

INSPECTION REPORT

Selwood VC Anglican Methodist Middle School
Frome

LEA area: Somerset

Unique Reference Number: 123894

Headteacher: Mr G H Wright

Reporting inspector: Sandra Tweddell

Dates of inspection: 8 - 11 November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 708245

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Middle deemed Secondary
Type of control:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	9 to 13
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Berkley Road Frome Somerset BA11 2EF
Telephone number:	01373 462798
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr John Killah
Date of previous inspection:	7 - 11 November 1994

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Sandra Tweddell, RgI	Modern foreign languages	Attainment and progress Teaching
Shirley Elomari, Lay Inspector	Equal opportunities	Leadership and management Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils welfare Partnership with parents and the community Curriculum and assessment
Paul Cosway	English Drama	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Niall Carr	History	
Angela Fraser	Physical education Science Information technology Design and technology	N/A
Sylvia Greenland	Geography	N/A
Paul Ingram	Mathematics	Efficiency
Eileen Metcalfe	Religious education	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Terence Payne	Art	N/A
Philip Winch	Music Special educational needs SEN Unit & Assessment	N/A

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- There is above average attainment in speaking, listening and reading at both key stages and in science at Key Stage 3.
- Attainment in art, history and drama exceeds what is expected.
- Extra-curricular music is very good.
- The behaviour of pupils is good and their attitudes are most positive, relationships are very good.
- The school provides a welcoming and caring environment, support and guidance is very good.
- Attendance is above average.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and the provision in the Language Resource Base is very good.
- The provision for moral development is very good.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Attainment in writing is below average at both key stages.
- II. Higher attaining pupils do not always make the progress they should in mathematics at Key Stage 2.
- III. Information technology is not used in all subjects to support learning.
- IV. The data from assessment is not yet fully used to ensure that pupils make progress.

Selwood Middle School ensures that its pupils are safe in a caring environment. The strengths of the school outweigh the weaknesses but the weaknesses will form part of the action plan that will be sent to all parents and carers by the governing body.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made sound progress overall on the issues identified in the last inspection. A well thought out process for the school development plan ensures that all staff are involved in its preparation and review and it is effective in helping the school to meet its priorities. There is a good policy for ensuring that staff are kept abreast of developments in education. Monitoring of English, mathematics and science has taken place and the information is being used to raise attainment. The previous strengths have been maintained.

The school has good management systems in place to ensure that it continues to improve further.

Standards in subjects

This table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools		Key
			<i>well above average</i>	A
			<i>above average</i>	B
English	C	D	<i>Average</i>	C
Mathematics	C	D	<i>below average</i>	D
Science	B	B	<i>well below average</i>	E

Over the three years to 1998, the performance of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 in English and science was above the national average and in mathematics, it was close to the national average. In 1999, attainment fell in all three subjects. Although more pupils attained average results in mathematics because it was a focus for

development, fewer attained the higher levels. The reason for the drop in attainment in English was below average performance in writing. The school has acted swiftly to put systems into place to improve performance.

The inspection found that at the end of Key Stage 2 and in Year 8, attainment in speaking and listening and reading is above average but in writing, it is below average. Attainment in mathematics is improving, particularly amongst the boys, and at the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is below average but in Year 8 it is in line with the national average. At the end of Key Stage 2 and in Year 8, attainment in science is above average. In information and communication technology attainment is average and in religious education it is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. There are many strengths in attainment in history, drama and art at both key stages and in physical education at Key Stage 3.

Quality of teaching

	Overall quality	Most effective in:	Least effective in:
Years 5 – 6	satisfactory	French, art, history, drama, geography	English, mathematics
Years 7 – 8	satisfactory	French, art, history, drama, science, geography, physical education	English, music
English	satisfactory		
Mathematics	satisfactory		

The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in 93 per cent of lessons, and of this, 63 per cent of teaching is good and 25 per cent is very good or excellent. At Key Stage 3, 73 per cent of lessons were good or better and at Key Stage 2, 56 per cent were good or better.

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

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Behaviour is good. The majority of pupils have very good attitudes towards their work.
Attendance	Good and pupils arrive on time.
Ethos*	Good, relationships are very good and there is a commitment to high standards.
Leadership and management	Good overall. The headteacher has set a clear direction for the school's development, he is well supported by the deputy headteacher, governors are closely involved in the school and heads of department and of years are generally effective. Monitoring of attainment is beginning to become effective.
Curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum is broad and assessment procedures are good. Assessment is not always used to inform planning.
Pupils with special educational needs	The provision within the school is good and in the language base is very good.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Good overall. Provision for moral development is very good.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Satisfactory overall. There are weaknesses in the accommodation for music and for physical education.
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

- V. The attitudes and values that the school promotes
- VI. The link books are very good.
- VII. The school cares well for their children.
- VIII. Behaviour is excellent.
- IX. The school is approachable and parents are very welcome
- X. There are many good opportunities for the arts.

What some parents are not happy about

- XI. A few are concerned about the inconsistency of
- XII. Some find the interim reports confusing.
- XIII. Many are confused about the inconsistency of
- XIV. A few think there are too few after-school
- XV. About 10% of those who responded feel ill
- XVI. A few do not understand the nature of the

The inspection team found that the school promotes good attitudes and values and that the behaviour of the pupils is good. Pupils and parents find the link books extremely useful for communications. The school is welcoming and pupils are cared for well. Attainment fell in 1999 but the school has been quick to find out why and to put systems into place to improve attainment. Provision for the arts is very good. Homework is set regularly and in most subjects. There are many activities at lunch time and a good range of extra-curricular activities after school, including sports activities. Information about the school is satisfactory, but there is little information about the curriculum and the reports have little detail about the progress that pupils make. The after school classes are available to pupils as part of broadening the curriculum. They contribute to the school's provision for extending the learning of higher attaining pupils. The school is aware of the concern about the after school classes and has taken steps to tackle this.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to raise attainment, the headteacher, senior management team, governors and staff should:-

- XVII. Raise attainment in writing by ensuring that pupils are encouraged to plan, write, improve the structure and ideas, proof read and correct their writing in all subjects, (paragraphs 12, 13, 14, 21, 37, 51, 114, 116, 119, 123, 125, 126, 129, 141, 143, 153, 193, 194)
- XVIII. Raise attainment in mathematics at Key Stage 2 by ensuring that higher attaining pupils are given tasks that extend their knowledge, skills and understanding, (paragraphs 10, 11, 13, 15, 38, 51, 131, 132)
- XIX. Ensure that the skills that pupils acquire in information technology are used to increase their learning in all subjects, (paragraphs 40, 137, 157, 191)
- XX. Use the data that is coming from the good assessment procedures to track and improve the progress that pupils make in all subjects. (paragraphs 61, 191, 192, 202)

In addition to the key issues listed above, governors should take account of the following less important weaknesses when drawing up their action plan:-

- XXI. Establish a cycle for monitoring attainment and the quality of provision in all subjects. (paragraphs 85, 91)
- XXII. Implement the marking policy in all subjects. (paragraphs 62, 127, 128, 137)
- XXIII. Ensure that the full programme of study is taught in music at Key Stage 3 so that pupils are enabled to make progress. (paragraphs 23, 44, 55, 207, 208,)
- XXIV. Ensure that pupils are aware of the need for care when designing an object. (paragraphs 19, 43, 176, 177, 179, 180)
- XXV. Review the reports to parents so that they clearly indicate the progress that pupils are making.

(paragraphs 71, 78)

XXVI. Ensure that the annual report to parents from the governing body contains all the information that is required by law. (paragraphs 77)

XXVII. At Key Stage 2, ensure that the tasks that are set for pupils are appropriate for their attainment, particularly for the higher attaining pupils. (paragraphs 147, 163)

XXVIII. As finances permit, ensure that there are sufficient resources for all subjects. (paragraphs 97)

· INTRODUCTION

· Characteristics of the school

1. Selwood Middle School takes in pupils between the ages of 9 and 13. There are 794 pupils on roll, which makes it much bigger than most middle schools. It is situated in a semi-rural area and about 18 per cent of pupils come from the villages around. There are approximately the same number of boys and girls in the school and there are very few pupils from backgrounds other than English. The number of pupils who are entitled to free school meals, 11.5 per cent, is about average. The number of pupils on the school's register of special educational need is 158 and of these, 25 have a statement of special educational need which is much higher than average. This figure includes 12 pupils who attend a unit for pupils with speech and language disorders which is attached to the school. The attainment on entry is broadly average.
2. The school aims to achieve total quality education for all pupils to enable them to reach their full potential as individuals and as members of their communities within the Frome Area Federation of schools. Its objectives include the creation of a happy, stimulating and exciting school that aims for the highest standards of behaviour, achievement and presentation.
3. The current priorities are to raise standards in literacy, numeracy and information and communications technology and to use data to monitor the progress of individual pupils.

3. Key indicators

1. Attainment at Key Stage 2¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1998	104	99	203

4. National Curriculum Test		English	Mathematics	Science
Results				
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or Above	Boys	56	53	79
	Girls	74	51	72
	Total	130	104	151
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	64 (65)	51 (64)	75 (80)
	National	65 (63)	59 (62)	69 (69)

4. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or Above	Boys	53	61	83
	Girls	72	54	80
	Total	125	115	163
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	62 (63)	57 (67)	81 (85)
	National	65 (63)	65 (64)	72 (69)

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1

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

2. **Attendance**

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed			%
Through absence for the latest complete Reporting year:	Authorised	School	5.3
	Absence	National comparative data	6.1
	Unauthorised	School	0.1
	Absence	National comparative data	0.4

5.

6. **Exclusions**

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:		Number
	Fixed period	4
	Permanent	1

6.

7. **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	25
	Satisfactory or better	93
	Less than satisfactory	7

7. PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

7. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

7. Attainment and progress

3. In the National Curriculum tests in 1998 at the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in English and mathematics was in line with national averages and was above average in science. In comparison with schools that have a similar intake of pupils, attainment was below average in English and mathematics and above average in science.
4. In the three years up to 1998, at the end of Key Stage 2, performance in English and science was above the national average and in mathematics it was close to the national average. Over the three years to 1998, boys attained above average results in English and science, but well below average results in mathematics. Girls' performance was better in mathematics in that they performed close to the national average. In English they attained above average results and in science, well above average results.
5. In 1999 attainment fell to be below the national average in English and in mathematics and was in line with the national average in science. The school had been focusing on mathematics and was successful in raising the number of pupils who attained average levels from the previous year, but was less successful in ensuring that pupils attained the higher levels of the tests. Staff had recognised that attainment in English was a problem. The literacy hour had been reviewed in April 1999 as part of a focus on English and methods of raising attainment had been identified.
6. The inspection found that attainment in mathematics is below average at Key Stage 2, but that boys are doing better because of the work that has been done on identifying why boys were underachieving. One reason for the boys' higher attainment is higher expectations of what they can achieve. Attainment in English is also improving as the new methods which were identified are being put into effect. Attainment in science is above average owing to effective use of assessment to track pupils and ensure that they are performing as highly as possible.
7. Attainment in Year 8 is in line with what is expected of thirteen year olds in mathematics. It exceeds expectations in science, speaking, listening and reading, but is below average in writing.
8. Progress across the school is satisfactory at both key stages. This is because the senior management team quickly identifies where there is a problem and acts to remedy it. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, they receive effective support and their needs are catered for well in lessons. Higher attaining pupils sometimes do not make the progress they should, particularly in writing and mathematics at Key Stage 2, as the work is pitched too low for their needs. The very few pupils for whom English is an additional language make good progress in English due to effective provision.
9. Attainment in speaking, listening and reading is above average at both key stages and pupils make good progress. This is because pupils are given many opportunities to develop their skills in these areas. Attainment in writing is below average at both key stages and progress is unsatisfactory. Fewer opportunities are given to develop writing skills, particularly in other subjects. Pupils use their oral and reading skills effectively in all subjects. Many enjoy reading, read for pleasure and many are skilled at using information books as part of research. They skim and scan text quickly to locate relevant information and they read closely to find information they need. When writing however, many mid attaining pupils have difficulty in ordering their ideas and writing accurately. This affects their ability to use writing in subjects other than English such as history and science. The school is aware that this is a problem and has increased the time given to literacy and is focusing on writing. A literacy policy is being developed; for example, each week staff are asked to focus on an element of literacy such as a spelling rule.

10. Attainment in mathematics is below average at the end of Key Stage 2 but is in line with the expectations for pupils at the end of Year 8. Attainment is improving because of the focus on mathematics over the past two years. Strengths in attainment are geometry and mental arithmetic at Key Stage 2 and algebra, shape and space at Key Stage 3. A weakness is the number skills of lower attaining pupils. Progress is satisfactory overall and is improving because there is a consistent approach to teaching that has been supported by the effective implementation of the numeracy strategy. Pupils apply their skills of numeracy effectively across the curriculum. They handle data well in history and geography and measure and calculate efficiently in design and technology. In science, they use number effectively when calculating forces or when undertaking investigation.
11. Pupils make good progress in science at Key Stage 2 and very good progress at Key Stage 3. They attain above average standards at both key stages. Strengths at both key stages are in the way pupils use scientific language to explain their thinking and the skilled and thoughtful way in which pupils undertake investigation. Progress is good because of consistently good teaching that puts appropriate emphasis on scientific investigation.
12. Progress in information technology is good when it is taught as a separate subject. At Key Stage 2, pupils attain in line with what is expected of eleven year olds and in Year 8, attainment generally exceeds what is expected. By the end of Year 8, most pupils have good skills in accessing programs. Occasionally, tasks are too difficult for pupils in Year 5 and so progress is slowed down. Information technology is not yet used consistently in all subjects.
13. Pupils attain in line with the locally agreed syllabus for religious education at the end of Key Stage 2 and at the end of Year 8. They make satisfactory progress at both key stages. At Key Stage 2, many pupils gain a good understanding of moral teachings and relate them to their own lives. At Key Stage 3, pupils retain information well. They have a good understanding of Christianity and other world faiths. At both key stages, their oral skills are used well to explore feelings and beliefs.
14. Pupils make satisfactory progress in design and technology at both key stages. Staff place great emphasis on helping pupils to improve their work by encouraging them to measure with precision. Progress is sometimes unsatisfactory when pupils are not encouraged to be fully aware of the criteria for design. A strength in the subject is the good use of tools and materials when pupils work with resistant materials. Sometimes, pupils do not think carefully enough about the purpose for which products are made which affects their final piece of work.
15. Progress in both French and German is good at both key stages. This is because all staff in the department use the languages when they are teaching so pupils hear the languages constantly. As a result, there are strengths in pupils' ability to speak and to understand the spoken languages.
16. Pupils make satisfactory progress in geography at both key stages, planning is good and teachers encourage pupils to think for themselves. A strength in the subject is in the pupils' use of oral language to describe, compare, and deduce answers. At the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils use geographical vocabulary to describe climatic conditions and they know how to use a simple grid system to represent location. In Year 8, they compare and contrast different places. Weaknesses in spelling adversely affect pupils' ability to present information, although a significant number of pupils use writing well to develop their ideas. This weakness in presentation is also apparent in history. However, progress in history is good at both key stages and at the end of Key Stage 2, girls attain highly. Boys and girls attain highly in Year 8. This is because they are motivated by the teaching. They handle primary evidence well and acquire good knowledge of events in the past.
17. There are many strengths in attainment in art and pupils exceed what would be expected for their age when they are eleven and thirteen. Progress is good at both key stages and is very good at Key Stage 3. This is because pupils are taught techniques effectively and are also taught to observe closely. Strengths are in the use of tone and texture at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 3, pupils are skilled in observational drawings, in understanding the techniques of famous artists and in drawing and painting.

18. A considerable strength in music is the extra-curricular provision which enables many pupils to take part in performances. In lessons, progress is satisfactory at Key Stage 2 but unsatisfactory at Key Stage 3. This is because there is an imbalance in the coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study at Key Stage 3. A strength in attainment is the ability of the pupils to listen carefully to each other and to sensitively evaluate what they have heard. At Key Stage 3, there are too few opportunities for pupils to develop skills in singing and to read music.

19. Attainment in drama is above what would be expected at ages 11 and 13 and pupils make very good progress. At the end of Key Stage 2, many pupils perform confidently, sustaining a role with conviction. During Key Stage 3, many pupils develop a good range of drama skills which they employ confidently in a range of situations. Progress is very good because of the highly skilled and challenging teaching.

20. Progress in physical education is good across the school. Effective planning of the subject ensures that there is careful progression in the development of skills. Strengths are in planning and executing movements in dance and gymnastics and in games skills.

25. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

21. The behaviour of pupils is good, both in the classroom and around the school. Almost all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have very good attitudes to learning, which contribute positively to their progress. They concentrate very well, listening carefully, often for long periods. Most pupils persevere well to complete their work. They consistently show good levels of interest in their work and many show enthusiasm for it. They co-operate well and work very effectively in small groups. They respond positively when given the opportunity to work collaboratively, for example in drama and modern foreign languages. Pupils co-operate well when sharing equipment in science or music. The majority of pupils with special educational needs share these positive attitudes. They work hard and try to sustain their concentration to the best of their ability.

22. Pupils respond well when given some responsibility for their own learning through investigative work, research or decision making exercises. There is very good practice in drama, art, science and history but this is inconsistent in other subjects. Pupils are capable of showing initiative and of evaluating their own and their peers' work when given the opportunity to do so for example, in music, physical education, drama and art. Pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to work independently and respond very well. This contributes positively to the good progress they make.

23. The school functions as an orderly community. Standards of behaviour are good throughout the school and are often very good in lessons. Pupils' movement around the buildings is generally orderly, even on the narrow stairways, without heavy supervision by staff. Pupils are polite and courteous. They are able to talk confidently and informatively to adults, and contribute confidently to discussions. They treat their own, other pupils' and the school's property with respect.

24. Pupils understand and respect the clearly defined system of sanctions. Procedures for exclusion are very clearly laid down. Permanent exclusion is seen as a last resort and rarely used. Pupils generally appreciate the system of merits and certificates and accept sanctions, when they are required, with good grace. Overall, pupils feel that staff are fair and that rewards and sanctions are consistently used.

25. The quality of relationships throughout the school is very good. Pupils relate very well to their peers, teachers and other adults. They almost always treat others with courtesy, consideration and respect and are willing to help others in a variety of ways. Pupils habitually listen carefully to others and support one another in their work.

26. The school provides a range of opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, particularly through the pastoral system. There is a year council in every year, with two representatives elected from each form. Two members of each year council are elected to serve on the school council. Meetings are regularly held and have achieved a range of practical changes and improvements. For example, the provision of curtains in the boys showers. A recent initiative is a scheme in which a number of volunteers from Years 7 and 8 have been trained to help pupils in Years 5 and 6 to build up confidence. A number of pupils in Year 8 act as ambassadors, showing visitors around the school. They undertake this seriously and courteously. Pupils respond positively to the range of informal opportunities for undertaking responsibility such as helping to get out equipment, distribute books and tidy the classroom.

27. The good behaviour has been maintained since the last inspection.

32. **Attendance**

28. Attendance rates have been consistently above the national average for several years and the rate of unauthorised absence is consistently below the national average. Almost all parents routinely inform the school of absence and for most pupils, their regular, prompt attendance has a positive effect on their standards of work and progress.
29. Punctuality is good. There are very few persistent latecomers, although occasionally the buses arrive late. The overwhelming majority of lessons begin punctually.
- 34.

34. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

34. **Teaching**

30. The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in 93 per cent of lessons, and of this, 63 per cent of teaching is good. Teaching is better at Key Stage 3, where 73 per cent of lessons were good or better compared with 56 per cent at Key Stage 2. The small amount of unsatisfactory teaching was roughly the same proportion at both key stages.
31. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and is very good in the Language Resource Base. Teachers have a very good understanding of how to teach such pupils. The learning support assistants are very effective in their role, supporting skilfully and sensitively.
32. Teaching of English is sound overall, within a range of very good to unsatisfactory. Over half of the lessons observed were good and almost one sixth unsatisfactory. The unsatisfactory teaching was in the group sessions of the literacy hour. This was because the aim of the session was unclear or the teachers did not focus their teaching on one or two groups. Strengths are in the opportunities that pupils are given to extend their speaking, listening and reading skills. There are weaknesses in the teaching of writing. The teaching of the literacy hour was reviewed half way through last year and areas identified for development.
33. The teaching of mathematics is generally sound and is improving because the implementation of the national numeracy strategy is developing a consistent approach amongst the staff. A high proportion of lessons was observed which were good. Strengths in the teaching are in the effective use of questions at Key Stage 2 and the systematic teaching of algebra at Key Stage 3. The main weakness is in the unsatisfactory challenge in the work given to higher attaining pupils at Key Stage 2.
34. Science is taught effectively and the overall teaching is good. Just under half of the lessons were very good or excellent. At Key Stage 2 teaching is good and at Key Stage 3, it is very good. A significant feature in the success of the department is the planning for investigation by the pupils which is leading to high standards in this area of science.
35. The teaching of information and communication technology is good overall when it is taught as a subject by specialist staff who have high expectations of what their pupils can attain. It is insufficiently used in some other subjects for pupils to use their skills to increase their learning.
36. Religious education is taught satisfactorily by teachers who are non-specialists. Their good teaching skills are ensuring that pupils reach the standards that are expected. A specialist teacher has recently been appointed for the near future.
37. The teaching of French and German is good overall. The main reason is the thorough planning which

motivates the pupils by the range of activities and the consistent use of the two languages for teaching which enables pupils to hear the languages spoken.

38. Design and technology is taught satisfactorily. When pupils are working with resistant materials, teachers have high expectations of their use of tools and machinery. The emphasis on design is insufficiently strong to enable pupils to develop good skills in design. The teaching of geography and history is good. A feature of successful teaching in geography is the range of activities, particularly with regard to investigation. Occasionally, the lessons lack challenge for the higher attaining pupils. In history, lessons are well planned and time is used effectively which leads to high attainment.
39. Teaching of art is good and is very good at Key Stage 3. Staff are skilled in demonstrating techniques which enables pupils to carry out their ideas successfully. They also ensure that pupils carefully observe how famous artists have produced their work. Music is taught satisfactorily at Key Stage 2 but the teaching is unsatisfactory at Key Stage 3. The teaching is enthusiastic and motivates the pupils. Explanations are clear so that the pupils know what they have to do. The weakness is in the imbalance in teaching the programmes of study of the National Curriculum, which leads to some areas being taught highly successfully, but musical skills in performance are not consistently developed in the classroom. The teaching of drama is very good. There is a very good ethos in the department which engenders confidence and high attainment,
40. Physical education is taught well. The teaching is good at both key stages. Strengths are in the high expectations that staff have of all pupils and the careful planning. There is good awareness of safety.
41. Most staff have considerable expertise in the subjects they teach which ensures that they have the confidence to take pupils on in their learning. Staff who support as supply teachers are usually qualified in the subjects they are teaching which helps to maintain the quality of teaching. A key strength is in the high expectations that all staff have of the behaviour from pupils. As a result, pupils behave well, have positive attitudes towards their work and the resulting learning environment enables them to listen and to learn.
42. Time in lessons is used effectively. Lesson planning is good and ensures that pupils remain motivated. There is a good range of activities, for example, in French and German, teachers ensure that there is a good pace to lessons by planning activities for five or ten minutes and consolidating the learning by asking pupils to work in twos, groups, as a class or as individuals. This approach maintains the pupils' interest for the subject. Resources are used well in most subjects. In a lesson about food chains, pupils in Year 6 attained highly because the resources that were used motivated them and helped them to understand the ideas that were being put forward.
43. Generally, the match of task to the abilities of the pupils is satisfactory and ensures that they make progress. Assessment is used well in modern foreign languages, drama, music and information technology to improve the work that pupils do. Teachers generally have high expectations of their pupils, in science, this led to high attainment for a group who were investigating how solids become liquids. Pupils in Year 6 attained highly in their understanding of the differences between Athens and Sparta because of the rigour of the lesson.
44. Enthusiastic teaching that stimulated the pupils was observed in a number of subjects. Many pupils were enthralled by the study of Ann Frank's Diary in an English lesson and were moved to want to read it for themselves. This feature was observed in the teaching of drama, history, science and modern foreign languages. Pupils are encouraged to extend their understanding by careful questioning. In a religious education lesson where pupils in Year 6 learnt about Islam and the Kabah, they deepened their understanding by the judicious use of questions.
45. Homework is set regularly and extends the learning that takes place in the lesson. In a mathematics lesson, answers to homework were analysed which gave a focused start and successfully continued the learning from the previous lesson.
46. The main weakness is in the teaching of writing by all staff across the curriculum and the low expectations of higher attaining pupils in mathematics at Key Stage 2. The school has recognised both

of these and has adopted methods to deal with them.

47. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection, particularly at Key Stage 3, as more lessons were found to be good. The weakness in setting learning objectives has been overcome and assessment has improved.

52. The curriculum and assessment

48. In the last report, aspects of the curriculum were criticised. The balance of the curriculum was reported to be better at Key Stage 3 than at Key Stage 2. There was no formal monitoring of the curriculum and no whole-school strategy to ensure that cross-curricular issues were addressed. The curriculum for art did not meet the requirements of the National Curriculum.

49. The school took the criticisms seriously and, as a result of effective action planning, has made satisfactory progress in addressing these issues. The amount of monitoring has been increased considerably, including monitoring of the introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies. Cross-curricular issues are addressed satisfactorily through a series of theme days a year; interesting work in environmental education, combining lessons in science, geography and personal and social education in the sustainability project; and the growing links with a school in Uganda. The curriculum for art has been extended and as a result, attainment is high.

50. The school provides its pupils with a generally broad and well-balanced curriculum in all National Curriculum subjects and religious education at both key stages. The curriculum is broadened through the provision of personal and social education lessons and French teaching in both Year 5 and Year 6 for a full hour a week and for two hours in Years 7. Lessons in German are introduced in Year 8 along with one hour of French and there are drama lessons every week for all pupils. All the requirements of the National Curriculum are met, except that the full programme of study for music is not being taught at Key Stage 3. There is good and appropriate provision for sex education and drugs awareness training as part of the wide ranging and effective personal and social education course. Also included in this programme are environmental education, work on relationships and the dangers of bullying and problem solving activities to develop thinking and learning skills. The study of moral issues includes the importance and relevance of rules in our lives and school.

51. The curricular provision overall is appropriate to the needs and aspirations of the school's intake and prepares its pupils satisfactorily for the next stage of education. There is satisfactory emphasis on the development of study skills that will enable pupils to learn how to research and find things out for themselves. There is also an extra study option on these skills, based in the school library, available to a number of pupils who stay after school once a week. The extra study options also include opportunities to study Ancient Egypt, cooking, tie-dyeing and badminton, amongst others. Following parental concern about the eligibility of these options to pupils, the school has reviewed its provision. The courses are intended to widen the curricular provision, particularly for higher attaining pupils.

52. Appropriate emphasis is placed upon English, mathematics and science, which are all allocated sufficient teaching time. Good provision is made for the arts through an extensive programme of extra-curricular music and the provision of dance, drama and art within the curriculum. There are policy documents and schemes of work in all subjects, which give generally good guidance to teachers. All students are able to take equal advantage of the curriculum. One pupil has been disapplied from the National Curriculum.

53. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school has an effective commitment to the provision of an inclusive curriculum. Learning support assistants work sensitively and skilfully in classes, providing additional help for pupils with special educational needs. Procedures are clear and well organised. Up-to-date records are kept and are easily accessible. Monitoring is effective and parents and teachers are fully involved. Learning support assistants make a valuable contribution, supporting the pupils effectively.

54. Curricular planning is good overall. The subject leaders have produced policies and schemes of work in consultation with colleagues. In general, this long-term and medium-term planning ensures the progressive development of pupils' knowledge and skills over time. This planning is very good in some subjects, such as science. A strength is the way that the school is actively involved in the local 'federation' with its partner first schools and senior schools. The liaison that has resulted ensures that the work done in each tier of schools enhances the curriculum of the others and that pupils do not repeat work unnecessarily.
55. A good range of extra-curricular activities enriches the curriculum. These include: a wind band, three choirs, a string ensemble, a computer club, an art workshop, a pond regeneration group and a composition workshop, along with a wide range of sporting activities. The extra study options give an added dimension to the curriculum. There is a good level of take-up for many of these activities, although those that take place after school are not accessible to all, because 18 per cent of pupils travel on the school buses which depart at the end of the school day. They enrich the experience of school for those who take part. There is a satisfactory variety of educational and social visits. There are also regular outdoor pursuits and personal challenges, which are designed to prepare pupils for the challenges of life beyond school, and pupils respond well to the opportunities offered to them.
56. Good procedures for assessing pupils' progress are newly in place and there is a brief but succinct assessment policy. Assessment data on all pupils is kept centrally on a data base, and extracts from this are provided for every member of staff so that he or she has information on the progress all members of their classes have made from the age of nine. This data, which helps teachers to set targets and monitor progress, includes reading scores and National Curriculum test results for Years 4, 5 and 6. This information is produced in a standard format for all staff, which helps to ensure consistency. All this is linked to a whole school assessment strategy, which sets out common approaches to marking and grading. A particularly good development is the Selwood progress chart which outlines where pupils are expected to be in terms of national averages. This is planned to be used to track pupils' progress. The overall result has the potential to be a coherent system for monitoring attainment and progress, but it is not yet fully in place. It has not, therefore, had time to make a significant impact on standards. As a result, the school was not prepared for the drop in National Curriculum test performance in 1999. It is a key issue for the school that it monitors progress effectively, sets realistic targets for pupils and class teachers, making effective use of the new procedures it has adopted.
57. A working group has produced a draft paper to tackle the problem of marking which is inconsistent in detail and quality across the school. Marking across the curriculum is not picking up the technical inaccuracies that are such a problem in the written work of very many pupils.
58. Overall, there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, when it was reported that marking was inconsistent across departments and not always helpful to pupils in improving their work. Most departments were not using assessment information to help them to plan appropriate work for their classes. The school was not making sufficient use of assessment information to evaluate the effectiveness of its work. There is now more effective practice in all these areas, although the working party for marking has only just completed its work and a whole-school policy has not yet been adopted.

63.

63. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

59. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development and very good provision for their moral development. These aspects are identified in the school's aims and objectives. The school is a combined Anglican / Methodist Voluntary Controlled School and assemblies reflect the Christian traditions and teachings that make a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is a strong, caring ethos within the school that supports all these aspects.
60. Assembly topics such as reliability are looked at from the spiritual as well as the social and moral

viewpoint. Bible readings and thoughts from scripture help pupils to see the spiritual dimensions of everyday situations and occurrences. In assemblies pupils listen to music but no mention is made of this, so to some extent, there is a missed opportunity for spiritual development. The religious education lessons help pupils to be aware of the spiritual aspects of major world faiths and how these relate to the lives of pupils to-day. The spiritual aspects of topics such as relationships, fear, poverty, hope, opportunities, pain and suffering are examined in good depth and pupils are given examples of how religious leaders provide answers to these problems. Spiritual development is also promoted in music by composing and listening to music. In English, questions of meaning and purpose are discussed. The school is giving careful consideration to ways of promoting spiritual development further within subject areas and the art and the design and technology departments have plans to implement these suggestions.

61. Provision for pupils' moral development is closely linked to the spiritual and to the guidance provided by the school's adherence to its Christian principles and teachings. There is a very positive Christian ethos in the school. Teachers and other adults set high standards through their own example. Pupils demonstrate a clear understanding of what is right and wrong. All subject areas promote this good understanding and some subjects such as drama, English and geography encourage pupils to reflect on moral principles in a wider context.
62. In response to the previous inspection report there has been a major curriculum review of personal and social education (PSE) effectively led by the deputy headteacher. There is now a very detailed programme of study for PSE that ensures that this aspect of the curriculum receives good attention. Circle time has had a particularly good impact on pupils' social development. Social education is also well promoted by group work in most subjects but particularly in drama, physical education and music where pupils have to work as a team. There is a good sense of community within the school.
63. There is good provision for cultural development. The school is linked with a school in Uganda. Exchange links with staff have been ongoing since 1993. Photographic material is being used for project work in both schools and they have exchanged artefacts. Much work has been done to ensure that the link reaches the experience of the pupils. Good emphasis is now placed on studies of major world faiths, such as Judaism, Islam and Buddhism in response to a suggestion in the previous inspection report. There are studies of the works of major world artists. There are links providing a composer and artist in school. There is a good contribution to cultural development through raising awareness of the cultures of France and Germany. The study option course supports the spiritual, moral social and cultural development by offering a range of extra studies outside the planned curriculum. There is a wide range of trips to places of cultural and historic interest. One World Day took place the week after the inspection. This involved a number of guests from the community and a series of events representative of a wide range of cultures.
64. The few shortcomings identified in the previous inspection report have been rectified.

69. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

65. The last report commented on the very good support and guidance provided for all its pupils, and these remain significant strengths of the school. Pastoral care is well led by the deputy headteacher and year leaders and form tutors are highly effective. All staff carry out their pastoral duties conscientiously.
66. The monitoring of academic progress is good overall. The school has comprehensive data available on pupils' attainment and assessment results and these are beginning to be used effectively to identify underachievement and to guide individual progress for all pupils. Work is regularly marked and pupils state that teachers tell them how to improve their work. However, not all the comments in books are useful to guide progress. The termly reports give good information about the effort that pupils are making and if it is unsatisfactory, how the pupil can improve. Annual reports do not identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses sufficiently clearly although they do give a target for each pupil for each subject. The targets are sometimes insufficiently focused to guide future progress effectively. Pupils use

these targets to identify the action they need to take in order to achieve them, and their progress is reviewed at the end of each term with the form tutor. The quality of individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs is very good and provides teachers with a range of appropriate classroom strategies. The annual reviews for pupils with special educational needs are carried out effectively. Statutory requirements are met, procedures are very clear and individual achievement is monitored effectively.

67. The monitoring of personal development is very good. Pastoral staff know the pupils well and apply this knowledge sensitively to guide their work. Almost all pupils appreciate the time and concern provided by teachers and are confident that there is always an adult to turn to in need. At the time of the previous inspection, personal and social education was not regularly timetabled. This has been very well tackled and a comprehensive, well planned programme of lessons is now in place for all pupils. The lessons are well taught by form tutors, supported by the year leaders. The programme includes sex education, drugs awareness, health education and aspects of study skills. The programme is very effectively monitored and evaluated. The school makes effective use of outside agencies, for example the community police and health care professionals, to support the programme.
68. The school has very good policies and procedures in place to promote and monitor good behaviour. The deputy headteacher reviewed methods of encouraging pupils to behave appropriately and the new approaches are successful. Almost all pupils appreciate the system of rewards and are motivated by them to behave well and work hard. Incidents of unacceptable behaviour are appropriately recorded by form tutors and department staff. The communication systems ensure that all staff are made aware of any concerns and a consistent approach to discipline results. Exclusion is seen as a last resort and appropriate procedures are rigorously followed in all cases, whether fixed term or permanent. The rate of exclusions is low. The school has recently set up a group of trained volunteer “buddies” drawn from years 7 and 8, who are available to listen to the concerns of younger pupils. The system is not yet fully effective but is being evaluated and modified, with pupils’ views taken into account. Pupils state that teachers listen carefully to their concerns and take them seriously. Appropriate procedures are in place to deal quickly and effectively with any reported incidents of bullying. Bullying is addressed effectively in the programme of personal and social education, work in English and drama, and through assemblies.
69. Procedures for monitoring attendance and punctuality are very good. All absences are followed up promptly and efficiently, and pastoral staff monitor attendance on a regular basis. The school makes effective use of the education welfare service when attendance problems develop. There are appropriate systems in place to monitor and record lateness. The school records and reports attendance in accordance with statutory requirements
70. The school has adopted the local education authority policy and procedures for child protection. These are very clear and all staff are aware of them. The child protection officer has received a range of appropriate training. Procedures for first aid are very good. Appropriate arrangements are in place for storing and administering medicines. Regular health and safety checks are carried out and staff pay excellent attention to health and safety issues in practical work such as design technology, science and physical education. In science, pupils act as safety officers and ensure that safety procedures are followed. Appropriate risk assessment has been carried out. There are no major health and safety issues outstanding. Technical and caretaking staff are appropriately trained to carry out much of the routine maintenance and the checks of electrical equipment; this allows any issues to be picked up promptly.
- 75. Partnership with parents and the community**
71. There is a very high level of support for the school among parents. They value the standards of work and behaviour their children achieve, the good opportunities for the arts, the very good pastoral care and the attitudes and values promoted by the school. They state strongly that their children like school.
72. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory. The prospectus contains the full range of

required information but the annual report of governors has some omissions. These are arrangements for the admission of physically disabled pupils and for the professional development of staff. Parents are kept well informed of events through the regular newsletters. All pupils record homework and any other relevant information using the well-established link books. These are used very effectively as a channel of communication between home and school. A number of parents expressed confusion about the amounts of homework, but inspection evidence shows that they are well informed about it through the link books and homework timetable. However, the school is arranging a workshop about homework, planned for January, to ensure that parents are well informed.

73. Parents have a good number of opportunities to consult formally with teachers and are welcome to come in to discuss their child at any time. There is an effective system of reporting progress to parents and pupils. Parents receive a report each term, either an interim one or a full one. The interim report is a particularly useful innovation. Effort grades are given for each subject. The A, B and C grades indicate a range from very good effort to effort which is just satisfactory but needs to be improved. The D grade is usefully subdivided into further codes that indicate where the deficiency is, in motivation, for example, or in problems with poor attendance or incomplete homework. From January 2000, the school is planning to include a grade for attainment for each subject as part of its plans to increase the tracking of progress of pupils in all subjects. Annual reports contain a brief outline of the curriculum and ticks to indicate attainment and effort in each subject but they do not contain any information on progress, nor are strengths and weaknesses clearly identified. Parents are invited to discuss this full report with tutors, and to make an appointment with subject teachers. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are well informed and invited to their child's annual review meetings.
74. The deputy headteacher has established a parents' forum and all parents are welcome to attend the regular meetings. The forum addresses a range of issues of concern including the provision of more detailed curriculum information, as a significant number of parents feel ill informed about the work that their children are doing. Currently, insufficient information is provided about the curriculum. A number of after school classes are provided as part of the enrichment policy for higher attaining pupils; a few parents do not fully understand the nature of these classes or why their child cannot attend them. This is currently being tackled by the school. Parents provide good levels of support for school productions and events.
75. The school has an appropriate and well-established induction programme for new pupils, which is appreciated by both parents and their children. Links with Frome College, to which almost all pupils transfer, are strong. The local federation of schools works closely together to ensure continuity in the curriculum as pupils move through their education.
76. Links with local churches are well established and used effectively to enhance assemblies and work in religious education. Some subject areas make effective use of the local community and its resources to support their work; for example in history, pupils have the opportunity to visit Chepstow and Longleat, and in geography they study the local area. Pupils in Year 5 visit a local quarry and in Year 8, pupils visit Hinkley Point, a nuclear power station. Outside speakers are used to support the programme of personal and social education, in particular the work on sex education and drugs awareness. The school maintains good working relationships with a range of external support services.

81. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

81. Leadership and management

77. The issues identified in the previous report have been satisfactorily tackled and the management systems that are in place will ensure that the school continues to improve, particularly in the area of raising attainment.

78. The overall leadership of the school is good. The headteacher is very clear about how the school needs to move forward and he is taking strong action to ensure that improvements take place. He has a considerable presence around the school and has high expectations of pupils and staff. With his deputy headteacher and the senior staff team, he has established an ethos of mutual respect between adults and pupils which contributes to the very positive attitudes that pupils have towards school. He has established efficient and effective management structures which enable the school to run smoothly. The senior staff team is highly effective. Each member of the team has a range of expertise which complements that of his or her colleagues.
79. Governors have a clear picture of the school and are effective in their role of governance. They have a presence around the school through the appointment of *governor of the month* whose role is to attend all functions. The governing body reviews all policies on a regular basis and invites members of staff to talk to it about developments. The establishment of a management committee made up of the chairs of sub-committees and other interested governors gives them a strategic overview of the school. Governors have a range of expertise that they use well for the benefit of the school. A governors' curriculum committee plays an active part in overseeing the curriculum as a whole. A formal monitoring programme has been established.
80. Heads of department are generally effective in their role and offer good guidance to colleagues. They fulfil their responsibilities well except that most departments do not formally monitor the work of their departments.

81. Satisfactory arrangements are in place for monitoring the work of the school, which involve those heads of departments whose subject is being monitored. English, mathematics and science have monitored the quality of provision and the results used to establish methods to improve it. This has had a positive impact on mathematics as results in the National Curriculum tests improved from last year. The school day has been reviewed, as has the teaching of the literacy hour. Setting pupils according to their attainment has been introduced in mathematics at Key Stage 2 and setting is planned to be introduced in English. In science, there are plans to group pupils according to attainment during the revision period leading up to national tests. The literacy hour has been reviewed and methods brought in to improve the teaching of writing across the school, such as prompt sheets for writing and a weekly focus on an aspect of literacy.
82. The school improvement plan is a clear and well produced document. It involves all staff in a process that is very good and includes review and evaluation. A significant feature is the pairing of departments to act as a sounding board for each other. This gives staff a broader perspective on how they might develop their subjects. The priorities that have been identified are appropriate, and the action plans that suggest how the targets may be achieved, are clear.
83. The ethos of the school is good. Relationships are very good and pupils have very positive attitudes towards work. Although attainment has dipped, staff are working hard to seek out how they can improve it, and there is a strong commitment to high attainment in all departments. The aims of the school and its policies are implemented, one factor in this is the way in which all staff are encouraged to take part in the development of policies.
84. The school is aware of equal opportunities and ensures that all have access to the curriculum. The management of the provision for special educational needs is good and is supported effectively by the governing body.
85. The school meets all statutory requirements except for the provision of the programme of study for music at Key Stage 3, and information about for the admission of physically disabled pupils and for the professional development of staff in the governors' annual report to parents.
86. The previous inspection identified weaknesses in the school development planning cycle and in monitoring and evaluation. The process of planning is very good and the school improvement plan is an effective tool for ensuring that priorities are met. A programme of evaluation has been introduced through the cycle for the school improvement plan and monitoring of the core subjects has taken place. A formal programme for the regular monitoring of subjects is still needed.

91. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

87. The number of teaching staff is sufficient and they are suitably qualified and well deployed. The senior staff team provides strong leadership for the school and has been widened to bring in additional expertise and a gender balance. The middle management is representative of the staff in terms of age and gender. Teachers' roles are well matched to their qualifications. Specialist staffing for pupils with special needs is good.
88. The school is well served by efficient and experienced clerical and technical staff and non-teaching staff are fully involved in the life of the school. Support staff work hard to assist the smooth running of the school. Caretaking staff ensure that the building offers a pleasant working environment.
89. Staff training has a clear focus in terms of its impact on classroom practice. Staff workshops are well supported and received. There is a balance between the needs of the individual teacher and the requirements of the school improvement plan. The induction programme for newly qualified teachers provides sound support. The review system is complex and needs to have in the future a stronger link to

training for the professional development of teachers. A new staff review system is to be implemented which will cover teaching and support staff. A trial review was held in 1998/99 and feedback has been positive.

90. The school is situated on a pleasant site. Accommodation is only just adequate for the current number of pupils. The library is too small, although it provides a very pleasant learning resource. Some rooms have undergone some renovation but there are still deficiencies. For example, not all rooms are accessible to pupils in wheelchairs. Most subjects have suitable space, but there is a lack of practice space in music. Some classrooms are in need of re-decoration and the provision of display space for pupils' work in many areas is inadequate. There are good sports facilities at the local Leisure Centre and the school's playing fields are good. There is, however, a lack of indoor physical education facilities. This means that pupils are sent outside even in unfavourable weather conditions to meet the National Curriculum requirements. The school's accommodation is old although the school premises are well managed. They are efficiently used and minor building works are identified and completed. A large number of temporary classrooms constitute an essential part of the school's provision. The dining area is carefully organised and well supervised to minimise congestion. The entrance hall is attractively decorated and welcoming.
91. The resources allocation is below the national average. Heads of department manage their own budgets and there is provision for bidding for extra funds which staff consider equitable. The learning resources area is light and comfortable but too small, though reasonably well stocked with appropriate fiction, reference books and a CD ROM facility. Pupils have access to the learning resource area to use the books to support curricular projects. For pupils with special educational needs the learning support base has an appropriate range of resources to aid the progress of this range of pupils. There are old and inadequate percussion instruments in the music department.
92. Computer provision is good with most subjects having access to a computer when needed. The quality of most machines is generally good but some old computers exist in classrooms. Books, audio-visual aids and other equipment available to subjects are satisfactory. However, there is a shortage of some books in subject areas such as art. The teacher supplies many of the required books herself. Some textbooks have to be shared in geography. A few learning resources made by teachers are less good; for example worksheets do not always contain a range of tasks to suit different levels of attainment.
93. Health and safety considerations are followed and procedures for reporting matters are clearly specified and publicised. Since the last inspection this and other concerns raised have been satisfactorily dealt with by the school. The major concern, however, remains unresolved. The school is overcrowded and although staff manage it well, the hazards of movement around the school at break times is a concern. There is now a whole school development plan. There is a staff development policy following wide staff consultation. There is an annual programme of team meetings. Job descriptions have been revised and appropriately, a new post of finance and premises manager has recently been created.
98. **The efficiency of the school**
94. Financial planning to support educational developments in the school is good. Governors and senior management are fully involved in the process. They have started a three year planning cycle and all requests for additional funding by subjects are reviewed by members of the governors' curriculum committee who take decisions regarding them. The staff development group takes decisions with regard to bids for staff to visit other schools and institutions and monitors their effectiveness. The school has made good provision out of the funding provided by the rise in pupil numbers in the recent past and now knows that pupil numbers are at a maximum and may decline slightly in the future. It has plans to meet this situation.
95. The use of staff, accommodation and resources is good. Teaching staff are appropriately deployed in all teaching areas including those supporting pupils with special educational needs. All accommodation is fully used. There is no evidence of waste of teaching resources. The school library and the reading room in the Year 5 block are used by pupils throughout the school day in a purposeful way. Information technology equipment is readily available for use in two main centres.

96. The number of administrative staff is average for this size of school and they provide a high quality of service, which allows teachers to get on with their main task of teaching. Funding for special educational needs ensures that support by non-teaching assistants and by staff in the special unit give proper support to those pupils who need it.

97. Financial control and school administration is good. The recommendations of the last LEA audit report of 1996 have been carried out and there is a proper separation of responsibility between staff placing orders and those arranging payment. Daily administration ensures that teachers' absences are covered by staff who are aware of the aims of the lesson and pupils' learning continues in a way consistent with the scheme of work.
98. Financial resources, which are below the average for secondary schools, are used in an efficient way and the effectiveness of this expenditure is monitored. Despite weaknesses in writing at both key stages and for numeracy at Key Stage 2, the strengths in pupils' learning in many subjects means that the school provides satisfactory value for money.
- 103.

The Language Resource Base and Special Educational Needs

99. In the Language Resource Base (LRB), pupils make very good progress. Attainment is well below average and pupils find written tasks very difficult though they are better at speaking and listening, and reading. They find basic numeracy difficult and are confused between + and x signs in mental arithmetic. However, they learn to speak with greater clarity and at greater length, to listen carefully to instructions, to read more accurately and with expression, using punctuation as a help, and to write neatly and in clear sentences. Progress in the learning support base and in the mainstream is good. Pupils learn to speak out in class with greater confidence, and to listen carefully. They learn to sound out words when reading and to draft paragraphs to achieve more forceful vocabulary and fewer spelling errors. They learn to use their spelling books to help, too.
100. Pupils' attitudes are good. In the LRB many pupils have very good attitudes to their work. Behaviour overall is good and sometimes excellent. Pupils co-operate with the teacher and show consideration and courtesy to others. They show initiative by using spelling books to check spellings without being told. They use wall displays to help them distinguish nouns, adjectives and verbs. Pupils integrate well in mainstream classes.
101. Teaching is very good in the LRB and good overall for pupils with special educational needs who are withdrawn for extra support. Teachers have very good knowledge of effective strategies to promote learning. For example, they vary tasks and resources to keep pupils' interest. Computers, tapes, word cards and wall displays are appropriately used. Relationships with pupils are very good. Learning support assistants give valued support in class and enable pupils to make good progress, for example in science and geography. Their explanations are clear and their day-to-day assessments raise attainment in the classroom.
102. Provision for special educational needs is good. Pupils are given access to the National Curriculum by carefully chosen work. Wall displays are a particularly effective feature of the provision. For example, in the LRB the speech therapist uses displays of work and pictures relating to history, geography and French to stimulate talk and this raises pupils' confidence and consolidates work in those subjects. Pupils with language difficulties have two hour sessions weekly in the LRB. While the emphasis is on literacy and numeracy, the staff help pupils with their work in other subjects. In the Learning Support Base, pupils similarly make very good use of wall displays – such as number frames and posters of words specific to language study, such as 'metaphor' and 'dialogue'. Information technology is employed to promote progress in literacy and numeracy. Learning support assistants help with homework club twice a week, in their own time at lunchtime. This gives pupils a chance to seek extra support. Assessment is thorough, regular and well recorded. A learning support assistant has two timetabled lessons to put data on the computer. This data is well used to plan future work and to inform individual education plans and annual reviews. The plans are very good. They list realisable and measurable targets. The newly introduced group profiles include pupils' strengths as well as areas of difficulty, and this reflects the school's positive attitude to pupils with special educational needs. They contain a wealth of helpful information – for example, reading and spelling ages, and teaching strategies recommended. Teachers say they find them informative when planning work. In general, the plans are used well across the school and this is enabling pupils with special educational needs to make good

progress.

103. Staff give effective pastoral and academic support. They are easily accessible and sympathetic to pupils' needs. Assessment data is well stored on computer and progress easy to track.

104. There are close links with parents, who express confidence in the work of the LRB and Learning Support Base. Support for annual reviews is good and the reviews appropriately include the views of pupils. Links with agencies – for example, educational psychologist and learning support services – are good, and with first and upper schools.
105. Leadership and management are good. The special educational needs co-ordinator, in post only for 10 months, has encouraged a very good team spirit amongst the learning support assistants and links with the LRB are very good. Staff work effectively together to raise pupils' academic achievements as well as their self-esteem. Response to the last inspection report has been good. The withdrawal system has been reviewed and care is taken to see that pupils are not missing vital work in other subjects. There has been regular training for staff in school - for example, from the speech therapist, and special educational needs staff have attended relevant courses. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs gives valued support and visits the school regularly.
106. Staff are well qualified and experienced. They attend training regularly and share ideas with the whole staff. Staff as a whole are aware of the need to plan for special educational needs and to work closely with support assistants, who help to produce materials to match pupils' ages and capabilities.
107. Accommodation is good and resources are satisfactory, though there is insufficient equipment for information and communication technology in the Language Resource Base and this limits progress. At present, a wheelchair bound pupil has access only to classrooms on the ground floor. The school is seeking to tackle the problem of the need for him to access specialist rooms on the upper floor, when he enters Key Stage 3.
108. The special educational needs co-ordinator deploys her staff efficiently, and with priorities carefully thought out. The statutory requirements of statements are met. She matches staff's subject expertise to classes as far as possible. The main concern is to raise pupils' attainment.

109. Pupils' attainment on entry to Year 5 is close to the national average in English. Pupils' listening skills are satisfactory when they begin at the school. They speak reasonably fluently and have an appropriate range of vocabulary for pupils of their age. Reading is satisfactory, most pupils read reasonably fluently and with understanding. Writing skills are below average, overall. Almost all pupils can write with expression and vitality, but although a small number of pupils can write accurately, the written work of many contains grammatical weaknesses, erratic spelling and poor punctuation.
110. The 1998 National Curriculum test results at the end of Key Stage 2 show that the number of pupils attaining the expected level was close to the national average. The proportion of pupils reaching levels above the expected level for their age, level 5, was close to the national average. Over the past three years, attainment in English in the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests has declined. There is little difference between the performance of boys and girls. When the results are compared with those in similar schools, pupils at this school are attaining below average in English.
111. The finding of the inspection is that attainment in English is below average at the end of Key Stage 2 and at the end of Year 8. The observation of work in lessons and the scrutiny of work show, however, that attainment is not the same across the three attainment targets. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are above average. Their reading skills are above average overall, with about 15 per cent of pupils reading very confidently and expressively for their age. It is the ability of the majority of pupils at both key stages to express themselves fluently and accurately when writing that is below average and this is affecting their attainment across a number of subjects.
112. Almost all pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 listen well to one another and their teachers. They concentrate well when listening and can follow instructions as well as remember what they have been told. Pupils listen to each other with consideration and respect in lessons, even when the views expressed differ from their own. At the end of Year 8 almost all pupils have good listening skills. They are able to concentrate at length and listen with good understanding to complex explanations and instructions. Speaking skills at the end of Key Stage 2 are above average. Most pupils are fluent and articulate, with a wide vocabulary. They are able to engage in discussion and answer questions at length, justifying their opinions when asked to do so. At the end of Year 8, pupils' speaking skills are above average. They can respond maturely and thoughtfully to discussion on sensitive issues, such as racism or drug abuse, and argue well and cogently. They respond appropriately to points raised by their teacher or classmates and the quality of debate is high. Almost half the pupils can speak standard English when appropriate and speak confidently in formal situations, but others are still too colloquial in their expression.
113. Reading skills are above average at the end of Key Stage 2 and still above average at the end of Year 8. Only a very small number of pupils have reading problems at the end of Year 6. The vast majority reads reasonably fluently and recognises most common words at sight. Almost all pupils read with good understanding and by the end of Year 8 read a wide range of texts, including poetry and speeches from Shakespeare's plays. Their comprehension is good and they understand many basic stylistic devices, such as similes, recognise them and can explain their effect.
114. Writing skills are below average at the end of Key Stage 2 and at the end of Year 8. Although the proportion of pupils that can write at an average standard for their age is close to average, the proportion that can write at the higher levels, level 5 and above, is below average. Almost all pupils can write

narrative. They enjoy writing stories and do so in a lively style. A girl in Year 8 used language well when writing a ghost story to create atmosphere: *The shadows looked like figures and the trees seemed to be alive...*and then to build up tension: *A shadow appeared on the wall and then there came a creaking and a scraping and a scuffling and an obscure whispering...* Relatively few pupils are comfortable tackling a wider range of styles, such as writing for widely different audiences and using appropriate language for them. When they try to do so, higher attaining pupils succeed. Many pupils, however, cannot adapt their writing well to different purposes. The style of their writing tends to echo their speech patterns. An able boy in Year 8, for example, writing a narrative, began sentence after sentence with 'so': *So we (did this). So we (did that...)*. Many write in short sentences and as a result their written work does not flow well. Their writing contains a significant number of errors, mainly of spelling, punctuation and grammar.

115. Progress varies across the attainment targets. Speaking and listening skills are close to average on entry. Many pupils find it difficult to concentrate on what they are told for sustained lengths of time. In a Year 5 literacy hour lesson, for example, the pupils were told that they had to find five pieces of information about the first moon landing to include on a poster they were designing. After twenty minutes, many pupils had not begun the writing task because they had not understood, or had forgotten, what they had to do. Although they are quiet and appear to be listening, they do not take in all that they hear. The teachers work hard to improve listening and understanding skills and by the end of the key stage, listening skills are above average as a result. They have made good progress and this is sustained through Key Stage 3.
116. Similarly, speaking skills are average on entry. Most pupils speak well informally, but not all can express themselves clearly or at length and rarely use standard English. At the end of Year 6, most pupils speak clearly and articulately and can address the class or their year group confidently. In a Year 7 lesson on *The Diary of Anne Frank*, pupils debated difficult issues of racism and prejudice at a level beyond that expected for their years. Their inputs were well expressed, thoughtful and showed a breadth of vocabulary and command of spoken language that enabled them to handle complex ideas well. Progress is good in Key Stage 2 and very good in Key Stage 3, as the demands on them become greater. Teachers have higher expectations of the quality of literature and the challenging ideas that they can respond to and discuss.
117. Reading skills are close to average on entry, with the large majority of pupils reading at a level around that appropriate for their chronological age. At the end of Key Stage 2, they have made good progress. They encounter a wide range of types of texts, including poetry, novels and information extracts from newspapers and non-fiction books. The discussions they have in class and the shared and guided reading lessons widen their reading experience and understanding. At the end of the key stage they are above average in their reading overall. This good progress continues through Key Stage 3, as they study English literature and are helped to understand it by sensitive and informed specialist teaching.
118. Progress in the development of writing skills is unsatisfactory in both key stages. Teaching fails to focus on the specific problems that are holding back the pupils' progress as writers. It is sometimes misdirected, with time that should be devoted to developing writing skills being spent drawing, designing posters or leaflets. Pupils are given too few opportunities to improve the quality of their writing through real drafting. As a result, there are examples of redrafted work being 'fair copies' of the original, often with an increased number of errors as copying mistakes creep in. The marks and comments that teachers make are not always helpful to pupils, sometimes concentrating only on a couple of spelling errors out of many; rarely giving advice on how writing skills can improve.
119. Response to lessons is generally good. In all the lessons that were observed, pupils were quiet and attentive and settled down quickly to work. They keep to task and work co-operatively where appropriate. All pupils have positive attitudes to work and want to succeed: it is this interest in learning and positive attitudes to work that is a key feature in the success of lessons. In some classes in Year 5, individual pupils do not pay attention, though this is quickly corrected as a result of teachers' effective methods for managing behaviour. Almost all pupils want to work hard and want to succeed. They are responsible and will persevere when they find the work difficult. Many older pupils are capable of

independent learning and research.

120. The teaching of English to whole classes is satisfactory, overall, within a range of very good to unsatisfactory. It was good in over half the lessons and unsatisfactory in about one sixth. Teaching of reading, speaking and listening is generally good. There are weaknesses in the teaching of small groups in the literacy hour. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is generally good.
121. All teachers have good classroom management skills. They maintain good discipline in their classrooms. Most, especially the subject specialist teachers, have good knowledge of the subject. They all use questioning well to assess pupils, to draw out from them how much they understand and to extend their thinking, often through challenging and searching questions. They have the confidence to give pupils the time and space to discuss issues and come to their own conclusions. The teaching of group work sessions, especially in the literacy hour, is unsatisfactory. It was unsatisfactory in a fifth of the lessons seen. This leads to problems with the plenary sessions. A quarter of the plenary sessions towards the end of lessons have unsatisfactory features. The problems stem from a lack of expertise in teaching the literacy hour and weaknesses in planning. The aims of the lesson, in terms of literacy, are not always explicit nor are they shared at the beginning with the pupils. In lessons on informative writing, for example, pupils worked hard at drawing pictures and designs on the leaflets they were producing, but had little time for the writing exercise that was the real point of the lesson. When they realised their mistake, many wrote hard all through the plenary sessions, missing all the teaching points that were being made. A class working on poetry was set the group work task of writing short poems about sleep and dreams. The teacher worked with a group on a relatively easy reading task, while the groups tackling the much more demanding writing assignment struggled and frequently interrupted her to seek guidance. There is inconsistency of teaching strategies across the work in English, especially in Key Stage 2.
122. There has been a whole-school emphasis on improving literacy skills across the curriculum and this is succeeding in promoting the speaking and listening skills of pupils. All departments plan for and provide good opportunities for pupils to work in small groups, to discuss topics, to answer questions, give presentations on their work and to learn the technical vocabulary specific to the subject area. In geography, for example, pupils are expected to give presentations on their group work and to give reasoned explanations of their interpretations of evidence. Drama makes a particularly effective contribution to the development of speaking and listening skills. Although these skills are not strictly part of the National Literacy Strategy, pupils benefit greatly from this work. Reading skills are developed well across departments. Teachers ensure that pupils understand what they read and provide them with worthwhile and well written texts to study in many subject areas. Writing skills, however, are not developed well. Marking rarely concentrates on improving the quality of pupils' written work or its accuracy. In lessons outside of English, written work is usually marked for its content. The school has not yet implemented its marking policy to help English teachers to raise the standards of pupils' writing.
123. Homework is set regularly and supports the work being done in the lessons. In the lessons in which pupils are making good progress, teachers exude enthusiasm for the subject and this enjoyment is reflected in the pupils. Relationships between teachers and pupils are strong, so that pupils want to work well and succeed both for themselves and to please their teachers. However, they are not always able to do so, because teachers are not always consistent in the ways they use marking to improve both literacy and content.
124. The head of department is responsible for teaching in Key Stage 3 and is working to ensure a consistent approach to English teaching based on literature. The curriculum is broad and covers all elements of the National Curriculum, except that there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills using information technology.
125. Attainment in English at the end of both key stages has gone down since the last report. The literacy hour has not been implemented satisfactorily in Key Stage 2. Teaching was judged to be sound overall, but some teachers did not provide enough detail in their planning. This is still the case in some of the teaching of the literacy hour. However, the senior management team recognised that there was a

problem and the monitoring that has taken place has resulted in methods being found to try to raise attainment. These include lengthening the lessons so that a full hour can be given to literacy and finding extra time within the literacy hour to teach writing.

130. **Mathematics**

126. Attainment in mathematics is below national averages at the end of Key Stage 2 and in line with national averages half way through Key Stage 3. Attainment as measured by National Curriculum tests at Key Stage 2 has risen slowly over the past four years, apart from a drop in 1998. Despite the rise, attainment in 1999 was below national averages. The progress of pupils at Key Stage 2 is improving as the introduction of the numeracy hour is having a positive impact and it is now satisfactory overall. The inspection found that progress in individual lessons is sometimes good. The school recognised the comparatively low attainment of boys in comparison with girls during the three year period and has successfully tackled this problem by requiring high attainment of boys, so that in 1999 the improvement in boys' attainment made it higher than that of girls. At the end of Year 8, attainment is satisfactory and pupils make satisfactory progress. Higher attaining pupils make unsatisfactory progress at Key Stage 2, but satisfactory progress at Key Stage 3.

127. At Key Stage 2, pupils are good at recognising geometrical shapes by the properties of their sides and angles. In Year 5, pupils are given speed tests of suitably graded number skills at the start of every lesson. These are starting to raise attainment in number. Although the whole range of topics are covered at this key stage, pupils in general are not able to work accurately and at speed and so are not awarded the higher grades which are possible in national tests.
128. At Key Stage 3, higher attaining pupils work successfully at solving algebraic equations of increasing difficulty and use number skills in this process. They are able to find the areas and volumes of regular solids. There is a wide range of attainment in number skills with some lower attaining pupils having considerable difficulty in dealing with numbers up to ten. Other pupils are able to calculate percentages of money values with confidence in the context of modern competitive shopping.
129. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, overall. All pupils are able to follow the National Curriculum with support in both key stages. While the progress of some pupils is good, others still experience considerable difficulty in remembering and applying number skills in a shopping situation. Pupils' general skills of listening and speaking are good and reading skills are sound so that questions are understood. There is little evidence at both key stages of opportunities for extended writing skills.
130. The behaviour of pupils is at least satisfactory in all lessons and good in the great majority of them. The good behaviour is based on the very good relationships between pupils and teachers and between pupils themselves. Pupils listen carefully to and respect the answers of other pupils, they respond to the positive encouragement of teachers and work co-operatively together in pairs or in groups when given the opportunity. Text and exercise books, and equipment are respected.
131. Teaching is satisfactory in all lessons and is good in sixty per cent of them, occasionally with some very good teaching. The introduction of the national numeracy strategy is having a positive effect on teaching. Within that strategy, good question and answer technique both on a class and individual basis is used to prompt pupils' thinking. All teachers have a secure understanding of the subject. Planning and the management of time are generally good. Teaching is less satisfactory when it does not take account of the prior attainment of pupils or when problems are presented in a less challenging way. Homework is regularly set and marked. It is related either to the main topic of the lesson or to a summary part of a previous lesson.
132. The requirements of the National Curriculum are met at both key stages. While the use of information technology and opportunities to apply mathematics are provided at various times of the year, these are not integrated into the revised schemes of work and the teaching style now required for the National Numeracy Strategy. The new scheme of work for Year 5 introduced this year gives greater cohesion to teaching in that year and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Assessment of pupils' attainment is good as indicated by the successful focus on the attainment of boys, which has brought about an improvement. The regular marking and correcting of pupils' work lacks consistency, as was recorded in the previous inspection report. Number marks are given with a range of comments which often lack an indication of how pupils may improve their work. Mathematics has more teaching time than previously this year; has introduced grouping pupils by their attainment in Year 6 and has plans for a similar changes in Year 5. All of these are designed to raise attainment. It is important that mathematics maintains good ways of assessing and tracking pupils' attainment as they move from different teaching groups and that their classwork and homework are graded against National Curriculum levels on a regular basis if these policies are to be successful.
133. Management of mathematics is good. It is shared between the head of department and the Year 5 co-ordinator. There are good relationships between teachers. Support staff are fully aware of the needs of pupils and the aims of lessons. Resources of textbooks and other equipment are good. Mathematics is a sound department and improving department. It has the capacity for further improvement.

Numeracy

134. Provision for the development of number skills is good in many subjects in spite of the lack of a school numeracy policy. In mathematics, all teaching is consistent with the National Numeracy Strategy. Higher attaining pupils in mathematics are competent in the use of number but some lower attaining pupils still have considerable weaknesses at Key Stage 3. In science, pupils use number to very good advantage in investigations and calculations of forces. Information technology gives further enhancement to number skills in science with the analysis of field work information. There are wide opportunities in geography, history, mathematics and science for graphical work for the presentation of information. In geography, pupils are able to convert from one unit of area to another and are confident in using percentages with accuracy. In design and technology there are further applications of area in the use of control. Pupils in French are familiar with number and use it in French. A time line is used by pupils in religious education to help them to understand chronology.

139.

139. Science

135. By the end of Key Stage 2, the 1998 National Curriculum test results showed performance in science to be above average. The number of pupils reaching the expected level 4 was above average and the higher level 5 was well above average. When compared with similar schools, results were above average. Results over three years to 1998 show that performance has been sustained above national averages. They have improved from average to above average levels since the last inspection. The 1998 comparisons indicate girls perform well above national average and boys above average. The 1999 results have fallen, with fewer pupils reaching higher levels. The school identified the reason as being insufficient time allocated to revision and this has been rectified in planning for the current year.

136. The inspection confirms the 1998 test results. Attainment is above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2 and at the end of Year 8. At both key stages, higher attaining pupils reach good standards in knowledge and understanding and in practical skills. Their understanding of the process of planning an investigation, considering and evaluating experimental evidence is above national expectations. They reach appropriate standards in the use of number, but writing skills are developed less well, particularly in reasoned argument about why things happen. They reach appropriate standards in the use of information technology to record and display experimental results, but do not always analyse information sufficiently.

137. Pupils in Year 6 reach good standards in lessons. A factor that contributes to their success is the extent to which they are encouraged to speak extensively, using scientific vocabulary, to explain their thinking. For example, in one class they discussed extensively what might happen to animals in a food chain if one group were killed for food. Pupils reach good standards in practical investigation. In solving the problem of why salt is added to icy roads, they were very successful in measuring and timing the melting ice. Higher attaining pupils explained clearly the difference in results between salted and unsalted ice. Examination of earlier work shows they have a good understanding of classification of animals and identify particular types through using identification keys.

138. Progress is good overall in Key Stage 2 because of skilled teaching. Pupils in Year 5 engaged in useful research about the planets, reading very well to the rest of the class. However, as a class, they did not identify key scientific learning points from the exercise. They make slow progress when the lesson objectives are not sufficiently linked to science attainment targets, spending more time constructing puppets than talking about the scientific effects of shadows. In Year 6, pupils make good progress in understanding how to keep a scientific test fair and in using scientific vocabulary. However, higher attaining pupils make spelling errors.

139. Progress is very good at Key Stage 3. Pupils in Year 7 gained a very good understanding of why a pendulum swings. Lower attaining pupils reach expected levels in measuring forces. Lower attaining pupils made good gains in knowledge of insulating houses, supported very well from practical investigation. Higher attaining pupils make very good progress in practical investigation. They

understand the structure of geological formations, writing well about basic and acidic volcanoes.

140. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress at both key stages because tasks are well planned to support them. They work fully with the rest of the class, achieving good levels in scientific skills and gaining confidence in knowledge and understanding. Support assistants are well briefed and work effectively with individual and group educational plans, giving additional help of good quality.

141. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and behave well in every lesson. They are attentive, listening to questions well, and always willing to answer. They engage in lively discussion and are full of ideas. They are very enthusiastic, enjoying practical experiences to the full, excited by personal discovery. Relationships between pupils are very good. Older pupils are totally engrossed in their investigation, working very well in teams. Keen to explain their work to the rest of the class, they are confident speakers. They are developing an excellent sense of responsibility and gain considerable maturity by Year 8.
142. Teaching is good at Key Stage 2 and very good at Key Stage 3. Examples of very good teaching were seen in both key stages, with one outstanding lesson at Key Stage 3. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen and the overall profile is a tribute to the departments. This represents improvement since the last inspection. Teachers have good subject knowledge and this generally results in high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Teacher expectations in Year 5 are sometimes too low, sometimes failing to extend average and higher attaining pupils sufficiently. In Key Stage 3, expectations are very high for pupils' attainment in scientific investigation. Teachers assess them by Key Stage 4 criteria, setting complex and challenging problems. This provides excellent continuity into the next stage of education.
143. Lessons are almost always stimulating and the quality of discussion is excellent when pupils are required to include clear scientific terms to explain their thinking. Teachers review lessons by asking higher attaining pupils to explain key learning points, extending the learning of the class as a whole. Similarly, they involve pupils with special needs fully in leading discussions.
144. Planning is good, with exemplars of excellent daily planning by a number of teachers. They monitor the progress pupils make as they work, encouraging them to persevere and take pride in their work. On occasions, discussion between individuals or small groups of pupils with the teacher is of the highest quality, encouraging them to extend their thinking. They assess pupils' progress regularly, on the basis of good targets for each topic taught. The best lesson evaluations note difficulties particular pupils may have had and change plans accordingly. The department is recording pupils' attainment and progress, transferring information to the next teacher. They are now in a position to use the information to refine planning further for groups of pupils.
145. Teachers manage pupils very well and have developed very good relationships. They foster very positive attitudes, developing a strong sense of responsibility, expecting pupils to take initiative. Teachers use other adults well. Learning resources are used very well, giving pupils good opportunities for first hand enquiry and research from books and stimulating videos. Homework is regularly set giving pupils a continuing sense of purpose.

150.

OTHER

SUBJECTS OR COURSES

150. **Information technology**

146. Attainment is in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 2 and by the end of Year 8 is above national expectations. Almost half have good background knowledge, enabling them to reach good standards in lessons. The increase in standards in Key Stage 3 is an improvement since the last inspection.
147. Year 6 pupils have good routines, knowing how to restore programs they have saved. They talk readily about procedures, using correct terminology. They reach appropriate standards in producing isometric drawings in a range of colours. They are all successful in producing good effects. Higher attaining pupils produce complex drawings with good foreground and background detail, improving their work with refined shading. Those who find computing most difficult are successful in building a number of shapes and adding new dimensions. Year 8 reached good standards in designing a poster for bonfire

night, summarising safety guidelines and importing text effectively. They have good skills in controlling the mouse, manipulating icons from the tool bar and moving text and graphics around the screen.

148. Progress is good throughout the school. Year 5 make good progress in using appropriate software, but when tasks are too difficult for them, progress is slower. Year 7 make good progress in editing existing work. They have quickly become competent in moving existing images around the screen, changing font and colour to improve appearance and layout. Progress is very good in Year 8. Higher attaining pupils demonstrate high levels of competence in manipulating graphics. However, they are sometimes reluctant to include written details, or to correct spelling errors, finding such tasks less exciting. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated in lessons, making very good progress.
149. Pupils have very positive attitudes and are well motivated to improve their skills. They are attentive to instructions and enjoy their work, appreciating specialist accommodation and equipment. They are willing to talk about their work, discussing things they find difficult with adults. They work hard to finish tasks in the given time and are proud of their work when they succeed. However, they do not routinely check for correct spelling and punctuation. Pupils are gaining independence because they have regular use of resources.
150. Teaching is good. Specialist teachers are very committed to making the recently acquired system work well throughout the school. They have good subject knowledge, using it to establish high expectations of pupils in manipulating software. They assess the pupils' performance well in the lesson, using this to help pupils to improve their skills. They use time well, planning efficiently and having all resources readily available. In science, history and design and technology, teachers use pupils' computer skills well. However, in other subjects, computer skills are insufficiently used. The school has plans to develop information and communication technology across the curriculum.
151. Planning is good. Lesson objectives take full account of differing needs, with tasks set for particular individuals, particularly in Year 5 where a number of pupils are making slower progress. All lessons are well organised for pupils to gain good first hand experience. A good assessment system is being developed, enabling teachers to assess skills. Pupils are encouraged to assess their own skills and to evaluate the effectiveness of the computer as a tool. This is not yet formalised across the school. Teachers manage the behaviour of pupils very well.
152. Learning resources are very good. Teachers use the newly acquired resources very well. In the newest room there are sufficient computers for each pupil to work individually and a second room enables some to work individually and others to share effectively in pairs. In design and technology, the computers in the design room are used very well for developing skills of control technology and modelling. However, resources in some departments, such as mathematics, are underused.

157. **Religious education**

153. Pupils' attainment in religious education is average in relation to the standards expected by the Agreed Syllabus at the end of Key Stage 2 and by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 8.
154. In Year 5 pupils are articulate in class. Their answers show a basic understanding of the Jewish faith, particularly with regard to knowing and understanding the practices and observances of the Shabbat. In Year 6 pupils gain a basic knowledge of Islam. The majority of pupils can recall the details of the Five Pillars of Islam in the correct order. They understand the importance of the pilgrimage to Mecca and can give details of the practices that are observed. By the end of Year 8 pupils acquire a sound factual knowledge of Christianity, Islam and Judaism. They have a good understanding of the life and works of the Buddha and how he came to his beliefs and answers with regard to aspects of life such as suffering and happiness. They know his understanding and teachings of how to conquer fears. They consider the destructive elements of selfishness. They know the practices of some Buddhist festivals and the

symbolic meanings of what these represent. They can relate the ideals of the major world faiths to their own lives with regards to care for others, happiness and coping with fears.

155. Progress is satisfactory at both key stages. The topics are covered in good depth. Pupils are able to understand how religious faith affects how people live their lives. They gain a good understanding of the moral teachings and can apply these to modern life. Pupils respond well to the committed and enthusiastic teaching in both key stages and particularly in Key Stage 3. They build up a good knowledge of Christianity and other world faiths. There is an emphasis on presenting religious faith as a shared human experience and this greatly benefits pupils' social development. They can discuss social and moral issues such as helping each other and helping the poor in the contexts of Christian and other religious beliefs.
156. Pupils with special educational needs get specific attention and support as appropriate and make good progress. As much of the response required is oral and visual they can make at least average contributions to discussions and whole class presentations. They take a lively interest in the subject, many responding with better than average enthusiasm.
157. All pupils take a lively interest in this subject in both key stages. They sustain concentration throughout the lessons, with a few exceptions in Key Stage 3. They pay attention to the teachers' input and answer questions readily. They concentrate very well throughout the hour-long lessons. They show respect for other people's feelings, values and beliefs which are central to the understanding of the subject. Pupils understand that many people hold their religious beliefs with conviction and that their faith affects the way they live their lives. They have a serious approach to the subject.
158. In Key Stage 2, teaching is satisfactory; there was one example of very good teaching in Year 6. In Key Stage 3 teaching is satisfactory and a number of lessons are very good. There is no specialist teaching at present but teachers prepare lessons well, in line with guidance of the Agreed Syllabus. The work for Years 7 and 8 is concentrated on Buddhism for this term to ensure that the preparation is done in good depth by the full-time supply teacher who teaches all classes in Years 6, 7 and 8. All teachers have good classroom management skills and discipline. In Year 5, the pace of lessons is a little too slow and the content is a little too basic for high attaining pupils, who could cope with much more demanding work. There is a greater commitment to high achievement in Key Stage 3. Pupils' responses are largely oral and visual and teachers plan appropriately for this type of response with good questioning and guidance on how to present knowledge by way of diagrams and illustrations.
159. Oral assessment is ongoing in all lessons but overall assessment is not adequately structured across the years or key stages.
160. The subject is under temporary management for this term. A new specialist head of department has been appointed and takes up the post at the beginning of next term. Meanwhile, the governors have appointed a temporary manager of the subject for one term. When this teacher took on the responsibility there was little documentation. She worked very hard in the summer vacation to prepare an adequate scheme of work for this term. There is a considerable amount of work to be done from next term, particularly with regard to documentation. There are no schemes of work that cover all the elements of the Agreed Syllabus in a coherent manner. Assessment needs to be formulated to address all the topics. Consideration needs to be given to providing extension work for high attaining pupils.
161. The subject is taught with commitment and is linked appropriately to pupils' own experiences. It makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

166.

Art

162. Attainment in art is well above what would be expected for pupils at the age of eleven. In Year 5, work

in art is linked to themes. Teachers ensure that skills and techniques are taught. Pupils can mix colours from the primary colours. They can blend colours in pastel to achieve warm and cold effects for landscape and images of the universe. They learn to observe closely and make very good observational drawings of cross-sections of fruit and vegetables. Pupils have very good specialist teaching in Year 6. They learn the techniques of drawing and painting helped by the very good demonstrations given by the teacher. They learn how to use colour and understand how colour is built up by exercises in Pointillism. They can use mark-making exercises to explore the use of tone and texture. Pattern making, printing and design are particularly good.

163. By the end of Year 8, attainment is again high. The most significant aspect of art in Key Stage 3 is that almost all pupils achieve good levels of attainment and the majority achieve very high levels of work. By the end of Year 8, pupils have a good understanding of how to use their own drawings from direct observation to extract an abstract composition. This is particularly effective in studies based on observational drawings of crushed cans. They are taught the principles of composition and can put this knowledge into practice. They have studied and understand the relevant works of major artists such as Lichtenstein and Kandinsky with regard to the use of shape and tone. They can see and comment on the need to consider the use of positive and negative space in composition. They can observe closely and draw with confidence. They use tone and texture very well. The design process is taught clearly in Year 8 and pupils have confidence to experiment and use initiative. Three-dimensional work is confined largely to modelling and mobiles in both key stages. Is not as extensive in range as two-dimensional work. There is some modelling in self-drying clay. Information technology is not used apart from research for individual studies in Year 8.
164. Progress is good at Key Stage 2 and very good at Key Stage 3. This is mainly because teachers give very good demonstrations of techniques in Years 6, 7 and 8. Units of work are well planned and structured so that pupils can build systematically on their skills and techniques throughout each unit of work and from year to year. The topics are designed in an interesting and imaginative way and pupils are encouraged to experiment. They always know what they are expected to do. All pupils are given close individual attention in all lessons and this helps them to focus on the aims of their work. Pupils are set relevant and interesting homework as part of the development process in Year 8 and many spend a good deal of time on this. There is assessment and evaluation of work at the end of most lessons in Years 6,7 and 8. Pupils are expected to evaluate their own work and that of others. They speak confidently about the use and application of tone and texture. In exercises on Pointillism they can evaluate the use and application of paint. This evaluation helps pupils to understand the essential aspects of the work in hand and this contributes to their progress.
165. Pupils with special educational needs are given close individual attention. In a few cases they are given different ways of doing the work, by, for example, tracing some of the motifs in design. Many pupils on the special educational needs register have average and above average ability in art. All pupils make very good progress.
166. Pupils take a good interest in this subject. They are quietly enthusiastic. They sustain concentration throughout the lessons. This is particularly impressive in Years 6, 7 and 8. They take a close interest and enjoy the teachers' demonstrations. Pupils acquire a good capacity for personal study as they are expected to develop their tasks in individual ways. Behaviour is exemplary in Years 6, 7 and 8.
167. Teaching is good, overall, and is very good at Key Stage 3. In Year 5, art is taught by the form teachers and is linked to themes such as the universe. The head of department gives clear guidance on the skills that are to be covered. Linking art work to themes means that pupils have a broad knowledge of the topics and they can use a good range of ideas. All teachers have good class management skills and discipline. The head of department who is an art specialist, teaches all pupils in Years 6, 7 and 8. This teacher gives interesting demonstrations of skills and techniques in drawing, painting and design in all lessons. Teachers have excellent class-management and discipline. These aspects help all pupils to achieve their potential. Pupils are surprised and pleased by their own success.
168. The subject is well managed. Planning is good and is well implemented in both key stages. There is a

commitment to high achievement. There is a very good ethos in the department, reflecting that of the school. Statutory requirements are met.

169. There has been a significant improvement in art since the previous inspection. All the reported shortcomings have been rectified. Attainment has improved significantly in both key stages. There is no unfinished work; the art club is used to good effect to provide extra time so that pupils can finish work appropriately. There are practical demonstrations in all lessons. Good consideration is given to the final presentation of work. There are good displays of pupils' work in all rooms and throughout the school. There is a balanced programme of art, craft and design.
170. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Art is a major strength of the school.

175. Design and technology

171. Pupils reach similar standards to those expected nationally in both key stages. Standards are higher in making than in understanding the design process. Year 6 pupils measure accurately and reach good standards in the use of tools, particularly machine tools. Year 8 pupils are in line to reach appropriate standards by the end of Key Stage 3, with good standards in the use of resistant materials. They mould acrylic sheet, making successful desk tidies, improving the quality of their product during second attempts. In food technology, they produce sound written evaluations of fruit crumbles made in an earlier lesson.
172. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall throughout the school. In Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 6 design and make a toy maze, cutting and jointing a good range of materials successfully. They benefit from the use of specialist machine tools, enabling them to make very good progress in gaining precision in cutting. In making fruit salad, they organised themselves successfully, and made satisfactory progress in considering the effect of their cutting on the final appearance of the product. Those who had not used vegetable cutters before improved their skills from careful efforts. At Key Stage 3, pupils in Year 8 make good progress in considering healthy options for their food products. Higher attaining pupils reach good levels of evaluative writing, using a helpful writing frame. In sketching a good range of alternatives before choosing a design for their clock, they did not use clear criteria for making decisions. Examination of last year's work by Year 7 shows increasing competence in working with a good range of materials. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress as a result of effective support.
173. Attitudes to learning are good. Pupils enjoy design technology and are very attentive during good demonstrations from adults. They ask good questions, wanting to achieve the most from their efforts. They give careful consideration to organising work well, checking measurements and the quality of cutting as they proceed. They become increasingly accurate in the use of equipment and tools. The oldest recognise that efforts made in developing skills improve the quality of their work. Pupils work well in small groups, enjoying good relationships with adults and sustaining concentration because of good support. For example, a group of Year 8 girls work very well as a team in deciding how to arrange articles on a desk tidy, before using machinery. Pupils are highly motivated by tasks, taking care in construction and showing pride in their achievements. They generally behave very well in specialist rooms and take full responsibility for working safely with tools and clearing away equipment.
174. Teaching is satisfactory, overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge, developing practical skills well. The emphasis on the design process is not strong enough. When engaging in design tasks, pupils are not always required to think about the purpose for which products are made, or which people to consider in deciding on materials to use. For example, when asked to make a poster for salads, they did not have a clear view of which design elements are important. Good discussion helps pupils consider safety and improve skills. Teachers have high expectations for the development of practical skills in the use of resistant materials. Expectations for pupils to gain independence are good. Teachers generate effective collaborative work in some classes. They use resources very well, enabling pupils to benefit from a wide range of materials and from using equipment, including computers, to good effect. The school technician provides very good support for computing, enabling pupils to become quickly proficient. Classroom assistants give very good support to lower attaining pupils.
175. Effective planning is beginning to ensure that pupils make good progress over time, incorporating the national scheme to good effect. Control technology and modelling are developed well in lessons, enabling pupils to apply mathematical skills such as estimating area to control tasks. Good links with science and geography result in a good project on growing organic food for use in food preparation. Teachers are developing appropriate systems for assessment, encouraging pupils to sustain a weekly record of their achievements. Homework is used well to help pupils see the relevance of variation in recipes by bringing in suggestions from home.

Drama

176. Standards in drama are above expectations at the end of Key Stage 2 and above expectations at the end of Year 8, with a significant number of older pupils performing at a level well above expectations. Pupils make very good progress through both key stages. Almost all pupils can perform confidently in front of their peers at the end of Year 6, can create and sustain a characterisation and speak clearly and confidently in character. At the end of Year 8, many pupils have well-developed drama skills, as a result of persistent challenge and skilful teaching. They use their bodies and voices well to convey feelings and emotions to an audience and show good awareness of the need to establish a character early on in a scene. They use voice and body language, along with skilfully devised dialogue, to enable the audience to identify the person they are acting and her or his relationship to the rest of the cast. The few low-attaining pupils are able to assume a role and contribute effectively to a group presentation, but sometimes speak too quietly or are inhibited in their movements.
177. All pupils, by the end of Year 8, have mastered the techniques of working with others, have learnt to respond to cues and to sustain a character and concentration without becoming self-conscious. They have the confidence to tackle issues and portray relationships within families that are complex and difficult, including divorce and pregnancy. Their approach is mature and their drama response portrays perception and insight.
178. Pupils are making very good progress through both key stages. In order to work as well as they do as contributors to small group presentations, they learn quickly to respond positively to suggestions and ideas. As part of this, they learn to listen carefully and to adapt their own ideas to those of others and develop them further. They understand much of the specialist language of drama, such as *centre-stage* and *freeze* and as they move through the school these become a natural part of their vocabulary in drama lessons and they use them correctly in their work. They become increasingly confident in their use of the art form of drama to explore social issues, such as homelessness, and feelings and relationships. The higher attainers develop the skills to use a range of dramatic styles confidently and effectively and are able to convincingly portray characteristics very different from their own, such as a confused elderly person or an anxious parent.
179. The response of pupils to drama lessons is good in two fifths of lessons and very good in the rest. All pupils at both key stages are interested and enthusiastic. They are co-operative and prepared to share their ideas and to learn from each other. All are very keen to perform their work and listen and watch respectfully as their peers perform. They respond well to demonstrations and advice from their teachers and they are eager to improve their own standards as a result. They are always willing to volunteer answers to questions and suggest ideas. Independence and reliability are developed well in drama lessons.
180. Teaching is very good. It is very good in 60 per cent of lessons and excellent in 40 per cent. The teacher explains the purpose and objectives of the lesson well and regularly returns to these aims in order to remind pupils what they are expected to attain and encourage self evaluation. He has a very good relationship with the pupils and an excellent range of control and management strategies. The trust that he engenders, along with his good management, high expectations and very good subject knowledge and expertise, ensure that there is a very good ethos for learning in drama and that pupils have the confidence to take risks and extend their skills. The activities are varied and interesting and the lessons are well structured. Good and detailed schemes of work and policies are in place and the department is managed very effectively.
181. Drama is a separate subject in the school. It broadens the learning opportunities for all pupils and provides a powerful medium through which they can explore and express their feelings and come to terms with the world around them. The curriculum is broad and balanced, with equal weight given to the development of performance skills and to the use of drama techniques to explore social issues and human relationships. Drama makes a very significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and to the development of their speaking and listening skills.
182. There is a drama studio, which provides satisfactory accommodation and resources, including lighting

and sound equipment, although the use of part of it as a corridor is sometimes distracting. Overall, standards in drama have been sustained and improved since the last report and drama is a significant area of strength in the school.

187. **Geography**

183. Attainment is in line with what is expected at the end of both key stages. The results of teacher assessment in Year 8 are in line with national expectations. By the end of Year 8, pupils can compare and contrast living conditions in different places, can use bar graphs and pie charts to present information and have a good grasp of geographical vocabulary. They write responses to questions and describe routes and landscapes from maps and from observation. By the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils can name the world's continents and many major countries and cities. They understand a simple grid system to represent location and are using geographical vocabulary to describe climatic conditions. There is a good standard of presentation across all abilities. Pupils regularly have the opportunity to read aloud in class and are generally able to express themselves orally with some fluency.
184. Progress is generally satisfactory over time throughout both key stages. It is often good, as in the many lessons where pupils are encouraged to think for themselves and are given challenging tasks and a variety of activities. For example, the Year 5 lessons where pupils were investigating world climates in groups, and the Year 7 lesson where they were working in pairs to prepare investigations of the effects of tourism in the Lake District, were particularly effective. Pupils with special needs are making good progress because of the level of constructive help they are given, and some skilful and effective matching of work to different levels of attainment was seen. The progress is satisfactory rather than good overall, as pupils do not experience field work, which limits their opportunities to observe natural phenomena at first hand.
185. Pupils' response is very good in Key Stage 3, and good in Key Stage 2, where some over-noisy behaviour was observed in one class. Responses to questions and other stimuli are observant and enthusiastic. Relationships between pupils are mutually co-operative, which enhances their progress.
186. The overall quality of the teaching is good at both key stages. Management of pupils is invariably good and there are no discipline problems. Topics such as the contrasts between the north and south of Italy, and the impact of tourism in the Lake District, were taught with imagination and engaged the empathy of the pupils. Teachers have a good understanding of the subject which enables them to take the pupils' learning forward. In most lessons, there is a good range of interesting activities which motivates the pupils well. However, in a few lessons there was a limited variety of activities. Teachers encourage pupils to improve their work by assessing it carefully in the lessons. There is little structured fieldwork in the curriculum even though this was recommended in the last inspection report. Assessment is now a regular part of the schemes of work but the department still has no systems or equipment for collating assessment results and thus monitoring the long-term progress of groups of pupils. Resourcing is adequate but there is a shortage of text books and of equipment for information technology.
187. Sound progress has been made in management and planning since the last inspection. Short-term planning is now good but there remain weak areas in the documentation. There is no overall curriculum plan and no plan to make effective use of the assessment data which is beginning to come from the senior management team. Although provision for pupils with special needs is now good, there is no documentation to underpin this.

192. **History**

188. Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 are generally above average, although many boys attain less highly and attain only average standards. Standards of attainment at the end of Year 8 are above average. Pupils show an interest in the subject from Year 6 and by Year 8 have acquired good levels of knowledge and a deep understanding of what the observation of time means to present day historians. Most pupils develop the skills and concepts necessary to produce satisfactory coursework, some of which is of a high quality. The major problem is that some pupils cannot spell subject-specific words such as the names of people or places. The higher attaining pupils by Year 8 can undertake a limited amount of independent and collaborative research which helps them gain confidence in

themselves.

189. Progress at both key stages is good for both boys and girls. Progress has improved considerably, so that by Year 8 pupils are learning from a wide range of materials and can handle primary evidence with ease. Pupils are, generally, well motivated and participate fully and positively in classroom discussions. A good lesson was seen in which pupils had to choose to become either an Athenian or a Spartan. Those whose choice was an Athenian ate bread and grapes, and those who elected to be Spartans were given black porridge. Again the top ten per cent can interpret the past through judicious use of a range of evidence. For a majority of pupils, listening and oral skills are progressively better in Years 7, and 8. Assignments are written with flair and style. However, punctuation and spelling in much of the writing is often inaccurate. Teachers adopt a variety of exercises to raise the standard of literacy to aid the learning of history. One method is to teach the specialist language of the subject which has proved to be successful as pupils use specialist terms confidently. Writing frames are bringing about a measure of improvement.
190. The standard of teaching is good. Lessons are well planned and lively in pace. For example, in a good Year 6 lesson on the Greeks and Spartans, a searching look was taken at the aspects of everyday life as well as providing a clear historical outline of the period. A variety of teaching strategies is employed. History field work is a strong feature. Pupils visit a variety of historical sites for example, the Mary Rose at Portsmouth, Montacute and Caerleon Roman baths. The collected scrapbooks of these visits are used to inform pupils of their research. Computers are used to teach history and their use raises standards. Some materials of good quality are in use at Key Stage 3 which provide appropriate challenges for the different levels of attainment. These need to be developed further. Relationships are firm and pleasant. Teachers' expectations are high and this contributes to the standards being attained by pupils across the attainment range. A challenging lesson enticed pupils to examine the life and death of Julius Caesar. The development of the Roman Republic after 509 BC, powerful and overpowering her neighbours and in 206 BC becoming a major force, fascinated a Year 7 group. Pupils learnt that *Senatus Populusque Romanus* means 'the Senate and the people of Rome'. They argued about its significance and whether Rome was a true democracy. Pupils with special needs are given good support and make satisfactory progress. Homework is set and regularly marked. Since the last inspection the subject has a fuller criteria assessment statement, field study work is an integral part of history, the stock of artefacts has increased and ways to increase the use of computers have been identified.

Modern foreign languages

191. Pupils begin to learn French in Year 5 and in Year 8 all pupils take up German while continuing with French. The good grounding they receive from Year 5 enables them to continue with the good progress that they make in French and they also make good progress in German. Higher attaining pupils make progress because they are suitably challenged by extended questions or they are expected to give longer answers. Lower attaining pupils make good progress because they are supported by teachers, support assistants and resources which give them extra help. Boys and girls make equally good progress, although a few lower attaining boys are less motivated and their progress is satisfactory.
192. Strengths in both languages at both key stages are in pupils' speaking and listening skills. This is because all teachers speak the languages as part of their everyday teaching so that pupils become accustomed to hearing the language. A few pupils are prepared to use the languages themselves, when, for example, asking for classroom equipment, but this is not widespread despite the best endeavours of the staff to encourage them. By the end of Key Stage 2, many pupils understand common classroom instructions, they can say where they live, use numbers in a sentence explaining how many pets or brothers or sisters they have and can give a brief description of themselves. By the end of Year 8, attainment is in line with what is expected for thirteen year olds. Many pupils understand instructions and requests when the teacher speaks at a near normal speed. Lower attaining pupils still need support, but they are confident when speaking and listening. The accents of most pupils are generally good.
193. At Key Stage 2, many pupils read simple phrases and sentences accurately and with understanding.

Lower attaining pupils are hesitant but will try. At Key Stage 3, most pupils read texts that they have met before with confidence and understanding. They use dictionaries to check words. Staff are aware of the need to encourage pupils to read widely and they are planning to introduce reading time into lessons and have started a reading club at lunch time for those pupils who wish to read French texts, including magazines.

194. At Key Stage 2, pupils write brief pieces generally accurately, although a few average and many lower attaining pupils forget about masculine and feminine genders and verb agreements. By Year 8, many pupils write competently. Pupils in Year 8 wrote postcards about their holidays for homework. The writing was lengthy, generally accurate and they took great care of the appearance of the card, doing their best to make them authentic. This was work of a high standard.
195. Pupils had been learning German in Year 8 for about seven weeks. Many pupils, particularly boys, enjoy the sound of the language, often using it with relish. They understand common classroom instructions and can respond to simple questions about their life in a brief phrase or word. Two boys were prepared to ask questions in German.
196. Most pupils enjoy learning languages because the lessons motivate them. All staff have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour, so that pupils are well behaved and their attitudes towards the subject are highly positive. As a result, they are able to listen and to learn. The few lower attaining boys who find listening difficult respond to reprimands, so that time is not lost. The positive ethos of the school is reflected in the language classrooms. Relationships are generally very good, so that pupils feel confident to try speaking the languages. Pupils are courteous to adults and to each other; they listen when peers respond. In one class, there were too few resources for pupils to have one book each and two boys spontaneously said they would share and passed their book on. They collaborate well when working in pairs or groups. As they move through the school, pupils respond to the good encouragement to become independent; they use resources around the room to check their answers, they use dictionaries and they always arrive ready to work.
197. The quality of teaching is good. All staff, including the non-specialists, have a good understanding of the teaching of modern foreign languages, so that there is a good consistency of approach. A particular strength is the very good use of the hour's lesson. All staff plan effectively so that the pace of the lesson is brisk and pupils remain motivated. There is a good mixture of individual, class, group and pair work, which adds to the motivation. Much of the teaching is enthusiastic. One lesson began with a lively dialogue about the teacher's disappointment about the failure of the French to win the World Rugby Cup, pupils were highly amused and immediately entered the spirit of the lesson, adding their own contributions. Resources are used effectively; all staff use games and songs well to reinforce the pupils' learning. There is good coverage of the four language elements of speaking, listening, reading and writing. All teachers use assessment well to improve the performance of the pupils. They listen carefully to pronunciation and grammar and correct it. Homework is set regularly and extends the lesson. There are very good systems in place for assessing the progress of pupils and for recording it, although records are kept by individual staff, rather than collectively by the department.
198. Although staff try to encourage pupils to use French or German for their own questions, pupils are usually reluctant to try. Greater encouragement and the expectation that pupils will use the languages across the department is needed. Information technology is occasionally used; the department is aware of the need to extend this and is currently looking at resources.
199. The department is effectively led. The new head of department has identified appropriate areas for development, such as having a uniform method of assessment to ensure accuracy across the department and the need to observe each other teach so that expertise is shared.
200. The last inspection found that accents of pupils were sometimes anglicised, the range of texts that pupils read was limited and there was a need to extend reading for pleasure. There has been satisfactory progress on these issues. Accents are often good, the range of texts has been increased and the

department has begun to tackle the need to read for pleasure.

205. **Music**

201. The weakness identified in the last report, the inadequate accommodation, has been satisfactorily tackled by using different rooms where sound does not interfere with other lessons, although the lack of practice rooms for group work still hampers progress in composing.
202. There are strengths in attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 but by the end of Year 8 attainment is below national expectations. After Year 5, pupils sing too infrequently and irregularly to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum at Key Stage 3. Most pupils play tuned percussion or keyboards in instrumental work, but performing and music reading skills are not well enough developed, as seen for example when pupils play their own compositions. At both key stages, pupils listen most carefully to each other and to recordings. They appraise sensibly, showing sensitivity towards each other and a satisfactory general musical knowledge of composers, instruments, forms, styles and artists. In composing music to represent space pictures, most Year 5 pupils showed imagination and many showed good control of their ideas.
203. Music is a popular subject, which most pupils enjoy. Progress is satisfactory at Key Stage 2, but is unsatisfactory overall at Key Stage 3 as the programme of study for music is not fully covered. At both key stages, pupils with special needs make similar progress to other pupils. Higher attaining pupils who are instrumentalists, and read music, make good progress, building on their previous learning, experience and their personal interests.
204. Pupils show positive attitudes and their good behaviour supports achievement. They are keen, friendly, open, responsive, respectful towards staff and each other, use equipment sensibly, work well collaboratively and generally concentrate on their work. They show initiative and willingly enjoy taking responsibility, for example, when composing in groups. They enjoy music making, especially using instruments, but dislike written work. Older pupils recognise that music contributes significantly to their social, cultural and personal development.
205. Teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 2 but at Key Stage 3, teaching is unsatisfactory, overall, mainly because of an imbalance in teaching the National Curriculum. There are examples of good and very good teaching at both key stages. The teaching is enthusiastic and motivates most pupils highly. It is confident and explanations are clear so that the pupils know what they have to do. Generally, teachers have sound subject knowledge and skills. Classroom organisation is very good and the expectation of pupils' behaviour is very high. Relationships are very good, which give pupils the confidence to try and not to be concerned or embarrassed if they make mistakes. Teachers encourage pupils to evaluate their work and that of their peers and pupils are encouraged to use the specialist language of the subject, which enables them to answer with precision. Resources are used well. Generally, time is used effectively, although sometimes, too long is given to a task. Expectations of pupils' work are appropriate at Key Stage 2 but sometimes not enough is demanded of higher attaining pupils in Years 7 and 8. Pupils do not make enough use of their own instruments in lessons. Assessment is encouraging and supportive, but targets are not set for individual pupils.
206. Music is soundly led in this orderly department. Assessment is encouraging and supportive but goals specifying targets related to standards are lacking. Documentation is meticulously kept and is of a very high quality. Curricular links with other schools within Frome are well developed. Resources are adequate but there is a need for additional computers and adequate audio equipment. Technical support is absent.
207. Eight visiting teachers provide a wide range of instrumental lessons involving 40 boys and 48 girls (over 11 per cent of the school's population). A further 14 per cent of pupils receive tuition outside school. In school tuition, standards, pupils' attitudes, progress and the quality of teaching are mainly good; some

very good teaching was observed in brass and string tuition. These staff and their lessons support the wide range of extra-curricular activities.

208. Staff give up a great deal of their time to run a wide range of extra-curricular activities which involve large numbers of pupils. In these activities, standards, are very good; some excellent string ensemble playing of reels was seen and the quality of the band was excellent rehearsing *Livin' La Vida Loca* and *Hawaii-Five-O*. In extra-curricular work, most teaching, pupils' attitudes and progress are very good. School concerts involving large numbers are held regularly and musicians visit the school. Current activities include the Harmony Choir, Boys' Choir, Band and the String Ensemble. The extra-curricular work enhances the cultural life of the school and the community but listening and performances of live music in assembly are not well developed. The activities reflect the dedication of staff, the support of parents and the enthusiasm of the musicians whose performances and successes bring credit to the school.

213. **Physical education**

213.

209. In physical education the standards reached at the end of Key Stage 2 are average and levels compare well with the capabilities of most pupils. Boys and girls from Year 5 play together sports such as rugby, football and netball. This means that the skills are learned right from the start of the scheme of work. There is some unwillingness on the part of a small number of Year 5 boys and girls to fully listen to instructions. As a consequence, in this year there is some under-achievement. By the end of Year 8, standards of attainment are above average. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 are full of enthusiasm and some skill. These pupils enjoy their physical education.

210. Progress at Key Stage 2 is good. Progress at the end of Year 8 is good, overall, for both boys and girls. Progress is made in terms of physical knowledge of the human body and what feats it is capable of performing. From Year 5 to 8, all pupils engage in activities which promote cardiovascular health. Greater progress is made in the skill components of various physical exercises. Pupils make progress equally in their understanding of the rules of various games and how to be proficient in applying those rules. In gymnastics and dance they can plan, innovate and develop a number of sequences or movements. In Year 7 this skill is raw but develops in Year 8. For many pupils, it is a sophisticated skill. Pupils learn quickly on entry to a physical education class how to carry out their warm-up routines.

211. The standard of teaching or instruction is good throughout Key Stage 2, as it is in Years 7 and 8. In gymnastics and dance pupils are expertly guided on how to improve on performance. Three good dance lessons were observed covering clown dances and rock and roll, both in costume. The pupils danced well without inhibition but too frequently ignoring the rhythm of the music despite the best efforts of their teachers. This omission needs to be rectified. An imperative, in each session observed, was safety. All tasks are structured to pick up from the previous lesson and to move the skill on to a higher phase of learning. In Year 7, skills were extended in hockey and improved the use of tactical play. All lessons start promptly and instructions are given firmly. Care is taken of the less physically gifted pupils and increases in physical demands, while progressive, are gradual through well-planned activities. Opportunities are available for the more able pupils to extend this approach, which results in pupils in Year 8 who play netball using skills with accuracy and control. There is positive provision and encouragement of extra-curricular activities, in which a good number of pupils participate. Physical education has developed good links with the Frome Athletics Club, Frome Cricket Club and the Frome Trampoline Club. To these and other clubs pupils are introduced to continue their sporting talents. Most pupils, even those with special needs, are confident to work alone though many prefer to work in groups. Teachers always stress that hard practice raises standards. A Year 5 soccer lesson helped pupils experience different systems of play and some players used skills with precision and fluency. Standards of dress indoors and outdoors are high.

212. Since the last inspection physical education has written an assessment policy that meets the end-of-key stage requirements. Teachers undertake regular safety checks on equipment and staff continue the

development of differentiated teaching strategies. This was observable in a Year 7 and Year 5 gymnastics lesson exploring the theme of balance. Mixed ability pupils concentrated at their own levels on presentation, fluency and control. All Year 5 pupils compete in inter-school matches and the school is rightly proud of its sporting reputation. During the last year, the school timetable has changed, with the result that the amount of extra-curricular sport has been reduced. This is a situation outside the control of the physical education teachers. Enrichment opportunities which complement the core physical education programme are being considered for the future. Owing to a lack of adequate indoor facilities it is necessary to send pupils outside even in unfavourable weather conditions.

217.
INSPECTION DATA

PART C:

217.
INSPECTION EVIDENCE

SUMMARY OF

213. The inspection was undertaken by a team of ten inspectors who were in the school for a combined total of 37 days over a four day period. Observations were made of 151 lessons or parts of lessons covering all areas of the curriculum and all classes. The time spent observing lessons was approximately 123 hours. Every teacher working in the school was observed at least once. Inspectors also spent approximately 61 hours observing registration sessions, assemblies, and extra-curricular activities, and in talking to pupils, staff, and governors. The work of 24 pupils was closely scrutinised by the whole team. Discussions were also held with many other pupils during the inspection week. A total of 42 pupils were heard to read formally and other pupils were heard to read informally throughout the week. Planned discussions were held with all members of staff with additional responsibilities and informal discussions took place with all staff. Discussions were held with seven members of the governing body and with 55 parents at the parents' meeting. The number of parents who completed the questionnaire was 187. A range of documentation provided by the school was analysed.

218.

218.
INDICATORS

DATA AND

219. **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
Y5 - Y8	794	25	158	92

220. **Teachers and classes**

220. **Qualified teachers (Y5 - Y8)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	34.37
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	23.1

220. **Education support staff (Y5 - Y8)**

Total number of education support staff:	16
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	482.7

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes: 82.3

Average teaching group size:	KS2	28
	KS3	28

221. **Financial data**

Financial year:	1998/1999
	£
Total Income	1,451,227
Total Expenditure	1,455,914
Expenditure per pupil	1,813.09
Balance brought forward from previous year	41,402
Balance carried forward to next year	36,715

221.

222. **PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out:	803
Number of questionnaires returned:	187

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	30	62	8	1	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	39	54	6	2	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	19	46	32	4	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	14	64	12	11	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	26	53	14	5	2
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	32	53	13	2	1
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	22	52	20	4	2
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	21	62	9	6	2
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	24	62	11	3	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	20	58	19	3	1
My child(ren) like(s) school	38	52	7	2	1