupils do show respect for property. They usually treat the accommodation, furniture and equipment well and look after materials and equipment with care. In music, for example, unsupervised pupils worked responsibly with expensive equipment. They generally form constructive relationships with each other and with their teachers. There was no evidence of any racist behaviour during the inspection. In music, pupils related well to each other in ensemble and band situations and in history relationships between pupils and their teacher are consistently good, based on encouragement, support, and respect for individuals and humour. Pupils work well together, when given the opportunity. For example, in English pupils work well in pairs and in small group work and show a high degree of collaboration in drama. In music good examples of collaborative work were observed in every lesson, and also in extra-curricular ensemble and band sessions. Pupils also collaborated well in science, art and design technology and information technology. In history, pupils collaborate well when given the opportunity - for example, when categorising opinions about the abolition of slavery - but not enough opportunities of this nature are provided. The same applies to mathematics.

6. Most pupils respect other people's feelings, values and beliefs. In food technology pupils critically appraise each other's work and are prepared to accept the views of others - for example, when evaluating the outcome of cooking lasagne in a Year 10 lesson. In English pupils readily discussed feelings of guilt and remorse in a Year 10 lesson, whilst in music they enthusiastically acknowledge and applaud each other's performances. In graphics products lessons at Key Stage 3 pupils' designs take account of the needs of end users. In religious education a minority of pupils are disrespectful about the needs of others, whilst in science and modern foreign languages a small minority of pupils show poor respect for supply teachers. Pupils took good care of a Year 7 pupil with severe learning difficulties, however, holding open doors and ensuring that she was able to move around the school freely. Most pupils are good at showing initiative and taking responsibility, when given the opportunity. Pupils actively contribute to the decision-making processes of the school through the Student Forum, and Year 11 pupils willingly volunteer for, and execute well, the role of form prefect, building up good relationships with the form group they take responsibility for. Pupils also willingly volunteer to provide support in the running of the school library. In lessons pupils readily accept responsibility. For example, in physical education, a Year 11 boy who has represented his country at soccer, took responsibility for one session, whilst in music one group of pupils took responsibility for setting up and using studio equipment for an extra-curricular session. In art pupils readily undertook their own research and development work, using the Internet and other resources. In information technology pupils were willing to take good initiatives with their work - often independently of the teacher. In some areas pupils do not show initiative or take responsibility. In religious education, for example, this is directly related to the behaviour and attitudes of the pupils, whilst in science it is directly related to the opportunities provided by individual teachers. In geography pupils are over-reliant on teachers' guidance.

7. The school supports a number of charities, and participated recently in the Great North Run, raising funds for a school in Ghana. Pupils are also involved in organising and preparing for a Christmas party for local senior citizens. A group of over 60 pupils are involved in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, which involved community service and the school has good links to the local church youth worker. Links with industry, through Young Enterprise and through work experience opportunities for Year 11 pupils are strong. Pupils

studying art have participated in exhibitions outside of school and have also contributed to stage designs in professional venues within the city. In music the big band has been most successful in involving pupils in rehearsing and performing with members of the wider community.

8.The school is used well in a programme of community education. A number of pupils carry out community service as part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. They help in local residential homes, charity shops and in Riding for the Disabled. Pupils in the school organise a Christmas party for one hundred local senior citizens.

9.Pupils develop well in the moral and social areas, and their cultural development is satisfactory, but spiritual development is patchy. Detail is provided in paragraphs 63-70 of this report, where the school's provision for these aspects is considered.

10.The school should now:

- .improve the level of fixed term exclusions;
- .identify and support the minority of pupils who have unsatisfactory attitudes to their work;
- .ensure pupils show respect towards temporary staff;
- . improve the poor level of behaviour of a significant minority of pupils in and around corridors during break and lunch times.

· **Attendance**

1.Attendance at the school is satisfactory overall with rates just below those achieved nationally. The school has worked hard to improve rates and these have risen from 88.4 per cent in 1996/97 to 90.2 per cent in 1998/99. Rates of unauthorised absence are slightly above the national average.

2.In Key Stage 3 attendance is good. In Key Stage 4 the school has a number of poor attenders, some of whom have recently been admitted to the school. This is having a detrimental effect on attendance rates and the school is working well with the educational social worker to address the problem.

3.School sessions begin promptly and punctuality to lessons is generally good.

31.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

31. **Teaching**

4.The overall quality of teaching in the school is good and meets the needs of most pupils. Teachers are dedicated and committed and work hard in providing the best education for their pupils. Teaching was at least satisfactory or better in 90 per cent of lessons observed. Of that percentage teaching was good in 40 per cent of the lessons, very good in 15 per cent and excellent in one per cent. Teaching in six per cent of the lessons was unsatisfactory and four per cent of the lessons were poor. There were more unsatisfactory and poor lessons observed at Key Stage 4 than at Key Stage 3. At Key Stage 3 93 per cent of lessons were at least satisfactory, 36 per cent were good, 18 per cent were very good and two per cent were excellent. Teaching in four per cent of the lessons was unsatisfactory and poor in two per cent. At Key Stage 4, 86 per cent of the lessons were at least satisfactory, 41 per cent were good, 11 per cent were very good, eight per cent were unsatisfactory and five per cent were poor. Four of this five per cent of poor teaching at Key Stage 4 and one per cent at Key Stage 3 was observed in personal and social education.

5.Good or very good teaching was observed in all year groups, with a quarter of the lessons observed in Years 7 and 9 being very good with two excellent lessons observed in Year 9. A higher proportion of very good lessons was observed at Key Stage 3. There was a higher proportion of less than satisfactory lessons observed in Years

8, 10 and 11.

6.Examples of high quality teaching were seen in most subjects. In Key Stage 3 very good teaching was seen in art, English, music, physical education, design and technology, science, modern foreign languages and mathematics. In Key Stage 4 very good teaching was seen in information technology, science, English, physical education and technology. Good teaching was seen in art, design and technology, English, mathematics, modern foreign languages, music, physical education and science. Unsatisfactory lessons at Key Stage 3 were observed in science, geography and religious education. A minority of poor lessons was observed in English and personal and social education. At Key Stage 4 unsatisfactory lessons were observed in science, mathematics, English and religious education. Poor teaching was observed in modern foreign languages and personal and social education. A high proportion of unsatisfactory and poor teaching was seen in lessons taught by supply teachers.

34. *Strengths of teaching*

7.Most teachers have secure subject knowledge. Most teachers have high expectations of themselves and their pupils and in many lessons the pace was brisk and pupils were engaged well. For example, in mathematics the teacher had a sense of excitement when introducing statistics for the first time to a Year 8 group. In English pupils were introduced to a range of text in lessons that challenged their understanding and in geography pupils were guided towards improving their map skills in Year 7 and given specific objectives to work towards. In modern foreign languages teachers used the language with good pace, rhythm and natural fluency and in history oral and collaborative work was carried out effectively lifting the pace of the lesson.

8.Teachers often used skilful questioning where pupils were given the opportunities to give extended and thoughtful answers. Much of the questioning then built on the responses the pupils gave. For example, in geography the teacher introduced appropriate subject vocabulary from pupils' responses in a Year 10 lesson describing population distribution in the United Kingdom.

9.Schemes of work have improved since the last inspection and now include a good range of activities. Planning of good lessons was thorough, well thought out and included features for the differing abilities of pupils. Homework is used appropriately. Pupils' work was frequently marked and secure assessment helped pupils' progress. Lessons were well managed and organised. Many lessons were well presented and where demonstrations were carried out to show pupils new skills or how to carry out tasks they were very well planned and interesting. Examples of this were seen in art and in design and technology, where teachers used their own work or the work of other pupils to demonstrate quality work, and in information technology where pupils were shown how to use spreadsheets.

10.Resources were used effectively in many lessons and appropriately chosen to make lessons stimulating and interesting. The teachers themselves produced many of the resources and these were often of very good quality – for example, practical aids and displays prepared by teachers in design and technology and high quality sketchbooks used in art.

11.Relationships between pupils and teachers in effective lessons were often very good. Teachers gave very good support and guidance and pupils respected and responded to this help. Positive feedback to pupils helped pupils' progress and they valued this praise.

39. *Weaker features of teaching*

12.The least effective teaching and unsatisfactory teaching at both key stages were often caused by poor lesson planning that did not cater for the abilities of pupils. Consequently many of the pupils made slow progress in their work. These lessons often relied heavily on textbooks and the pupils were not given the opportunity to engage in discussion, research or group work. Often the questions asked of pupils did not give them the opportunity to answer in any detail or provide wider opportunities to encourage debate with other pupils. In some unsatisfactory lessons work was not marked accurately and assessment of pupils' work was poor.

13. Teaching in poor lessons was often caused by poor subject knowledge and poor management and control. Often these lessons were not planned to take account of some of the challenging behaviour of some pupils or what the teacher had planned was not engaging or stimulating enough for pupils. Often the noise level in these lessons was high which caused difficulties of concentration for pupils. Unsatisfactory and poor behaviour management skills were evident in mathematics, science, religious education, modern foreign languages and personal and social education on occasions. Unsatisfactory teaching was a feature of a high proportion of lessons taught by supply teachers, often as a result of poor behaviour management.

14. In personal and social education particularly at Key Stage 4, subject knowledge is poor and the teaching methods are often inappropriate for the topics concerned. These lessons are often unplanned and depend heavily on photocopied sheets from published schemes without thought given to the best way to teach the topic. Often subjects such as drugs education and preparing for interviews require careful planning in order to engage pupils and it was quite clear from observations of lessons that teachers had not been trained to tackle these issues or had not been part of the planning of the personal and social educational programme.

42. *Special Educational Needs*

15. Specialist teachers know their pupils and needs well. This ensures appropriate expectations both in terms of standards and behaviour. The quality of specialist teaching is at least satisfactory and often very good. There are examples of effective planning with subject teachers and specialist teaching to cater for the needs of pupils with special educational needs in English, mathematics, science and art. This is less secure in other subject areas. In other subjects teachers do not prepare for the needs of special educational needs pupils using the pupils' individual education plans and their targets. There are good examples of assessment in English and mathematics and when pupils are withdrawn for additional support. However, this is not consistent across other subject areas. Individual education plans are not reviewed regularly and behavioural targets are insufficiently focused to enable judgements of improvement.

43. *School improvement*

16. In response to the previous inspection report, the school has made progress in mathematics, science, information technology, design and technology, geography, modern foreign languages, music, art, physical education and English. It has not made progress in religious education or in some aspects of history.

17. In order to improve the quality of teaching even further the school should now:

Eliminate unsatisfactory and poor teaching by:

- improving the problems of poor behaviour management of some teachers;
- improving the teaching of personal and social education;
- ensuring that marking and assessment are consistent across all subjects for pupils with special educational needs and ensuring that the individual education plans are reviewed more regularly and that all teachers plan the targets into their planning to ensure the needs of these pupils are catered for.

• **The curriculum and assessment**

1. The curriculum is generally broad, balanced and relevant at Key Stage 3, reflecting the school's aims. The statutory requirements are met in all National Curriculum subjects, and the school follows the agreed syllabus for religious education. The planned curriculum for information technology meets statutory requirements, but a number of subjects do not yet fully develop pupils' capabilities in ICT. The curriculum at Key Stage 4 is balanced, but not extensive, and there are some limitations in provision. The agreed syllabus for religious education is not fully implemented for all pupils. Religious education is statutory for all at Key Stage 4, but pupils currently receive no accreditation for following the course, and there is still insufficient time allocated to religious education at Key Stage 4 to ensure that the complete syllabus requirements are covered adequately.

2.The total time available for teaching is 25 hours per week, which conforms to the national recommendations. In addition to the subjects required by law, the school makes a commitment to drama, business studies, NVQ construction and statistics at Key Stage 4.

47. *Key Stage 3 curriculum*

3.The curriculum is organised appropriately at Key Stage 3. Pupils in Year 7 are placed in broad ability bands for mathematics and are taught in mixed ability form groups for most other subjects. In subjects where specific equipment and practical resources are used extensively, pupils are taught in small groups. In the Year 7 curriculum these subjects are art, music, food technology, design technology and information technology. Pupils in Year 8 and 9 are grouped by prior attainment in English, mathematics, science, history and geography. The groups are then arranged into ability sets for modern foreign languages. All other subjects are taught in mixed ability groupings.

4.The curriculum at Key Stage 3 offers pupils a wide and varied range of activities. Provision for the creative arts is a particular strength of the school. The art curriculum provides pupils with extensive opportunities for success, particularly in three-dimensional work; music offers all pupils the opportunity to compose and perform to a high standard, and drama provision enables pupils to explore their capacity for expression. The physical education curriculum provides a range of sporting opportunities for pupils and provision for modern foreign languages is a notable strength with all pupils having the opportunity to study a second modern foreign language from Year 8. There is some imbalance between the time allocated to design technology and to food technology, but the school is taking steps to remedy this so that pupils receive their entitlement. The curriculum for ICT is satisfactory overall, but is inconsistently applied across the curriculum. Pupils' use of ICT is currently restricted in several subject areas including modern languages, geography, science, mathematics and history.

49. *Key Stage 4 curriculum*

5.Curriculum provision in Key Stage 4 combines the legal requirements with a degree of choice appropriate to most pupils of this age. Whilst ensuring that all pupils study a broadly appropriate core of subjects, the curriculum is nevertheless restricted in scope, and does not meet the learning needs of some pupils. There are currently too few opportunities for some pupils to have access to a range of alternative forms of accreditation. The school is considering increasing the availability of alternative forms of accreditation to GCSE, in order to improve access for more pupils from a broader ability range. In geography, in English and in design and technology the Certificate of Achievement is offered, and this helps lower-attaining pupils to gain access to a wider range of opportunities once they leave school. The music department offers good opportunities both within the classroom and through extra-curricular activities. As well as a range of groups and bands in which players of higher ability perform, the department operates an 'open-access' policy which enables pupils with a wide range of performing abilities to play together from materials which are specifically designed for individuals. In addition the school offers appropriate courses leading to NVQ in construction which is taught off-site by the local college and a college course in life skills. The school also offers the single science course to some students, but this still does not fully meet the needs of many lower-attaining pupils.

Personal and careers education

6.Clear policies and guidelines are in place for personal and social education and for drugs and sex education, but overall the curriculum provision for these aspects in both key stages is poor. Pupils generally work through materials which are drawn from published sources and collated into booklets for each year group. Lesson content is often unimaginative and unchallenging and the use of tutors for teaching the personal and social education curriculum and the careers component is unsatisfactory.

7.Careers education is a planned component of the curriculum from Year 7 to Year 11, and is taught through the tutorial programme, with the main part of the programme occurring in Year 9. The school receives very good support and advice from the careers service, but the materials and provision available in school are poor.

52. *Equality of access to the curriculum*

8.The school seeks to provide its pupils with equality of access and opportunity and arrangements have improved since the last inspection.

9.In many subject areas pupils have good opportunities for gaining access to all aspects of their curriculum entitlement, as well as to an extended range of activities. In history, however, pupils have access to only one lesson per week in Year 8, and this has a negative impact on their learning. Some groupings of pupils are also adversely affecting their ability to take advantage of the full curriculum. In physical education, for example, standards are affected by the large groupings for soccer in Year 9; a gender imbalance in the lower history sets in Years 9 and 10 adversely affects standards of attainment; and in music a large Year 11 group with a high proportion of boys has a negative effect on some pupils' ability to access and gain from the curriculum opportunities on offer.

10.Curriculum provision for those pupils who have special educational needs is generally satisfactory and sometimes good, particularly where there is appropriate support for pupils. In some subject areas such as art and music, pupils with special needs are well catered for by teachers who adjust their teaching styles and approaches sensitively and appropriately, and as a consequence there is no negative impact on the quality of education for these pupils. Individual education plans are prepared for pupils on stage 3 and above of the code of practice, but they generally lack subject-specific targets for learning. Individual education plans are not universally used, referred to or regularly reviewed, but examples of some good quality teaching made up for a lack of specific planning in modern foreign languages and examples of high quality support for children with special needs were observed in ICT and modern foreign languages, for example, and in English, some good literacy-related targets for pupil have had a positive impact on attainment.

55. *Promoting progress*

56. Links with local primary schools are improving since the last inspection. The school offers a good range of activities designed to ease transfer from primary to secondary school, and to smooth learning transitions across the key stages. Within the school, planning for logical coverage and careful steps in learning is mostly good in both key stages. In art, for example, the curriculum is planned to allow pupils to build upon and develop their skills and knowledge effectively, whilst careful resource and planning decisions in the modern foreign languages department ensure that pupils can make good progress and can build upon their previous experiences. Science in Key Stage 3 offers good opportunities through the school's adaptation of 'spotlight science' and in mathematics, ICT and design technology the provision for pupils to make good progress is well developed.

56. *Assessment*

11. The school has a brief but clear assessment policy. Information on pupils' attainment and progress is held centrally, and assessment priorities defined in the school development plan are transferred to departmental development plans. The school has introduced a good system of assessments, and these are reported to parents. Systems for assessing pupils' work are good in art, where pupils are involved in evaluating their own work, and in setting themselves targets for improvement. Rigorous and accurate assessment takes place in design and technology, and in mathematics good assessment results in useful records which are then used to modify the teaching programme. Geography operates a well-planned three-year cycle of modular assessments and science makes good use of the tests at the end of units of study. The modern foreign languages department has good arrangements for carrying out statutory teacher assessment at the end of Key Stage 3 with useful portfolios of pupils' work to demonstrate levels of attainment and progress.

12. The day-to-day procedures for the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress are generally well developed in most departments and regular frequent assessment is sometimes used to good effect in order to guide future curriculum planning. In art, for example, teachers use a portfolio of evidence to help shape their future planning. Good review systems are in place in modern foreign languages, and these ensure that information obtained from assessments is used effectively as a means of improving curriculum planning. In English teachers use a monitoring system where pupils receive an allocation of personal time with their teacher, in order to review their progress and to set further goals for improvement. In history, however, assessment is not yet used effectively to inform and alter curriculum planning where necessary.

13. An analysis of external examination results is carried out at departmental and whole-school level, with a view to informing future curriculum plans, and the school has begun the process of setting targets for improving pupils' attainment.

59. *Extra-curricular aspects*

14. The quality of the wide range of extra-curricular opportunities offered to pupils across a variety of subjects, interests and activities is very good. Activities week supplements the curriculum well in the summer term. The school enjoys numerous significant successes through the quality of its extra-curricular provision. In music, for example, the department provides instrumental tuition for over 80 pupils and in addition runs choirs, bands and many other types of ensemble. The Big Band tours regularly in Europe, and provides pupils with the opportunity to perform to the very highest standard. Band members present themselves in a polished, professional manner, providing excellent role models. Good opportunities exist for pupils with an interest in drama - for example, in the City of York. Many pupils take part in the wide range of sporting activities on offer. There have been excellent results in cross-country, soccer and athletics, for example, and one pupil plays football for the England under-15 team. Some pupils have recently taken part in the national orienteering championships and others take up the opportunity of becoming involved in the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme. Various subjects offer lunchtime and after school clubs, and in science, pupils have visited Eureka and an exhibition held locally in York. Pupils have the opportunity to visit France and Germany with the modern foreign languages department and in art the department is building very good business and industry links. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to extra-curricular opportunities.

15.Improvements since the last inspection:

- the school has continued to improve provision overall, except for provision in personal and social education, information technology across the curriculum and religious education;
- assessment of pupils' work has significantly improved since the last inspection.

1.The school should now:

- improve the quality of provision for pupils' personal and social education, and investigate a more suitable means of effectively covering this aspect of the curriculum;
- provide more courses that offer pupils access to alternative forms of accreditation; and
- improve the integration of ICT across all subject areas.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

63. The school's provision for the moral and social development of its pupils is good. Provision for their cultural development is satisfactory overall, and provision for their spiritual development is unsatisfactory. The school has made some progress in aspects of its moral, social and cultural provision since the last inspection, but has made little improvement in spiritual development.

1.The school's provision for pupils' spiritual development is unsatisfactory. There is no whole school policy or plan, nor any monitoring of provision for pupils' spiritual development, with the result that provision, where it occurs, is of variable quality. The school's assembly programme does not satisfy statutory requirements for a daily act of broadly Christian worship. Assemblies have a strong moral flavour, and are used to establish clear standards of behaviour, but they do not contain enough opportunities for pupils to engage in quiet reflection and contemplation, nor in active participation. The thought for the day, which should be a feature of all registration sessions, is at times very well managed - for example, in three Year 11 groups discussing issues of aggression in school and in society - but is not always delivered, and when it occurs, does not always have a clear spiritual or moral message. Within lessons, provision for pupils' spiritual development is good in religious education. For example, Year 7 pupils shared life stories before tackling sacred texts and Year 8 pupils reflected on their own mortality in the game of life. Spiritual issues of heaven and hell are addressed in drama and one Year 9 music lesson addressed spiritual issues well. In all other subject areas, and within PSE, provision for pupils' spiritual development was either underdeveloped or not considered.

2.The school's provision for pupils' moral development is good. Across all subjects, teachers provide good role models in terms of their behaviour. They promote positive behaviour and attitudes and consistently provide a clear model through the school's code of conduct, to help the pupils understand the difference between right and wrong. They actively consider important moral issues in a number of areas. For example, in science, Year 10 pupils discuss the pros and cons of human cloning and the human genome project, whilst in both design and technology and information technology, pupils consider the moral dilemmas of technological activity and its impact on the environment and society. In English Year 10 pupils consider the emotive use of language in charity appeals, whilst in religious education, pupils consider such moral issues as crime and punishment, and family life. Moral issues are covered through personal and social education lessons and also through school assemblies and in some registration periods.

3.The school's provision for pupils' social development is good overall. Although a few pupils step out of line, the vast majority conform constructively with the school's measures for the harmonious social life of the school community. The school provides some good opportunities for pupils to work together and relate to one another, but there are some areas of the school where this could be further developed. In music excellent opportunities are provided through the school band and through ensemble practice and performance. In physical education good opportunities are provided for co-operative work through soccer, netball, hockey and volleyball, as well as good opportunities for partnership work in Year 7 gymnastics lessons. In English extensive use is made of small group work, whilst in information technology many opportunities are provided for pupils to work together, and this leads to good pupil to pupil interaction. In modern foreign languages, the department is undertaking a pilot study aimed at increasing boy/girl interaction. In geography there are too few opportunities provided for collaboration, particularly where pupils bring relatively poor learning and social skills to the classroom. The school's provision for pupils' social development is significantly enhanced by the broad

programme of extra-curricular activities which is on offer. These activities are delivered well by a large number of staff and are well supported by the pupils.

4.The school provides some good opportunities for the pupils to take responsibility, participate in the community, and develop an understanding of citizenship. The design and technology department has been involved in designing a car for the Mileage Marathon and has established productive links with local and national companies. This has led to the development of relevant real world design technology projects. Within the school, good opportunities are provided for pupils to become involved in the life of the school as form representatives on the student forum and as Year 11 form prefects. The student forum meets regularly, and elected representatives take their peers' views to the forum and report back providing a practical demonstration of the workings of a democratic institution.

5.The school's provision of opportunities for pupils to develop an appreciation of their own cultural traditions is satisfactory overall. In history good opportunities are provided through Year 7 project work on Roman and medieval York and through Year 9 work around Eden Camp, and in geography, a teacher skilfully handled the conflict of interest between hill farmers in Snowdonia and visitors to the National Park. Visits to local theatres are arranged. However, provision in other subjects is too limited.

6.The school's provision of opportunities for pupils to develop an appreciation of the diversity and richness of other cultures has improved since the last inspection report, and is satisfactory overall with some areas of strength and some areas of weakness. In modern foreign languages both the teaching in lessons and further opportunities through exchange visits to Europe reinforce the connection between the foreign languages and the people who speak them. In art, the curriculum is very well structured to provide opportunities for the pupils to consider work from Africa, Aboriginal, Oriental and a range of art from ancient cultures, as well as making extensive use of art from the western European and modern American traditions. In personal and social education pupils were led very well to reflect on social violence in East Timor in a way which clearly broadened their horizons. In music good opportunities are provided through the wide ranging cultural repertoire used with the big band and in some lessons. In some other subjects, there is little reference to multi-cultural provision within schemes of work and little was seen during the inspection. For example, in religious education other religions are studied but there is little exposure to or exploration of other cultures.

7.The school should:

- .develop policy and provision for pupils' spiritual development;
- .improve the quality and range of opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions.

• **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

1.The school provides strong pastoral support for pupils with good systems in place to ensure that pupils know who to approach when they have personal problems or difficulties with their work. Heads of year have a pivotal role in the support and guidance of pupils. Personal development is well monitored through close contact with form tutors. Staff know pupils well and relationships are good. For pupils with special educational needs, there is a lack of specific targets in their individual education plans which leads to difficulties in the monitoring of their personal development.

2.There are clear procedures in place to monitor the behaviour of pupils. The ten weekly assessment sheets which are sent to parents include grades for behaviour as well as academic achievement. Detentions, isolation and exclusions are well documented and the school has good contact with the behavioural support teacher who visits the school weekly. There are procedures in place to deal with instances of bullying and this is not felt to be a problem. However measures undertaken to maintain discipline are not wholly effective and there is a significant minority of pupils who do not respond to the discipline policy. A considerable number of pupils in the school are on the special needs register for behavioural difficulties. Support in the classroom for these pupils is limited and this has a negative effect on their attainment and sometimes that of other pupils.

3.The school monitors attendance well. The attendance officer liaises effectively with form tutors and with the

educational social worker to promote good attendance. Administrative staff provide good support and telephone calls are made to parents when pupils are absent without explanation. Registers are carefully and accurately completed.

4. Pupils' academic progress is monitored well through the assessment sheets with grades for attainment, behaviour and homework. These grades are collated by heads of year, action taken if there are causes for concern and targets for improvement set – for example, individual consultations take place with pupils in Years 9, 10 and 11. This process is particularly effective with under-achieving pupils. In some subject areas additional assessment procedures are used to support pupils' progress. Parents are involved in and appreciate this monitoring. The school operates an effective system for rewards and merits.

5. The school has due regard for the health and safety of pupils and has made improvements since the last inspection. Procedures are well documented and the school has staff suitably trained in the application of first aid. Specialist advice has been sought concerning health and safety aspects of the current building project. The school nurse provides a weekly 'drop-in' clinic which is well used by pupils. This provides pupils with good opportunities to share personal concerns and problems in confidence. The school complies with regulations in matters of child protection.

6. The quality of guidance for option choices is generally good. Advice is given to pupils on their choices in Year 9 and post 16. Pupils are encouraged to continue their education through individual interviews and action plans. A high percentage of pupils continue their education on leaving the school. A good monitoring scheme for pupils is in place with senior staff and voluntary mentors from local business and industry. The school has good contact with the local college and with the careers advice service.

7. Overall the school's pastoral system provides good support for pupils which has a positive effect on their learning.

77. Partnership with parents and the community

8. The school provides good opportunities for parents to be involved in the education of their children. Parents are made to feel welcome in school and regard staff as approachable and helpful. The school has continued to maintain effective partnerships with the parents, and the community. The parents' association centres its support around the school and is beginning to make good contributions in terms of developing parents' interest in the curriculum.

9. Parental attendance at school meetings is not high, but the school compensates for this by providing detailed information on school issues. General day-to-day information is good with regular newsletters. Parents are contacted by telephone, if necessary, and individual letters sent both to inform parents about achievements and concerning any problems.

10. The school provides helpful assessments to inform parents about their children's attainment, homework and behaviour. Parents appreciate these. Although annual written reports give useful information about the work undertaken by pupils and their attitudes, few contain information on strengths, weaknesses and targets for improvement. The school does not report on information technology in Years 8 to 11 and therefore does not comply with statutory requirements. Religious education reports do not contain end of key stage statements which would be useful to parents.

11. The school works hard to involve the parents of pupils with special needs in annual reviews but with limited success.

12. Through its education/industry group, for example, the school has been very successful in establishing a good network of community and business links which have a beneficial effect on pupils' learning. They work closely with Young Enterprise and with the North Yorkshire Business Education Partnership who provide valuable assistance in curriculum areas and in the mentoring programme for some Year 11 pupils. During

Industry Day local employers conduct mock interviews. A recent Media Day for Year 10 pupils was well supported by journalists and local radio personnel. The school is particularly well supported by local and national businesses who have provided long-standing assistance.

13. The school enjoys good relationships with local schools and colleges and some Year 11 pupils attend York College for tuition in National Vocational Qualification life skills.

83. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

83. Leadership and management

14.The school is well led and managed. The school has improved its leadership and management through a period of significant changes since the last inspection. These changes have been the result of reorganisation of secondary education in York. The school is now in the process of expanding due to the closure of a nearby school. The new senior management has been instrumental in planning for these changes. The school is now in a position under the temporary one-year management structure and the management system planned for the future to develop and make improvements to cope with the challenges of school expansion. There are aspects facing the school that require extensive work, in particular strategic planning. The current management of the school is well able to carry out these requirements successfully and will be in an even stronger position when the new structure is in place in September 2000. The headteacher, senior management team and the governors have a very clear vision for the future of the school. This vision has been shared with parents, pupils, staff and the community.

15.The school ethos has a clear commitment to improving pupils' achievement, and endeavours to provide a caring and supportive learning environment where pupils can achieve. This is recognised in the school's mission statement. Generally there are good relationships and equality of opportunities for all.

85. *Governors*

16.The governing body has restructured its roles and responsibilities to take account of the changes and governors are taking these responsibilities seriously to support the school. As a governing body to the school they are developing well and show a strong commitment to improving the school and raising standards. The governors are very keen to develop strong partnerships with the community. They have worked well with the school to prepare for new intakes of pupils, the appointment of new staff, the re-organisation of staff responsibilities and the preparation for a huge building programme. All governors are attached to a curriculum area and when possible attend departmental meetings. Working relationships between staff and governors are good. The Chair of Governors shows good commitment to the school and endeavours to support the headteacher, acting as a critical friend and sharing the vision for the school. However, the governing body has yet to become fully involved in evaluating the impact of changes and outcomes of their decisions or spending in terms of improvement of standards.

17.Governors take their legal responsibilities seriously and most statutory requirements are met except: in the implementation for a daily act of collective worship; in the inclusion of targets for improvement in annual written reports of pupils' progress; in reporting information technology; and in implementing the agreed syllabus for religious education at Key Stage 4.

87. *Senior management*

18.The headteacher provides very effective leadership. During his short time in post he has worked diligently and conscientiously to plan for the expansion. He has managed to involve both staff and governors in preparation and has very secure and well thought out strategies in place to manage the changes. Areas of sensitivity, such as reorganisation of staffing responsibilities, are being carefully pursued with all the people involved to ensure a smooth transition and an appropriate structure is adopted to serve the needs of the school. The induction of new pupils into the school has been given a lot of thought in Year 7 and in Year 10 although there are still some problems for the school in Year 10 linked with behaviour and attendance. Strategies to regularly monitor pupils' progress are good as is the work that the headteacher has been carrying out in the school to improve the attainment of boys. The headteacher has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and has planned procedures to tackle these weaknesses - for example, the review of discipline and behaviour and the management of special educational needs. He leads by example, providing a clear direction for improvement and works hard to achieve a consensus for the aims and vision for the school.

19.The headteacher is well complemented by the newly appointed deputy headteacher who provides good support and has some key ideas to improve the work of the school. Other senior managers have worked well with the headteacher to identify major areas needing improvement and change. However, their roles and responsibilities are too extensive in the school with two senior managers leading departments as well as carrying out their management roles. This situation will change in the new structure in September 2000.

20.The management and leadership of special educational needs provision are unsatisfactory. This is because the special educational needs co-ordinator carries too many other roles and responsibilities in the school and consequently cannot manage the requirements of special educational needs. There are some areas of good practice being developed for special needs such as the working group and the commitment shown to special educational needs from the staff and the governors. However, the individual education plans are not shared widely with staff to support their curriculum planning for these pupils and neither are they regularly reviewed with departments to track the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Support staff supporting pupils with special educational needs are good but their deployment across the curriculum areas is varied. The school has limited control on the funding of special needs and consequently the provision is not used to good effect to get the maximum support for these pupils. The school has recognised the management problems and the impact they are having. It has also recognised that special educational needs does require further development to take account of the additional numbers of pupils with special educational needs coming into the school. These issues are firmly addressed in the school development plan.

90. *Middle management*

21.The quality of middle management in the school is mixed. Some heads of departments carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively. The leadership and management in modern foreign languages, art, design and technology, information technology, mathematics, history and English are good. In science management is satisfactory with some good features, such as monitoring and evaluation of pupils' work and the work of the department. Music is managed and led satisfactorily. However, the teacher is very new to the school and has carried out a departmental review to identify key areas for development. The instrumental staff are also effectively managed. Religious education and geography are not well led and management is unsatisfactory. In the case of religious education the head of department carries too many responsibilities and therefore does not have the time to carry out the monitoring of the department. In geography there is no systematic monitoring of the department. The humanities faculty is not well managed. Subjects within humanities do not plan together, there is no consistent overview of the work of the faculty and there are no clear aims and objectives or purpose aligned to the faculty structure. The management of personal and social education is poor. The programme delivered by the form tutors does not identify teaching styles and strategies for the appropriate teaching of the content. Staff have not been trained to teach the materials and there is inconsistency in the quality of provision across year groups. There is no monitoring of the quality and effectiveness of the programme. However, the management of wider pastoral support for pupils, notably the work of heads of year, is a strength of the school.

91. *Planning and other aspects*

22.The school development plan is appropriate and relevant and identifies the personnel to carry out the priorities for the future. It clearly identifies action to be taken with time scales and who is going to monitor and evaluate the progress to achieve the success criteria formulated. It also recognises the resources needed to carry out the priorities. However, the resources, particularly financial implications are vague and not fully worked out. Development planning across departments is satisfactory but these plans do not identify targets in sufficient detail or plan the strategies to achieve the priorities set. Planning over the longer term is good. The school has worked diligently in putting interim plans and longer-term plans and structures in place to prepare for the expansion. Strategic plans include new staffing structures, curriculum structures, pastoral structures and building programmes to take account of the greater numbers of pupils coming to the school in the next two years.

23.The process of monitoring teaching by the senior management has started but as yet it is not fully implemented, mainly due to the significant reorganisation that has taken place. Some departments however, carry out effective monitoring of teaching - for example, modern foreign languages, physical education and design and technology. However, other departments are in the very early stages of monitoring and this is an

area that is underdeveloped. Monitoring across departments on the progress of pupils' work on a ten-weekly cycle is working well and departments are carrying out this aspect of monitoring effectively.

24.The school has a well-developed system of administration and communications. There is a very competent team of administrators and clerical assistants. Members of the team support each other and all have very clear roles and responsibilities. Members of this team provide a welcoming reception to the school and also provide a knowledgeable and helpful focal point for parents and visitors to the school. Finance and resources are very well administered.

25.Clearly the school has many weaknesses that urgently call for attention from governors and senior management. The priorities are listed below and should be considered alongside the importance of reducing the significant minority of poorly taught lessons. The signs that all these matters can and will be put in hand are evident.

26.In order to improve further the management of the school, governors, headteacher and staff should carry through the school development plan targets:

- develop further monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school and the impact of change and the quality of provision at all levels including governors and heads of subject;
- improve departmental development planning;
- improve the unsatisfactory management of geography, religious education, humanities and special educational needs;
- review the management and procedures for the delivery of personal and social education;
- follow through the plans to improve the management structure by reorganising roles and responsibilities.

1.Governors must ensure that statutory requirements are met for:

- a daily act of collective worship for all;
- the inclusion of targets in annual written reports of pupils' progress and the relevant details for IT in these reports;
- implementation of the agreed syllabus for religious education at Key Stage 4.

· **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

1.The school is staffed by 34 full-time and five part-time teachers who have the appropriate qualifications and experience for the effective teaching of the National Curriculum and Key Stage 4 courses. This is an improvement since the last report when the teaching of mathematics was carried out by a relatively high number of non-specialists. In the small number of cases where non-specialist teachers are used, pupils continue to make good progress and their attainment is not adversely affected. However, when supply teachers are used to cover staff absence, this has a negative impact on pupils' learning. Eleven support teachers who are appropriately experienced and qualified work in the school for a total of 201 hours a week. In art, for example, support staff were fully conversant with the lesson requirements and worked well with the class teacher. In some subjects, for example music and history, there is no in-class support for some pupils with special educational needs.

2.The school values the work of others involved in teaching, learning or counselling, all of whom contribute effectively to the development of a positive ethos in the school. Five peripatetic music teachers' work with individuals and groups of pupils, and the school nurse makes a particularly effective contribution to pupils' learning in personal and social education.

3.The librarian makes an effective contribution to the school's provision by ensuring that the library and its limited resources are well managed. Effective use of the library as a learning resource is enhanced by planned sessions for all Year 7 and Year 10 pupils and by links with the City Central Library. This is an improvement since the last report. The school's technical staff provide support which has a very positive impact on the quality of education provided across the school, particularly in science and information technology. A full-time

ICT technician has been appointed to facilitate independent learning opportunities for pupils to meet the recommendations of the last report. Good subject knowledge and demonstration and instructive skills contribute to the effective support provided. However, the lack of full-time technical support in all areas of design and technology has a negative impact on standards. The school's strategic planning clearly includes future provision for such support. Clerical staff are efficient and effective and make a positive contribution to the ethos of the school in their dealings with pupils, parents and the outside community.

4. The arrangements for the induction of new staff and the development of newly qualified teachers are good, and enable these colleagues to settle into their roles quickly. The policy for newly qualified teachers (NQTs) meets statutory requirements, and induction, support and monitoring are good at departmental, school and local authority levels.

5. There is now a clear staff development policy in place for 1999-2000 with clear aims, principles, priorities and procedures. However, evidence from the inspection indicates that staff development since the last report has not been well planned or widely undertaken across the school. In physical education, for example, professional developments are satisfactory but few opportunities are available for external courses for staff to update their skills in curriculum areas. The department has responded to the previous inspection recommendations with regard to updating physical education skills in summer activities. When individual staff have undertaken professional development, learning has not always been shared across the staff within subject departments. There has been little generic training for middle managers in the school. Planning at departmental level for staff development lacks detail and costing, and should be developed to include detailed longer-term planning linked to departmental and whole school priorities with the impact evaluated. Support teachers for pupils with special educational needs are local education authority (LEA) based and there is little opportunity for joint planning and professional development, which creates barriers to improvement.

6. The planned staffing structure for September 2000 carries significant implications for staff training in generic and subject specific areas. Since the last inspection report, staff appraisal within the school has become less rigorous. A new cycle of appraisal and professional review was instituted in September 1999. This will include all teaching and non-teaching staff, and will allow for identification of personal professional development needs as well as those linked to targets from whole school and departmental development plans. It is too early to judge the impact of these procedures.

103. *Accommodation*

7. Accommodation is barely adequate. The ten temporary classrooms have been provided since September 1999 to accommodate increased pupil numbers. Where these are used for language teaching, acoustics are very poor and have a negative impact on pupils' learning. Their use also limits effective teaching in English in that their position inhibits easy access to other colleagues and other resource bases. Some teaching rooms in the old buildings are inadequate in terms of furniture and fittings. The accommodation for art is barely adequate, with work surfaces in need of renewal and inappropriate seating, and the science laboratories are old and do not naturally provide an attractive learning environment. Lessons observed in other rooms - for example, geography, mathematics and history - were overcrowded, restricting the teacher's ability to group pupils and therefore limiting the range of teaching and learning strategies available. Some departments such as design and technology, music and geography have inadequate numbers of specialist teaching rooms so that food technology is taught in an art room, textiles in a temporary classroom and music in a languages room. The school makes use of drama as an aid to learning in English and there are also GCSE drama lessons, but there are no specialist facilities. This has a negative impact on the quality of provision. Where classrooms are grouped together in departments such as history and art this has a positive impact on the quality of education by allowing for the creation of a distinctive departmental culture and ethos and for the ready exchange of resources and support for colleagues. In some departments, however, such as religious education, classrooms are some distance apart, limiting the quality of provision. Provision for physical education is unsatisfactory, as the school has insufficient accommodation and resources to offer pupils the full range of National Curriculum expectations. The school compensates by using sports facilities in York.

8. Governors are well aware of the current inadequacy of accommodation and have worked hard to secure a planned £4 million building programme to be completed in September 2000. This will include a new three-

storey teaching block and a new sports hall. Parts of the existing buildings will be refurbished. The targeted completion of this building programme is essential if adequate provision is to be made for the accommodation of increased numbers of pupils.

105. *Resources*

9. Most departments make good use of their limited funds for resources by ensuring that there are appropriate materials and books available. There are still some departments which do not have the quantity, quality or range of resources required to fully meet the needs of the curriculum - for example, history, mathematics, religious education, physical education and geography. The financial resources made available for art are only adequate because of the ingenuity shown by staff in utilising waste materials. In science, experimental resources are just adequate. Recent investment in this subject has resulted in good quality and sufficient texts at both key stages. Some listening equipment used in the modern foreign languages department is inadequate for classroom use. Language learning is, however, well supported by ready access for pupils to authentic language resources in tourist maps and brochures in some lessons.

10. The information technology resources currently in the school are unsatisfactory and variable across departments. There are clear and costed plans to improve provision through National Grid for Learning (NGfL) in the immediate future. Network upgrades are to take place very soon. New computers have been purchased ahead of targets and there are good plans in place for their effective use in ICT. However, departmental resources in terms of subject-specific software are poor and departmental planning for the use of ICT hardware and software lacks detail in terms of costing and staff training. Music, though, has good ICT provision, with good plans for extending it further.

11. The library is under-resourced and inadequate for a school of this size. There is seating for only 30 pupils. Limited financial resources have been well managed, but current stock is inadequate. There are insufficient books to support independent study. The range of fiction and non-fiction books is limited. The amount of library resources for some subjects at GCSE - for example physical education, religious education, science, geography - is poor. Further texts are necessary to contribute to the raising of standards. There has been some increase in the number of resources which reflect a multi-cultural and multi-racial society. This is an improvement since the last report. There are clear plans for the library's development in the new building programme in terms of providing accommodation. Plans for resourcing the library to an adequate standard in terms of quantity, quality and range of resources have yet to be finalised.

12. General cleanliness of the school is satisfactory overall although there is some concern regarding litter on the playing field and on the sides of the netball courts. The decorative condition of the school varies from satisfactory to poor. Departments work hard to enhance classrooms and corridors with high quality displays of pupils' work and published resources. Modern languages rooms have good quality displays which clearly value pupils' work and provide interest - for example, a clothes-line with labeled clothing. In science, staff have improved accommodation by using stimulus material and pupil display. History displays of photographs supporting local history and a History in the News board attract pupils' interest and comment. The accommodation throughout the school is significantly enhanced by the high quality displays of pupils' artwork.

13. The school makes limited use of outside resources. Good use is made by the physical education department of the Barbican Leisure Centre in York to extend the curriculum for Year 11 pupils. In religious education, however, visits are limited to the local church, and visitors invited into school to enhance the curriculum are all Christian. Geography and history make only limited use of the local environment.

14. Since the last report, when accommodation was judged to be appropriate and adequate, and the overall standard very good, the adequacy of accommodation has deteriorated because of the period of uncertainty through which the school has just passed and the increase in numbers of pupils from September 1999. However, the school is now in a good position to further develop and improve in areas of accommodation and staffing.

15. The school should now:

- implement the new planned structure of staffing for September 2000 to ensure that individual staff do not carry an unreasonable multiplicity of roles and responsibilities;
- ensure planned staff development and its monitoring and evaluation meet the requirements of the new staffing structure;
- ensure that all departments plan strategically and effectively for staff development, linking individual, departmental and whole-school development priorities;
- ensure that the building programme is implemented in its entirety to provide adequate accommodation for all subjects;
- implement plans for the group sizes and room allocations for some teaching groups to minimise the negative impact on teaching and learning;
- improve the quantity, quality and range of resources across all subject departments and the library.

The efficiency

of the school

1. At the time of its last inspection, the school was seen to manage its budget wisely, with clear financial policy statements, monitoring and value for money considerations. Most of the school's priorities were accurately costed through the school development plan. Not all department development plans gave precise details of the costs of their priorities, however. The deployment of staff was efficient and the administration of finances was seen as very efficient. The current financial management of the school continues to reflect these same strengths and areas for development.

2. Educational developments are supported effectively through good financial planning. The school makes good use of the financial experience and expertise of the governing body. It has planned well, through a two-year period of considerable uncertainty, for a £4 million building programme to cater for the expansion in pupil numbers. Longer-term financial planning shows good levels of concern for care and quality in provision, in line with the aims of the school. The budget is set in line with the priorities of the school and is used well - for example, to support the induction of pupils new to the school both in Year 7 and Year 10 and to meet the resource needs of the higher number of pupils on roll. The budget also supports developments well at departmental level and there are examples of good financial awareness and decision-making in design and technology, information technology and modern foreign languages. Policies and procedures in English are a further good example of a department promoting efficiency in resource management. The management of mathematics provides too little awareness of efficiency issues, however.

3. The deployment of staff is generally good. Teacher time is used effectively in modern foreign languages and music. The information technology technician is deployed very effectively. Nevertheless a number of issues emerged from the inspection. The allocation of responsibilities to many middle managers results in an unacceptable and often inefficient workload for some staff. The use of non-specialist teachers in English has a negative impact on the progress of the pupils. The lack of technician support in design and technology means that teachers have to spend too much of their time in preparing materials and in managing the facilities.

4. Accommodation is inadequate in many respects and planning for much-needed improvements is in place. Within the current limitations, teaching areas are well used and the school makes efficient use of the accommodation available. Modern foreign languages is a good example, where quality and standards are high despite temporary accommodation with poor acoustics and soundproofing. In drama, limited space is used efficiently, but the attainment and progress of pupils are impaired by the restricted access. Financial decisions attend to best value in some instances – for example, in the glazing contract to repair any damage - but the costs of cleaning, in comparison to other schools, are high and standards of cleanliness, though satisfactory overall, do not reflect these high costs.

5. Learning resources are managed efficiently both at school and departmental levels. The identification of needs and the planning for resource development are good. The process of allocating funding for learning resources for subjects is sound, though not all staff are aware of the basis upon which these allocations are made. The use of available learning resources is efficient. In art, for example, resources are managed very

well: teachers have created a culture of valuing resources and have also organised Internet files in a way which allows pupils full Internet access with a minimum of time wasted on searching for sources. Instrumental and technology resources are well used in music; texts are well used in science at both key stages; in history resources, though limited and inadequate, are used efficiently and effectively; resources are well used in design and technology and are well supplemented by materials from industry. Resources are not managed efficiently in geography and in mathematics information technology resources are not being used to best effect.

6.The control of finance in the school is good. The budget is well managed and monitored by a very experienced bursar and the process is well supported by LEA advice and guidelines. The computerised financial management system allows the school to profile expenditure and to provide up-to-date information to budget holders. Spending is regularly monitored. The match between spending and priorities is kept under close scrutiny and allows the school to anticipate budget concerns at an early stage. School administration is very efficient.

7.The school makes good use of additional sources of funding to meet its aims and objectives – for example, the additional funding received from the LEA for learning resources and pupil support assistants to cater for the recent increase in pupil numbers. Additional funding for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils with Statements of Special Educational need is used appropriately. However, the school has identified useful areas for improvement in extending opportunities for planning and increasing the flexibility in the grouping of pupils.

8.Issues from the latest auditor's report and from the last inspection report have been addressed, with the exception of detail of financial planning in department development plans.

9.The school gives satisfactory value for money in relation to its income and expenditure per pupil and the standards achieved.

10. The school should now:

- ensure consistency in planning costs at departmental level;
- consider using some of its own resources to supplement the LEA funding for Statemented pupils
 - to provide more opportunities for joint planning between teachers and learning assistants, and
 - to improve flexibility in the grouping of pupils.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

1. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 is in line both with national averages and with similar schools for the proportion of pupils achieving Level 5 and above and represents a significant improvement on the 1998 results. Standards of speaking and listening are good with instances of sustained classroom discussion by higher attaining pupils and articulate responses to questioning by those of lower attainment. Pupils are able to listen to what others are saying and frame questions to improve their understanding. Pupils read with understanding from a range of graded texts. There are numerous examples of good writing. Staff pay particular attention to the written accuracy of lower attaining pupils.

2. The 1999 GCSE results have improved significantly on those for 1998. In English 48 per cent of pupils gained a grade in the range A* to C and in English literature the figure was 47 per cent. These are a little below the national averages. There is an issue in the gender breakdown in that only the girls are obtaining the higher grades. The percentage figure for achievement at grades A* to G in English language is above the national average. Standards of speaking and listening are good. Higher attaining pupils have opportunities to extend the range of their writing and they are schooled in drafting and revision. The result is work which is in the grade A/B range. There are limited opportunities for extended writing for lower attaining pupils where the work seen concentrates on improving accuracy and broadening vocabulary, but standards are still satisfactory and at times good when the exercises are varied and linked to the pupils' own experiences.

3. Good progress has been made at Key Stage 3 since the last inspection in developing pupils' abilities in speaking and listening. They explain, describe and argue well and this is most evident in small group work and applies across the ability range. All pupils contribute to class discussion and show respect for others' views. Drama is used effectively as part of the teaching process and aids pupils' understanding, as in a Year 7 class's use of a drama circle to develop awareness of gesture and sound. Progress in writing is at least satisfactory with evidence of improved accuracy and writing of increased length and depth in the work of the higher attainers. All pupils develop their written narrative and descriptive skills and most can combine shorter and more complex sentences into paragraphs which are punctuated to a satisfactory standard - for example, autobiographical accounts in Year 7; creative writing in Year 8; critical analysis in Year 9. There are examples of Year 7 using a word processor to map poems from their poetry carousel and change font style, size and colour and then add clip art to reflect mood and meaning. Children with special educational needs work to a good standard when they are set clear targets and have support in the classroom. Work is assessed regularly according to an agreed ten-week procedure and the assessments are used to inform teaching and identify under-achievers who are then encouraged to participate in the department's mentoring scheme. Parents are kept informed of their children's progress through regular communication of the assessments. Progress in reading is good with pupils having access to a range of texts. Progress is monitored effectively through the graded reading scheme and by the end of the key stage pupils are able to demonstrate their understanding orally and in writing. Lower-attaining pupils in Year 9 made good progress in their understanding of the text of 'Romeo and Juliet' and were able to respond meaningfully when questioned about the dramatic tensions between the two families.

4. The progress of higher attaining pupils is good at Key Stage 4, in particular in the length, accuracy and content of girls' written work. Boys' progress is less evident and the department is aware of the problem and is seeking means to tackle it. The progress in writing of lower attaining pupils is satisfactory and improvements are made in accuracy and presentation. They have fewer opportunities, however, for extended writing which limits their progress in planning and drafting work in depth. Their progress is satisfactory where the teaching is challenging, as in a Year 11 lesson on different tones and styles of writing where the pupils had to develop their own persuasive style. Progress in speaking and listening and in reading is good at this key stage. Pupils are able to speak confidently in a variety of contexts and contribute well to discussion. Year 10 pupils gave imaginative accounts of symbols of heaven and hell in a drama lesson and in another Year 10 class there was analytical discussion of Eric's confession in the play 'An Inspector Calls'. There is progression from Key Stage

3 in the demands made on reading levels as is evident from the reading records and from hearing pupils read and explain in lessons. Very good work is being done in GCSE drama in spite of limited resources and inadequate accommodation. In the lessons observed pupils evaluated each other's work in a critically positive way and were able to appreciate the standards achieved.

5. Pupils respond well in lessons. They are attentive and concentrate for sustained periods on the task in hand. They are able to work independently, in pairs and in small groups. Behaviour is good except in a minority of lessons taught by non-specialists. Pupils are supportive of each other and are tolerant of those who struggle, as seen in the attitudes displayed by a Year 7 class to a boy who had difficulty expressing himself. Texts and exercise books are cared for and pupils respect the high quality range of display work. The few instances witnessed of poor behaviour were dealt with quickly and effectively and the pupils readily accepted the teacher's authority. This was not the case in the lessons of the non-specialists. Pupils do their written homework on a regular basis and few instances were found of non-completion. Most presented their work with care, including those with handwriting difficulties.

6. Good teaching was seen in at least half the lessons observed and a quarter were classed as very good at Key Stage 3. At Key Stage 4 teaching was good in four lessons, very good in one lesson and unsatisfactory in one lesson. The teachers have a sound knowledge and understanding of the subject, are well prepared and organised and able to sustain interest. They make use of a wide range of texts in their lessons to challenge pupils' understanding and broaden their appreciation of the use of language. The purpose of lessons is clearly established at the start and each is set in context. Questioning is apt and open-ended and builds on pupils' responses. A variety of teaching techniques are used to good effect which results in pace and rigour in lessons. Time and resources are well used and class management is good and founded on mutual respect. In the best teaching, lively and challenging exposition by the teacher was followed by group or paired work which was purposeful and so structured that pupils had to explain their progress to the whole class. This was seen in poetry lessons in both key stages. Teaching was less than satisfactory in a minority of lessons taught by non-specialists who were covering for absent colleagues. In these lessons the teachers' lack of subject expertise and lack of confidence meant that pupils made little progress.

7. The curriculum strikes an appropriate balance between speaking and listening and reading and writing and conforms with the requirements of the National Curriculum. The schemes of work are applicable across the ability range and secure equality of access. Reading schemes are graded for age and ability and cater for well-judged progress in learning. Appropriate time is allocated to the subject throughout the working week. There is a mixture of withdrawal and in-class support for pupils with special educational needs with targets being used to inform the teaching and they make satisfactory progress. Written work is marked and assessed regularly with the formal ten-week assessments being used to review teaching and pupils' progress. Pupils' attainment at both key stages is assessed against past performance and against gender performance. The department also compares the performance of parallel groups.

8. Drama is an integral part of the curriculum and is well managed. Good use is made of the limited facilities and opportunities are available for extra-curricular work. Schemes of work are in place and are linked to the work being done in English. Drama is used effectively as a teaching technique in English lessons to promote understanding and broaden experience. The GCSE course is now well established and successful and results this year show that attainment is good when measured against pupils' performance in other subjects. The allocation of time to the subject in Year 9 poses difficulties for well-linked coverage and appropriate steps in building up learning and is an issue which is of concern.

9. The department is well led and managed at a time when changes to the school's intake and size present exceptional challenges. The staff are meeting these challenges positively and with noteworthy commitment under particularly difficult circumstances. The department has clear aims and policies which are helpfully contained in a handbook which also has guidance on methodology. There are good schemes of work which staff use as working documents. The head of department monitors the work of a sample of pupils from all English classes and he checks his colleagues' preparation books on a regular basis. Developmental priorities are established after consultation with staff and attention is now appropriately being given to information and communication technology, literacy and purposeful curricular links with primary schools. This is a united department where professional relationships are strong and founded on mutual respect. An issue to be

addressed is that two key members of the department carry excessive workloads. This is recognised by senior management as a priority concern.

10. In order to take the work of the department forward the school should:

- ensure an appropriate match in all lessons between staff qualifications and experience and the teaching of English;
- ensure that those with management responsibilities have the means to discharge them effectively;
- ensure that purposeful subject links from the primary to the secondary phase are in place;
- establish the reasons for the underachievement of more able boys and take remedial action; and
- take forward the development of information and control technology.

Mathematics

1. Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 3 in 1999 were in line with national averages for the proportion of pupils achieving Level 5 and above, and Level 6 and above. The proportions of pupils achieving Level 5 and above, and Level 6 and above were also in line with results from similar schools. These results have shown a slight improvement over the last three years, which is very similar to the national trend. Boys performed slightly better than girls which is against the national trend.

2. GCSE results for the higher grades A*-C for 1999 are well below national averages and below results for similar schools. The results obtained in 1998 for grades A*-C were the lowest the school has recorded in the previous five years so that although the 1999 results show an improvement on those for 1998, and in the years leading up to 1998 results were improving, the trend over the last three years shows a significant decline, while the national trend shows a steady improvement. In the 1999 examinations boys performed better than girls against the national trend.

3. On the evidence of the work seen during the inspection, pupils' attainment overall at both key stages is below but close to national expectations. Attainment in data handling and the use of graphical representation of data is now in line with attainment in the other attainment targets and this represents an improvement since the last inspection. Towards the end of Key Stage 3 many pupils are able to use ratios to solve problems, substitute in linear algebraic formulae and identify mathematical number patterns resulting from investigations. At Key Stage 4 many pupils demonstrate a sound knowledge of symmetry, are able to solve simple problems involving projectiles and have secure ideas about congruence and similarity. Little or no information technology work has taken place this term and no such work was seen during the inspection.

4. Progress at Key Stage 3 is satisfactory based on analysis of attainment tests. Comparing the results of Key Stage 3 with GCSE results, progress at Key Stage 4 is rather slower than would be expected. On the evidence of work seen during the inspection most pupils are making satisfactory progress at Key Stage 3; and at Key Stage 4, while some pupils are making satisfactory or good progress, the progress overall is rather below expectations. Generally higher-attaining pupils make better progress than others. Lower-attaining pupils often spend time recapping previous work before they are able to move on to the next stage. In some cases slower progress is due to lack of pace in the teaching. For example, a Year 11 class is going through a sequence of lessons where they are all working at their own speed at individual topics. For many pupils in that group, the rate of work was very slow. In most lessons at both key stages pupils gained in knowledge and developed or consolidated skills during the course of the lesson. Developing understanding was usually seen in the longer term, but with lower-attaining classes, many had difficulty in retaining knowledge and skills over time. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards their targets, and this progress is enhanced where in-class support is available.

5. In all lessons at Key Stage 3 pupils' attitudes to learning were at least satisfactory; they were good or very good in half of the lessons observed. At Key Stage 4 pupils' attitudes were satisfactory or good in three-quarters of the observed lessons. Most pupils show interest in the work and sustain concentration for appropriate periods of time. In some classes, however, there are significant minorities of pupils who exhibit troublesome and sometimes disruptive behaviour. The incidence of this problem was observed more at Key

Stage 4 than Key Stage 3 and occurred more in middle- or low-attaining classes. This behaviour often reduced the quality of teaching and had a negative effect on pupils' attainment and progress. Overall, most pupils are courteous and respond well to their teachers and other pupils. They work well together in groups when required and help each other with their work, such as in the lesson on measuring with a Year 10 group.

6. At Key Stage 3 all of the teaching observed was satisfactory or better with about three-quarters being good or very good. At Key Stage 4 four-fifths of the teaching was sound or better with one-third of the teaching good. Where teaching is good or very good teachers convey a sense of excitement about the work, such as in a low attaining Year 8 group doing their first lesson on statistics. The teacher's enthusiasm was picked up by the class and this increased the quality and the pace of learning. In good quality lessons explanations to the whole class are clear and good use is made of contributions from individual pupils to check understanding and maintain motivation and interest. Such lessons have pace and pupils are clear about the reasons for activities and what they will gain from them. Exchanges with pupils during individual work sessions are of good quality and provide feedback, encouragement, support and challenge as appropriate. Good examples of this were seen in a Year 7 lesson on number patterns and another on parallel lines. In the few lessons observed where the teaching was unsatisfactory, the process of managing troublesome behaviour prevented active and stimulating teaching, which resulted in little or no progress being made by most pupils. Generally, however, lessons are well planned and the methods chosen are suitable for the topic and the group being taught.

7. The marking of pupils' work varied from good to adequate with some staff putting helpful and constructive comments on pupils' books and others simply indicating where work contains errors. In the same way, reports to parents from some teachers did not indicate strengths and targets for improvement in any detail.

8. The curriculum is generally broad and balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. It provides equality of access for all and meets the requirements of pupils with special educational needs. The curriculum is planned effectively to provide suitable links between topics and well-judged steps in learning. The procedures for regularly assessing and recording pupils' attainment are sound. The information collected centrally is used to check or modify setting arrangements. Information collected from tests is also used to modify individual teaching programmes such as in the case of an extra Year 8 lesson included to compensate for a weakness noted in the test a few days earlier. Plans for the appropriate elements of information technology are detailed but not being implemented at present.

9. The department works well together as a team. The organisation and administration of the department are thorough with detailed documentation providing good support for the work of the teachers in the department. The head of department is committed to raising standards and to this end schemes of work are kept under review. The department is aware of the urgent need to review learning resources in use in an attempt to improve standards of attainment particularly in the case of lower-attaining pupils in Key Stage 4. Pupils' work is regularly monitored and a new scheme for monitoring the work of the department more extensively is being introduced in order to improve the quality of teaching.

10. In order to raise standards the department should:

- look for ways of improving the pace of lessons;
- seek effective strategies for managing troublesome behaviour and to lessen its impact on the quality of teaching;
- improve the use of information technology within the department;
- ensure that the quality of marking and report writing is brought up to the standards of best practice within the school; and
- explore a variety of learning resources in order to improve provision particularly for Key Stage 4.

• **Science**

1. Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 3 in 1999 were just below the national average for the proportion of pupils achieving Level 5 and above and below average for the proportion of pupils achieving Level 6 and above. The proportion of pupils achieving Level 5 and above was below that found in

similar schools and for Level 6 it was well below. The 1999 test results for the proportion of pupils achieving Level 5 and above sharply reversed what had been a steady downward trend over the previous three years. The proportion of pupils achieving Level 6 and above over the past three years has shown a downward trend slightly greater than that seen nationally. Although boys performed better than girls in 1998 their performance in 1999 was very similar, in line with the national trend. In both 1998 and 1999 teachers' assessments were markedly higher than the test results and the department needs to investigate the reasons for this.

2. GCSE results have improved since the last inspection and pupils attain more highly in science than they do overall. Results in both 1998 and 1999 for the higher grades (A*-C) in science (combining double and single award) were close to the national average. Performance is close to the median when compared with similar schools. There is no clear pattern to the performance of boys and girls over the past three years, although results for the last two years show a strong link between GCSE grades and Key Stage 3 results two years earlier. The department currently carries out little analysis of results at either key stage and recognises that this needs to be developed.

3. On the evidence of the work seen during the inspection, pupils' attainment overall towards the end of both key stages is close to the national expectations. Some pupils are attaining highly at both key stages. At neither key stage are there any great differences between pupils' attainment in the four attainment targets. Towards the end of Key Stage 3 many pupils can construct food chains, are aware of the main functions of animal organs, can suggest how mixtures might be separated and show how energy is transferred. More highly attaining pupils showed a good grasp of food webs, pyramids of numbers, the different arrangements of particles in solids, liquids and gases, and recognised some of the different types of chemical reaction. Towards the end of Key Stage 4 many pupils are able to make predictions based on the reactivity series, can advance an argument on the advantages/disadvantages of cloning, and have a sound grasp of energy resources and conservation. More highly attaining pupils have, for example, a good grasp of chemical equations and can recall a formula and calculate frequency using it. Many pupils at both key stages have notes which are satisfactorily organised and presented and generally pupils take a pride in their work. Most pupils handle number and graph work at least satisfactorily and some graphs were very well presented with clear headings and, where appropriate, good lines of best fit. Although opportunities for the use of information technology are identified in the scheme of work, no use of it was seen during the inspection. Most pupils carry out experimental and investigative work with appropriate care and with sufficient attention to health and safety. At Key Stage 3 some good planning on 'twisters' linked the prediction of rate of fall to air resistance, though evaluation was less secure. At Key Stage 4 some well-produced investigations were seen - for example on osmosis and resistance in a wire. In the investigations seen more highly attaining pupils were equally strong across the four aspects of investigation.

4. Progress in Key Stage 3 is satisfactory, based on an analysis of test results. It was better in 1999 than in 1998. Using the results from Key Stage 3 tests against GCSE results, progress in Key Stage 4 was good for pupils leaving in 1999; this showed a slight improvement over the previous year. On the evidence of work seen during the inspection most pupils are making satisfactory progress in Key Stage 3 and some are making good progress. Where pupils are making good progress this is linked to good or very good teaching. For example, a higher attaining Year 9 group made good progress in their understanding of the periodic table aided by good lesson organisation, high expectations and a good sense of interest, enthusiasm and relevance engendered by the teacher. This led them to ask some good questions about its organisation and the placing of elements within the table. At Key Stage 4 most pupils make satisfactory progress in many lessons, although in about a third of lessons many pupils made unsatisfactory progress. Where progress is unsatisfactory it is linked to weaknesses in teaching such as unclear expectations and some lack of mutual respect. For example, a Year 11 lesson involving soaps and detergents took considerably longer than necessary to establish some basic information due to a lack of sustained pace and off-task chatter. In most lessons at both key stages pupils' knowledge and understanding of their work were better at the end of lessons than at the beginning. Generally pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards the targets set for them. These targets are mainly generic and staff are well aware of pupils' problems. Where in-class support is available pupils make good progress towards their targets helped by some joint planning between the teachers and learning support staff.

5. Pupils' attitudes to learning in almost all lessons seen at Key Stage 3 were at least satisfactory; they were good or very good in over half of lessons. At Key Stage 4 pupils' attitudes were at least satisfactory in half of lessons and good in about one third. Most pupils show interest in their work and the majority behave well.

Where disruption occurs it is often due to a few pupils and this then sometimes spreads to others in the class. Even so some continue to work reasonably effectively indicating that they see some responsibility for their own learning. Overall most pupils sustain their concentration on work appropriately. Most pupils are courteous, trustworthy and generally respond well to their teachers and one another. Most show a satisfactory respect for equipment that they collect, use and return appropriately. The majority of pupils work well together during experimental work and in small group discussion when they have the opportunity. Most pupils show respect for one another's feelings when discussing work and answering questions.

6. Overall teaching is satisfactory. In Key Stage 3 almost all teaching was at least satisfactory with just over one third being good and about a further eighth very good. In Key Stage 4 just over one third of the teaching was satisfactory, one eighth good with a further quarter being very good. Teachers have a sound knowledge and understanding of their subject and most sustain a good level of interest and enthusiasm. Expectations of pupils are generally appropriate but not always sufficiently high. Planning is soundly based on the schemes of work that the department is developing further. Methods and organisational strategies are usually appropriate. The management of pupils and standards of discipline vary markedly across the department from very good to unsatisfactory and this is linked to teachers not tackling poor behaviour appropriately. Time and resources are generally well used.

7. The best lessons were calm and ordered, the purposes of the lesson were shared with pupils and expectations were made clear. Time targets were clearly set and questions to extend pupils' thinking were well used. For example, in a Year 10 lesson on heat the teacher emphasised the importance of units and terminology, focused pupils' attention on the key parts of diagrams, made clear the belief that they would attain highly and through links with everyday life helped pupils to set the work in context and plan their experimental work. In a Year 11 lesson on evolution, pupils were able to make a free response on the benefits or otherwise of human cloning after careful input from the teacher. Then using a revision sheet, with support from their teacher, they constructed a summary of key points from their work. Some lessons were unsatisfactory or contained unsatisfactory features. These included a noise level too high for effective working, a lack of clear working routines, and expectations that were pitched too low - for example, allowing too long for routine tasks or not building appropriately on pupils' earlier learning. Pupils' work is regularly marked though the quality of marking varies. Some of the better marking sets targets for pupils' learning and indicates how they might improve both in terms of knowledge and understanding as well as in investigative work. Some examples of incorrect work accepted as correct were seen; examples included SO_3 for sulphur dioxide, a model drawing of a liquid with large gaps between the particles and freehand drawing of apparatus. Such inconsistency does not promote high expectations and standards. End of Key Stage 3 reports do not clearly identify strengths, weaknesses and areas for development.

8. The curriculum broadly meets statutory requirements at both key stages, although the department recognises the need to develop the use of information technology, as noted in the last inspection report, within the curriculum at both key stages. The department has responded to the previous inspection report by adopting a published scheme that has helped the development of experimental and investigative science. The department also recognises the need to continue to develop the schemes of work. Again in response to the previous report opportunities for numerical and graphical work have been increased and some pupils achieve highly - for example, in gas law calculations and graphs. The department has also introduced 'Thinking Science' (CASE) at Key Stage 3 as a means of raising standards. The department needs to keep the course provision at Key Stage 4 under review. The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of extra-curricular activities including visits to Eureka, local exhibitions and carrying out scientific investigations through links with the North Yorkshire Business Partnership. Staff also provide revision and homework clubs at Key Stage 3 and 4.

9. The work of the technician has a very positive effect on the quality of education and standards achieved by pupils. The laboratories have some shortcomings and staff have worked with pupils to provide some attractive displays which enhance the learning environment. These now need to be developed to increase the science content and enhance expectations. Resources for experimental and investigative work are just adequate. Recent investment has provided good quality textbooks at both key stages which are appreciated by pupils. Library provision is limited; it contains a number of recently published science books but these need to be increased in number and range.

10. Leadership and management of the department are satisfactory with some good features - for example, the decisions to change courses to raise attainment, the start of a monitoring and evaluating regime and the tracking of pupil progress. Staff are committed and hard working, show a genuine interest in their pupils and work well together as a team. They give of their time to help pupils with revision and coursework. The departmental documentation is helpful but contains no specific references to awe and wonder, a commitment to high standards, teaching and learning styles or any detailed analysis of performance. The department development plan does not show clearly how specific action is linked to achieving higher standards or continuing professional development although staff share a determination to want to raise standards within the science department. The minutes of departmental meetings indicate that these are largely administrative.

11. In order to raise standards further the department should:

- analyse test and examination results to identify strengths, weaknesses and areas for development;
- use departmental meetings more effectively for professional development;
- develop primary/secondary curriculum links to build more effectively on pupils' prior attainment;
- continue to develop a wide range of teaching and learning styles including making pupils more responsible for their own learning and building on a culture of success; and
- improve the use of information technology in science lessons.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

Art

1. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations overall. Pupils' drawing skills are satisfactory, but with few examples above expectations. Painting skills are generally in line with expectations, with higher-attaining pupils producing well-controlled painted work and creatively exploring different methods of applying paint to paper. Graphic media are generally well used, and combined to striking effect in Year 9 Egyptian project work in the pupils' sketchbooks. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.

2. Over the past four years results at Key Stage 4 have been inconsistent. Results in 1997 and 1998 were below the national average, but results in 1999 improved dramatically, comparing favourably with results in other subjects in the school, and were above the national average. The performance of pupils has thus returned to the position that existed at the time of the last inspection. Inspection evidence indicates that the performance of current Year 11 pupils is above expectations and is comparable to the performance of pupils in the 1999 examination. Most pupils make good use, and higher-attaining pupils very good use, of the sketchbook, both as a means of collecting and organising research material and as a vehicle for the generation of new ideas. They use colour expressively in their painted work and occasionally use colour in their three-dimensional work to good effect. Higher-attaining pupils make good use of the work of other artists and work from other cultures. For example, two Year 11 pupils have produced extensive projects based on their researches into African and tribal art, utilising paint and three-dimensional relief materials effectively.

3. In both key stages, pupils make good progress overall. Pupils enter the department at the start of Key Stage 3 with below average skills, knowledge and understanding, and, whilst they make satisfactory progress in terms of their objective drawing skills, they make good progress in terms of their ability to use graphic materials to record from pictures and photographs. Three-dimensional work is well controlled. For example, Year 8 pupils produced structurally sound and visually bold Grecian urns from cardboard strips. They make clear gains in their ability to work independently, identifying and researching appropriate materials to develop ideas from, and presenting the results of their research in visually exciting ways.

4. At Key Stage 4, pupils consolidate their drawing skills, but continue to extend their use of graphic media. They continue to make good progress in their use of sketchbooks, particularly in the case of higher-attaining pupils. Most Key Stage 4 pupils make good progress in their use of the work of other artists, but lower-attaining pupils do not progress beyond a superficial use of physical characteristics of the artists' work. At both

key stages, the progress of lower-attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs is good.

5.The good progress of the large majority of pupils is directly attributable to the planned provision of opportunities for the pupils to engage in challenging and meaningful work. In the few instances where pupils do not make satisfactory progress, this is directly related to these pupils' negative attitudes toward the subject and to their poor behaviour.

6.The response of pupils in lessons is generally good. Most pupils take a keen interest in their work and respond positively to the interesting tasks set. They are generally capable of maintaining concentration well but small numbers of pupils, mostly but not exclusively boys, lose concentration easily and can disrupt each other's work. Pupils' behaviour is good overall, with few examples of task avoidance or lack of courtesy. They can be trusted to work with potentially dangerous equipment, looking after the tools and materials they use and treating the accommodation well. A strong feature of the pupils' response is the way in which they readily help each other when required. For example, Year 11 pupils assisted each other in the laying out of large-scale pop art drawings for mono-printing and Year 8 pupils worked together well on large-scale sculptures. They take full advantage of the many opportunities provided to show initiative and willingly take on responsibility for the development of their work.

7.In Key Stage 3 teaching was at least satisfactory in all lessons observed, with three-quarters being good or better and nearly one-third being very good or excellent. In Key Stage 4 all teaching was satisfactory or better, with one-quarter being good. The most effective teaching showed some notable features, including very thorough planning, which was fully matched to National Curriculum and examination board requirements, and which provided a range of tasks for pupils to engage in. Teachers also made good use of resources. For example, in a Year 9 lesson on Egyptian art, the teacher had produced high-quality examples in a sketchbook, which clearly showed the pupils what was required, and also established very clearly the teacher's high expectations. Teachers also made good use of the time available. Demonstrations in Year 7, 8 and 11 lessons were clear but brief, maximising the time available for the pupils to do their own work. The choice of subject matter for the projects interested and sometimes inspired the pupils, as in the case of the Year 7 'Flowerbook' lesson, where the example produced by the teacher immediately captivated the pupils. Homework was directly linked to classwork and consolidated and extended the pupils' learning. Where teaching was less effective, the small number of pupils who were avoiding work were not effectively challenged, and so made unsatisfactory progress.

8.The art curriculum provided by the school is very good. It is planned well to ensure that pupils' learning develops well as they move through the school. It also provides them with the opportunity to work in a range of materials and techniques in both two and three dimensions. It provides good access to the work of a range of western European and modern American artists and also provides good access to the artwork and artefacts of a number of other cultures. A feature of the curriculum is the increasing use of information technology within the subject. In lessons observed, pupils readily accessed the Internet in order to download images for use in their own work. The subject makes a very good contribution to the pupils' social and moral development, and to their awareness of the art of other cultures. The subject does not make sufficient contribution to pupils' spiritual development, however, and opportunities to develop the pupils' awareness of their own culture should also be developed. The work of pupils is regularly and effectively assessed, and all pupils spoken to had a clear idea of how well they were doing, and what they needed to do to improve.

9.The leadership and management of the subject is good overall. The head of department provides very effective leadership and is a strong advocate of the work of the pupils and the department, both inside and outside of school. The teachers in the department work hard to establish and maintain effective and friendly working relationships with the pupils. The curriculum and resources are managed effectively, but teaching within the department is not yet monitored systematically. The department's development plan has identified a clear direction for the department for the future, but has not identified ways in which the success of the pupils can be used to judge the success of the department. The accommodation and resources available for the department are barely satisfactory, but the teaching staff are most ingenious in their use of resources, and ensure that all pupils have access to quality materials. The department makes a very good contribution to the school environment through the high quality displays, which can be seen around the school buildings.

10.In order to develop provision further the school should now:

- improve the provision for pupils' spiritual development, and provide more opportunities for the pupils to engage with art works from their own cultures;
- further develop the pupils' objective drawing skills, in order to maximise their use of objective drawing as a means of feeding into their creative work;
- monitor and evaluate the teaching of the subject systematically, and use the results to inform curriculum and teaching developments; and
- establish clear success criteria in terms of pupil outcomes, as a means of measuring the effectiveness of the work of the department.

• **Design and technology**

1. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 is in line with national expectations. Pupils of all levels of attainment demonstrate appropriate knowledge of the design process where they design and make a range of products using a wide range of materials. In Year 9, for example, pupils use neoprene successfully to model their final designs for a watch. This material enables them to accurately reflect the size, colour and fit for their design and provides a very realistic model. In Year 7, pupils demonstrate appropriately their skills in working with textiles when they produce a bookmark using simple stitch techniques on a theme of sea life. Continuing with the textiles experiences, pupils in Year 9 use a wide range of textile processes appropriately, using the influences of Chinese culture, to model some interesting interior designs. In most projects, pupils demonstrate an ability to work safely when using tools and equipment because their design and planning sheets for making make appropriate reference to good, safe working practices such as wearing protective eye wear when using machines and washing hands when preparing food. Pupils' making skills at the end of Key Stage 3 are in the main appropriate. For example, in the clock design in Year 9, time and effort is given to making sure that all surfaces are smooth and polished appropriately. There were some particularly good examples of above average attainment in Key Stage 3 in Years 8 and 9 where pupils illustrate their design ideas well using high quality graphic presentation techniques, such as rendering with crayons to give the effect of texture and light reflecting off surfaces, and use information technology to design ideas for watches. Final designs are also often presented with care and accuracy using perspective elevations and different layers of card for effect. At present, however, whilst designs are well presented, they often lack the required detail that explains how an idea has developed or how a particular piece of research has influenced design thinking. The 'mood' sheets, which give a sense of purpose and audience for a design, are good, but pupils need to focus and analyse their research more and use more sources - for example, the Internet and other ICT applications. The recorded National Curriculum teacher assessments for design and technology at the end of Key Stage 3 are in line with national averages.

2. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 is also in line with national expectations. Pupils of all levels of attainment generally demonstrate a deeper knowledge of the design process where they design and make a range of products using an appropriate range of materials and processes. In the graphics products course in Year 10 and 11 pupils demonstrate above average attainment in design illustration, making models and presenting ideas - for example, designs and models for cafes and leisure complexes. In these models, pupils' sense of proportion and scale is well defined, together with imaginative use of modelling materials. As in Key Stage 3, pupils' design work lacks detail and research is rarely analysed in sufficient depth to be of value in helping pupils make progress in developing ideas. This area of work needs to be improved further. In food technology pupils make quality food products; they take time to ensure that ingredients are selected for best effect in terms of nutritional value and make good use of their prior knowledge. They present their work appropriately. Some packaging of food products, designed and made by pupils, is good and reflects the time and effort given to present the final product to best effect. The vegetarian lasagne project in Year 10 is a good example of this level of attainment. In both resistant materials and textiles, pupils' attainment is much more variable in both their design work and in making products. In some cases it meets national expectations but in others it is below. Some pupils work accurately and safely but there are too many occasions when they are prepared to accept second best rather than strive for a higher level of attainment. This was particularly so for some boys in Year 11 resistant materials and some girls in Year 11 textiles. In resistant materials the more advanced making skills are often below expectations. The department has made limited progress in this respect since the last inspection. In the few examples of pupils' practical work seen during the inspection there was little evidence of pupils using combinations of materials in a creative and imaginative way to improve a project's fitness for purpose or aesthetic value. Pupils with special education needs are able to demonstrate good making skills often in line with national expectations, in particular in food technology. Some of the

finished products looked very appetising. In most projects in Years 10 and 11, pupils are able to research and develop a good specification and design brief keeping the user in mind. The quality of some research, using the Internet and design thinking, has enabled some students to secure advice and support outside school in developing ideas.

3. There has been continued improvement in pupils' performance overall in GCSE examination results over recent years. In the 1999 results 48 per cent of pupils entered for the examinations gained grade A* to C. This is broadly in line with the national average but significantly higher than the school's average of 39 per cent. In 1998, 44 per cent gained grade A* to C. Pupils' performance at grade A* to G is not significantly different from the national average. In graphic products pupils' attainment is consistently well above national average, in food technology it is above, but in resistant materials it remains consistently below. However, in this material area, pupils do perform appropriately in relation to their prior attainment. This is reflected and confirmed in the school's analysis of results and comparative data. In comparison to similar schools pupils' performance is broadly average. The department is making good progress in reaching its targets for pupils' attainment. This is reflected in an improving trend in pupils' performance. On balance there is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.

4. When designing and making most pupils in both key stages are able to talk about their work confidently using appropriate technical vocabulary. Overall, throughout the department, however, pupils do not make full use of information technology to design and illustrate their work or to improve the presentation of design portfolios or written assignments.

5. In both key stages pupils are making satisfactory progress in particular in how they consolidate and apply their knowledge, understanding and skills in graphics and in the production and presentation of food. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in working safely and hygienically. Pupils with special education needs make good progress in particular when they make products. In Year 10 food technology, for example, these pupils made good progress in the selection and combining of ingredients to make a vegetable lasagne. Pupils in Year 9 made good progress in developing their designing skills. For example, when critically evaluating a number of torch designs, pupils analysed the characteristics of each design and fitness for purpose to help them with their own design thinking. However, there needs to be a more consistent approach across the department to this aspect and approach to ensure that pupils make better progress than they are at present in developing broader design and critical evaluation skills. The department could introduce the process of critical evaluation of products and designs lower down in Key Stage 3 in order to prepare pupils better for this work in Key Stage 4.

6. Pupils respond with enthusiasm and commitment to their design and technology work. They are busy learners who concentrate hard and show perseverance in order to produce a quality outcome. They have a sensible, mature and safe approach to tasks of designing and making; they work particularly well together, for example, when preparing food for investigations in Years 8 and 10 and when discussing alternative designs for a torch in Year 9. Relationships are very good and those pupils with a more secure command of the materials and processes are always prepared to share their skill and knowledge with others. Pupils are courteous in the classroom, trustworthy, helpful and supportive and often show great pride in their work.

7. In 77 per cent of the lessons observed teaching was good or very good in both key stages. In the remaining lessons teaching was never less than satisfactory. In the best lessons teachers make effective use of their specialist knowledge; they plan and prepare their lessons well and present very good demonstrations - for example, in the food technology and resistant materials lessons in Year 9. All lessons have clear objectives and targets for teaching and learning which are always highlighted in the front cover-sheet for each project. Pupils are very aware of what it is they are required to do and the targets they must reach. Time is always used effectively and teachers maintain high expectations of themselves and their pupils. They are judicious in their use of advice, support and evaluative comment, giving pupils sufficient time to wrestle with the problems, but intervening appropriately and at the right time to avoid frustrations and to advance learning without inhibiting their creativity. Support materials are always of good quality. Practical aids and displays prepared by teachers to illustrate a particular process and expectation are good - for example, using their own and pupils' work to show the standard required when designing and making. Tasks are often presented in a different way to help those pupils with special educational needs and to challenge those pupils who are attaining highly, but this

feature of teaching should be developed more. Teachers are very aware of pupils' prior attainment and use this knowledge well to help them with their planning. Some teachers are particularly sensitive to the responses made by pupils especially those who lack confidence in their own ability. They often use skilful questioning to develop pupils' thinking and pupils make at least satisfactory progress as a result. There is always an appropriate emphasis given to health, safety and food hygiene practices. Teachers assess pupils' performance regularly and generally mark work quite accurately, although there are times when marks given to pupils do not accurately reflect the quality of work produced and as such lower pupils' expectations. At present, whilst assessment is being used well to help teachers improve their long-term planning, it is not being used to help teachers with their day-to-day planning. This prevents the higher-attaining pupils in particular from making as much progress as they otherwise might.

8. There are missed opportunities for teaching and developing pupils' information technology skills however, due to a lack of resources for designing and making using more sophisticated information technology equipment - for example, computer-aided design and computer-aided manufacture (CAD/CAM). The department has a well-structured development plan in place to rectify these issues; improvements to resources are imminent as part of the whole school refurbishments. The department does need to review its planning for the integration of information technology into schemes of work, as currently insufficient focus is given to the use of information technology to help pupils improve the quality and standard of their project portfolios or to help them develop their research and investigative skills. In addition, there are too few opportunities for pupils to accurately dismantle and evaluate familiar products or gain access to higher levels of systems and control. These areas also need to be improved and incorporated more fully into teachers' planning.

9. The leadership and management offered by the head of technology are very good. He is supported well by the head of food technology and recently appointed staff. The department is soon to move into new facilities. Considering the progress made since the last inspection the 'departments' are now well placed to work more closely together to develop and manage a more cohesive, corporate, strategic approach to the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the subject. New procedures for monitoring and evaluating the department's work are a firm foundation upon which to build this process. Time for the management of all aspects of the department's work is at a premium as the head of technology carries a substantial teaching load as well as management responsibilities. This has a negative impact, hindering development and needs to be rectified.

10. Resources are adequate to meet the needs of the curriculum for design and technology. However, some capital equipment is dated and in need of replacement and information technology throughout the department needs to be upgraded in terms of quality, quantity and range in order for the department to fully meet its commitment to the school's cross-curricular information technology provision.

11. The department has improved standards in both key stages and in most material areas. Resistant materials continues to be the weakest area in terms of pupils' performance. The Key Stage 3 scheme of work is now fully integrated and involves all material areas. The formal monitoring of pupils' progress and performance has significantly improved. A greater range of subjects is now offered at Key Stage 4. The use of information technology is still an issue but integration is better. Information technology is being used well on occasions to support design work. The facilities are still somewhat depressing but new facilities are imminent.

12.The school should continue its good work on raising standards by:

- working even more closely together to develop and manage a more cohesive, corporate, strategic approach to the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the subject;
- developing further pupils' research and designing skills, in particular in communicating how an idea has developed and critically evaluating products and designs ;
- developing further opportunities for pupils to experience disassembly in order to evaluate familiar products and applications, and gain access to higher levels of systems and control;
- planning more opportunities for pupils to use information technology in their work, including, computer-aided design and computer-aided manufacture;
- improving capital equipment and consumable resource levels; and
- using assessment more to help teachers improve their day to day planning.

Geography

1.At the end of Key Stage 3 standards vary significantly; overall, however, attainment is below expectations. Broadly similar numbers of pupils are either in line with or below the levels expected nationally. This is confirmed by the school's own assessment of pupils' performance at the end of this key stage. There is evidence that under-performance is related to both pupils' own poor expectations of themselves and to teaching which varies from good to unsatisfactory in terms of its expectations of pupils' attainment. Both issues will be dealt with below.

2.Standards in terms of GCSE examination results have varied significantly since the last inspection. From being above the national average in 1996, the A*-C pass rate fell to well below average in 1998, but rose again in 1999. In line with the national pattern, girls' results are better than boys, but there is a tendency in both cases for few pupils to achieve the very highest grades. The levels of attainment are broadly in line with pupils' performance in other subjects in the school. The current standards in Key Stage 4 would suggest a continuation of these overall trends.

3.Particular strengths and weaknesses in attainment in both key stages include the following: pupils can frequently grasp geographical ideas relatively quickly, but then fail to develop their thinking to greater depths; they are able to accurately extract information from geographical sources such as graphs, maps and diagrams, photographs and videos, but they lack a secure geographical understanding to locate and appreciate the value and relevance of the information gained; they frequently have good knowledge of places in terms of their location, but not of their character and too often they are unable to use the proper geographical language to express their ideas. The emphasis within teaching on working towards greater understanding and use of subject vocabulary is a point for development.

4.For the majority of pupils in both key stages, progress is satisfactory; again variations are related to both pupil attitudes and to teaching. The majority of pupils are both willing and able to settle quickly to their tasks and to sustain concentration. There is a tendency for pupils to be very reliant on the teacher in terms of how and when to proceed with their work, and this is linked to very closely controlled teaching. This sometimes curtails the progress of higher attainers whilst providing support to others. A significant minority of pupils, especially in some middle-attaining sets in Key Stage 3, have poor attitudes to study. Poor behaviour affects both their own progress and that of others. Here also, the choice of teaching approach is not always conducive to resolving the problems and some teaching fails to engage those pupils who lack self-motivation.

5.Overall, the quality of teaching was satisfactory in half of the lessons observed, good in almost 40 per cent of lessons and unsatisfactory in the rest. This pattern was broadly the same in both key stages apart from the unsatisfactory teaching in Key Stage 3. Non-specialist teaching and the recent addition of a newly qualified teacher are both having a positive impact on the quality of teaching in the subject. Where teaching enables pupils to make better progress it has a number of positive features. High expectations are set and explanations are clear as in the Year 7 lesson concluding a series of lessons on Ordnance Survey map skills. Questioning is skilful and builds directly upon pupils' responses, as in the Year 10 lesson explaining the population patterns in the United Kingdom and in the exploration of conflicts in Snowdonia National Park. Approaches to learning

are well matched to the topic and to pupils' needs, as in the introductory activity to Year 7 atlas work, and also Year 8 Antarctica projects. Some pupils' work is also meticulously marked to help them with further progress, but this is not consistent across all teaching groups.

6.Aspects of teaching which worked against pupils making appropriate progress included the following: where questions asked were both narrow in scope and imprecise, sometimes leaving pupils to simply guess what was in the teachers' mind; where there was little scope for proper pupil discussion; and where teaching was directed too much towards the completion of worksheets rather than towards clarifying and deepening pupils' understanding or towards extending their geographical vocabulary. These features were seen in the unsatisfactory teaching of soil erosion in Year 9 and in the Year 11 lesson exploring traffic problems in cities, both of which led to poor or unsatisfactory progress.

7.Curricular planning has improved significantly since the last inspection. Units of study are appropriately sequenced across all year groups to give good coverage of the National Curriculum in Key Stage 3 and syllabus requirements in Key Stage 4. The curriculum is being suitably modified to meet the needs of those pupils in Key Stage 4 for whom GCSE would be too demanding. Planning identifies appropriate learning objectives and has improved the suggested variety of approaches to teaching. The imprecise detailing of what pupils are expected to know, understand and do remains a weakness and provides insufficient guidance in terms of assessment of progress and standards. Similarly there is insufficient evidence of the development of skills related to enquiry and fieldwork both of which would provide much needed opportunities for pupils to be more involved and independent in learning. The small range of high quality resources is appropriate. Overall, however, the range of resources is too limited.

8.At present subject leadership is having insufficient impact on the raising of standards in the subject. Management of departmental direction is weak. There is no evidence of systematic monitoring of provision or of analysis and evaluation of pupils' work and results. Documented guidance within the department is weak. However, the day-to-day management and professional relationships are a relative strength and provide a good foundation for future development of the subject and the team.

9.In order to improve the work of the department, the school should:

- continue to improve the range of approaches to teaching and the quality of those techniques already in use, such as questioning, explanation, groupwork, planned discussion, enquiry, fieldwork and task setting matched to pupils' needs and prior attainment; and
- improve management and leadership within the subject, in particular further developments to the scheme of work, the documented guidance for the expanding number of teachers, the systematic monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of the department's work.

History

1.Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 is in line with national expectations for average attainers. In 1999 teacher assessments for the percentage of pupils at Level 5 and above were below national expectations, but in lessons observed during the inspection pupils in higher-attaining sets were attaining at above national expectations when they were given the opportunity to do so. Pupils of all levels of attainment are able to recall factual knowledge well; for example, lowest attaining pupils were able to describe the key features of the slave trade and use that knowledge in identifying groups and individuals who opposed or supported the slave trade. Higher-attaining pupils were able to describe events, people and changes and make links between relevant reasons for and results of events and changes - for example, in changing attitudes towards slavery. They understand, and are able to use, appropriate historical terminology and are able to organise facts and communicate their knowledge. They do so better orally than in written work. They understand the need for explanation to support statements. This is an improvement since the last inspection report. Pupils of all levels of attainment are less able to discuss different interpretations of key events and characters, and the reasons why such interpretations have arisen. There is no marked trend of difference in the attainment of boys and girls.

2.Over the past three years attainment at Key Stage 4 has been significantly above the national average for A*-C grades for both boys and girls. In 1999 85 per cent of pupils entered for GCSE history obtained a grade C or

above, compared with a national figure of 60 per cent. This is a significant improvement since the last report when attainment at Key Stage 4 was judged to be in line with the national average. Results at Key Stage 4 for pupils studying history have also been well above average in relation to other subjects in the school for both boys and girls. The attainment of Year 11 pupils continues this trend, with the higher attainers attaining at the highest levels and lower attainers attaining in line with prior attainment.

3. Pupils in Key Stage 4 demonstrate good knowledge, understanding and recall. They are able to identify, note and summarise key points of information from a variety of sources, although the lowest attainers do so less confidently. Higher-attaining pupils are able to substantiate statements with evidence, and are well able to communicate knowledge and make links between cause. In a lesson on The New Deal, for example, pupils were able to make complex links between the aims, successes and failures of Roosevelt's policy, and make reference to prior learning about Hoover's policies.

4. In Key Stage 3 pupils make satisfactory progress across the key stage in acquiring historical knowledge. They develop the ability to describe historical events and situations - for example the social effects of the railways. They make less progress in asking and answering significant questions; for example, some written work on the abolition of slavery in the form of letters from key people tended to be superficial and over-reliant on information from the text book rather than emerging from an understanding of how and why the person selected took a particular stance.

5. Pupils make good progress in using different types of evidence to describe events, situations and features of an historical period. They make less progress in their ability to analyse and evaluate interpretations. For example, in lessons on the execution of Charles I the majority of pupils did not move on from describing the differences in the sources to an understanding of how and why the different interpretations of the event have arisen.

6. Lowest attaining pupils and those with special educational needs make relatively less progress in developing historical skills and understanding because of an over-reliance on written texts and tasks. For special educational needs pupils progress is further limited by a lack of subject-specific targets in individual education plans and in-class support. There is no significant difference between the progress of boys and girls.

7. Progress in Key Stage 4 is good. Pupils of all levels of attainment acquire and consolidate new knowledge well. They develop a sound understanding of historical concepts and become increasingly confident in their use of historical terminology. Good progress is made in skills and understanding of source analysis. They develop the ability to write extended answers to historical questions, and substantiate analytical discussions with evidence. This was observed in a lesson on the strengths and weaknesses of the League of Nations, where pupils were able to argue the case for identifying a particular event as an example of strength or weakness. There is no significant difference in the progress of boys and girls.

8. The majority of pupils in all teaching groups enjoy history and respond particularly well to oral work. They are keen to answer questions and enter into discussion. Most pupils apply themselves conscientiously to written tasks and take pride in their work. Projects on medieval York, for example, produced at the end of Year 7 reflect enthusiasm and commitment to high quality presentation. Where loss of concentration and effort occurs among lower attaining pupils, written tasks are too demanding or take too long.

9. Pupils enjoy working on collaborative tasks - such as sorting chronologically the causes of the depression in the 1930s, or categorising opinions on the abolition of slavery. They listen well to the opinions and ideas of others. This was observed in a lesson where individual presentations were given on the effects of mass unemployment in the 1930s in various countries. The positive response of pupils is due to the good relationships between teachers and pupils seen in all lessons observed, based on support and challenge, humour, encouragement and respect for individual pupils. When individual pupils presented challenging behaviour, they were managed effectively. Generally behaviour in class was satisfactory.

10. Pupils are able to develop their ability for personal study through regular and appropriate homework, which

is almost always completed. Pupils are, however, given too few opportunities for independent study based on prior learning or new research. There is a tendency for all pupils to be over-dependent on the teacher in terms of when and how to respond to tasks, despite clear instructions and explanations.

11.Until recently the structure of option blocks contributed to the relatively low uptake of history in Key Stage 4: 20 candidates in 1999, 15 in 1998; and the imbalance of more boys than girls. This has now changed significantly, with 60 pupils studying history in Year 10, with approximately equal numbers of boys and girls. This is a more accurate reflection of the success and popularity of the subject in Key Stage 3.

12.Teaching was good in two lessons and satisfactory in all others at both key stages. History is taught by specialist teachers with good knowledge and understanding of the subject. In all lessons observed, teachers used skilful questioning to elicit answers to closed questions and sometimes more open questions. Teachers' expectations of pupils are high, and where intended outcomes of the lesson are made explicit, pupils respond well. Lessons are well planned, and resources carefully prepared. In oral and collaborative work the pace is brisk but the length of time devoted to written tasks is often too great and limits progress, particularly of the lower attainers. There is an over-reliance on the use of textbooks and worksheets, some of which are inaccessible to the lowest attainers even when simplified. Pupils' work is marked very conscientiously but there is insufficient guidance on ways for improvement for individual pupils in Key Stage 3.

13.The previous inspection report judged that the range of teaching styles was too narrow with a preponderance of teacher explanation and pupil questioning. There has been an improvement since then, with a wider use of collaborative and pair work, and this provides a basis for further development across the department. The need to further develop a wider range of teaching and learning resources identified in the previous report remains. Teaching in Year 7 makes good use of the local environment, with accessible and creative approaches to Roman and Medieval York and with clearly identified progression in skills across the year.

14.In Year 9, Eden Camp is used as a teaching resource in a study of the Second World War. There is, however, no planned fieldwork in the Year 8 curriculum. In general, the range of resources for the subject is narrow, with inadequate ICT software, and a lack of appropriate artefacts and visual resources.

15.The history department is well led and organised, with a clearly stated philosophy of teaching and learning. Informal co-operation between the staff ensures the exchange of good practice and the sharing of texts. A clear monitoring and evaluation policy is in place and there is good analysis of pupil performance data to evaluate achievement. Since the last report detailed schemes of work for both key stages have been put in place. However, while assessments are planned into the scheme of work for all study units in Key Stage 3 they do not in themselves indicate planned steps in learning across the key stage, and planning for links between aspects and stages of learning across the key elements is not made clear within the schemes of work, nor are intended learning outcomes.

16.The history departmental development plan does not indicate detailed or long-term planning for staff development, information technology or impending curriculum change, all of which need to be tackled if current standards are to be maintained and improved. The role of head of humanities is under-developed, dealing with administrative and disciplinary matters. There is no effective planning, monitoring and evaluation or cross-curricular work across the humanities subjects.

17.History is a successful subject, particularly at Key Stage 4. Confidence in this success should provide a firm basis on which to further develop and meet the challenges which face it.

18.In order to develop further provision for history, the school should now :

- revise the Key Stage 3 scheme of work to ensure clarity of planning for well-stepped progress of all pupils;
- plan for and implement the use of information technology as a teaching and learning resource;
- incorporate planned fieldwork into the schemes of work for all groups in Key Stage 3;
- plan for and implement a wider range of teaching and learning resources across the department.

Information technology

1. Whilst standards of attainment in both key stages are, on balance, in line with national expectations, many pupils attain higher standards in how they handle and communicate information. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils are able to use word processing software applications to prepare text, for example, by using word wrap facilities by aligning text, by editing and by changing font style, colour and orientation. They also proof-read to produce news sheets and articles - for example in work on The Welton Times in Year 9 English and for typography work in a Greek Restaurant design in art in Year 8. They can also use simple desk top publishing (DTP) procedures and use information from the Internet and CD ROMs to enhance a piece of project work - for example, in work on volcanoes in geography in Year 8. In design and technology in Year 9, pupils are able to use a complex computer-aided design (CAD) package appropriately to produce designs for a watch and packaging for a moisture tester and use a colour printer successfully for effect. In history, some pupils in Year 8, with access to computers at home, produced some above expectation work in the topic on Medieval York by word processing text and importing images from CD ROMs and the Internet to illustrate their work. In art pupils use the Internet successfully to research the work of other artists and download images on an Egyptian theme appropriately to help them with their artwork. In personal and social education pupils use simple DTP to produce a promotional leaflet on the welfare of animals. In Year 7 information technology lessons pupils are able to set up a simple spreadsheet using given data to investigate sales of sandwiches and model the effects of changing data. They are also able to use graphs to display the outcomes of these changes. Wizards and templates are being used appropriately and successfully by most pupils to help them to lay out a professional letter. Again in Year 7 holiday brochures are designed successfully by most pupils where again the importing and re-sizing of pictures and selection of text provide an interesting perspective on various countries such as Japan and Barbados. In modern foreign languages pupils use the target language and information technology well to produce signs and symbols to practise speaking and listening skills. Generally pupils' attainment in control and measuring effects is below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 3 and needs to be improved.

2. By the end of Key Stage 4, in addition to that which most pupils attain by the end of Key Stage 3, most pupils are able to use more sophisticated information technology to improve the quality of work and attainment in other subjects. For example, most pupils are able to use digital cameras and scanners to capture an image and use editing software to manipulate and improve the quality. In music, pupils are able to compose music appropriately and use keyboards well to perform a range of music styles. Most pupils are able to apply their previous knowledge, skill and understanding of word processing and DTP to produce some good quality promotional materials and to enhance the quality of project work - for example, in business studies. When pupils have access to high quality computers and software at home this has a positive effect on the standard of their work. Pupils' attainment at the end of each key stage is, however, adversely affected by the lack of opportunity to use information communication technology in other subjects - for example, history, science, and mathematics. Most departments have secure planning in place to integrate information technology into their schemes of work but difficulties with accessing resources has meant that most departments have not yet been able to fully implement their plans. In both key stages there are limited opportunities for pupils to attain higher levels of knowledge and skill in control and measuring, although most pupils attain standards in line with expectations at the end of Key Stage 3 in how they use the computer to model and change variables and observe the effect of change through using, for example, on-screen control and simulation programmes.

3. When they are able to use information technology regularly, pupils are making satisfactory progress, in particular in how they handle and communicate information. However, pupils' keyboarding skills and basic understanding of computers are generally poor and this makes progress difficult. Pupils with special education needs make good progress when using information technology based on their prior attainment. However, their progress is hampered at times when the tasks they are asked to do are not always well matched to their level of knowledge, skill and understanding. Those pupils with special education needs who have additional support and use specialist software to help them with their work make particularly good progress.

4. There is an improving picture emerging in relation to pupils' attainment and progress with the recent improvement in resources.

5. The majority of pupils respond with enthusiasm and commitment although some pupils have a lazy attitude at times and demand a lot of teachers' time. When tasks are challenging most remain on task; they persevere, show interest and are sometimes willing to take risks in investigating the possibilities offered by a particular software package. Pupils investigate and take more risks when the tasks are a little more open-ended - for example in Key Stage 3 design and technology in Year 9 and information technology courses in Years 10 and 11. Relationships are generally good. Pupils work well together when sharing computers although they do become frustrated when computers break down or when things go wrong. Those pupils who have computers at home and who have a more secure command of information technology are always prepared to share their skill and knowledge with others. Most pupils have a desire to complete the task set and a desire to improve.

6. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and often good. The best lessons are characterised by good planning, good organisation, good subject knowledge, an enthusiastic approach and good pace. Demonstrations - for example, in the lesson on spreadsheets in Year 7 - are well structured and enable pupils to move into the task quickly and with confidence. Lesson objectives are clear and declared to pupils. Teachers use time well and judge well when pupils should toil on their own and when they should be helped. Tasks are often presented in a different way to help those pupils with special educational needs and to challenge those pupils who are attaining highly, but could be developed more. The best teachers often use skilful questioning to develop pupils' thinking and pupils make at least satisfactory progress as a result. Teachers assess pupils' performance regularly and the certificates of achievement presented at the end of each unit of work in Year 7 give pupils clear targets for improvement and enable teachers to measure and record pupils' attainment accurately. Assessment is useful in the long term but does not help day-to-day planning. This particularly constrains higher attainers. Pupils do not receive a report on progress and attainment in information technology at the end of Years 8, 9, 10 and 11. This is unsatisfactory and should be addressed either by subject departments making a comment in their subject reports or through a separate subject report for information technology.

7. The worksheets and guidance materials prepared and used by the teachers are of good quality. The commitment made by teachers to support and enable pupils to use the information communication technology facilities at all times of day is noteworthy; rarely is a computer free during the lunch time.

8. The leadership and management offered by the head of technology is very good. The headteacher and governors have given excellent support in improving information technology resources and developing a strategic vision for information technology provision in the school. Considering the progress made since the last inspection the school should be well placed to continue to improve the contribution made by subjects to the development of pupils' information technology capability. Monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching is currently not taking place. Time for the management of this aspect of the department's work is at a premium as the head of technology carries a substantial teaching load as well as other management responsibilities. This has a negative impact, hindering development, and needs to be rectified. The development plan should contain more detailed criteria which will enable the school to measure the impact of its planning and spending decisions on the quality of teaching and pupils' attainment and progress. In addition the school should increase security arrangements for access to the Internet by agreeing a code of practice with pupils and parents. The initial developments in cross-curricular information technology are good but more work needs to be done in order to enable other curriculum areas to become fully involved in this work. The planned programme for the professional development of teachers in the use of information technology is satisfactory and needs to be implemented as soon as possible.

9. The school makes quite effective and efficient use of the facilities, time and resources available and the curriculum provision does fulfil the statutory requirements. The library information technology facilities are well used during the lunch times due in part to the support given by library staff. The management of the administration and curriculum networks is excellent and technical support for information technology is very good. The school must continue to ensure that adequate time is given to network management and maintenance to ensure that systems remain effective and efficient.

10. The school has made significant progress since the last inspection in improving the quality and range of the information technology resources. It has also significantly improved the provision for involving other departments in the delivery of the information technology agenda.

11. The school should now:

- ensure that all departments contribute fully to the implementation of the information technology action plan, including assessment and recording of pupils' progress and attainment;
- review management responsibilities to include monitoring of teaching and learning;
- ensure that planned activities are matched to the needs of all pupils to ensure that they all have the optimum condition to succeed at the highest levels;
- implement the planned professional development programme for teachers;
- increase security arrangements for access to the Internet by agreeing a code of practice with pupils and parents; and
- ensure that adequate time is given to network management and maintenance to ensure that systems remain effective and efficient.

Modern Foreign Languages

1. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 is above national expectations. Standards of writing are high. Written work, notes and spelling are accurate. From a sample of pupils' written work it was clear that the higher-attaining pupils, both boys and girls, achieve high standards for their age across a full range of writing tasks. For example, they can write extended passages in French using subordinate clauses, prepositions and a good range of vocabulary. They also have a secure grasp of present tense verb endings for different verbs. Many pupils were able to enhance the quality of their writing through using their word-processing skills. In French higher-attaining pupils were seen to express preferences clearly and to be able to give reasons for their preferences; they were able to carry out an extended dialogue in a shop without using prompts or notes. Such evidence of speaking skills was rare, however, and the strength of pupils' attainment in their writing was not reflected in their ability to speak the language. Lower-attaining pupils in German were achieving standards in line with national expectations for their age. They were able to read and understand a good range of bedroom vocabulary and were able to use the accusative of the definite article accurately. A relative weakness was again in their standard of speaking, both in their willingness to use the foreign language and in the accuracy of their pronunciation, for example pronouncing the 'u' and initial 'w' sounds and the final 'e' and 's' sounds for plural nouns.

2. GCSE results in French have been above national averages for the higher grades A*-C. The pattern is that girls have achieved results well above the national average for girls and that boys attained well above the national averages in 1996 and 1997, but have fallen well below the national average for boys over the last two years. GCSE results for the higher grades in German have fluctuated from well above the national average in 1997, to well below in 1998 and then in line with national averages in 1999. The pattern here has been very different to that in French. In German boys have achieved results well above the national average; the results of the girls were also well above average in 1997, but fell well below average in the last two years. The reasons for these fluctuations have been carefully monitored. Attainment reflects the ways in which pupils have chosen their Key Stage 4 language and correspond to their levels of prior attainment. A strength in both foreign languages is that a high proportion of pupils achieve a higher grade in their foreign language than they do in their other subjects and that all pupils entered for the GCSE over the last two years have achieved a pass grade.

3. Attainment at Key Stage 4 is above the national expectation. The current attainment of pupils towards the end of Key Stage 4 shows higher-attaining pupils achieving standards which are above expectations. Draft written work by pupils in French showed a good range and variety of language with, for example, accurate use of 'si' clauses. Further samples of written work provided evidence of good extended writing with accurate use of tenses and some good colloquial phrases. Average and lower-attaining pupils are achieving in line with expectation. Virtually all pupils can write extended sentences accurately with the use of prompts and reference materials. For example, in German, pupils show good understanding of word order inversion and the use of the past tense and many pupils use dative cases and adjectives accurately in their writing. Pupils' reading and listening skills are above average both for gist and detail. As at Key Stage 3, a relative weakness is the standard pupils achieve in their speaking.

4. Progress in both key stages is good in French and is particularly good in the second foreign language, German. Boys and girls make equally good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, notably in listening and reading. Pupils just starting French in Year 7 have made good progress in the way in which they can understand the teacher speaking to them in the foreign language at near normal speed. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 8 were seen to be making excellent progress in French. Pupils in Year 10 are making good progress, particularly in their reading and writing. They can recall well what they have learnt previously. In one lesson observed pupils made poor progress as a result of poor class management by the teacher.

5. Pupils - both boys and girls - have positive attitudes to learning a foreign language. In lessons pupils are well organised and work quickly. Pupils clearly want to do well. They are willing to participate and volunteer. Classwork and homework tasks are completed carefully. Through well-structured teaching they develop their capacity both for learning a foreign language and for personal study. Behaviour is good and as a result time is used very effectively in lessons. Pupils work in a mature, responsible and independent manner when required. They show respect for each other. They help each other well and this has a positive impact on their progress – for example, in tackling problems of vocabulary and comprehension and in understanding word order in a German sentence. A high proportion of pupils show initiative in improving the quality of their own performance, particularly in writing and in asking good questions to clarify what is expected of them. A relative weakness is that a substantial minority of pupils shows little such initiative and is too dependent on the teacher, notably in developing their speaking skills. In one lesson observed behaviour was unruly and pupils had little sense of purpose. Overall, however, the response of the pupils is good.

6. Teaching in modern foreign languages is good. Teaching observed in Key Stage 3 was good in three lessons and very good in another lesson. Teaching in Key Stage 4 was good in four lessons and poor in one lesson. Strengths in the good teaching observed were the very clear and thorough organisation of learning, skilful classroom management, the insistence on high standards and the careful monitoring and assessment of progress. Above all, teachers provide continuous reinforcement of what pupils need to do in order to improve. In one Year 9 lesson, the teacher used the foreign language with good pace, rhythm and natural fluency and showed through pauses and silences a good understanding of how pupils can recall language they have learnt previously and build on it to improve the quality of their performance. In a Year 11 lesson the good teaching showed the value of using authentic reading materials from foreign tourist offices and of providing grammar reference materials to improve pupils' progress. As a result teaching developed self-esteem well among lower-attaining pupils. The one poor lesson observed was characterised by uncomfortable noise levels, too little teaching and by a small number of boys being allowed to dominate open questions to the class. Overall, however, the good teaching creates a positive ethos for language learning.

7. The subject leadership of modern foreign languages is very good and has a very positive impact on attainment despite poor accommodation and limited access to ICT. The subject is very well managed. Policy and expectations are consistent across both foreign languages, across year groups and for pupils of different levels of attainment. The department has continued to develop successfully in all aspects since its last inspection.

8. In order to raise standards further, the school should:

- improve standards in speaking by
 - providing opportunities for pupils to build extended conversations;
 - developing pupils' initiative in using the foreign language;
 - sharing best practice;
- ensure all pupils benefit from teaching which is at least satisfactory;
- improve as a matter of urgency the quality of accommodation; and
- improve the opportunities for pupils to use ICT to enhance their language learning.

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· **Music**

1. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 is broadly in line with and often above national expectations. Most pupils are able to demonstrate a wide range of musical skills and understanding, both through performing and

composing their own music, and by investigating and interpreting music composed by other people. In listening and appraising sessions they draw on a store of appropriate factual knowledge about music, and can demonstrate good use of the technical vocabulary needed for discussing the music they take part in and listen to.

2.Higher-attaining pupils achieve standards that are well above the expectation. In a Year 9 lesson, for example, the attainment demonstrated by all pupils was outstanding. In making an arrangement of a blues, pupils worked effectively in small groups to produce high quality performances, showing a good understanding of the nature of the blues as a musical style, an ability to construct fluent and authentic melodic lines and accompaniments, exceptionally good use of a wide range of instrumental resources and an ability to work well in ensemble.

3.Only one lesson was observed where pupils achieved standards that fell below the national expectation, and this was because the task set for this lower attaining class was largely performance-based, requiring a level of performance skill and instrumental facility not yet acquired by the majority of pupils. There is no marked difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Statutory assessment by teachers in music has not been carried out at the end of Key Stage 3, but inspection evidence indicates that standards of attainment have been maintained.

4.Results at Key Stage 4 have generally shown a marked improvement since the last inspection, with pupils achieving standards that are broadly in line with national averages. In 1999, however GCSE results were well below the national average. The small cohort of pupils entered for music consisted only of girls, with 50 per cent achieving grades A*-C against a national figure (for girls) of 73 per cent. Current inspection evidence indicates however that levels of attainment in the present Year 11 are above average.

5.Many pupils in Key Stage 4 are able to demonstrate outstanding abilities in composing and performing, exploring a range of musical styles and genres with comparative ease. They produce sophisticated compositions drawing on a range of influences including specific techniques used in contemporary jazz; they move easily between complex changes in harmony and time signature, performing with expression and intuition in a variety of ensembles; and they use music technology to very good effect, manipulating, refining and recording their work to a professional standard. A good example of this was observed in an after-school session where three pupils were working together on a song composition. The pupils used an effects unit and the hard-disc digital recording facility very competently, in order to develop a high quality recording of their composition. Their appraisal of the work in progress was excellent. They listened sensitively to each other's suggestions for improvement, and implemented those that were judged to be effective. The unfinished work was stored digitally, to be revised and refined in future sessions.

6.Pupils in both key stages are able to understand and use a very wide technical vocabulary for talking about and analysing music. Those who have instrumental lessons make effective use of their particular skills within the classroom setting - for example, by using their own brass and woodwind instruments to play a classroom ensemble piece, thus adding another dimension to the performance.

7.Progress in Key Stage 3 is almost always good for pupils of all abilities, and one lesson was observed where pupils made excellent progress in the skills of arranging, improvising and playing in an ensemble. Good progress was seen in a lesson which required effective and accurate responses to rhythmic ideas, and which tested pupils' abilities to translate these into invented notations. Pupils were also seen to make good progress in developing a music-specific vocabulary that they were then able to apply to subsequent work.

8.In Key Stage 4 progress is good when pupils are working together in small performance groups. Progress is generally slower (but is still satisfactory) in class-based lessons with a theoretical bias, owing to the immature attitudes demonstrated by a small number of pupils who find the requirements for written work difficult. In practical sessions, pupils use opportunities effectively to demonstrate their gains in knowledge, skills and understanding at levels appropriate to their abilities, both within lessons and over a period of time. They show clear evidence of an ability to understand and retain information, and to apply it to their subsequent practical work. Very rapid progress was observed during a Key Stage 4 lesson where pupils were working together on a

combined composition. Progress was very good both in terms of the development of pupils' musical thinking, and in the sophisticated use of recording equipment. Sequencing and multi-tracking techniques were well understood and effectively used to produce high quality results.

9. Pupils with special educational needs generally make satisfactory progress in the music department. The work is well matched to suit their needs, with teachers making good use of a variety of approaches. In a practical session, for example, teachers might provide good access for a non-playing pupil by altering the tuning of a guitar, thus allowing the pupil to produce a simple but effective song accompaniment. The individual education plans for pupils with special needs are not used to inform departmental planning, but no negative impact was noted.

10. Pupils' attitudes to work in Key Stage 3 are good or very good in lessons. They maintain their interest in the work over long periods of time, and know what to do to improve their results. They readily seek advice and help from the teacher, and relationships within the class are healthy and productive. Behaviour is good, and pupils support and encourage each other, valuing each other's efforts when there are opportunities to show their composing or performing work to the rest of the class. Pupils collaborate well and respect the feelings of their classmates. They generously applaud other groups' performances, and are courteous in the ways in which they discuss and evaluate their efforts and achievements.

11. In Key Stage 4 pupils respond very well to the work when it is practically based, involving composing and performing activities. A small minority of pupils display immature attitudes when the work is biased towards listening and appraising, and when some written work is required. A few pupils are unwilling to concentrate, and they act as a distracting and demotivating influence on the others. A significant imbalance between the numbers of boys and girls in the Year 11 group exacerbates the situation, with the boys tending to dominate, and the girls feeling marginalised and resentful. At other times the same pupils are capable of approaching their practical work with maturity and enthusiasm, showing unusually high levels of personal motivation and achieving well.

12. Teaching at Key Stage 3 is always at least good. In more than half of the lessons observed teaching was good or very good, and in two lessons teaching was judged to be outstanding. At Key Stage 4 teaching is satisfactory, and was good in one-third of the lessons observed. In the best teaching, the pace is brisk and purposeful, and tasks are well planned, engaging and rigorous. Questioning is well used and is effectively targeted towards individual pupils in order to support, encourage and challenge them appropriately. When teachers give guidance in mid task, they do so sensitively in order to help pupils improve their work. The teaching staff have a thorough knowledge of the needs of individual pupils and have identified successful strategies for addressing these. Their considerable musical and professional skills contribute significantly to pupils' learning and attainment, particularly when used to develop pupils' own musical abilities. Teachers' expectations relating to standards of attainment and behaviour are very high, and pupils know and respond well to this. Whilst the teaching promotes high technical standards, it does not yet fully exploit pupils' needs to explore their spirituality and sense of the aesthetic through music, and at Key Stage 4 some teaching does not yet deal effectively with unsatisfactory attitudes among a small number of pupils. The quality of teaching has improved overall, however, since the last inspection.

13. The Key Stage 3 curriculum meets statutory requirements, but the newly appointed head of music is currently redrafting the schemes of work in order to improve the range and breadth of activities, and to ensure that pupils' needs are met in ways which enable them to make appropriate progress. Good systems are in place for periodically assessing pupils' attainment, and these concur with the school's system of ten-weekly assessments. Informal procedures are in place for assessing and monitoring pupils' day to day attainment and progress. Whilst not formally documented these are nevertheless effective, enabling teachers to adjust the level of demand for particular pupils.

14. The department is adequately resourced with basic electronic keyboards but there is an insufficient variety of tuned classroom instruments, and this restricts pupils' opportunities to explore, compose with and listen to a wide range of sound sources. Music technology equipment is good, and a variety of suitable software is available. Plans are in place to ensure that the department will shortly have access to an improved range of technological equipment for supporting the music curriculum.

15.The school is well served by a team of visiting instrumental staff who teach approximately 80 pupils on a weekly basis, all of whom are achieving appropriate standards in performance. The department provides a rich and exciting programme of extra-curricular opportunities. Some of these are appropriate for those pupils who already learn an instrument. The Big Band, for example, is made up of pupils and teaching staff from other departments in the school, and is an accomplished and professional performing group that has already made many public appearances and that tours Europe on a regular basis. The school stages regular large-scale musical performances, and there are many other ensembles, bands, choirs and groups available to pupils on both an informal and a formal basis. One recent innovation has been the introduction of an 'open-access' ensemble that is designed by staff to encourage more pupils of all abilities to take part in wide-ranging music-making activities. The school is justly proud of its extensive extra-curricular programme in music, which is a significant strength. The music department has continued to maintain high standards recognised at the last inspection.

16.In order to continue to raise standards, the department should now:

- continue to review and redesign the Key Stage 3 curriculum in line with the new requirements, providing carefully structured programmes of work that reflect a wide range of music from various times and places, and that enable all pupils to make suitable progress;
- develop the spiritual aspect of pupils' education by helping them to balance the essential technical requirements of the music curriculum with a sense of the aesthetic;
- widen the range of available instrumental resources; and
- develop and put in place appropriate and supportive teaching strategies to deal effectively with the small number of Key Stage 4 pupils whose attitudes towards the theoretical aspects of the syllabus are immature.

Physical education

1.At the end of Key Stage 3 levels of attainment are in line with National Curriculum average standards. There are no significant differences between boys or girls. Girls achieve high standards in volleyball and some boys achieve high standards in soccer.

2.At the end of Key Stage 4 levels of attainment are in line with National Curriculum average standards. In GCSE physical education progress in relation to prior attainment is good. Although GCSE results for 1999 were poor, these results in relation to the particular cohort of students' academic ability were good. Some examples were observed of poor performance levels for girls in Year 11 netball but this is also balanced by higher-attaining girls in the same year group. In health-related exercise both boys and girls attained good standards and were confident in planning their own exercise programmes. Pupils are also able to explain the benefits of regular planned physical activity. Levels of attainment in relation to GCSE results are below national standards with 28 per cent of pupils gaining higher grades A*-C in 1998. However, standards are rising and the quality of work observed was broadly typical of national expectations. Higher-attaining pupils in GCSE demonstrated good knowledge and understanding of key anatomical principles - for example, types of muscular contraction. Presentation of pupils' work was good. Some pupils in Years 10 and 11 demonstrated exceptional performance in soccer.

3.During Key Stage 3 pupils' progress is satisfactory and sometimes good. Where groups are of mixed ability, levels of progress differ - for example, in Year 7 boys gymnastics and Year 8 girls netball. In girls' activities, particularly volleyball, high-attaining pupils progress rapidly and they were able to make perceptive comments on the range of shots available to them. Progress of the lower-attaining pupils is not as rapid, but steady - for example, in Year 9 soccer where boys take time to develop passing and positional skills. In hockey girls in Year 7 co-operate well which enhances their own progress in terms of their skill development.

4.At Key Stage 4 pupils' progress is good especially for high-attaining pupils in boys' basketball and girls' trampolining. In trampolining girls achieve well and gain in confidence as they experience success with their routines.

5. Pupils' attitudes are variable. Those pupils with special educational needs that include behavioural problems show less interest in their work. However, most pupils, boys and girls, demonstrate good behaviour and it is the quality of relationships between pupils and teachers that enhances this process. The department works hard to create a positive ethos and a willingness on behalf of the pupils to participate and enjoy their activities. Assessment of pupils' behaviour is recorded in the ten-week plans and this helps to guide teachers planning. Further good examples exist of excellent behaviour out of school by Year 11 pupils at the Barbican Fitness Centre in York. This is also balanced against poor behaviour by some boys in Year 9 soccer and non-participant girls in Year 11 netball. Higher attaining pupils show respect for other people's feelings and show initiative and enthusiasm for their activities.

6. Teaching across Key Stage 3 was satisfactory in a third of the lessons, good in a third and very good in a further third. Lessons are generally effectively planned, providing good demonstrations with purposeful questioning. At Key Stage 4 teaching was good in half the lessons and very good in the other lessons except for one satisfactory lesson. Lessons are well planned and teachers use time and resources effectively. Introductions to lessons are particularly good with good warm-up exercises. Explanations are often clear and teachers have high expectations of pupils. On occasions teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to evaluate their own performance or demonstrate their own knowledge and understanding. In some activities non-participants need to be occupied more effectively. Pupils' work is regularly assessed in GCSE and the marking of this work is consistent across the department. Teachers' knowledge and understanding are generally good and sometimes very good, particularly with regard to the specialist teachers in the department.

7. The physical education curriculum meets statutory requirements and is balanced across the key stages. Since the last inspection a further range of activities have been introduced such as aerobics, hill walking and health-related exercise sessions at the Barbican Centre in York. These activities add to the breadth and quality of the curriculum. Swimming is not offered either at Key Stage 3 or Key Stage 4. Schemes of work are adequately detailed and appropriate. They are followed through and on occasion necessarily adapted to suit specific pupils needs, for example in soccer for less able pupils. A significant number of pupils continue to wear jewellery in lessons. Some aspects of the health-related fitness programme are not totally appropriate for secondary school pupils. There is some evidence to show ICT is used in the curriculum - for example, CD ROMs for GCSE groups and video analysis in gymnastics and dance. Assessment procedures are effective and to some extent are used to help shape curriculum planning. There is no additional support for the high number of pupils with special educational needs. Some teaching groups are too large - for example, in Year 9 games - and this has a negative impact on the quality of learning. Extra-curricular provision is good with some excellent results in soccer, athletics and cross-country.

8. The physical education department is well led by the head of department. Documentation is good, as are the schemes of work. Some further work is required to develop the department's development plan. The subject action plan from the previous inspection has in most part been implemented. For example lessons are well planned and most pupils are more fully involved with regard to their own learning. The curriculum has now been extended. Documentation relating to safety has been developed but lacks exemplification for throwing activities. The aims of the department are well documented and these are evident in the delivery of teaching sessions. Teaching is monitored across the department with written reports completed on a yearly basis. A strong ethos exists in the department that promotes enjoyment towards physical activity as well as positive attitudes that help towards pupils' lifelong participation. Very good relationships exist between staff and pupils which help to promote an effective learning environment.

9. Staff in the department are well qualified with a number of relevant up-to-date coaching qualifications. Support from other teachers in the school is effective and ensures the necessary breadth in curricular and extra-curricular activities. Professional development arrangements are poor and few opportunities exist for staff to update their skills in curriculum areas. The department has responded to the previous inspection's recommendations with regard to updating skills in rounders. There is a lack of staff development for teachers and limited monitoring of practice. Accommodation is barely satisfactory. As the school grows these resources will not be adequate to effectively deliver the curriculum. Library resources are poor and further texts for GCSE PE would be useful in order to raise standards. Good use is made of IT facilities for example CD ROMs for GCSE PE and video analysis in gymnastics and dance. Displays across the department are good.

10. In order to raise standards the school should:

- develop strategies for dealing with disaffected pupils and non-participants;
- review safety procedures and exemplify safety guidelines including jewellery in department documentation;
- reduce group sizes that have a negative impact on learning and provide support for pupils with special educational needs;
- develop spiritual and cultural aspects in the curriculum;
- raise standards in GCSE and develop learning resources to support this; and
- extend the department development plan so that it includes planned INSET provision.

• **Religious education**

1. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 is below the standard set by the North Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus. Fewer pupils than one would expect reach that standard. Higher attaining pupils can apply their understanding of religious ideas - for example Hindu dharma - to their own lives, and know the scientific explanation of the origins of the universe to set alongside the religious explanation. Those of average and below average attainment lack a clear understanding of the interplay of dharma, karma, samsara and moksha in the Hindu faith, and their knowledge of the creation stories from different religious traditions is uncertain.

2. The small number of pupils opting to take the full GCSE course tend to be those of below average attainment. Small numbers make comparisons unreliable. However, since 1997 when the ten candidates achieved more grades A*-C than the national average, results have been well below the national average. In the 1999 examinations no candidates achieved an A*-C grade, and the percentage achieving an A*-G grade was well below the national average. This year a group of over 20 pupils have begun the short GCSE course. Inspection evidence shows that at the end of Key Stage 4 pupils' attainment in the examination classes is well below the national average, and in the general religious education classes pupils' attainment is well below the standard set by the agreed syllabus. There has been no improvement in attainment since the previous inspection. Pupils in the examination class cannot identify the main point of Jesus' parables about the Kingdom of God and cannot remember how Mark's Gospel fits into the synoptic pattern. Their responses to the case studies of moral issues tend to be simplistic, and very few pupils understand the breadth of Christian teaching on divorce, for example. They lack the skills to undertake independent enquiry. Pupils in the general religious education classes have no clear understanding of the Christian response to moral issues and have an unsatisfactory knowledge of the teachings of the Bible.

3. At Key Stage 3 pupils make satisfactory progress in gaining knowledge and developing understanding. From concrete work in Year 7 on communities, pupils progress to abstract ideas in Hinduism in Year 9, able to draw conclusions from a video on a possible previous life. Pupils of above average attainment most often make sound progress in class, except when excessive explanation of the task by the teacher reduces its challenge. Those with special educational needs make sound progress because lessons are often predominantly oral and they receive effective support from the teacher. At Key Stage 4 pupils in the examination classes make unsatisfactory progress as they find complex ideas hard to grasp and are unable to retain the detailed information required for success. Pupils in the general religious education classes make unsatisfactory progress mainly because the unsatisfactory attitudes of a large minority affect the majority. In lessons pupils of above average attainment and those with special educational needs most often make the same progress as their fellows. When teachers' talk predominates, as it did in a Year 10 class studying divorce, pupils of above average attainment make insufficient progress, and when tasks and resources are not effectively matched to their attainment, pupils with special educational needs make insufficient progress.

4. At Key Stage 3 pupils have a satisfactory response to religious education, although it is muted. Pupils are accepting rather than enthusiastic. In the GCSE classes at Key Stage 4 pupils respond well, working hard, but in the general religious education classes a vocal minority has negative attitudes. The small numbers of pupils, not above ten in recent years, opting for GCSE is a reflection of the interest generated as well as of the attraction of alternative subjects. Many pupils have a short attention span during lengthy oral sessions and are very reluctant to take part in discussion, but concentrate well on a written task. Most pupils in all classes behave well, but the poor behaviour of a minority in some classes has an adverse effect on the progress of all

pupils in that class. With very few exceptions, relationships are good, and pupils are courteous to each other and to adults. They have few opportunities to collaborate on a group task and lack the capacity to work independently on a research task. A small minority in many classes shows insufficient respect for the views and beliefs of others.

5. Teaching is satisfactory, though unsatisfactory features predominate in almost a third of lessons. While there is now no superficiality and no sluggish pace, there has been insufficient progress since the previous inspection. The teaching of the supply teacher is not as competent as that of the head of department. In the most successful lessons open questions, such as, “Why did the pharisees not respond to Jesus’ teaching?” and “What does childlike mean?” [in the context of the Kingdom of God] challenge pupils. Homework that asks pupils to identify five responsibilities that they might have as human beings is similarly demanding and worthwhile. Good classroom management and good relationships allow learning to take place in a pleasant atmosphere. The specialist knowledge of the head of department allows her to teach with authority. Lessons are carefully planned, but not in terms of what the pupils should learn. The pace of lessons is most often satisfactory, but seldom brisk. Teaching methods lack variety and most pupil activity involves completing a worksheet. Pupils are given insufficient opportunities to plan and carry out their own ways of working. Teaching is unsatisfactory when class management skills are insufficient to ensure that all pupils make progress, and when over-lengthy exposition reduces the time available for pupil activity and promotes boredom. For some pupils work and resources are insufficiently well matched to their attainment, and they make insufficient progress.

6. The management of the department is unsatisfactory. Because the head of department has other considerable responsibilities in school the leadership of the department suffers. The assistant teacher appointed in September to share responsibility is on extended sick leave, and the burden is undiminished. Organising and delivering three distinct courses at Key Stage 4 is excessive. Since the previous inspection the time allocated to general religious education at Key Stage 4 has increased, yet is still insufficient to allow the agreed syllabus to be taught in sufficient breadth or depth. The curriculum for that group fails to meet the requirements of the agreed syllabus in its inadequate coverage of ultimate questions and its neglect of a systematic study of religions at an appropriate depth. This was a criticism in the previous inspection. Insufficient use is made of information technology. Pupils are not given first hand experience of faith communities other than the Christian. Assessment procedures are sound, but make insufficient use of the end of key stage statements provided in the Agreed Syllabus. Reports to parents do not indicate clearly enough what pupils know, understand, and can do, and neither do those at the end of Key Stage 3 report attainment in terms of the end of key stage statements. Because the two classrooms are a long way apart, there is insufficient opportunity for informal, rapid contact between the two teachers, which is a significant disadvantage when one is very new to the school, a criticism in the previous inspection. Resources have been improved since the previous inspection, but at Key Stage 3 are still narrow in range. The subject makes a substantial contribution to the spiritual and moral development of pupils.

7. In order to improve standards the school should now:

- rationalise the Key Stage 4 courses, and if non-examination general religious education is to be retained, ensure that the requirements of the agreed syllabus are met;
- increase the interest and enthusiasm of pupils by using a much wider range of teaching methods and provide a much wider range of activities for them; and
- provide a greater range of resources and develop the use of information technology.

- **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**
- **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

1.The team consisted of 14 inspectors who spent in total 45.5 inspector days in school over four consecutive days.

2.During the inspection 147 lessons, many registration sessions and some year and school assemblies were inspected. In total over 142 hours were spent in classes, in discussions with pupils and in evaluation of their work.

3.Inspectors looked at the written work of many pupils. All the available written work of a representative sample of three pupils from each year group was inspected together with the work of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need. Formal discussions were held with these pupils and informal discussions were held with many more throughout the school.

4.All subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education were inspected along with provision for pupils with special educational needs.

5.All teachers were observed teaching, the majority on several occasions. Non-teaching staff were also observed in their roles. Extra-curricular activities were observed. Observations were made of pupils arriving at school, during breaks and lunchtime and when leaving school. Assemblies, registrations and tutorial sessions were observed.

6.Meetings were held prior to the inspection with the senior managers, including governors, and the whole staff. During the inspection planned discussions were held on many occasions with members of the teaching staff, other staff, Chair of Governors, other governors and the governing body as a group. Daily meetings were held between the Registered Inspector and the headteacher.

7.Documentation provided by the school was analysed both before and during the inspection, including the school's aims, prospectus, school development plan, budget details, curriculum policies, whole-school policies, minutes of meetings of the governing body, annual report of governors to parents, National Curriculum results, and GCSE and other external examination results. Attendance registers, pupils' records and reports to parents were also inspected.

8.The Registered Inspector held a meeting attended by nine parents prior to the inspection. The team received and analysed 61 responses from parents to a questionnaire sent to them about their opinions of the school.

262. **DATA AND INDICATORS**

262. **Pupil data**

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
Y7 - Y11	639	19	156	82

262. **Teachers and classes**

262. **Qualified teachers (Y7 - Y11)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	36.22
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	17.6

262. **Education support staff (Y7 - Y11)**

Total number of education support staff:	10
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	199

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes: 79

Average teaching group size:	KS2	
	KS3	23.6
	KS4	20.2

262. **Financial data**

Financial year:	1998-1999
	£
Total Income	1,163,266
Total Expenditure	1,178,289
Expenditure per pupil	2,198
Balance brought forward from previous year	4,286
Balance carried forward to next year	-10,737

262. **PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out: 637
 Number of questionnaires returned: 61

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	21.3	62.3	11.5	4.9	-
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	39.3	54.1	3.3	1.6	1.6
The school handles complaints from parents well	21.8	49.1	21.8	3.6	3.6
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	16.7	60.0	16.7	6.7	-
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	42.6	50.8	4.9	1.6	-
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	27.9	57.4	4.9	8.2	-
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	25.0	58.3	11.7	1.7	3.3
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	16.4	63.9	6.6	11.5	1.6
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	21.3	45.9	27.9	3.3	1.6
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	16.9	50.8	15.3	10.2	6.8
My child(ren) like(s) school	31.1	54.1	8.2	3.3	3.3