

INSPECTION REPORT

St Monica's RC High School

Bury

LEA area: Bury

Unique reference number: 105366

Headteacher: Mr. F. McCarron

Reporting inspector: Brian Leek
2959

Dates of inspection: 8 –12 May 2000

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	11-16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bury Old Road Prestwich Manchester
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Right Rev. Monsignor J. Allen
Date of previous inspection:	31/10/94

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr B Leek	Registered inspector		The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning Leadership and management
Mrs J Beattie	Lay inspector		Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
Mr T Comer	Team inspector	Mathematics	
M L Robarts	Team inspector	English	
Mr D Tracey	Team inspector	Science	
Mrs H Marsland	Team inspector	Design and technology	
Mr J Clay	Team inspector	Information technology, Art	
Mr D Howorth	Team inspector	Geography	
Mrs A Powell	Team inspector	French, Spanish	
Mr M Robottom	Team inspector	History	
Mrs T McIntosh	Team inspector	Music	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
Mr A Pearson	Team inspector	Physical education	
Mr J Clark	Team inspector	Special educational needs Equal opportunities English as an additional language	Quality and range of learning opportunities

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The Registrar
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Monica's is a mixed Roman Catholic comprehensive school for 1150 pupils in the 11-16 age range. The school is over-subscribed and there has been a 10% increase in pupil numbers since the previous inspection. Pupils come from a variety of social backgrounds and travel from a wide area. The school population includes a small proportion of pupils (4.1%) of ethnic minority heritage, most of whom are white Europeans. English is not the first language of 15 pupils although all are fluent English speakers and only one receives additional support. A below average proportion of pupils is entitled to a free school meal. The schools' register of pupils with special educational needs comprises 175 pupils, with 24 having formal statements. Both figures are close to the national average. Pupils' attainment on entry is above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Monica's Roman Catholic High School provides a very good quality education for its pupils. It has made significant improvements over the last six years. The high standards found in the previous report (1994) have risen in line with the national trend. Good teaching ensures that pupils make good progress and the teachers' extensive knowledge of preparing pupils for external examinations effectively supports pupils in achieving high standards. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning and their very good relationships with one another and their teachers, contribute significantly to the progress they make. There are very good arrangements for the support and care of all pupils. The school is very well led with clear direction and strong emphasis on raising standards. It provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards achieved in Key Stage 3 tests and GCSE examinations are well above average. Boys' achievements in 1999 were particularly good.
- The leadership of the headteacher is very strong, it provides clear direction and is a significant factor in promoting high standards.
- The overall quality of teaching is good.
- Provision for pupils' personal development is very good .
- Pupils' positive attitudes and their very good relationships with teachers enhance the quality of learning.
- Pupils' behaviour is very good and attendance is above average.
- Pupils are well cared for and the school makes very good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils with learning difficulties make very good progress.
- A rich programme of extra-curricular activities is provided.

What could be improved

- The quality of teaching could be further improved.
- Procedures for ensuring that all managers work effectively to meet the aims of the school.
- Information technology and numeracy skills.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the time of the previous report, in December 1994, the school has maintained and improved, in line with national trends, standards of work which were already well above the national average. It has been particularly successful in raising boys' achievements. Most areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection have been tackled successfully. Strategies have been introduced for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and, although they have not spread to all subject departments, they have had a significant effect in raising the overall quality of teaching. The provision for pupils with special needs is better and pupils make good

progress and achieve well. The development plan now provides a clear direction for the school's work but there is scope for further improvements, which would make it even more effective. Class sizes have been reduced and the situation is still under review. In addition to the issues raised in the previous inspection the school has successfully introduced strategies to improve literacy, attendance, behaviour, the effectiveness of the governing body and the pastoral system, and communication with parents through pupil planners. The school has made many improvements in the last two years but a number of areas for improvement remain, such as: assessment, including marking, and its use to improve performance; information supplied to parents regarding their children's attainment; the amount of teaching time to meet national recommendations; and curriculum development, particularly to meet statutory requirements. However the school has clearly demonstrated its capacity to improve and continue to raise standards.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 14 and 16 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests and GCSE examinations.

Performance in:	compared with				Key well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
Key Stage 3 tests	A	B	A	A*	
GCSE examinations	A	B	A	A	

Results of the 1999 national tests for 14 year old pupils are well above average taking the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science together. These results are very high and amongst the top five per cent when compared with similar schools. The English results were the best with boys doing particularly well. Results in mathematics and science were well above average and the performance of boys and girls was broadly the same. Inspection evidence shows standards of work of the current Year 9 pupils are above average overall and broadly in line with the test results. Standards of work exceed the national target level in history, geography and foreign languages and in all other subjects standards are similar to the target level.

1999 GCSE results were the best the school has ever achieved. They were well above average with boys once again doing particularly well. They were better than the national average for boys by nearly 30 per cent. Girls' results were also good but their improvement was little changed from previous years. A particularly noteworthy feature of the 1999 results was that almost all pupils obtained five or more A-G grades which places the school in the top 5 per cent of similar schools. The school also achieved an above average proportion of the highest grades, A* and A. Over the last six years the school has maintained its good results and kept pace with the national improvement. In 1999 results in English and science were very good. In mathematics, although a higher than average proportion of pupils left school without a qualification, the overall results were good. Very good results were also obtained in history, geography, drama, French and Spanish. All other examination subjects were above average apart from, sports studies, and music which were below average. The school sets appropriate targets for GCSE performance, which were met in 1999, and it is on course to meet its more challenging 2000 targets.

Inspection evidence confirms these good GCSE results and finds that in the current Year 11 there are no subjects where attainment is below average. Pupils of all abilities achieve good standards overall. In information technology pupils taking the GCSE course achieve good standards but pupils not taking the GCSE course underachieve and do not reach a satisfactory standard. Standards of literacy are good but numeracy skills are below average.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy school and are proud of it. They are keen to learn and boys and girls work well together.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are considerate towards each other and polite and welcoming to adults.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils show much initiative and take responsibility from an early age. Relationships are very good and pupils' charitable work is impressive.
Attendance	Good. It is above average and procedures for further improvement are excellent.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 11-14 years	aged 14-16 years	aged over 16 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Not applicable

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

The overall quality of teaching is good; however it is variable with one lesson in four being very good or better whilst nearly one in three is satisfactory. Only two lessons out of the 166 observed were unsatisfactory. The teaching is better in Years 10 and 11, where there is a higher proportion of good or better lessons, than in Years 7 to 9. Good teaching occurs in all subjects but the best teaching is in Year 10 and 11 history, geography and drama lessons where it is very good. Teaching is good overall in English and science and satisfactory in mathematics and information technology. It is good in all other subjects. Teachers have good subject knowledge and a good understanding of the requirements of external tests and examinations. As a result pupils are very well prepared for National Assessments at the age of 14 and GCSE examinations. Literacy skills, particularly writing, are well developed across a range of subjects but currently there is no coherent strategy for the teaching of numeracy which, as a consequence, is ineffective. However, the improvement of numeracy skills has already been identified by the school as a priority. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English is effective and they are enabled to learn well. This good quality teaching coupled with high quality relationships and the positive attitudes of the pupils are the reasons why boys and girls of all abilities make good progress in their learning and achieve successful outcomes.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Overall, the quality and range of learning opportunities are good. The provision of extra curricular activities is very good and community links are a great strength. However, the school does not meet statutory requirements in its provision for information technology, and design and technology in Years 10 and 11.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision has improved considerably since the previous inspection and provision is now good. All pupils have individual learning plans but pupils' progress is not checked frequently enough.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils are well supported; they quickly become fluent in English and make very good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. The school is particularly good in developing moral and social values.
How well the school cares for its pupils	A very effective pastoral system is an important factor in creating a climate of care and affection. The school has very good procedures for health, safety and child protection.

The school has very effective links with its parents who are very supportive and proud of its successes.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides strong leadership and clear direction for the school. However not all teachers with management responsibilities are monitored sufficiently.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors carry out their responsibilities through an effective committee structure. They are fully involved in the decision-making processes but they need to ensure that the school meets all its statutory requirements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school monitors its academic performance very effectively. A wide range of data is used to ensure it is on course to meet its targets.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning is efficient; the school makes certain that its low budget is spent wisely. All contracts are examined to ensure they are competitive and that they provide exactly the service or goods required. The school has sufficient teachers but there is a shortage of books and computers. Accommodation is poor; there is serious overcrowding, with the library and some corridors used for teaching.

Senior managers have made a good start in monitoring the work of the school systematically to help them measure the progress being made to meet the targets set in the school development plan. However, not all areas of the school's work have received rigorous attention. For example, subject departments have various procedures for assessing and reporting pupils' progress but these have not yet been brought together into a coherent whole school policy. As a result those with responsibility are not sufficiently held to account for the outcomes.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children like school• The attitudes and values promoted by the school• Children make good progress• Teaching is good• Their children are expected to work hard• The school is well run• Their children are helped to become mature and responsible young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information regarding their child's progress• The arrangements for meetings between teachers and parents to discuss their children's progress.

The inspectors are in agreement with the parents except that inspectors do not have enough first hand evidence to be able to make a judgement about the arrangements for meetings between parents and teachers. This has been left with the school for consideration.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The results of the 1999 national tests for 14 year old pupils are well above average taking the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science together. These results are very high and amongst the top five per cent when compared with similar schools. The English results were the best with boys doing particularly well. They scored considerably better than the girls in the school for the first time even though the girls' results were above the national average. One of the school's priorities was to raise the achievement of boys. The strategies they adopted were certainly successful in English. They were not quite as successful in mathematics and science where, although results were well above average, the performance of boys and girls was broadly the same. Over the last four years the school has maintained these good results and improved them in line with the national trend.
2. 1999 GCSE results were the best the school has ever achieved. They were well above average with boys once again doing particularly well. They improved on the national average for boys by nearly 30 per cent and were the best in the Local Authority. Girls' results were also good but their improvement was little changed from previous years. A particularly noteworthy feature of the 1999 results was that almost all pupils obtained five or more A-G grades which places the school in the top 5 per cent of similar schools. The school also achieved an above average proportion of the highest grades, A* and A. Over the last six years the school has maintained its good results and kept pace with the national improvement. 1999 results in English, Language and Literature, and science were well above average. In mathematics, although a higher than average proportion left school without any accreditation, the overall results were above average. Very good results were also obtained in history, geography, drama, French and Spanish. All other examination subjects were above average apart from sports studies and music, which were below average. The school sets appropriate targets for GCSE performance which were met in 1999 and are on course to meet the more challenging targets set for 2000.
3. Inspection evidence, which includes observations of lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils and takes into account a broader range of work than that tested at the end of Year 9, indicates that standards of work of the current Year 9 pupils are above average overall and broadly in line with previous test results. Standards in English and science are well above average and in mathematics they are above average. Pupils' achievements are not as high in mathematics mainly because they get off to a slow start in Year 7. They are taught in mixed ability classes and the more able are not sufficiently challenged. In addition, some important weaknesses in basic number knowledge and skills are not addressed. Progress is much better in Years 8 and 9. Good standards of work are evident in history, geography and foreign languages. In all other subjects standards are similar to the national target level. Overall, all pupils make good progress and achieve well. There is little difference between the progress of boys and girls and pupils with special needs are well supported and achieve well.
4. In years 10 and 11 the rate of learning generally quickens and by the time pupils are about to leave school their overall standard of work is well above average. As at the end of Year 9 standards in English and science are well above average and in mathematics they are above average. There is a good correlation between the standards seen during the inspection and GCSE examination results. The highest standards occur in history, geography, French, Spanish, drama as well as English and science. Good standards occur in art, music, business studies and design and technology. In information technology pupils taking GCSE courses achieve above average standards but pupils not taking GCSE underachieve and do not reach a satisfactory standard. A change in the examination syllabus has helped to raise

the achievement of pupils taking the physical education GCSE course to above average. It was not possible to observe compulsory physical education for non-GCSE pupils during the inspection.

5. Nationally, girls achieve higher standards than boys in GCSE examinations. However the 1999 test and examination results and inspection evidence indicate that at St Monica's there are no significant differences between the achievements of boys and girls. This reflects the emphasis the school places on raising the esteem and consequently the attainment of boys. Ethnic minority pupils make similar progress to others; they achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs and also those whose first language is not English achieve well. They make very good progress particularly in Years 10 and 11. All pupils on the special needs register are entered for GCSE examinations and a high proportion gained at least one C or better grade. The progress of pupils who are withdrawn for help with basic skills, especially reading and spelling, make particularly good progress due to the skilful teaching from specialist teachers.
6. Standards of literacy are good on entry to the school and remain at this level through both key stages. This has a strong positive effect on pupils' learning in other subjects. Writing is a particular strength. Pupils' confidence in writing is encouraged in nearly all subjects, and they often produce lengthy pieces of writing, especially in English and music. Geography and history also provide many opportunities for pupils to write at length and make other good contributions to pupils' literacy. Standards of presentation are good. Reading skills are generally good but overall these skills are not fully used in subjects to extend learning. There is inadequate library facility to support improvements in literacy. Speaking is well developed in modern languages, but opportunities to speak at length, other than in answer to teachers' questions, are too few in other subjects.
7. Overall standards of numeracy are below average. Pupils can use calculators effectively but weaknesses in basic numerical knowledge, such as multiplication tables and in basic skills, such as subtraction and long multiplication adversely affect pupils' progress, particularly lower attainers. In one Year 11 lesson, lower attaining pupils were unable to write down a number in figures when it was expressed in words, or to write simple fractions as decimals. In a Year 8 science lesson, middle ability pupils had difficulty in doing a straightforward proportion calculation involving single digit numbers. The school currently lacks a strategy for numeracy although it is a priority for next year.
8. The use of information technology across the curriculum is underdeveloped. This is partly due to lack of access arising from an under-provision of computers, software and ancillary equipment particularly in those subjects which are dependent on specialist facilities such as those required for music, computer aided design and manufacture and control. Art makes good use of image manipulation and there is some effective data-logging in science. There are some good examples of using computers for presentation of projects in some areas of design and technology and child development. However, the use of information technology in other subjects is insufficient to achieve adequate standards or enhance significantly pupils' learning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils display very good attitudes to learning. They enjoy coming to school and value the support and concern of their teachers. Their approach to work is conscientious and in class they listen attentively and work co-operatively. In general their powers of concentration are good, and little time is wasted during lessons. They take care to present their work carefully. Homework is properly completed and handed in on time, and many put considerable effort into research, and into writing about their responses to lessons. One Year 7 pupil gave a lively account of his reaction to images produced by listening to music about train journeys. Older pupils participate well in class and are prepared to engage in discussion but younger pupils in some classes are reticent about expressing their ideas.

10. Behaviour in lessons is very good. Pupils are polite to adults and considerate towards each other. They listen attentively when others are speaking. Around school, both inside and out, pupils behave well. There are very few examples of boisterous behaviour, and movement along corridors and up and down staircases is very orderly. They enter and leave lessons in a controlled manner. There is very little oppressive behaviour. The school responds very firmly to incidents of bullying, which are declining, and pupils have formed for themselves an anti-bullying council designed to support any pupil who feels intimidated. There has been a marked reduction in the number of exclusions. Isolated incidents of racist behaviour have been dealt with effectively and recorded in line with the Local Authority policy. In discussion, pupils agreed that they feel safe in school, and that rules are applied fairly and consistently.
11. Pupils show a high level of respect for their own and each other's property, and for the school environment. There is no graffiti, and litter is reasonably well controlled. In order to raise awareness further, the school has arranged a visit from representatives of the "Tidy Britain" campaign. Relationships between pupils and with teachers are based on mutual respect and are very good.
12. Pupils willingly accept responsibility. They respond well to the many opportunities offered by the school and are eager to make the most of a wide range of experiences. Older pupils are keen to become prefects, take their duties seriously and act as good examples for younger ones to follow. Year 8 pupils are good ambassadors for the school when it is their turn to greet visitors to the school. Pupils express their views in a responsible manner through the school council. Each year there are several fund-raising initiatives on behalf of disadvantaged people and many pupils give their own time to help pupils in a nearby old people's home. Pupils show much initiative such as that shown by the Year 11 netball team who produced a video to present to a teacher about to leave the school. All pupils have the opportunity to produce and take part in assemblies. However, opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning within the school are restricted by the unavailability of a good resource area where they could research information.
13. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are major strengths of the school; they contribute substantially to pupils' achievements.
14. The school has good levels of attendance. During 1998/9 the overall level was higher than the national average and unauthorised attendance was less than the national average. Parents say that their children like coming to school and that they respond well to the school's expectations of commitment. The good attendance rate is a key factor in the pupils' good progress. Registers are marked promptly and lateness is recorded. The large majority of students are punctual. Lessons start on time and pupils respond well to the pace of an industrious and orderly community.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The overall quality of teaching is good. 166 lessons were observed and seven out of ten were good or better. There is almost no unsatisfactory teaching. The best teaching is in Years 10 and 11, where three out of every four lessons were good or better and one in three was very good including three lessons of outstanding quality. This is a big improvement since the previous inspection when one lesson in every four was unsatisfactory. The time and effort invested by the headteacher and a deputy in the monitoring of teaching over the last two years has been a significant factor in this improvement.
16. This good quality teaching, coupled with pupils' positive attitudes and good attendance, are the most important factors in promoting good learning. Pupils arrive at lessons prepared to work hard in order to acquire new knowledge and skills. The teaching meets their needs and prepares them particularly well for external tests and examinations. The school identified the raising of boys' achievements as a priority and they have been very successful in devising

teaching strategies to do this without detriment to girls, For example, long-term projects are broken down into shorter tasks and more emphasis is placed on oral work. The music department, for example, has been very successful in creating a 'boy-friendly' culture and many more boys participate in musical activities than is usually found.

17. Good teaching occurs in all subjects but the best teaching is in Year 10 and 11 history, geography and drama lessons. Teaching is good overall in English and science and satisfactory in mathematics and information technology. It is good in all other subjects. The teachers' knowledge and enthusiasm inspire pupils and their interest and motivation are kept at a high level by the variety of appropriate and challenging tasks. An example of this was seen in a Year 11 lower ability history group which, set some very challenging work on the Great Depression, produced work of a high standard. There are no subjects where the teaching is unsatisfactory but in information technology there were very few good lessons. Even though the shortage of computers causes difficulties more use could be made of the teaching material to make it more relevant and suited to the wide range of abilities found in most groups. In mathematics, the higher and lower attaining pupils in Year 7 could make faster progress if the work was better matched to their capabilities.
18. Teachers are generally well supported by subject managers through appropriate schemes of work, meetings and discussions. However, there is little monitoring and support through observation of teachers in the classroom, apart from those of newly qualified teachers, by subject managers or colleagues with a similar subject expertise. As a result, good practice is not effectively shared and the teachers are not enabled to see how they could further improve their teaching and turn good or satisfactory lessons into very good ones.
19. Teaching of literacy is good. In most subjects teachers help pupils improve spelling and the quality and accuracy of their writing. Teachers of foreign languages and guidance place a strong emphasis on speaking through discussion, debate and presentations but generally there are too few opportunities for pupils to speak at length. Pupils develop their basic learning skills well when given the opportunity to make decisions. A good example of this occurred in a Year 10 business studies lesson. Pupils enjoyed researching the advertising and marketing of soft drinks, made some very good group presentations of their findings, and then created their own coloured designs using computers. The teaching of numeracy is patchy. Pupils in geography are taught to plot graphs and understand coordinates and other subjects use number when required but there is no coherent approach to develop numeracy skills. The school has plans to introduce a numeracy policy next year.
20. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers have a good knowledge of each pupil's needs from the information provided by the school's co-ordinator. Most lessons are well planned with a suitable range of teaching methods and using a variety of resources. Teachers make effective use of support assistants when in the classroom but they are not sufficiently involved in lesson planning. The monitoring of pupils with special educational needs by support assistants is good and they are fully involved in recording the progress pupils make. Teachers make little use of information technology in the teaching of special needs pupils and computer-based resources are poor. However, the school is in the process of purchasing an independent learning system to use with one stand-alone machine.
21. Pupils whose first language is not English have been well supported and effectively taught. All are now fluent in English and only one pupil is still receiving specific support. All have made good progress and achieved well.
22. Homework is set appropriately and effectively extends pupils' learning. Pupils' work is frequently and regularly marked although the quality is variable. Pupils' strengths and weaknesses, and what they must do to improve are generally not clearly identified. As noted in the previous inspection there is a clear need for a whole school approach to marking. This should include regular discussions with pupils about their work, as observed in art, and clear explanations of assessment criteria.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?

23. The quality and range of learning opportunities is good. The curriculum is broad and balanced. In Key Stage 3 pupils study the full range of National Curriculum subjects as well as religious education and Guidance. The proportion of time given for each subject is appropriate in all subjects except design technology where in Key Stage 3, pupils receive less time for design technology than in most other schools. The time allocated at the start of the school day for such matters as registration, worship, administration and guidance is not always used effectively and is not planned or monitored sufficiently well. This means that the total teaching time that is provided in a week is below the nationally recommended minimum.
24. In Years 8 and 9, Spanish is offered to pupils the school judges will benefit from a second foreign language. The number of boys taking a second foreign language has caught up with the girls and is no longer the concern it was at the time of the previous inspection. In information technology progress is adversely affected by the time-tabling arrangement which gives pupils a seventy minute lesson for six months of the year and no further discrete lessons for the next six months. The control aspect of the information technology is not taught to all pupils and as a consequence the programme of study does not fully meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. Although not offered as separate subjects, drama and dance are positive enhancements to the learning experience of all pupils in this Key Stage.
25. In Key Stage 4, a suitable range of GCSE subjects is offered and the schools' option pattern is effective in that almost all pupils obtain their first-choice combination of subjects. There are, however, no vocational courses offered, other than GCSE business studies, as a supplement to GCSE courses, for those pupils who might benefit from a different style of learning and which could provide a different route into further education. Because many pupils in this key stage do not follow a design and technology course and because pupils do not continue to develop their information technology skills in a variety of subjects the requirements of National Curriculum are not fully met.
26. The planning for the development of literacy skills is good but currently there is no whole school approach to the development of numeracy although one is planned.
27. A very good programme of guidance helps all students gain knowledge and understanding of personal, social and health education and citizenship. The programme also includes guidance on health, sex and drugs misuse. Year 7 pupils are helped with organisation of their school work and homework and all age groups are helped to learn about relationships, health and safety, empathy with others and how to recognise and prevent bullying.
28. The quality of careers education is good. Pupils have a well planned careers programme and a good careers library, including computer software, with access to information about educational and career opportunities. Close links with the Bury careers service provide additional expertise and guidance which is appropriate to each pupil. The careers service can be consulted at all parents' events, and pupils and their parents can attend the annual careers convention. Very good links with the local Training and Enterprise Council enable students to gain work experience and take part in activities offering skills for life including personal challenge and community involvement.
29. The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good and it has a positive impact on pupils' achievements and enthusiasm for various subjects. A particularly good range of physical education activities, including competitive games, is taken up by nearly half of the pupils. Music, drama, astronomy, environment are some of the areas that also provide good opportunities. Numerous trips abroad bring an added dimension to the study of foreign languages. Extra revision classes for GCSE are also provided, and those who attend

appreciate and benefit from the additional support.

30. The school's commitment to equal opportunity, clearly expressed in its Mission Statement, is successfully implemented. Since the previous inspection the school's strategies for improving boys' achievement have substantially closed the gap between boys and girls achievement in the 1999 GCSE results. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the National Curriculum and all statutory requirements are met. Pupils are entered for the full range of GCSE subjects and the option block in Year 10 gives them the opportunity to spend more time on the Guidance programme, including careers.
31. Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) are well supported and make very good progress. Of the fifteen pupils on the EAL register, fourteen are fluent speakers and only one has special help.
32. Community links are a great strength of the whole curriculum. The school provides a wealth of opportunities in sport, the arts, humanities and community service. Pupils and their parents are well informed about sixth form and further education colleges. Links with local parishes, with primary schools, with the elderly and with young people who have learning difficulties, make a very good contribution to the community and, together with residential retreats, enhance pupils' own personal and spiritual growth. Educational links and visits are extensive and enrich the formal curriculum. The astronomical society take their telescope to view Saturn, Jupiter and the Andromeda Galaxy and pupils have visited Manchester University laboratories to look at the potential and application of lasers. Pupils have lobbied the Greek government to protect endangered birds. They have improved the local environment by planting trees. Excellent links with the police help pupils' awareness of their own personal safety and of the needs of society.

Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

33. The quality of religious education and collective worship is subject to a concurrent inspection, commissioned by the governors and carried out by the Diocese of Salford. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. The assemblies are orderly and reverent occasions which give very good opportunities for pupils to actively participate by taking a leading role in music and drama, for which all form groups take responsibility as part of a rolling programme, or by joining in general prayer and hymns. Assembly themes are supported by a good, recently introduced programme for use in form assemblies which provides opportunities for pupils to reflect on their personal ideas and beliefs and those of other people. There is a rich variety of liturgical, retreat, and pilgrimage experiences made available for pupils throughout the year, and a significant number of pupils are involved in the school's Liturgy Group. Parents appreciated the opportunity for their sons and daughters to affirm their faith through participation in the recent Mission Week. Provision for pupils' spiritual development through the secular curriculum is patchy although English makes a good contribution through the use of texts, which reinforce pupils' Catholic identity.
34. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good and is based on shared expectations emerging from Catholic moral philosophy, so that, for example, the focus in dealing with bullying is to emphasise change and acceptance of personal responsibility rather than blame. Relevant school policy documents emphasise the promotion of respect for other people. Teachers are good role models and are consistent in their approach. The guidance programme provides opportunities for pupils to consider a range of moral issues. Sex education is taught from a Catholic moral perspective and encourages personal responsibility. Provision is also made through the subjects of the curriculum. Sportsmanship and fair play are encouraged in physical education and both history and geography deal with

issues resulting from technological and environmental change. The moral implications of loans to the developing world are considered in mathematics. In English, pupils have the opportunity to explore their feelings and understanding of right and wrong by writing about relevant issues which arise from their studies.

35. Provision for pupils' social development is also very good with much based on that aspect of the school's mission statement concerned with "service". Pupils have opportunities for work with both the elderly and very young members of the community. Fund raising for local and national charities is extensive and the school readily encourages and supports pupils' initiatives in this respect, for example in collecting items of school uniform which they have outgrown, to be sent to a South American mission. There is a well-trained peer-counselling group which is highly regarded by pupils. The school's ethos encourages very good relationships between pupils and adults. Social development is also promoted through the curriculum and opportunities to work collaboratively both in lessons and extra-curricular clubs and activities.
36. Provision for cultural development is good. Drama productions offer opportunities for many pupils as do a range of musical experiences, including a boys' choir. Choirs and instrumental ensembles also perform regularly in assemblies. Visits are organised to theatres and art galleries, and there are field trips in both history and geography. Pupils gain a wide knowledge and understanding of the richness of English literature. Opportunities for pupils to appreciate cultural traditions other than their own, are more limited. Provision through the subjects is patchy. GCSE texts in English take pupils out of their own cultural experiences and introduce them to others, thus broadening pupils' understanding of different cultures. Trips abroad and history and geography lessons provide the pupils with knowledge and understanding of other world cultures, and the religious education curriculum enables pupils to learn about major world faiths as well as Christianity. However, the ethnic and cultural diversity of the local and regional community is insufficiently recognised both in the curriculum and in display in public areas around the school, which was also the case at the time of the previous inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. The school provides its pupils with high levels of care. Staff are very committed to the pupils, treating them as individuals and making them feel valued. Every pupil's care and well-being is supported by very good co-operation between families and the school staff. The pastoral system based upon the form tutor and heads of year is very effective. Pupils who are not achieving their potential are given extra help and support with individual mentoring and extra work after school. This procedure has a very good effect on the pupils' attitudes, progress and achievement. The school management and staff continually seek to minimise the necessity for temporary or permanent exclusions without compromising the climate of mutual care and respect which enables all to be happy and secure and make the best possible progress.
38. A very good policy for health and safety and good procedures provide for regular monitoring, risk analysis, and immediate response to hazards or concerns. Excellent procedures operate for safety during fieldwork and school visits. Pupils are well supervised. Lunch-time is a pleasant, social occasion and all year groups have good opportunities to relax and socialise without fear of harm or harassment. All accidents are recorded and first aid procedures are always on hand. The school takes great care to provide for any special medical needs.
39. Child protection procedures are in place and staff know what to do if they have any concerns. The school guidance programme includes advice on personal safety. The school liaises very well with primary schools to identify and provide for pupils' educational, personal and medical needs from the very start of their secondary education.

40. Assessment procedures in Key Stage 3 are variable; some good practice exists in English and mathematics but it is underdeveloped in many other subjects. Although assessments are carried out and recorded regularly, teachers are insecure in judging pupils' attainment in relation to national criteria. There are few portfolios of pupils' work to guide teachers with their assessments. Assessment procedures are much better in Years 10 and 11 when GCSE criteria bring greater consistency.
41. There is no effective system in place to track pupils' progress across the full range of subjects which would allow form tutors and year heads to quickly identify the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' work.
42. The use of assessment information is not yet used consistently across subjects to raise standards. Again, there is some good practice. The scheme of work in information technology at Years 7 - 9 was modified as a result of assessment of pupils' learning with a consequent benefit to standards in Years 10 and 11. Not all subjects use assessment data to set targets for improvement. Details of pupils' personal development are well maintained throughout the school and tutors know their pupils very well. Significant achievement is included in their Records of Achievement.
43. Procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs and how to bring any concerns to the attention of the learning support department are satisfactory. National Curriculum scores at the end of Key Stage 2, tests that pupils do on entering the school in Year 7, teacher observation and information provided by parents and external agencies are all used to form good pupil profiles. However, there is insufficient testing and recording of basic skills as pupils move through the school. The work of the school's support assistants is good. They know the pupils well and they use this knowledge to provide appropriate support. Individual Education Plans exist in a variety of forms, There is a need, however, to reduce the number of forms in use and to develop a learning plan for each pupil to which learning targets in different subjects can be added in a more co-ordinated way. The school is aware of this and has already begun to introduce a standardised system for all pupils on the special needs register. The plans drawn up by specialist support teachers for the pupils they help, are of a particularly high quality.
44. Procedures to promote good attendance are outstandingly good. Pupils records are closely monitored for attendance and punctuality. If the school has concerns these are discussed with parents who are well supported by the Education Welfare service in efforts to improve the pupils' attendance. When absence is not explained the school takes immediate action to seek an explanation. Individual students and classes are rewarded for good and improved attendance.
45. The behaviour policy is very good. Regular monitoring and staff meetings make sure that the policy is applied consistently. Pupils are eager to gain the awards of merits and certificates and they consider the sanctions to be fair. Parents are aware of the behaviour policy and co-operate well with the school to support their children's well-being and good conduct, and, if necessary, co-operate in setting targets to improve effort and attainment.
46. All pupils are aware that bullying can take various forms and that any incident of bullying and racism is taken very seriously and must be reported. The guidance programme pays careful attention to work on relationships and citizenship and pupils know what is expected of them. The many good opportunities to take positions of responsibility, for example as prefects, as members of the school council, as anti-bullying counsellors and in the skills for life scheme, encourage pupils to make their own contribution to the school community.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. The school's links with parents are very good. Parents support the school strongly. They express a high degree of satisfaction with the leadership and management, the school's expectations of pupils' commitment, the behaviour in school and the way the school cares for pupils and responds to any pupils' or parents' concerns. Parents are very pleased with the way the school promotes their partnership and involvement via the weekly newsletter and the weekly signing of pupils' journals. The journals are well designed to record homework, a termly grade for effort and provide an opportunity for dialogue between parents and form tutors. Parents like the way all pupils are encouraged to set themselves high standards of individual achievement and the way the school recognises and rewards all those who achieve their personal best. Parents say that they feel welcome to speak to their child's form tutor by telephone, or in person, about any queries or concerns. They are very pleased with the quality of information they receive before their child starts secondary education, particularly the opportunity to learn about the school during the last year their child is at primary school. Parents say that the school provides well for pupils' special needs.
48. A minority of parents would like more information about how their children are progressing. Parents' evenings are very well attended, but some parents are not always able to meet all the teachers they would like to see. The end of year reports do not always tell parents what their children are doing, how well they are doing it, whether it is good enough and what they need to do to improve. They do not always provide information on how pupils' attainment relates to national standards; in this respect the school does not fully meet the national requirement in art, music and physical education in Year 9.
49. Parents receive good, detailed information on the courses available for Year 10 and 11 pupils and very good opportunities to talk to the careers officer at parents' evenings and by request. At parents' evenings parents have opportunities to see what is being taught and the history department provides them with written information on topics for each year group. Links with parents make a good contribution to pupils' learning at school and at home. Parents are advised of the school's behaviour policy and the home-school agreement in the students' journals and may be involved in any special measures to raise attainment levels and standards of behaviour.
50. Parents' involvement makes a positive impact on the work of the school. The Parent Teacher Association comprises a committed group which works hard to raise substantial funds for extra resources. Social events and school performances are very well supported. Parents' views are very well represented on the governing body. Parents know that the school is always ready to talk to them and welcomes their views on any aspect of their own child's education and on the overall provision in school.
51. The school prospectus provides clear information about the school with particularly good detail about the school's arrangements to provide for pupils who have special needs. However the prospectus could be improved by more specific information regarding the school's admission policy. Overall partnership with parents is a real strength of the school and makes a very good contribution to pupils' attainments and progress.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The headteacher provides strong and very effective leadership. His commitment to raising standards and his clearly visible presence and influence around the school are significant factors in creating a climate that encourages learning and consequently high attainment. He is well supported by his deputies, teachers, governors, and by the parents. This strong support from the whole community creates very positive attitudes and relationships firmly based on the Catholic faith.

53. The school has responded well to the issues raised in the previous report and significant improvements have resulted. In addition, the headteacher and senior management team monitor and evaluate on a regular basis many important aspects of the schools work. This has been particularly successful in raising the overall quality of teaching which has improved considerably since the previous inspection. There are now almost no unsatisfactory lessons. However, for this improvement to continue all subject managers, instead of a few, need to evaluate the teaching in their department. They need to use their specialist knowledge of the subject to identify the best practice and develop procedures to share it.
54. The school works well with the Local Authority in evaluating its performance, particularly in relation to examination and test results. In consultation with the governors appropriate whole school targets are set and the progress towards meeting them is closely monitored. This culture of target setting needs to spread into subject departments in order to raise expectation and consequently the achievement of groups and individuals.
55. The implementation of policies and the monitoring of their outcomes are variable. Excellent procedures are effective in improving attendance, as is the very good monitoring of pupils' behaviour and personal development. The assessment of pupils' attainment and the extent to which it is used to inform planning and set targets is inconsistent, particularly in years 7 to 9. Only in Year 9 are assessments made against national criteria and these are not yet in place in art, music and physical education. However, there is some good practice; the Key Stage 3 scheme of work in information technology has been revised as a result of assessment and standards have improved, and in mathematics assessment is used effectively to monitor pupils' progress. There is also variability both within and across subjects in the marking of pupils' work. There is no whole school policy and the different practices make it harder for pupils to know at what level they are working and what they must do to improve.
56. Not all managers have made sufficient progress in putting in place the procedures needed to ensure high quality provision in all areas. For example, information technology is not sufficiently well coordinated to develop pupils' skills in a range of subjects; there is currently no strategy for improving numeracy although one is planned; and there is not always a clear strategy for sharing best practice in teaching or management. Although there are procedures in place for monitoring the performance of all teachers in the classroom a more formal approach to the appraisal of teachers with responsibilities would help in identifying areas which are in need of a 'lift'. Current job specifications for managers do not take sufficient account of the school's changing priorities and the amount of time needed to carry out the assigned responsibilities.
57. Since the previous inspection the school has developed a policy for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) which implements the recommendations in the Code of Practice. The resulting action plan set seven targets for improvement which have largely been met. The SEN coordinator has introduced a number of valuable initiatives, including Individual Education Plans that are updated every term. Liaison arrangements with outside agencies such as the sensory support service are efficiently managed. The result of these actions is that pupils with special needs make very good progress overall and achieve high standards. There is a need to review the use of the coordinator's time to ensure that the progress and attainment of individual SEN pupils is regularly and frequently checked. Individual Education Plans would be even more useful if they were complemented by subject-specific plans.
58. The role of the governors has recently been strengthened and they work well with the headteacher in planning future developments. Governors clearly understand the school's main strengths and they set suitably challenging targets in relation to pupils' performance in GCSE examinations. They meet regularly as a full body and as various committees. Good records are kept and suitable policies are in place although there is no formal mechanism for review. However, the annual report to parents does not contain performance targets and in

this respect does not fully meet statutory requirements. Not all pupils in Key Stage 4 follow a statutory National Curriculum design and technology course nor do all pupils have full access to the required information technology programme of study. The governors need to ensure that their procedures are robust enough to uncover areas of the school's work which have relative weaknesses.

59. The school's priorities are clearly identified in its development plan. This has improved since the previous inspection and provides a clear direction for the work of the school. The current focus on improving the performance of boys has been particularly successful. There is a clear link with budget setting but this could be improved with more detailed costing in some areas. Further improvements could be obtained by linking success criteria more firmly to academic outcomes and by taking a longer term view which encompassed such developments as the school's roll, accommodation plans and future pupil-teacher ratios.
60. The school has sufficient appropriately qualified and experienced teachers to match the needs of the National Curriculum and the abilities of the pupils. Since the previous inspection the teaching load on year tutors has been reduced to enable them to carry out their duties more effectively. Procedures for the induction of newly qualified teachers are good. Numbers and training of support staff, including learning support assistants are satisfactory other than in information technology. Here, the lack of a trained technician means that teachers have to manage the computer network, reducing the time available for planning and preparation. This has a detrimental impact on the standards achieved by pupils. The very good provision of administration and clerical staff ensures the smooth day-to-day running of the school and provides strong support for teachers.
61. The accommodation, though clean, is badly in need of external redecoration and, in some areas, refurbishment where, for example, wood has been exposed to the elements and is badly deteriorated. The teaching accommodation for most subjects is at least adequate. However, the library is in regular use as a classroom, which reduces its effectiveness as a learning resource. Some corridor space is also pressed into regular use as a classroom. One of the science laboratories is unsuitable for practical work. The lack of outdoor facilities for teaching physical education with the resultant need to travel elsewhere which consequently reduces teaching time; the limited changing accommodation for boys and the poor accommodation for music, were reported at the time of the previous inspection. They still persist and reduce learning opportunities..
62. Despite the school's low income, spending on learning resources is above average although serious shortages exist which affect the quality of learning. Library stock is inadequate which, compounded by lack of access and appropriate staffing, make it ineffective in providing assistance to pupils' personal study and in promoting higher levels of literacy. Shortages of textbooks in some curriculum areas mean that pupils are not able to take books home. Subject departments lack computers for specialist use. For example, the machines in music cannot handle sophisticated software, and in design technology they lack control applications.
63. The school has invested wisely and prudently in clearly identified priorities, such as, improving attendance, reducing class sizes and improving provision for pupils with special educational needs. In all these areas this improved provision has led to higher standards. Specific grants and additional funding are used effectively for their intended purpose. A recent Auditor's report gave the school a clean bill of health apart from a few minor recommendations that have now been implemented. Spending decisions are carefully considered for best value. The school considers alternative views and takes account of staff, parents and pupils' views as appropriate. Currently the school's information and communications technology system is not meeting the school's needs and a replacement is being considered.
64. The school receives a well below average income. Although the attainment of the annual

intake of pupils to Year 7 is pupils above average, it is well above average when they leave at the end of Year 11. The school adds considerable value and pupils of all abilities achieve well. They leave school as mature, well educated young adults. The school gives very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

65. A culture for school improvement has been established and the school should now:

- (1) further improve the quality of teaching by:
 - (a) extending to subject specialists the monitoring of teaching and learning, which is currently undertaken by senior management, to make full use of subject expertise in the evaluation of individual teachers' strengths and weaknesses;
(paragraphs 18,53,5674,87,95,119,137)
 - (b) formulating and adopting procedures that would disseminate good practice;
(paragraphs 18,53,5674,87,95,119,137)
 - (c) ensuring that the criteria used in monitoring focus on the school's development priorities;
(paragraphs 56,75,87,95)
 - (d) developing a whole school marking policy and ensuring it is followed by all teachers so that pupils know what to do in order to improve their work.
(paragraphs 22, 55, 94,109)

- (2) Improve the effectiveness of managers at all levels in meeting the aims of the school and statutory requirements by:
 - (a) revising job specifications and matching them to the amount of time available to carry out the responsibilities;
(paragraph 56)
 - (b) reviewing and amending as appropriate school policies or procedures where there is currently an inconsistency between subjects, for example target setting, assessment and its use, report writing;
(paragraphs 87,142,149)
 - (c) ensuring regular monitoring of managers at all levels to ensure that school policies are being carried out and that there is a consistency of approach across subjects;
(paragraphs 19, 53, 55, 56)
 - (d) arranging for governors to meet managers on a more formal basis.
(paragraph 58)

- (3) Improve numeracy and standards of work in information technology by:
 - (a) ensuring that appropriate training and resources are in place to introduce the whole school numeracy strategy as planned next academic year;
(paragraphs 7,19,26,82,87)
 - (b) adjusting the timetable to ensure greater continuity in the teaching of information technology in Years 7 – 9;
(paragraphs 24,125)
 - (c) providing for information technology to meet the 'control' aspect specified in the National Curriculum;
(paragraph 125)
 - (d) ensuring that all subjects make an effective contribution to the development of information technology skills as well as enhancing the learning in that subject.
(paragraphs 8,14, 85,130,136)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	166
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	44

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	24	42	31	1	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils on the school's roll	1150	-
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	128	-

Special educational needs	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	24	-
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	175	-

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	15

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	35

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	7.3
National comparative data	7.9

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	1.1

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	114	117	231

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	101	90	83
	Girls	93	91	90
	Total	194	181	173
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	84 (78)	78 (64)	75 (66)
	National	63 (65)	62 (59)	55 (56)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	52 (48)	48 (44)	37 (31)
	National	28 (35)	38 (36)	23 (27)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	105	89	75
	Girls	99	84	84
	Total	204	173	159
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	88 (81)	75 (75)	69 (83)
	National	64 (62)	64 (63)	60 (62)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	47 (53)	35 (43)	41 (47)
	National	31 (30)	37 (37)	28 (30)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4

Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	117	109	226

GCSE results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A*-G	1 or more grades A*-G
Numbers of pupils achieving the standard specified	Boys	78 [53]	117 (104)	117 (108)
	Girls	72 (66)	106 (85)	109 (87)
	Total	150 (119)	223 (189)	226 (195)
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	67 (60)	100 (97)	100 (99)
	National	46 (45)	91 (90)	96 (95)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	47 (42)
	National	38 (37)

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

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	5
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	2
Indian	-
Pakistani	-
Bangladeshi	-
Chinese	-
White	1142
Any other minority ethnic group	-

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	4	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	-	-
Pakistani	-	-
Bangladeshi	-	-
Chinese	-	-
White	46	7
Other minority ethnic groups	-	-

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y11

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	62.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y7 – Y11

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	235

Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y11

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	76.9
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Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y11

Key Stage 3	20.1
Key Stage 4	16.7

Financial information

Financial year	1999 - 2000
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	£
Total income	2432488
Total expenditure	2469495
Expenditure per pupil	2147
Balance brought forward from previous year	50476
Balance carried forward to next year	13469

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

1150

Number of questionnaires returned

386

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	47	46	6	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	61	37	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	46	1	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	50	7	2	1
The teaching is good.	53	44	1	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	45	10	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	32	5	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	78	22	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	40	49	8	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	68	29	1	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	42	1	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	56	34	5	0	5

Other issues raised by parents

The majority of parents who spoke to the inspectors felt that the parents' meeting to discuss their child's progress could be better organised.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

ENGLISH

66. Test results in English at the end of Year 9 have been well above national average in recent years. In 1999, boys' results were higher than those of the girls, which is contrary to the national picture, though girls also scored well above national average. The proportion of pupils who exceeded the nationally expected level was high compared with national and local figures. Compared with similar schools, test results were very high. Improvements in English results have been in line with the national trend, and in the school they have been better than the mathematics and science results.
67. All pupils are prepared for both the English Language and Literature examinations. Results for GCSE English in 1999 were well above national average. GCSE English Literature results in the same year were above average. In both examinations a very high proportion of pupils (one quarter) gained A* or A grades. Results were above those gained by the same pupils in mathematics and science. Over recent years GCSE English results have risen by more than the national trend, though in GCSE English Literature the gains have been less marked over the same period. Though girls' results were slightly higher than those gained by boys in English, the difference was less marked than nationally.
68. Inspection evidence gained in observation of lessons, scrutiny of work, interviews with pupils and displays confirms the test results at the end of Year 9. Standards of work are well above average. Pupils in Key Stage 3 write across a range of styles, showing particular strengths when writing about the media. They read a wide range of books in class, and a weekly private reading session encourages good reading habits. By the end of Year 9 they write carefully constructed essays showing a wide knowledge of books and language, an ability to analyse authors' ideas and techniques and assemble interesting arguments from notes. Pupils listen attentively to teachers' explanation of how books are written. A weakness in their attainment is a lack of opportunity to gain understanding for themselves by listening to each other propose and defend ideas in informal and more formal discussions.
69. Inspection evidence confirms GCSE results. The thorough preparation for the Year 9 tests continues into Years 10 and 11. Pupils are given detailed tuition in examination techniques. They gain a comprehensive command of set texts, skilfully use evidence in support of written arguments, write balanced accounts of opposing viewpoints, and express ideas in writing with great care to ensure accurate basic skills. Their effective written language skills are not yet matched by the skills of speaking that explore, persuade, communicate personal feelings, and entertain. In this regard, some of the writing lacks the flair and subtle originality that comes from speaking fluently and passionately about ideas.
70. The well above average standards in English have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils enter the school with attainment above the national average. By the end of Year 9 this has risen to well above national average. Progress and learning are good in Key Stage 3. Those with reading and writing problems receive special attention as part of the school's new literacy intervention strategy and this enables them to learn well. Access to information technology in English lessons is unsatisfactory and restricts progress. Pupils' attitudes to learning in both key stages are very positive. They enjoy lessons and show a willingness to be worked hard. They listen carefully to their teachers and comply with instructions without hesitation. Standards of work are established swiftly in Year 7. The boy-girl seating arrangements in many English classes keep pupils equally on task. There are challenging homeworks, lessons with pace, and a variety of books studied in class. These include examples from other cultures, such as Jan Needle's *My Mate Shofiq*. English is successful in creating an atmosphere in which pupils learn well, show interest in acquiring knowledge, and are proud of their achievements.

71. From Year 10 onwards, learning is characterised by a similar emphasis on a thorough understanding of set texts. Learning and progress are satisfactory, though pupils are not independent learners. While the close structure of the lessons favours a sound knowledge of what is required in examinations, it is not yet supported by personal understanding, acquired through challenge and exchange in spoken discussion. However, overall standards are still very good. Pupils study a variety of books, including those that create a world quite different from their own (e.g. Sean O' Casey's *Juno and the Paycock*). They write searchingly in reaction to high quality stimulus materials, such as the reminiscences of the disabled writer J-D Bauby in his *The Dining Bell and the Butterfly*. Impressive wall displays give examples of pupils' best work. By the end of Year 11 few pupils are inhibited about writing down their ideas. From Year 7 until they leave school, pupils of all abilities make similar progress. Those with special educational needs also keep up with the rest and achieve appropriate GCSE results in English and English Literature.
72. Teaching is good overall. In Key Stage 3 it is good in nearly half of all lessons, and satisfactory in the rest. In Key Stage 4 it is mainly good, never unsatisfactory, and in a small proportion of lessons is very good. It is characterised by enthusiasm for the subject, detailed planning with attention to progression, and a feverish pace. Teachers work themselves hard, explaining and directing. Their good command of subject knowledge enables them to explain in some detail the content of books, plays and poems studied in class. This, coupled with the skilled teaching of examination techniques and the acquisition of appropriate knowledge, makes the teaching effective though narrow. A very good Year 11 revision lesson was seen in which examination techniques, in the guise of new learning, assisted pupils' spiritual development. The stimulus material was about executions and the teacher gave a powerful account of the way in which God extends love to sinners shown through a nun's compassion towards a condemned man. There were 52 pupils in the class, which took place in a corridor space, but none was restless and all listened intently and reflectively to what they heard. This was an example of how the teaching style that restricts the breadth of pupils' learning in Key Stage 3 worked very effectively with older pupils at revision time.
73. A weakness of the teaching is its frequent directing of pupils' thinking. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to explore their own ideas through debate and discussion. Too often speaking is restricted to answering briefly teachers' questions, or to confirm learning in a previous lesson. Lessons were seen in which pupils' speaking was restricted to sharing in pairs a worksheet for completion. Not all tasks in these lessons were open-ended enough to provide pupils with real intellectual challenge. In many Year 7 and 8 lessons, all pupils, regardless of their ability, were expected to do exactly the same work. Throughout the school marking is not as specific as it could be. Comments are mainly confined to summary reactions rather than pinpointing in the pupils' writing what is of merit or what requires attention.
74. Management of the subject is very good. Strong leadership and meticulous administration enable pupils to learn at high levels despite the many changes in teachers in recent years and the appointment of a young staff in replacement. It gives clear direction and has established appropriate priorities, such as the literacy strategy. It reflects closely on examination performance and adapts planning to take account of strengths and weaknesses. However, observation of teaching by other English teachers is not yet established and the department has no formal procedures for sharing good practice. Teachers know and understand their pupils very well.
75. Since the previous report English has made significant improvements, though there remain some areas for further attention. Teaching has raised examination success, but it still directs pupils' thinking too much as indicated in the previous report. The success of boys in examinations is a considerable achievement. The development of reading is not sufficiently encouraged in all subjects and remains an issue. Poetry and elements of drama are now taught, though speaking remains undeveloped, as reported in 1994. Capacity for further

improvement is good because of the committed and hard-working team of teachers and the quality of leadership.

76. The library is unsatisfactory and cannot at present underpin a comprehensive reading programme. The use of an open space and the library for English teaching rooms, of which both are corridors, constrains the breadth of the teaching, distracts pupils and inhibits progress.

Literacy

77. Standards of literacy are good on entry to the school and remain at this level through both key stages. A good literacy policy helps teachers operating outside English lessons to assist pupils with weak basic skills. Spelling is aided by word-lists, and by teachers making sure that pupils pay special attention to accurate writing. Confidence in writing is encouraged in nearly all subjects. In many subjects pupils produce lengthy pieces of writing, especially in English and music. Geography and history also provide many opportunities for pupils to write at length and make other good contributions to pupils' literacy. Standards of presentation are good. Reading skills are not extended in many subjects. There are inadequate library facilities to support improvements in literacy, and information technology is used insufficiently in subjects to provide additional support. Speaking is well developed in modern languages, but opportunities to speak at length, other than in answer to teachers' questions, are too few in other subjects.

Drama and Media Studies

78. Drama is part of the programmes of study of English in Years 7 - 9, where drama is geared to speaking about books read and to role-play and hot-seating in response. Pupils studying GCSE drama bring few basic skills in acting; these are barely average at the start of Year 10. Pupils quickly lose self-consciousness and learn sensitivity towards other people's contributions to the lessons. They have a very positive attitude to drama, learn essential teamwork, and acquire sufficient confidence to perform in front of others. Pupils empathise with the roles they play. By the end of the course, nearly all pupils are willing performers and bring to their drama an enthusiasm and readiness to learn how to perfect performance skills. The highest attaining pupils bring a great depth of feeling to their performances, which can be emotionally charged and moving. Boys and girls make effective and very well crafted costumes and theatrical properties.
79. Teaching of drama at Key Stage 4 is very good. It makes considerable emotional and intellectual demands on pupils new to the subject by challenging their thinking and ways of learning. It insists that, by the end of the course, pupils are active learners, mainly independent of their teacher, using him as a guide rather than a director. Drama is characterised by the way it insists that pupils use their initiative and test out ideas for themselves. Pupils' achievement in drama and the high quality of teaching lead to GCSE results that are well above the national average. Nearly a half of all pupils who took the examination in 1999 gained A* or A grades. In recent years, results have risen at a higher rate than nationally, and it is one of the highest-scoring GCSE subjects in the school.
80. GCSE Media Studies is a well-established option. Results have improved over recent years (from 57% in 1996 to 68% A*-C in 1999) and the subject attracts pupils from a wide range of abilities. Girls' attainment has been much greater than that of boys although all pupils achieve well. Good teaching and pupils' interest in the subject lead to good progress and learning. Access to specialist equipment is adequate, though there is a lack of computers to provide a wider range of publishing and editing facilities. Pupils rise quickly to the considerable intellectual demands of the subject and learn to use its special language with confidence. They write lively responses when showing how the media are responsible for creating their perception of what the world is like. High attaining pupils write persuasively, paying careful attention to relevant evidence in advertisements.

MATHEMATICS

81. The attainment of the annual intake of pupils to Year 7 is above average in mathematics though there are some important weaknesses in pupils' basic numerical knowledge and skills.
82. The first-hand inspection evidence shows that, overall, standards are above average by age 14. These standards are reflected in the school's very good results in the national tests, which show that the proportions of Year 9 pupils reaching and exceeding the expected levels are well above the national averages and also well above the averages for similar schools. Over the last four years they have increased in line with the national trend. Boys' and girls' results are similar. The very good test results are not quite as good as the English and science results and represent satisfactory overall achievement. There is some underachievement, however, because the level of work in the all-ability Year 7 classes is often too easy for the higher ability pupils and yet fails to tackle the lower attaining pupils' fundamental weaknesses in basic numeracy. In Years 8 and 9, because the pupils are organised in ability classes, the higher ability pupils make better progress than in Year 7.
83. Overall standards are above average by age 16, as confirmed by the school's generally good GCSE examination results. Boys and girls achieve equally. Although the girls' results were considerably below those of the boys in 1999, there is no consistent difference in the examination performance of boys and girls when the results are considered over a period of time. The proportion of pupils achieving a GCSE grade C or better has substantially increased since the previous inspection. This proportion was above average in 1999 and was well above average in 1998. The GCSE results are not as good as those in English and science. Whilst the standards achieved by the great majority of pupils' are good, an above average proportion of Year 11 pupils leave school without a GCSE in mathematics.
84. In each key stage, the strengths of the pupils' work lie in algebra, in probability and statistics, and in the application of their knowledge and skills to the solution of problems. Investigational work is well developed, as was seen, for example, in a Year 9 lesson on number patterns. Pupils can apply their good measuring skills effectively in technology lessons, and in science and geography lessons pupils apply their mathematical knowledge well when drawing graphs or making calculations. Pupils can generally use calculators effectively but weaknesses in basic numerical knowledge, such as multiplication tables; and in basic skills, such as subtraction and long multiplication, adversely affect the lower attaining pupils' progress.
85. Teaching is satisfactory overall and has improved substantially since the previous inspection. It is now satisfactory at Key Stage 3 and good at Key Stage 4, and no unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Of the 18 lessons inspected, 10 were found satisfactory, five were good and three were very good. In general, pupils are well motivated and make satisfactory overall progress through each key stage; however, in Year 7, both the higher attaining and lower attaining pupils could make faster progress if the work set for them was better matched to their level. Though pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in some aspects of the subject, insufficient emphasis is given to improving their basic skills. In general, pupils are prepared thoroughly for GCSE examinations. Discipline is effective and relationships with the pupils are very good. Literacy skills are well supported by the mathematics teachers, for example, in teaching their pupils key mathematical words in lessons. Homework is usually set according to the timetable and marking is satisfactory. The teachers make insufficient use of information technology.
86. Pupils have good attitudes towards the subject; they have confidence in their teachers and work hard to succeed. Written work is generally well presented. Higher attaining pupils, especially boys, learn how to think for themselves and to come to independent conclusions. Behaviour is very good.

87. The subject leadership is good. The department has a good and effective assessment system which is used effectively to monitor pupils' progress and to place them in appropriate classes from Year 8 onwards. Marking, homework and the planning of lessons are monitored by the head of department. The school's commercially produced texts have been skilfully adapted to cope with the all-ability Year 7 classes although the textbooks are out of date. Teachers generally rely too heavily on textbooks so that the pupils' work generally has a narrow focus and there is a lack of spontaneity. As at the time of the previous inspection, the head of department does not monitor teaching and learning so that weaknesses can be identified and targets set for the subject. The school lacks a strategy for numeracy. Information technology is not used sufficiently, for example, to help pupils improve their arithmetic.

SCIENCE

88. Standards of attainment in science are improving. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests, results were well above the national average for all schools. They were also well above results obtained by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. Pupils' performance in these science tests indicates an improving trend. Boys and girls achieve broadly similar results in these tests. Results in science are above those in mathematics but below those in English. In 1999 the proportion of pupils who achieved grades A*-C in both Double and Single Award GCSE examinations was well above average. In both courses the good proportion of A* and A grades achieved indicates high standards in the subject. Practically all students achieved at least a G grade in their science examination, a considerable achievement for some pupils.

89. Lesson observation and work scrutiny indicates that standards of work at the end of Year 9 are well above average. Pupils have a very good understanding of science including experimental and investigative work. For example, a mixed ability group was able to plan and evaluate an investigation into the relative values of resistors well. Pupils make good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding from an early age. A year 7 class had a very good technical understanding of the Rock Cycle. They were able to explain clearly the relationship between igneous, sedimentary and metamorphic rocks. There was a good grasp of scientific language and technical terms. Pupils' presentation and oral skills are being developed well by their teachers although key scientific words are not routinely emphasised. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well,

90. By the end of Year 11 pupils achieve well above average standards in all areas of the programme of study. Investigative work is well developed. A Year 10 group were able to identify, by investigation, the factors effecting the electrical resistance of a copper wire. Skilful teaching brought in the use of spreadsheets to develop pupils' understanding of the law governing the flow of electricity and the application of the resulting formula helped develop pupils' mathematical skills in a practical situation. No significant difference was found in the attainment of boys and girls.

91. The quality of learning is good throughout both key stages. Pupils enter the school with attainment levels in science that are above average for their age. They make good progress and achieve high standards in all years as a result of effective teaching. Exposure to information technology in science is limited but when it occurs, such as in some data capture experiments, it aids learning and understanding. Opportunities to use information technology need to be more systematically developed by incorporating them into the departmental schemes of work. All pupils make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of experimental and investigative science. They are able to plan, carry out and analyse their practical work well.

92. Overall teaching is good at both key stages. It was very good in a third of the lessons observed and satisfactory in a quarter. Only one lesson out of the 18 observed was unsatisfactory; in this lesson the teacher was new to the class, relationships were a little

strained and the learning objectives were not achieved. Where teaching was good or better the teachers' very good subject knowledge was conveyed with enthusiasm to the pupils. Pupils were very well managed especially in practical sessions. Independent learning is encouraged. Overall, there are very good relationships between pupils and teachers, which promote the learning process. These relationships are due to the teachers' high commitment to the pupils' learning both in lessons and by means of extra-curricular activities, e.g. the Astronomy Club. Lessons that were satisfactory were generally lacking in flair, had a prescriptive nature, and lacked a clear focus on learning objectives and outcomes. The pupil's attitudes are invariably very good. They are very well behaved in class and display mature attitudes to their work. Very positive relationships with classroom teachers help their personal development. They are able to work well in collaboration with other pupils as was seen in an activity that involved the collection of data about blood types using the Internet.

93. Since the previous inspection the department has made good progress. Procedures for the assessment and recording of pupil's work are now better. The quality of teaching has also improved considerably. Experimental and investigative work is better emphasised and schemes of work are now more relevant to the needs of the pupils. Responsibilities in the department are more clearly defined. However the optional nature of the science curriculum results in a significant number of pupils who take Single Award Science in Years 10 and 11 having restricted career options.
94. The department is well managed and there is a clear vision of priorities for improvement. The technicians work well and efficiently to ensure the smooth running of the department on a day-to-day basis. Health and Safety requirements are well met. For example, risk assessments for class practical work are undertaken ensuring pupils are able to work in safety. However although assessment of pupils' work is accurate it does not enable targets to be set. Marking of exercise books is comprehensive but generally does not highlight pupil's strengths and weaknesses or show them how to improve. The standard of monitoring and evaluating teaching is weak. Although checking exercise books effects some monitoring of teaching the sharing of good practice in the classroom would be better achieved by direct observation of lessons.
95. The department could further improve its good progress by a clearer focus on literacy, numeracy and information technology in its schemes of work. It should let pupils know more clearly what they must do to improve and adopt procedures to identify and spread the very good teaching that already exists.

ART

96. Teacher assessments of the current Year 9 pupils show their attainment to be average; this is confirmed by the standards observed during the inspection. However, the attainment of Year 8 and Year 7 pupils is above average. GCSE results in 1999 were above average and were well above average in the previous two years. Observed standards in the Art and Design General course and preliminary coursework assessments show standards of attainment of pupils this year to be well above average. Standards in the Art and Design Graphics course are average. Girls achieve better than boys, however the Graphics course has been successful in raising boys' achievement. Standards in art in 1999 were similar to the school average. Overall, pupils' standard of work when they leave school is above average and has significantly improved since the previous inspection.
97. Pupils mostly achieve well during Years 7 - 9 although the current Year 9 pupils have not made as good progress as Years 7 and 8. Pupils make effective use of sketch books to record and develop ideas. They acquire good skills in drawing and painting and have a sound understanding of the use of elements such as pattern and colour. Pupils' experience of work in three dimensions is through one project using clay in each year, therefore their ability to use the elements of form and space is more limited than their use of two-dimensional elements. Pupils are introduced to the work of other artists and cultures as a resource for their own work, in some cases making good use of the Internet for research.

However, most pupils make limited use of these sources to experiment with ideas or techniques and mostly draw on their own experience.

98. Pupils achieve well during Years 10 and 11 and Year 11 pupils have made very good progress this year. Although attainment in Graphics is lower than in the General course, pupils make very good progress in relation to their ability. The quality of the finished pieces for most projects in both Year 10 and Year 11 is very high in both courses. Preparatory work shows projects to be well thought out with thorough exploration of ideas and techniques. Many pupils tend to stick with their first idea but nevertheless develop this thoroughly. Most pupils make sound use of sources from other artists and cultures, for instance one pupil used her interest in Egyptology as a source for her graphics project. Projects with religious themes and for the cover of a psychology magazine show a spiritual dimension to pupils' work. Although pupils undertake a project in clay during year 10 there is limited evidence of three-dimensional work in their final displays. Finished pieces of work in the Graphics course are executed to a high degree of accuracy but preparatory work is less imaginative. Pupils make good use of image manipulation using computers for graphic design in spite of very limited facilities for this work.
99. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. The commitment of the teachers to developing the potential of each pupil is a particular strength which is manifested in high quality discussions and help to individual pupils. This results in good learning by pupils of all abilities including those with special educational needs. Also good provision is made for pupils to work at lunchtimes and after school. Pupils respond well to this enthusiasm and commitment and there are very good relationships between teachers and pupils leading to pupils having very positive attitudes to art. Teachers' expectations are high at both key stages. In the only lesson that was satisfactory, as opposed to good, the teacher did not emphasise the artistic purpose of the lesson sufficiently.
100. The good quality of the management of the subject has a significant impact on the standards achieved, particularly the careful monitoring of the progress of pupils and the setting and revision of individual targets during Years 10 and 11. The good use of information technology has resulted from careful resource allocation to acquire an up-to-date computer and the use of the teacher's own equipment together with effective use of e-mail to exchange files between the teacher and pupils. Standards of attainment, the use of sketchbooks, the consideration of the work of other artists and the use of computers have all been systematically improved since the previous inspection. Display continues to provide a source of inspiration and standards for pupils. However, there are still insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop ideas three-dimensionally.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

101. Standards of work by the end of Year 9 are average despite below average curriculum time allocated to design and technology (D&T). This is a fall since the previous inspection when standards were good. Teacher Assessment in 1999 placed pupils' attainment well above average but this was inaccurate due to a lack of familiarity with the national criteria for assessment. In all areas of D&T boys achieve at least as well as girls, contrary to the national trend. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their prior attainment because they are well supported. The most able pupils are not always challenged adequately.
102. The below average allocation of time to D&T limits access to the various aspects of the subject and does not provide a balanced learning experience. In addition, reduction in staffing has resulted in narrowing opportunities, for example, curtailing working with textiles, an aspect commended in the previous inspection report.
103. Overall, weakness lies in pupils' graphical presentation skills, development of their design

ideas and products and their limited experience of control technology. Curriculum planning needs to ensure that increasing demands are made across modules as they are encountered so that, for example, skills of research in one area are improved upon in the next.

104. Strengths lie in pupils' practical work, for example, manufacturing a jewellery box in wood to a good standard of finish and in the selection and preparation of food for specific purposes. However, reviewing food technology schemes of work, particularly in Year 7, to reduce the number of focused tasks could further enhance nutritional knowledge and understanding. This would provide a better foundation for the healthy eating topics studied further up the school.
105. By the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 11, standards of work are above the national average overall. This is attributable to pupils' very good attitudes to work and commitment by staff. Examination results in GCSE improved from 1998 to 1999 but were higher still in 1997. There has been a small improvement overall in examination results since the previous inspection. Boys perform well above average in GCSE examinations - 60% achieving grades A*-C (41% national average) whilst girls' performance falls slightly below national figures - 53% achieving grades A*-C (58% national average). The department could usefully seek to put in place a strategy for improvement for girls' achievements similar to that undertaken previously by the school which successfully raised the performance of boys. Differences in results between the differing subject areas of D&T are not significant.
106. Analysis of current pupils' work indicates strengths in clarity of understanding in electronic products and a good measure of creativity in textile technology. Pupils following the home economics child development course exhibit sensitive understanding of young children's intellectual, physical, social and emotional needs. In food technology, resistant materials and graphic products, weakness lies in the development of the final idea and the depth and range of research skills. The use of information technology to enhance D&T learning is patchy in general and is largely dependent upon access to computers. The majority of pupils present research findings from questionnaires in bar and pie charts and on occasion word process their projects. Control technology skills are less well developed.
107. Overall, the quality of teaching is good; it is never less than satisfactory with good teaching seen in half the lessons observed at Key Stage 3. Strengths lie in clear learning objectives, teachers' subject knowledge and a good measure of enthusiasm. Pupils with high levels of ability are generally set the same task with little access to a higher range of reference materials. This limits achievement at the higher end of the spectrum. Most teaching at Key Stage 4 is good with very good teaching seen in Child Development lessons. Thorough subject knowledge, excellent choice of reference materials and skilful use of the question and answer technique ensures pupils make considerable progress in gaining knowledge of patterns of family life beyond their own experiences. In most lessons pupils' technical vocabulary of the subject is extended considerably. Ample opportunities are created for pupils to develop speaking and listening skills with particularly effective use made of the question and answer technique in electronic products and child development.
108. Pupils learn well on account of good teaching. Pupils' mature attitudes and attentive behaviour make a significant contribution to the quality of their learning. Relationships are very good. Design and technology contributes to pupils' skills in number work through appropriate emphasis on accuracy in measurement and in the frequent use of bar and pie charts to present findings. Percentages are also carefully explained where necessary.
109. Work is generally assessed and marked up-to-date but pupils are not always informed of what they need to do to improve. Records of pupils' progress are kept and analysed but are not used sufficiently to modify future teaching. Reports to parents and pupils need to be more informative of what pupils know, understand and can do within D&T and include targets for improvement. Levels of attainment need to be explained

110. Technician support is valuable in supporting construction work but not generally available for food technology. Accommodation is in urgent need of refurbishment and whilst plans are in place to improve the food rooms, workshops need to be improved to create a better environment for learning. Some Health and Safety issues, including all appropriate risk assessments, have been noted by the school and are acted upon.
111. Management of the department on a day-to-day basis is adequate but monitoring of teaching and learning that occurs in the classroom needs to be undertaken. Only 50% of pupils follow a National Curriculum D&T course at Key Stage 4 which does not meet current statutory requirements. A clear direction for the subject needs to be established given the recent staffing reductions and the need to provide a coherent and balanced learning experience in Years 7 - 9.

GEOGRAPHY

112. Attainment in geography on entry to the school is slightly above average. Teachers' assessments at the end of Year 9 show attainment to be above average with no significant gender difference. This is in accordance with inspection evidence. Pupils of all abilities make good progress from Years 7 to 9.
113. GCSE examination results reflect the high standards and very good progress made by pupils of all abilities through Years 10 and 11. In 1999 the proportion of pupils achieving A* to C grades was well above the national average and close to being very high. This has been consistent for the previous three years. The proportion of pupils gaining the higher A* and A grades is significantly higher than the national average. Geography is one of the most successful GCSE subjects in the school.
114. Inspection evidence shows that pupils' standard of work at the end of Year 11 is well above average. This is the result of consistently good and frequently very good teaching and the excellent attitudes of the pupils. Since the previous inspection attainment and the quality of teaching have improved significantly.
115. Teachers' good subject knowledge, carefully planned lessons and the use of good quality resources enable pupils to acquire knowledge, understanding and skills at a good pace. In Years 7 - 9 pupils learn how height is shown on a variety of maps and higher attaining pupils use contour lines to describe the basic relief features of maps. Homework is used very effectively to extend and reinforce classwork. For example, pupils research the basic structure of industry and are able to use technical terms competently in lessons to interpret photographs. They use pie-graphs to describe and explain the changing structure of industry. Higher attaining pupils demonstrate their understanding by completing and explaining compound bar graphs. All lessons are very well managed and teachers use a variety of methods, which are effective in gaining and sustaining the interest of pupils. When learning about the issues arising from people's interaction with the environment pupils were involved in a very effective simulation concerning the development of opencast mining. Pupils learn to pose relevant geographical questions and investigate these in enquiries on Namibia, Kenya and Japan. This work develops their capacity for independent study. Their cultural education has been enriched through the involvement of a Japanese visitor. Marking in Years 7, 8 and 9 is regular but cursory and rarely informs pupils how to improve.
116. The teaching of basic skills is good throughout the department. Literacy skills, including key words, spelling and opportunities for extended writing are gradually developed throughout each year. Pupils learn to use of many types of graphs. However, fieldwork skills, begun in Year 7, are not developed in Years 8 and 9 and the use of information technology is limited .
117. In Years 10 and 11 pupils continue to increase their knowledge and understanding of physical

and human geography through detailed case studies of the impact of development on the landscape and people. Very thorough preparation for coursework includes learning about the features of carboniferous limestone scenery, develops the skills of field sketching and examines the effects of tourism. This type of work makes a good contribution to the moral, cultural, social and spiritual education of the pupils. Teaching includes constant attention to examination technique and includes very good revision materials. These have a positive impact on results. Teachers have high expectations of all pupils, challenge them appropriately and the very best teaching is skilfully delivered using a variety of techniques and resources. In revision lessons on the formation of ox-bow lakes and flood hydrographs pupils of all abilities quickly recognised patterns and processes which they were able to describe and explain in detail. The marking of work in Years 10 and 11 is regular and includes comments on how to improve.

118. The curriculum provision is good. Courses are planned in detail and provide a coherent and progressive programme of study. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment at the end of Year 9 are weak although the results are accurate. The display of pupils' work helps to set standards and creates a pleasant working environment. Learning resources are good, managed well and used with skill to enhance learning.
119. The department is effectively led and managed. It is sustaining high standards with a strong team of well-qualified and experienced staff who work well together as a team. They are committed to maintaining and improving the success of recent years. However, planning does not include overall examination targets and setting performance targets for each pupil does not occur. Monitoring the quality of teaching and learning to extend the very best practice is not yet in place.

HISTORY

120. Standards of work are well above average by the end of Year 9 and also at the end of Year 11. Teachers' assessment of pupils' attainment at the end of Year 9 is in agreement with this inspection judgement. Since the previous inspection, attainment has improved year by year, particularly for boys, whose attainment is equal to that of girls in both key stages. These improvements are the result of the good and often very good teaching and very good attitudes and behaviour by pupils.
121. Pupils in Years 7 - 9. are interested and keen to learn, they make very good progress and benefit from a broad and stimulating choice of topics. One class in Year 8 was engaged in the intricacies of developments in textile machinery prior to a visit to a local museum to see, and work, these machines. Very good teaching ensured that pupils understood the basic principles involved. Another Year 8 class was well motivated by clear direction and explanation from their teacher regarding an enclosure deed. Pupils' behaviour is very good and the learning is of high quality because pupils settle down to work so readily. Teaching of Year 7 – 9 pupils is good overall. It is well planned and knowledgeable. Well prepared worksheets are used effectively, but there is a need to provide more textbooks to extend pupils' individual work. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and are given good individual help by teachers. The grouping of pupils by ability in Year 9 assists lower ability pupils as they can be more effectively targeted in smaller classes. Literacy skills are well developed. Writing is very good, with some very good extended writing on topics such as castles and enclosures. Although information technology is reflected in some good wall displays, more opportunities should be taken to use information technology to enhance learning.
122. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 also make very good progress. 1999 GCSE results are very high with over 90 percent of the pupils entered gaining grades A* - C. They were the best results in the school. Boys have made particularly good progress over the past four years and are currently achieving slightly higher grades than girls. This is the result of a determined and

consistent effort by teachers to interest and involve boys by adopting a variety of effective methods, including more oral work and giving shorter tasks to complete in a limited period. Teaching in Years 10 and 11 is very good. Teachers have developed excellent written resources such as course brochures and revision booklets designed to give maximum assistance in examination preparation. Students respond with great application and behaviour is very good. One Year 11 class worked independently on source documents about Roosevelt's New Deal and gave very good feedback. A lower attaining set in Year 11 was given very challenging work to explain the causes of the Great Depression in the USA. Helped by an excellent revision booklet pupils produced work of a high standard. Having achieved some extremely high grades in 1999, teachers are now concentrating on raising attainment amongst pupils in the middle ability range, by mentoring, target setting and involving parents more. Pupils respond very well to the high expectations of their teachers and are capable of sustained effort and concentration. Their learning would be enhanced still further by greater use of the Internet for research.

123. The leadership of the subject makes a very important contribution to the quality of the teaching and the standards achieved. A more formalised approach to the monitoring of teaching and learning in the classroom would help further. Since the previous inspection, both teaching and learning have improved, to good or very good, from being satisfactory to good. Attainment has been raised from above average to well above average. Methods of assessment are now more varied and are good, and restriction on the time allocated in Years 8 and 9 has been remedied. The narrow range of learning resources, reported in 1994, has been greatly improved, although there is still a need for more textbooks. The department reviews its activities well and has the ability and expertise to improve its work still further

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

124. By the end of Year 9 pupils achieve average standards which is confirmed by teacher assessments in 1998 and 1999. GCSE results in information technology have improved from below average in 1998 to average in 1999. The relatively small numbers of girls taking this examination achieve better than boys. GCSE results in business studies with information technology are well above average. Boys achieve better results than girls in this examination. Observed standards show an improving trend.

125. Pupils make good progress in Year 7 and by the end of their half-year course are achieving a good level of basic skills in using word-processing, spreadsheets and databases and are able to search the Internet for information. In Year 8 pupils also undertake a course lasting for half a year. The resulting gap in their experience of up to a year means that a significant proportion of the course has to be used to revise the skills acquired in Year 7. This situation is made worse as there is no planned use of computers across the other subjects of the curriculum in Key Stage 3. Hence progress is unsatisfactory during Year 8. In Year 9, after a further gap, pupils use their skills in a more selective way, which enables many pupils to achieve higher standards and also acts as preparation for those who are going to take GCSE courses. The school does not fully meet National Curriculum requirements as pupils have no experience of using information technology for control at either key stage. Pupils could do better during this key stage although overall they achieve average standards.

126. During Years 10 and 11 those pupils who take the GCSE course in information technology make satisfactory progress and attain average standards by the end of Year 11. They are able to carry out projects thoroughly, taking account of the needs of users and to give appropriate reasons for their selection of software. Progress is sometimes hindered by access to a computer during lessons because there are more pupils in the group than computers available. Presentation of projects is mostly good. Most pupils have a sound knowledge of the technical aspects required by the GCSE course. Pupils taking the GCSE business studies with information technology course make good progress, integrating their information technology skills into their work. Overall, they achieve well above average

standards. There is no strategy to ensure that all those pupils who do not take these GCSE courses are taught information technology during this key stage, hence these pupils underachieve and attain below average standards.

127. The vast majority of teaching is satisfactory in Years 7-9 and all is satisfactory or better in Years 10 and 11. A good feature of the teaching is the thorough attention given to individual pupils during lessons and the good provision outside lesson time. Most teachers have a good knowledge of the use of information technology but more use could be made of teaching material to accommodate the wide range of abilities in most groups. However, particularly in Year 9, the projects allow for responses at different levels. More systematic planning is needed in some lessons to ensure that all pupils learn satisfactorily when there are insufficient computers for the size of groups. Some lessons need to enable pupils to relate the use of computers more directly to their own lives in order to generate enthusiasm. Overall, teaching is satisfactory at both key stages.
128. The management of the subject is satisfactory. There is clear leadership and an appropriate development plan. Monitoring of teaching is limited by timetable constraints. However the use of information technology across the curriculum is not sufficiently co-ordinated or developed to enable pupils' experience in subjects to contribute to the development of their overall capability. There is very limited technical support, hence one teacher has to spend time on network management and technical services. This affects the time which can be spent on academic planning, particularly because the school has changed to networked industry-standard computers during the past two years.
129. Standards in Years 7 – 9 are similar to those found in the previous inspection. The above average GCSE results reported then involved a small number of pupils. Average results are now being achieved with an above average number of pupils. The up-dating of computers, whilst an improvement, has caused some disruption in pupils learning. The scheme of work for younger pupils has been modified as a result of assessment of pupils' learning. As a result more pupils are beginning to achieve higher levels with a consequent benefit to standards in Years 10 and 11. There is now an improving trend throughout the school.
130. The use of information technology across the curriculum is underdeveloped. This is partly due to lack of access arising from an under-provision of computers. Although the previous computers are still available in departments, standards in subjects are adversely affected by a lack of specialist facilities such as those required for music, computer aided design and manufacture and control. Art makes good use of image manipulation and there is data logging in science. There are some good examples of using computers for presentation of projects in some areas of design and technology and child development. However, the use of information technology in other subjects is insufficient to achieve adequate standards or enhance significantly pupils' learning.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES (French and Spanish)

131. GCSE results in Modern Languages are well above national average for both boys and girls. In 1999 proportions achieving grades A*-C in French were similar to those achieved in 1998 but with an increased number of A* and A grades. In Spanish, proportions achieving grades A*-C in 1999 were significantly higher than in 1998. Since the previous inspection results have been well above average each year and, following the steep increase in entries in 1998, these high standards have not only been maintained but continue to improve.
132. At the end of Year 9, standards are above average in French. Most pupils reach the national target level and a significant proportion reach higher levels. Pupils make good progress in all the skills. The strong emphasis in teachers' planning on listening and speaking leads to pupils of all abilities developing these skills to a high level. Pupils understand classroom

instructions readily and speak confidently because they are used to hearing the foreign language spoken consistently in lessons. They have many opportunities to practise speaking in pairs, which they enjoy. They learn basic grammar structures including the past tense, together with a large range of vocabulary, which helps them write sentences of increasing length so that they progress more quickly towards the expected standard. They show good understanding of worksheets and texts in their course books and the recent introduction of reading short stories on a regular basis is developing their reading skills further. High attaining pupils who study Spanish make very good progress in the time available and standards achieved are above average for second language learners nationally.

133. When they leave the school standards of work in French and Spanish are well above average. Consistently good teaching coupled with pupils' very good attitudes to their language learning ensures that they continue to make good progress in Years 10 and 11.

134. Listening and speaking are strengths because pupils regularly practise these skills in class and because both boys and girls are keen to be involved actively. They speak about their holidays or discuss their leisure activities. In their coursework writing they express their views on subjects such as their ideal school uniform and they use different tenses appropriately. High attaining pupils write and speak at greater length and often with more style and they produce simple reviews of short stories they read. Pupils are very well prepared for all aspects of the external examination because teachers have considerable examining expertise. Pupils with special educational needs and low attaining pupils in year 11 who follow the Certificate of Achievement course achieve standards which are higher than the goals set and which are more consistent with the Foundation tier GCSE. This mismatch between pupils' achievement and accreditation has been recognised by the school so that all pupils in year 10 now follow a course leading to GCSE.

135. Overall, teaching is good, and sometimes better, throughout the school. Teachers are well qualified and they speak their languages fluently, which is a major factor in promoting high attainment. They have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour and lessons are conducted in a purposeful manner. For example, when they organise pupils for pair-work or to carry out surveys around the class, they do so effectively and time is not wasted. Lesson planning is thorough with activities and resources such as flashcards and tapes well chosen to stimulate interest, to increase pupils' knowledge and to give practice in each skill. An excellent example of this was a very well planned lesson in which pupils took responsibility for their learning by working purposefully in groups on a carousel of activities involving listening, speaking and reading.

136. Since the previous inspection, new teachers have been appointed and the quality of teaching has improved. However, there is some inconsistency of practice across the department as a whole. Marking is patchy and there is insufficient use of supportive written comments to help pupils improve. Teachers assess and record pupils' attainment but use of the results does not go far enough, particularly to review planning and set targets. For example, discussion with pupils in Year 9 revealed a lack of awareness of how well they were doing in terms of levels or of what they needed to do to improve. Opportunities for pupils to use information technology in their lessons are undeveloped.

137. Department management currently monitors teaching and learning, but on an informal basis only. However, monitoring needs to become more formal, so that weaknesses are identified for improvement and very good practice shared, in order to narrow the gap that exists between the best and least successful practice. Issues raised at the previous inspection have been attended to and improvements made; for example, group sizes have been reduced and teaching time increased in Years 8 and 9. However, the level of resources has worsened with insufficient course books in years 7 and 8 for all pupils to have their own copy.

MUSIC

138. Standards of work in music at the end of Year 9 are average, although in Years 7 and 8 pupils are achieving better than this in relation to their age. Particular strengths are in composing, both in experimental work and in conventional melodic composition. In one Year 8 class almost every pupil could create an attractive, well-balanced melody, and one or two highly able pupils developed their ideas into carefully structured, appropriately harmonised pieces. However, because of the congested, noise-filled accommodation, pupils' work lacks dynamic and textural variety, and they cannot easily hear mismatches of harmony to melody. In ensemble work pupils can follow scores in staff notation and maintain independent lines but the overall effect is often disjointed because when they are practising they cannot hear each other properly. Singing is tuneful but not well focused. Subject language is used to a limited extent to describe music they hear but the use of non-specialist descriptive language is not well developed. Pupils who have special educational needs make good progress in music and many attain standards that exceed those which might reasonably be expected. Some need more support to ensure they maintain their concentration when working independently. The attainment of very able pupils is inconsistent because there are no strategies for their early identification. Once they are recognised, the attainment of such pupils is high.
139. Results from the 1999 entry for GCSE in music were below national averages because of exceptional circumstances, but current standards of attainment reflect those of preceding years, which were well above the national average. Pupils clearly build on their earlier experience and make rapid progress. Composing is very good; pupils employ a variety of genres and explore the possibilities of instrumental sound beyond conventional concepts. Their performing lacks this inspirational touch and pupils need to play with more attention to style and presentation. Some play music that makes too many demands on their technique at this stage. Pupils have a secure vocabulary, both technical and non-technical, for describing music they hear, but would benefit from further development of this skill.
140. Almost without exception pupils have positive, responsible and enthusiastic attitudes. They are relaxed and highly co-operative. A class of Year 10 pupils learned polka rhythms by practising the steps with great good humour. There is no discernible difference between the response of boys and girls. All pupils enjoy music and develop self-esteem through the opportunities for success offered in class. Pupils who choose music as an option are confident of success.
141. The quality of teaching, never less than satisfactory, is generally good throughout the school and contains some very good features. Topics are well chosen to stimulate pupils' interest. Teachers' expertise and enthusiasms are well communicated; they provide excellent role models. The music department has successfully created a "boy-friendly" culture in lessons, and boys respond extremely well to this. In the most successful lessons teachers make very good use of time to ensure pupils maintain effort and concentration. Pupils in a Year 7 class readily transferred ideas suggested by a piece of choral speech firstly into rounds and then into a sound picture representing train travel. When lesson planning is not sufficiently detailed the good pace established at the outset dwindles, and some pupils lose concentration. Homework is generally well used but occasionally its relevance is not always obvious.
142. On a day-to-day basis the department is well managed. The lack of a comprehensive scheme of work and an effective assessment system is currently being redressed. The present reporting system lays too much emphasis on written work and does not include proper evaluation of pupils' abilities in composing and performing. The department's development plan, which clearly identifies priorities, has no deadlines for realisation. The accommodation, which provides no separate spaces for group work, is unsatisfactory. The use of information technology is poor. The department has no provision for employing

computers as a composing tool, and relies heavily on equipment personally owned by staff and pupils in an attempt to remain abreast of developments.

143. Extra-curricular activities, both in school and further afield, provide very good opportunities for pupils to contribute to the community. Through joint ventures pupils maintain contact with their primary schools and perform with pupils from other schools in various attractive venues, including Bury Town Hall. They successfully took part in the national Voices of Promise competition. The recently formed boys' singing group with over thirty boys of all ages has had outstanding success in changing cultural attitudes.
144. Since the previous inspection, standards of attainment have been maintained in Years 7 - 9, and indicate an improving trend. With the exception of 1999 results, standards in Years 10 and 11 have risen. In all years the improvement in the participation and attainment of boys has added significantly to the general rise in standards. The quality of teaching at all levels has improved. Previously good extra-curricular activities have increased further. However, accommodation remains poor and seriously affects progress. In particular the second teaching room, with its poor ventilation and lack of natural light, represents a health hazard for staff and pupils. Numbers of pupils taking instrumental lessons have fallen since the introduction of charges, and only 5% of pupils are involved, compared with the previous figure of over 10%.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

145. Overall standards for pupils at the end of Year 9, and for compulsory physical education by the time that pupils leave the school, are average for their age, which represents satisfactory achievement for these pupils. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils. Standards are broadly similar to those found at the time of the previous inspection. It was not possible to observe Year 9 lessons during the time of the inspection because the national assessment tests were taking place at the same time. Discussion with pupils from Year 9 indicates that they are able to plan and evaluate their performance, have improved their knowledge and understanding of games skills and can devise ways of outwitting opponents in both modified and full versions of the games which they play. They have a good understanding of what is needed for quality performance in both dance and gymnastics. Their understanding of the effects of exercise on the body and knowledge and their experience of taking responsibility for warm up activities is more limited. In Year 8, boys reach above average standards in the long jump. In Year 7, girls in some classes reach above average standards in rounders because of their excellent attitudes to work and very good teaching. Standards in tennis and cricket are average.
146. Changes to the timetable during the time of the inspection meant that it was not possible to observe Year 11 pupils in their compulsory physical education lessons. Discussion with pupils indicates that they learn advanced tactics and skills in their chosen activities, are able to practise in order to become more consistent performers and are aware of their individual strengths and weaknesses. A significant minority chooses to follow the course leading to the Junior Sports Leaders qualification which enhances the already good provision. All pupils experience health promoting physical activity through a compulsory fitness programme and boys in Year 10 achieve high standards of physical performance. However, except for pupils who also follow the GCSE course, knowledge and understanding of what is needed to plan a suitable individual programme of exercise is under developed. Girls in Year 10 perform to an average standard for their age in tennis and rounders. The GCSE results in physical education since 1997 have been above average and the difference between girls and boys' performance has been greater than the difference found nationally. Results have shown a rising trend except for 1999 when they fell to well below average levels and were below those achieved in the pupils' other GCSE subjects. The reasons for this have been thoroughly analysed and measures for improvement put into place including more effective monitoring of pupils' progress and a change of examination syllabus. The inspection

evidence indicates that by the time they leave school, pupils who follow the optional examination course in physical education are reaching above average standards and there is no significant difference in the attainments of boys and girls.

147. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good overall and in lessons to pupils in Years 7 - 9, they are mostly very good or excellent. Participation rates are high. Pupils enjoy lessons, are enthusiastic, work hard and respond very well to the demanding pace which teachers set in most lessons. They work well with each other in group work and teams. Pupils readily answer their teachers' questions and talk to each other about their work. They continue to concentrate on their activities even when not directly supervised by their teachers. This applies even when there is a high level of physical demand as, for example, in boys' fitness lesson in Year 10. Standards of sportsmanship are very good and pupils sometimes show their appreciation of each other's efforts with spontaneous applause. They willingly help with equipment, but opportunities for them to take more responsibility in lessons, for example, by suggesting or leading warm up activities are inconsistently provided. Files and exercise books of pupils who follow the GCSE course are neatly presented and the work is well organised. A good proportion of pupils takes part in the extensive programme of extra curricular activities which are mostly, but not exclusively, concerned with competitive sport.
148. The overall quality of teaching in both key stages is good and has improved since the previous inspection. In three-quarters of the twelve lessons observed, the teaching was good or very good. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. The teaching has substantial strengths and, capitalising on the pupils' positive attitudes, ensures that they make generally good progress in each of the wide range of activities which they are taught. Lessons are well planned to provide pupils with good opportunities to plan and evaluate their performance, and use helpful monitoring procedures to take into account pupils' previous experiences. Questioning is sharp, and supported by good demonstrations and explanations, helps pupils to understand new skills and learn how to improve their performance. Relationships are relaxed and friendly, with nevertheless, an underlying discipline, and help create an ethos in lessons which encourages pupils to try their hardest. For example, in a very good rounders lesson in Year 7 a skilfully organised range of competitive practices, in the context of this good relationship gave pupils the confidence and bravery to extend their throwing and catching skills with a hard ball and resulted in very good progress. A strong feature of the majority of lessons is the rapid pace at which pupils are expected to work at largely interesting and enjoyable activities, resulting in high productivity which also minimises the effect of time lost on those occasions when lessons take place off the school site. Resources are used well. In a Year 7 athletics lesson boys progressed from throwing tennis balls to foam and then "real" javelins which also helped them to appreciate their own strengths and limitations in throwing events. Teachers' analysis of pupils' performance is generally good and enables them to adapt planned practices so that they become well matched to pupils' levels of attainment. However, in a minority of otherwise effective lessons, the progress of some lower attaining pupils was restricted because some learning activities were too difficult for them. In most lessons, non-participating pupils are not as involved in learning as they should be.
149. Good progress has been made in response to the curriculum, management and teaching issues which were raised at the time of the previous inspection, but the outdoor teaching accommodation is still inadequate, forcing a reliance on off-site facilities for some activities. Subject management is strong, hard working, and has created a good team ethos which also includes long term temporary teachers, and is mutually sharing and supportive. Assessment procedures in Years 7 - 9 are good but assessment information is not analysed and used effectively. The quality of teaching is not yet routinely monitored in order to raise standards further. Extra curricular provision is used well to promote high standards and all specialist teachers are generous with their time, supported by a number of non-specialist colleagues. The school has been recently successful in gaining the Sports Mark Gold Award which reflects the high quality of provision.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

150. This subject was inspected by an inspector appointed by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Salford at the same time. His report is issued separately.