

INSPECTION REPORT

WORLE SCHOOL
Weston-super-Mare

LEA area : North Somerset

Unique Reference Number : 109313

Headteacher : Mr D. Roberts

Reporting inspector : Mr Tim Feast
3650

Dates of inspection : 22nd to 26th November 1999

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school :	Comprehensive
Type of control :	County
Age range of pupils :	11 to 16 years
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
School address :	Redwing Drive Worle Weston-super-Mare BS22 8XX
Telephone number :	01934 510777
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Appropriate authority :	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors :	Mr N. Dean
Date of previous inspection :	22 nd to 26 th May 1995

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Mr Brian Jones Lay Inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development; Attendance; Partnership with parents and the community
Mrs Patricia Walker Team Inspector	English Equal opportunities	
Mrs Danice Iles Team Inspector	Mathematics	Pupils= spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Mrs Carol Worthington Team Inspector	Science	The curriculum and assessment
Mrs Christine Thompson Team Inspector	Design and technology	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Mrs Margaret Chilvers Team Inspector	Information technology	The efficiency of the school
Mr Neil Cowell Team Inspector	Geography Special educational needs	Special educational needs assessment
Mr Robin Schlich Team Inspector	Modern foreign languages	
Mr Oliver Nicholson Team Inspector	Art	Support, guidance and pupils= welfare
Miss Valerie du Plergny Team Inspector	Music	
Mrs Stephanie Matthews Team Inspector	History	Non National Curriculum at Key Stage 4
Mrs Lynton Karmock-Golds Team Inspector	Religious education	Leadership and management
Mr David Custance Team Member	Support for science	

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The Registrar
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House, 33 Kingsway, London WC2B 6SE

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

Pupils make good progress whilst they are at the school.

? Pupils achieve high standards in design and technology, art and performance in music.

? The ethos of the school is good.

? The quality of teaching is good.

? There is good leadership of the school.

? The provision of a wide range of extra-curricular activities is excellent.

? Staff support the welfare and guidance of pupils well.

? Links with the community are excellent.

? Pupils' social development, aided by the House system, is very good.

Where the school has weaknesses

Standards in geography and modern languages are not as good as in other subjects.

I. Statutory requirements in respect of collective worship and the provision of the full range of information to parents are not met.

II. When the quality of teaching is less than satisfactory it is related to the failure of classroom management strategies.

III. Managers are not consistent in their monitoring and evaluation of the quality of education in their subjects. They do not consistently use available information to support their planning.

The school has many more strengths than weaknesses. The governors' action plan will set out how the weaknesses identified during the inspection will be tackled. The plan will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has developed well since 1995. The school makes far improved use of assessment data to enhance teaching and learning and to evaluate the school's performance. There are greater opportunities for pupils to extend their speaking skills although this is not yet sufficiently consistent across all subjects. All departments do make a contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and there are opportunities for personal, social and health education for all pupils. Time allocated to religious education has been extended and all pupils have the opportunity to take the subject at Key Stage 4. Reports have improved but still vary in giving clear information about pupils' attainment and progress. Additional strategies have been established to review the school's policies and developments and their effect on pupils' standards and the quality of their learning. However, in some areas these need to be extended and a more consistent approach adopted. The school still does not meet the statutory requirements for a daily act of collective worship. The school has identified clear priorities and is very well placed to sustain these developments.

Standards in subjects

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

Performance in:	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	
			<p><i>Key</i></p> <p><i>well above average</i> <i>A</i></p>

Key Stage 3	B	B	
GCSE examinations	B	B	
A/AS - levels	n/a	n/a	

Results in 1999 Key Stage 3 tests are above average in relation to English and mathematics when compared to similar schools and well above in science. The school has achieved results above the national average for the last five years.

Results in the 1999 GCSE examinations improved on previous years, especially when the pupils' ability on entry is taken into account. Results in design and technology have improved significantly over the last three years. Results in geography and French are below the national average.

Quality of teaching

	Overall quality	Most effective in:	Least effective in:
Years 7-9	Good	DT, music, art, information and communication technology, physical education, science.	Religious education
Years 10-11	Good	DT, music, art, information and communication technology, science, dance, drama.	Modern foreign languages
Sixth form	n/a		
English	Good		
Mathematics	Good		

Teaching was at least satisfactory in nearly 96% of lessons observed. It was good in 45% of lessons very good in 20% and excellent in a further 2%. It was unsatisfactory or poor in just over 4% of the lessons observed. Similar high standards of teaching were observed across all years. Unsatisfactory teaching was mainly seen in lessons where the teachers' planned objectives were not achieved owing to unsuccessful strategies to manage the behaviour of some of the pupils.

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

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Good other than for a small number of older pupils, mainly boys.
Attendance	Good attendance and punctuality.
Ethos*	A good ethos with a strong commitment to raising standards and the development of the whole pupil. Relationships are very good and positive attitudes to work are encouraged.
Leadership and management	Good. There is the need for a greater consistency in monitoring and evaluation of progress towards targets selected.
Curriculum	Broad and balanced. Excellent provision of extra-curricular activities.
Pupils with special educational needs	Pupils are given good access to the whole curriculum.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Good overall.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good staffing and good resources in many subjects but accommodation and facilities are limited in some curriculum areas.
Value for money	Good.

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

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
<p>IV. The school is easy to approach with problems.</p> <p>V. The school achieves good standards of work.</p> <p>VI. Children are encouraged to be involved in more than just their lessons.</p> <p>VII. Their children like school.</p> <p>VIII. They are satisfied with the provision of homework.</p> <p>IX. They are kept well informed about their child's progress.</p>	<p>X. The timing, in the school year, of some of the reports and parents' evenings was not helpful.</p> <p>XI. The consistency with which homework is set.</p> <p>XII. The footpath which passes through the school grounds.</p>

The inspection team agree with the parents in respect of most of their positive views about the school. The school does achieve good standards of work in many areas. There is some inconsistency in the setting of homework across years and subjects although at the time of the inspection homework was a regular feature. The team was not in a position to view the impact of the differing timings of reports and parents' evenings. The footpath across the school grounds does not help with the security of the site nor with the eradication of vandalism to school facilities and the fouling of grounds by dogs.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

To raise further the standards achieved and the quality of education provided, the Headteacher, Governing Body and staff should:

- a) raise standards in geography and modern languages to at least those achieved nationally
(Paragraphs B 5, 121, 145)
- b) take further steps to meet the requirements for a daily act of collective worship and the provision of the full range of information to be provided to parents in the governors= annual report and the prospectus.
(Paragraphs B 29, 33, 47, 61)
- c) raise the standard of behaviour in all lessons to that achieved in the best lessons by:

XIII. inducting all staff into appropriate behaviour management strategies;

XIV. providing, where appropriate, staff with the opportunity to see current good practice in the school in operation;

XV. support and monitoring by managers to see that behaviour management strategies are being implemented consistently across all lessons.

(Paragraphs B 10, 12, 19, 58, 97, 167)

- a) consistently monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in lessons and other activities by:

- ?) adopting a common format and approach to classroom observation;
- ?) planning a formal programme of observations consistently across all departments and other areas of the school's activities;
- ?) debriefing staff who have been observed;
- ?) sharing the results of the monitoring and evaluation in appropriate whole school, departmental or other meetings.

(Paragraphs B 55, 56)

- e) use available information to support planning of the curriculum and of strategies to maintain improvements in teaching and learning by:

- ?) ensuring that all staff are aware of the full implications of the information provided;
- ?) monitoring, through regular reviews, how all departments make best use of this information;
- ?) supporting, where necessary, departments where there is insufficient effective use of the information.

(Paragraphs B 57, 58)

In addition to the key issues above the following less important weakness should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.

- ?)The work in some lessons is not sufficiently targeted to meet the range of ability in the class.
- (Paragraphs B 21, 89, 108, 126, 134, 149, 178)

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. Worle School is situated in Worle, in the town of Weston-super-Mare in North Somerset. It is a large community comprehensive school providing education for boys and girls aged between eleven and sixteen. The school draws its pupils from the town of Weston-super-Mare although some pupils come from further afield.
2. The school has 1274 pupils on roll. The school has increased in numbers since the last inspection and it is projected to grow even larger. The numbers of boys and girls in each year are generally balanced, other than in Year 9 where there are more boys. The pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds. Since the last inspection the local RAF station has closed and there has been an increase in the number of local homes owned by housing associations. The community is broadly average in terms of being neither especially advantaged nor seriously deprived in socio-economic terms. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, at just over 10%, is below average and lower than at the last inspection. Very few pupils come from homes where English is not the first language and the percentage is low compared to the national average. The number of pupils identified by the school as having special educational needs has grown since the last inspection. At just under 20%, it is above the national average and the number of pupils with statements has increased considerably from 11 to 41 since the last inspection. The ability on entry has varied considerably. For a period after the last inspection there was a significant drop in the level of ability of the intake on entry to the school and it was below average. Ability on entry has improved recently and is closer to the national average. The current Year 7s ability on entry is slightly below the national average.
3. The school's aims are made very explicit in the documentation and encompass the three key areas of opportunity, support and partnership. The key objectives in the School Development Plan for 1999-2002 focus on improving the pupils' levels of achievement and have been grouped around the mission of "Helping each other to succeed".

Key Indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 3

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	123	120	243

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 5 or above	Boys	70	86	91
	Girls	95	82	89
	Total	165	168	180
Percentage at NC Level 5 or above	School	67 (68)	70 (65)	73 (69)
	National	63 (65)	62 (59)	55 (56)
Percentage at NC Level 6 or above	School	36 (40)	45 (34)	31 (32)
	National	28 (34)	38 (36)	23 (27)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 5 or above	Boys	70	86	89
	Girls	84	78	86
	Total	154	164	175
Percentage at NC Level 5 or above	School	63 (50)	68 (70)	72 (73)
	National	64 (62)	64 (63)	60 (62)
Percentage at NC Level 6 or above	School	32 (22)	28 (31)	31 (39)
	National	32 (31)	38 (37)	29 (31)

Attainment at Key Stage 4¹

Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	118	123	241

GCSE Results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A* to G	1 or more grades A* to G
Number of pupils achieving standard specified	Boys	51	110	116
	Girls	72	116	122
	Total	123	226	238
Percentage achieving standard specified	School	51 (45)	94 (93)	99 (100)
	National	48 (46)	88 (87)	94 (92)

Number studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and percentage of *such pupils* who achieved all those they studied:

	Number	% Success rate
School	nil	
National		

Attendance

¹

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

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year :

		%
Authorised Absence	School	6.2
	National comparative data	7.6
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.8
	National comparative data	1.1

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year :

	Number
Fixed period	49
Permanent	5

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	22.4
Satisfactory or better	95.8
Less than satisfactory	4.2

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

1. Attainment is above the national average at Key Stage 3 and there are signs of improved attainment greater than the improvement in the ability of the pupils on entry to the school. In 1998 standards in the end of Key Stage 3 tests were above the national average and above the results achieved by pupils in similar schools. These standards have been improved upon in 1999 and in English and mathematics are significantly higher than reported at the last inspection. In science very high standards have been maintained.
2. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 in 1999 was above the national average and above those for similar schools. In 1998 the percentage of pupils achieving 5 A*-C grades in GCSE examinations was 45%, in 1999 this had risen to 51%, above the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving 5 A*-G grades was above the national average and the percentage of pupils gaining at least 1 A*- G grade was well above the national average. The 1999 results are above those reported at the last inspection. Similarly the average point score per pupils at GCSE has risen steadily in the last two years, as has the number of pupils achieving at least one A*-G grade at GCSE. There are some subjects not yet achieving results in line with the national average, particularly French and geography. Design and technology has shown spectacular improvements since the last inspection.
3. In the national tests at the end of Key Stage 3 girls have performed significantly better than the boys in English in all the years since 1996. In mathematics the picture is much closer with both groups achieving above the national average in the last 5 years. In science there is little difference between boys and girls over the last five years other than in 1998 when boys achieved higher overall grades. Since 1996 the performance of the pupils overall in all three core subjects has been above the national average, mainly due to the girls performing better than the national average and boys performing in line with national average.
4. The progress pupils make in Key Stage 3 is good and this good progress is maintained in most subjects at Key Stage 4, as seen by the improvement in results of the same cohort of pupils. Good progress is maintained in English, science, design and technology, history, information and communications technology (ICT) and physical education including dance and it is satisfactory in mathematics, geography, and modern foreign languages. Some of the progress in music at Key Stage 4 is very good for example in the knowledge and understanding of the development and evolution of the "Blues".
5. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress at each key stage. Teachers generally make effective use of individual education plans and progress is enhanced when there is support by learning support assistants. Where pupils are taught by teachers with additional training in special educational needs this further facilitates their progress. In lessons where pupils are withdrawn from class lessons to receive additional specialist support in the student support department they and their parents feel that it is worthwhile and it does improve their skills in literacy and numeracy. In addition to supported learning many pupils also benefit from regular practice and make good progress using a very effective computer-based developmental program. Where Year 11 pupils with special educational needs are taught together, for the Certificate of Educational Achievement in English, they make very good progress, particularly in their oral confidence and competence. Effective behaviour and learning support ensures that some pupils, with statements of educational need, make progress with their work and are less likely to disrupt the learning of others. Teachers have helpful information on prior attainment and progress in individual educational plans, which since the last inspection have been provided for all pupils above Stage 1 on the register of special educational needs.

6. Pupils use their skills in literacy appropriately and achieve standards expected in many areas, for example in physical education in writing up work related to the body. There are fewer opportunities to use their skills in numeracy but, when planned, at least appropriate standards are demonstrated. There is some good use of ICT skills in some of the subjects, for example, in geography in Year 7 in practising the use of 4 figure grid references.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

7. Pupils have good attitudes to their learning. Their response is good or better in a very high proportion of lessons. Most show keen interest, sustain their concentration and stay on their tasks well. A very few pupils show unsatisfactory response in some lessons. Pupils are eager to succeed in subjects that lead on to their chosen career. They make very full use of the opportunities they have for extra studies in work and leisure. The range includes clubs and extra sessions in information and communication technology, Latin, creative writing and a wide variety of sports. Younger pupils eagerly use the Successmaker computer program to enhance their literacy and numeracy. Bands, choirs and orchestras practise from as early as eight in the morning and there are extensive opportunities to take part in dramatic events which the pupils enjoy greatly.
8. Pupils maintain high standards of behaviour in lessons, at lunch and in breaks. Although the buildings are scattered around the site, the pupils move calmly and efficiently between them. Pupils are very courteous and helpful to visitors. They show pride in the reputation of their school and their House. They are well motivated by the school's rewards and sanctions system. Year 11 pupils serving as prefects set fine examples of good behaviour. Bullying and harassment are rare, but isolated incidents do happen. A very few pupils, especially in lower ability groups in some subjects, behave disruptively at times.
9. The school made 54 exclusions in the past year. In the context of good behaviour by most pupils on most occasions, this total is high. Five exclusions were permanent, and 49 were for a fixed period. Girls accounted for four of the exclusions. The most frequent reasons were violence, aggression, disruption in class and taking property of others. The school makes positive efforts to support pupils who have behaviour difficulties. However, it is determined to maintain high standards of behaviour and to protect the learning and safety of all pupils.
10. The very good relationships at school start with a pattern of older pupils helping the younger ones. Year 8 pupils welcome newly arrived Year 7 pupils at the start of the year. Years 10 and 11 take the lead in everything from paired reading to refereeing soccer competitions. Pupils work very well together in class, co-operating smoothly, irrespective of whether they work with their usual classmates or in randomly chosen groups or pairs. There are constructive relationships with teachers and other adults, who themselves serve as models of good teamwork.
11. Pupils' personal development is very good. They take a high degree of responsibility for their learning and leisure activities. A party of 60 Year 11 pupils correctly managed a trip to a ten-pin bowling centre in the middle of Weston. Their chosen group leaders collected the admission money. The pupils made their own way there and returned promptly by public transport. Pupils develop a sense of social responsibility through meetings of their House councils and discussion in their tutor groups of how to manage problems such as bullying. They use the school's learning resource centre and other computer facilities to research many different subjects and topics of interest. From their active participation in the wide range of clubs and extra-curricular activities, they gain maturity and self esteem. They achieve success in many sporting and creative arts activities. A former pupil played for the England ten-pin bowling team at the Commonwealth Games. A choir sang at the Salzburg International Festival. Pupils

are enthusiastic and innovative in support of local and international charities, many of which benefit disadvantaged children. Pupils in one House sponsor the education of a 10-year-old girl in Africa. Pupils' attitudes to literacy and numeracy are good.

Attendance

12. The good attendance of 93% in 1998/99 is almost two percentage points above the national average for secondary schools. It is an improvement on the 92% recorded in the previous year and at the time of the previous inspection. Unauthorised absence is lower than the national average. Punctuality is good, and virtually all pupils arrive for registration five minutes before the start of school. The previous report expressed concern that many teachers did not take registers at the start of lessons. Teachers do now register their classes, and lessons start promptly. Statutory requirements are met.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

13. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection when it was considered a "strength of the school". There has been a considerable improvement in the percentage of very good and outstanding lessons and the unsatisfactory or poor teaching remains a very small element. In lessons observed, teaching was satisfactory or better in nearly 96% of lessons. In 45% of lessons it was good, in a further 20% it was very good and there were a number of occasions (2%) when it was outstanding. Good teaching was seen in all subjects and in all years and in most very good teaching was observed. The quality of teaching was particularly good in art, design and technology, drama, English, ICT, music, science and dance. Unsatisfactory or poor teaching was observed in just over 4% of lessons and examples were seen in modern languages, religious education, mathematics and design and technology.
14. In the lessons where teaching is very good or better teachers find stimulating and challenging ways to share their knowledge and skills using a good variety of teaching strategies and techniques. One example was in design and technology when Year 10 pupils were making a bike stand and very good use was made of prompt cards to aid learning of technical terms. Another was in a Year 11 art lesson where excellent use was made of examples of the work of surrealist painters to start the pupils' course work project. Pupils are encouraged to think and build on their own investigations, as in a Year 11 science lesson when pupils were considering the difficulty of exploring the earth's structure using shock waves.
15. Teachers use skilful questioning techniques to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding and to encourage pupils to use the correct terminology. This was seen to very good effect in a Year 11 lower set when open questioning on Romeo and Juliet enabled pupils to determine which elements of the play to include in a film version, prior to seeing the film. Very good relationships have been developed in many areas and these have a positive effect on pupils' attainment. An example was in a Year 10 music lesson where the teacher expertly moved a pupil on who was very dissatisfied with their original composition for a Christmas/Millennium piece. Teachers usually make very clear what it is they want the pupils to learn. An excellent example was seen in a Year 11 lower set English lesson when the teacher reinforced the objectives with very good resources to aid the pupils in writing examination style essays in response to the work of Simon Armitage, one of the pieces in the set anthology. Some good use of homework is seen, for example in the pupils' research for their own choreography in dance, and, in physical education, pupils planning their own leisure centre.

16. Lessons are well planned but the unsatisfactory and poor teaching was mainly linked to teachers using strategies unsuccessfully to manage the pupils in some older classes. Their disruptive behaviour has a negative impact on pupils' learning and the progress made in the lesson.
17. During the run up to the inspection and during the week itself homework was consistently set and worked was marked, often with helpful comments. It is clear from the parents' comments and looking at the pupils' diaries that there is some inconsistency with which homework is set across years and within subjects. In the best cases homework is used by staff as a good starting point of the next lesson and to provide the opportunity to give pupils good feedback on what was successful and pointers to ways to improve. There is some inconsistency in exercise books as to the guidance given by teachers which enables both pupils and their parents to know how improvements can be made. There is much evidence of assessment at the end of modules in subjects being used to link to grades expected in external examinations. In many of the best lessons good use was made of on-going assessment to ensure that pupils' knowledge was secure before progressing to a new topic.
18. Teachers' planning acknowledges the presence of pupils with special educational needs but does not always make sufficiently clear the specific provision to be made to meet those needs. Where pupils are taught as part of a class of similar abilities, work is not consistently tailored to take account of the range of abilities and needs within the class. Appropriate and effective use is made of support assistants and specialist teachers. The experienced and qualified team of learning support assistants make a good contribution to ensuring access to the curriculum for individual pupils.
19. There is some good planning for the provision for supporting pupils in developing their skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT but it is not yet a feature of all departments= overall planning or of teachers' own plans. Some good use was seen of ICT teaching across the curriculum in mathematics, modern languages and geography. For example, a Year 10 intermediate mathematics set used an omnigraph program to plot sets of data relating to gradients. The teaching of numeracy was seen to good effect in some of the design and technology lessons, not only in the accurate measuring required to construct models but in planning questionnaires to ascertain the success of aspects of their projects. Pupils are being given greater opportunities for speaking and listening in many subjects when compared with those reported at the last inspection.

The curriculum and assessment

20. The curriculum is good, and meets all statutory requirements at both key stages. At Key Stage 3, breadth and balance are satisfactory. All National Curriculum subjects are included, and personal and social education, and religious education. There is an appropriate information and communication technology skills course. Drama is also included in this key stage, but this takes time from music. The method of organisation in short blocks, alternating teaching time between music and drama, inhibits continuity and progression in both subjects. French and German are both taught at Key Stage 3. There is no choice; pupils are allocated one of these languages in Year 7, according to which House they are in.
21. At Key Stage 4, breadth and balance of the curriculum are satisfactory, and its relevance is good. The curriculum provides college-accredited National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) literacy and numeracy courses for those of lower ability, and GCSE in travel and tourism for preparing pupils to work in the local industry. There is a good variety of optional GSCE courses, as well as choice within the core curriculum of design and technology. Pupils choosing music have a supported self-study option, which works well to enable high standards to be achieved. ICT is taught in Year 10 through design technology

and English, and can be extended to a full GCSE by those choosing a short design and technology course. Religious education is taught to most pupils as a short course, which can also be extended to a full GCSE, though the material for the short course and GCSE overlap in some aspects. Provision for personal and social education is continued for all pupils in Key Stage 4.

22. Provision for spiritual development is made well through music, art and English; that for moral development is good through personal and social education where sex and drugs education is sensitively treated. Pupils gain a good idea of their own culture through the arts, science and technology provision. Physical skills are developed well through physical education and sport.
23. All pupils have equality of access to the curriculum and opportunity to succeed, in accordance with the school's aims. Setting generally allows a good match of work to ability. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Individual education plans are used in all departments to guide modification of the schemes of work to suit their needs. Support for pupils with statements of special educational needs is good in class, generally.
24. Curriculum planning is good. The schemes of work in art, ICT, music and personal and social education are very good; in drama and religious education they are satisfactory. In all other subjects, schemes are good. Planning for literacy and numeracy is also good. Planning for ICT across the curriculum is good, though during the inspection its use was not much evident in science and mathematics.
25. Extra-curricular activities are excellent. There is a vast range available for all pupils to choose from in sport, drama and music, with additional options in Latin, technology, history and textiles. Many clubs take place before school, especially music with instrumental groups or choirs, rehearsing from 8am; lunchtimes are full, and much sporting activity takes place after school. Some choirs rehearse in the evening.
26. Preparation for adult life is excellent through careers guidance which includes a programme of lessons and courses, and talks by representatives from further education colleges. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Other improvements have been made in the time allocation to religious education and personal and social education, and in the provision of Travel and Tourism GCSE to widen the Key Stage 4 curriculum. However, although provision for spirituality has improved in curriculum areas, it is still not consistently evident in assemblies.
27. Good systems for assessment are in place. Each department assesses progress in each subject at both key stages by a series of tests at the end of each particular module or block of work. Early year pupils are tested for reading age and other abilities. In addition to the national tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 3, teachers assess all other National Curriculum subjects which provides a level of attainment at the end of Year 9 to report to parents. At the end of Key Stage 4, nearly all pupils take GSCE examinations in English, mathematics and science as well as in their option subjects. Some subjects, for example technology and religious education, may be offered as a short course. NVQs and the Youth Award scheme are assessed continuously.
28. The school uses its assessment procedures well to set targets for achievement and to predict examination grades. Good use is made of both the Key Stage 2 assessments and department tests to put pupils into ability sets for English and mathematics. Departments keep records of their subject assessments, and use them to provide National Curriculum levels or predicted GCSE grades when required for whole school interim and full reports. These levels and predicted grades are kept for each pupil and this helps

progress towards meeting the school's statutory targets to be monitored by governors. Assessment is used effectively by most departments to plan the next stages of the curriculum to put pupils into ability sets for most subjects from Year 8, and to identify underachievers. Regular procedures are used effectively to assess the progress of pupils with special educational needs in meeting their targets on their individual education plans. Overall this is an improvement in the use of assessment found at the last inspection. The school is now making greater use of assessment data to enhance teaching and learning and to evaluate the school's performance in meeting its targets.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

29. Reference is made in the aims of the school to the development of personal and social values and an ability to adapt in a multicultural society. Pupils are made aware of the importance of behaviour, self discipline and a sense of responsibility through the school and pupil charters. Many pupils have a natural courtesy and friendliness and throughout the school there is a sense of purpose. New projects and initiatives, local and national, are followed up to the benefit of the pupils. There are valuable local connections and the school's work on linking with the community is very good, both within and outside the curriculum.
30. Pupils attend two or three assemblies a week because lack of space precludes whole school assemblies; opportunities are given for year group and combined year assemblies in the Houses in addition to the hall; there may also be talks and discussions in tutor groups. Some assemblies follow a broadly Christian theme and the Headteacher's assemblies follow the liturgical year when appropriate. However, the provision does not meet the statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship. Some teaching on other cultures and beliefs in addition to Christian themes takes place in religious education and in art. There is an annual Christmas Service in the local church which combines dance, drama and music and is a very moving experience. The music department makes an important contribution to the spiritual dimension of the pupils' education. The English and art departments also make a contribution to the sound spiritual development of the pupils.
31. There is a well established behaviour policy and a personal, social and health education programme which gives the pupils valuable opportunities and incentives to think about themselves and other people and to have serious discussions on important and relevant issues such as drugs. Good work, behaviour and helpfulness are praised and reinforced and pupils are encouraged to consider the consequences of their actions on others. Relationships in the classroom are good at all levels in the school; the majority of the pupils are natural, open and friendly with adults. Opportunities for extra-curricular activities, especially music, drama and sport, are extensive; the staff and members of the community give their time generously. There is a School Council, which gives valuable experience of responsibility and citizenship to its members, who have recently visited the House of Commons. Valuable initiatives for the youth community are expected to follow from their recent meeting with the local Member of Parliament, who has organised a discussion with the local police about the provision of facilities locally for young people. There is a custodian system and a formal prefect system whereby opportunities are given to pupils to participate in the organisation of the school. Pupils take part in a paired reading scheme and there is a peer support scheme. The provision for social development is very good and for moral development is good.
32. Pupils are able to consider how they and other people live through English, drama, religious education, music, art, food and nutrition and modern foreign languages. School initiatives such as overseas visits also enable them to come close to other social and cultural traditions. Cultural horizons are widened through art drama, dance and music, which are highly valued in the school. There is currently an Artist in Residence and there are visits to art galleries and concerts. The quality of the provision for the

cultural development of the pupils is good.

33. Opportunities have been taken to extend and reinforce the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils with the result that there has been some strengthening and improvement in provision since the previous report.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

34. The school provides very good support for its pupils and has developed good procedures for monitoring their academic progress, personal development and attendance, which are used well to offer pupils appropriate guidance that is tailored according to their need. Pupils are confident that, should they need help, a member of staff will listen to them. They like the fact that they are well known by staff, and are treated as individuals. The cohesiveness of the various systems of support has improved since the last inspection.
35. Staff are working hard and successfully to refine their arrangements for monitoring pupils' academic and personal progress so that they interconnect with each other. Impressive year group files are maintained which record each pupil's academic scores, rewards, sanctions, attendance, medical records and the like building up an individual profile that can inform tutors and others when they offer guidance to pupils. The school has in place good systems of communication which ensure that important information reaches the relevant member of staff quickly. Tutors are playing an increasingly important role in overseeing pupils' academic progress as well as their personal development. In addition to recording day to day information about individuals and regularly reminding them about the school's expectations, tutors are accessible and responsive to pupils' needs. Pupils also review their own progress and targets so that the whole school community is working towards the same end of raising standards.
36. A strong reward system is in place which promotes good effort and behaviour. Pupils value receiving the accolade of commendations. The school takes any reported incident of bullying very seriously, and pupils consider the steps taken by staff are effective in eliminating harassment.
37. The school works very closely with a range of external agencies, including the Education Welfare Service and has good internal systems in place to track absence and promote attendance. The school attempts to make telephone contact with parents/guardians on the first day of a pupil's unexplained absence, and routine registration in lessons makes it extremely hard for pupils to leave the site undetected during the school day. Very good quality support is provided by the Careers Service which extends and enriches the already excellent provision and teaching of careers in the school.
38. The school has inclusion as a priority. It is beginning to strive to be flexible in its approach by developing alternative programmes and timetables for those pupils, particularly at Key Stage 4 who find the mainstream curriculum difficult to cope with for a variety of reasons. This balance of monitoring and support has led to improved attendance over recent years.
39. Procedures to ensure child protection are very good. Staff have received appropriate training and are provided with clear guidance on how to act. There is good liaison with outside agencies, the named responsible person keeps thorough records and ensures that these remain confidential. Appropriate arrangements are being put in place to support >looked after children=.
40. Arrangements for the support and guidance of pupils with special educational needs, and the monitoring of their progress through individual education plans and reviews are effective.

41. The school rightly considers the good care for its pupils as having a direct impact on the academic standards they achieve. The creation of the pupil support assistant post has added significantly to the range and quality of the support on offer to pupils. Staff work hard and successfully in establishing good working relationships with the great majority of pupils, to enable pupils to feel confident and secure in the school. The relatively small size of the Houses ensures that pupils become well known and are enabled to develop a strong sense of identity with a unit smaller than the whole school. The Head of Year 7 works very closely with colleagues at contributory primary schools in order to help pupils settle rapidly and well. The high level of priority attached to the half termly meetings of the Education Liaison Committee, which comprises school staff and representatives of external agencies, ensures that there is early identification of, and continuing monitoring of individual pupils requiring a range of additional support and guidance. The governors= pupil support committee is well established and likes to meet with pupils on a regular basis.
42. On a day-to-day basis the school promotes effectively the health, safety and general well-being of its pupils. For example, safety issues feature strongly in the Year 7 Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) programme. There are good arrangements for looking after pupils who have accidents or who feel unwell. Staff and governors conduct checks of the site in order to highlight any safety issues, and those with responsibilities in this area work hard in order to ensure the safety of all members of the school community.

Partnership with parents and the community

43. The school=s good partnership with its parents and the community effectively extends pupils= learning. The school has responded to a previous key issue by improving the quality of its reports to parents.
44. Omission of statutory requirements in the school prospectus and governors= annual report means that the school=s communication with parents is unsatisfactory overall. There are, however, good features about the way the school communicates with parents. The school holds consultation evenings every term where parents review progress with their child=s teachers. The recently appointed pupil support assistant enhances the sense of personal contact and the help that the school provides in times of problems or family difficulties. The school issues a parents= handbook with much detailed information at the start of the school year. Each term, it produces newsletters of high quality, some edited by the pupils themselves.
45. A key issue in the previous report was that the annual end of year reports did not give clear information on pupils= attainment and progress. The school has successfully improved the quality of these reports. Each year it issues two reports based on a system of targeting Key Stage 3 levels and GCSE grades. End-of-year reports contain a printout of what pupils have studied in their tutor groups, supplemented by individual comments for each subject. The school tested the new system exhaustively by interviewing parents and pupils. In the inspection questionnaire, a high percentage of parents said the school gave them a clear understanding of what their children were learning, and kept them well informed about their progress. Overall the parents have very positive views about the school and this is shared by the inspection team.
46. Parents support their children's learning well. All pupils, from Year 7 upwards, take a high degree of personal responsibility for their homework. The school produces a homework diary, and asks parents to sign it once a week to confirm that their child is doing the homework. A very large number of families

do this consistently. An active parent teacher association organises social events to raise funds for extra facilities at school.

47. The pupils' excellent use of community links is a strength of the school. Cultural links include work with Bristol Old Vic, a visit to the Tate Gallery, and singing at the Salzburg International Music Festival. Pupils give as well as gain in their theatrical activities. Each summer they work with children from local primary schools to create a song and dance spectacular. University academics open pupils' eyes to life beyond GCSE with lectures on ultrafast lasers and the origin of galaxies. Visits to Holland, France, Prague, Krakow and Budapest extend their knowledge of the wider world. The local Member of Parliament developed some pupils' understanding of citizenship by inviting them to the House of Commons. School teams compete with other local schools in many sports, including athletics, cricket, hockey, netball, rounders and soccer. Individual pupils win selection at county level. The setting up of a local Education Achievement Zone has greatly extended pupils' opportunities. In the summer holiday, the zone funded an arts course at Worle for gifted and talented Year 10 pupils in the area. Within a week, they created, rehearsed and performed their own rock'n'roll musical to a full house at Weston Playhouse.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

48. The leadership and management of the school are good overall. The school is well managed and well led by the Headteacher supported by the Governing Body. Values and aims are known and shared by staff, pupils, parents and governors. All subscribe to the school's keywords, 'opportunity, support and partnership' which can be found displayed in classrooms and offices as well as in documentation such as the school prospectus. The Headteacher has been in post for a substantial time, is forward thinking and keen to maintain the good reputation the school has within the local community. He has a clear overview of the school and is well respected by both staff and governors. He is approachable and receptive to new ideas and demonstrates good motivational skills.

49. Supporting the Headteacher is a broad senior management team. With the Governing Body this team has been responsible for identifying areas for development and shaping priorities since the previous inspection, such as data analysis and target setting.

50. Whole school planning involves all the staff and the governors although the school recognises that there is further work to be done to ensure everyone has ownership of the process. All departments are invited to make contributions to the school development plan indicating where they can support or enhance the identified priorities. The quality of departmental development plans varies from department to department although all are encouraged to consider targets and success criteria.

51. The school development plan identifies clear priorities, both short and long term, with costings in place and is co-ordinated by a senior member of staff. The governors review priorities through their various committees at regular intervals but at the same time recognise a need for targets to be more specific and measurable. This includes their approach to reviewing the school's progress.

52. The Governing Body is committed to ensuring that the school obtains good value for money and recognises the importance of monitoring and evaluating curriculum development projects. Governors are linked to curriculum areas and show an interest in their subject's development.

53.Senior managers are also assigned to different curriculum areas although there is a need for more consistency and further accountability. This will involve developing professional skills further in monitoring and evaluation techniques as well as a whole school policy being developed.

54.At middle management level, both curriculum and pastoral managers are expected to be more accountable in terms of raising attainment, monitoring performance and curriculum development. This is a relatively new venture for pastoral staff and as such requires more time for its development, although the school has already carried out an audit identifying where pastoral staff support the learning process under the guidance of a senior member of staff. The school now has access to, and produces a great deal of information about the performance and progress of the pupils. There is some inconsistency among curriculum managers in their effectiveness and ability to undertake their quality assurance roles in relation to this. Some are highly effective and others are not yet sufficiently confident to deal with the demanding rigour and wide range of issues being promoted by the school=s senior staff and the governors.

55.Whole school training and individual professional development has taken place and designated funding is available. The Governing Body has also been invited to join staff on development days. The school has been successful in gaining the Investors in People award since the last inspection. A major impact has been the training on >accelerated learning= techniques and strategies are tried and tested in the classroom by a wide range of staff in their efforts to raise achievement. Since the previous inspection the expectations of teachers, pupils and parents have been raised although it is recognised that more work still needs to be done on identifying and exchanging good practice. Agendas and minutes of meetings show a predominantly administrative focus rather than discussion on issues specifically related to teaching and learning.

56.The school is aware of national initiatives and has recently applied for specialist school status in the media arts. It is also part of an Education Achievement Zone. These projects have both provided a strong focus for the school and provided fresh opportunities and challenges for further raising standards such as literacy and information and communication technology.

57.There is an improving trend in the school in many areas. Most staff have a commitment to raising standards and improving the school. The school has a dedicated, supportive, increasingly informed and proactive Governing Body. Governors meet regularly, committees are in place and they operate efficiently and effectively. They are encouraged to act as a >critical friend= to the school and senior staff respect their valuable contributions. Governors maintain their close interest in the school through a range of visits, links with departments and attending school functions over and above their statutory duties.

58.The governors meet most statutory requirements, with the exception of a daily act of collective worship and the full range of information in the documentation required of them for parents. The Headteacher, deputies and other senior staff work in close co-operation with the governors. Senior pupils including presidents of the School Council make presentations to the Governing Body.

59.The implementation of the school aims, values and priorities is good. The aims underpin the strong caring ethos of the school. The school works in partnership with the local community, as shown recently in the school=s successful drive to gain sponsorship for specialist school status, as well as through its careers and work experience programmes.

60.Overall, routine administration and organisation are good. The school has a comprehensive staff handbook and various aspects of school life are well documented. Regular newsletters, letters home to parents and internal communication systems demonstrate the school=s concern for passing on information, responding to incidents and dealing with requests.

61. Overall the quality of leadership and management, the planning of school developments and the good improvement since the last inspection all lead to the judgement that school leadership and management is good. There is a very good capacity to make even further improvements which will enable the school to build upon its current successful reputation.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

62. Staffing levels are slightly higher than the national average for a school of this size, and the expertise of the majority of the teachers matches the needs of the curriculum well. The pupil/teacher ratio of 17.5 to 1 is higher than the national average and a contact ratio of 73% is reasonable when compared with other shire county schools. The deficiency noted in the last inspection in relation to religious education has been tackled. The school has placed a lot of emphasis on >Investors in People= and won an award in 1999. A music teacher has recently won a national award for >Best New Teacher= and £3500 for the school.
63. The staff is a good blend of age, experience and teaching skills, but there has been a significant number of staff changes since the last report. The good number of non-teaching staff, including those for special educational needs, provide good support. Some subjects such as design and technology, science and music have very good, effective and efficient technical support.
64. Staff training needs are adequately addressed through the use of the professional days, external courses and other activities.
65. The school occupies a large attractive site with well maintained playing fields. Several blocks of mainly single storey buildings are linked by uncovered walkways. In some blocks space is used to the maximum effect. Cloakroom space and open areas have been converted into classrooms. This has provided more rooms but many are small for the number of pupils. The food technology area has not been updated to match new curriculum requirements but there are plans for refurbishment in the near future.
66. The site is crossed by a public footpath and there are still concerns, voiced in the last report about site security and the health hazards of dog fouling. The courts are uneven and still in need of attention. The hard area needs replacing.
67. The resource provision overall is good. Resources in most subject areas, including the library, are adequate. In music, design and technology, modern foreign languages and ICT, resources are good. Resources for history and geography are unsatisfactory.
68. The number of computers has increased since the last report and with the exception of history and geography, most departments are well equipped with hardware and software.

The efficiency of the school

69. Financial planning is good. The Headteacher and governors have planned effectively for the development of the school. Money is targeted at developments which have an impact on pupils' learning. For example, spending on administrative staff has been increased to provide support for teachers and to enable them to concentrate on their teaching.
70. The Governing Body is actively involved in the scrutiny of the budget, keeping a watchful eye on

available reserves. Since 1996 the school has been faced with reduced funding from the local authority and an increase in pupil numbers. There is continued uncertainty about future funding and the allocation and use of fund has to be and is very carefully controlled. Management of the budget and systems to monitor value for money are very good.

71. Effective use is made of staffing, accommodation and learning resources. The deployment of teaching staff is particularly efficient. While funding for the pupils with special educational needs has been reduced recently, the money earmarked for provision for these pupils, enhanced by Education Achievement Zone funding, is used appropriately to provide a good level of support and resources, such as Successmaker, a computer program to enhance literacy and numeracy. Skilled assistants also make a significant contribution to the progress of the pupils with special educational needs. The school has maintained a relatively favourable level of expenditure on learning resources, especially information and communication technology, since the last report and, as a consequence, this has made a positive contribution to pupils' progress.
72. The latest audit report concluded that financial procedures have been administered to a satisfactory standard and that previous recommendations had been implemented satisfactorily. Minor adjustments for this year are now in hand. The school's administration is effective.
73. The funding per pupil is slightly higher than the national average. The school uses its resources effectively and provides a good quality education. In particular, the quality of teaching is good. The pupils make good progress, reaching standards above those achieved in similar schools. Taking account of these factors, the school gives good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

1. In the end of Key Stage 3 national tests, attainment in English in 1999 was in line with the national average, although in 1998 the results were well above the national average. The national improvement in the percentage of pupils attaining the higher grades in 1999 was not matched by a similar school improvement. In 1999 attainment overall was well above average in comparison with similar schools. Girls= results in the tests are better than those of the boys, although this disparity is decreasing and in 1998 was slightly less than the national figure. Attainment based on evidence seen during the course of the inspection is also in line with what is found nationally.
2. Pupils use discussion well in order to compare and contrast their ideas with those of others and express their ideas with confidence. Pupils talk in complete sentences, using the full range of their vocabulary and are thus able to express their ideas clearly and concisely. Pupils also appreciate the enjoyment of conversation and discussion as a worthwhile leisure pursuit.
3. Most pupils read aloud clearly, accurately and fluently, with developing expressiveness. They use punctuation in order to guide the pace and intonation of their reading. Pupils who experience difficulty when reading more difficult words frequently know how to work them out without recourse to help. Pupils across the attainment range select books from the library with discrimination and have research skills which serve them well. All pupils respond to a wide range of literary and other texts at a level beyond story or information and are able to comment on their responses, some using simple quotations to exemplify their ideas. The everyday vocabulary of some pupils is rather limited and it is this, rather than lack of vocabulary specific to the study of English, which restricts the complexity of the ideas they are able to express. They begin to analyse what they read using an appropriate range of literary terminology and all pupils, including those at lower levels of attainment, show understanding of some of the works of Shakespeare.
4. When writing, most pupils show a satisfactory standard of accuracy and all pupils write in complete sentences, using a range of joining words in order to vary the length and structure of their sentences. The spelling of most pupils is reasonably accurate and consistent and all show an appreciation of the importance of spelling correctly, although the spelling of some pupils is rather inconsistent. Most pupils have a clear understanding of the fact that writing can be carried out for a number of purposes and intended audiences and can vary their style in response to these, although lower attaining pupils find this very difficult.
5. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 in GCSE in 1998, the latest year for which national comparative figures are available, was above the national average, with a higher percentage of pupils attaining grades A*-C than is found nationally. In 1999 there was a drop in the percentage of pupils achieving at this level. In 1998 the percentage of pupils attaining grades A*-G was also higher than the national average. The attainment of pupils taking the English Literature examination in 1998 was higher than the national average and in 1999 there was a slight increase in the percentage achieving A*-C grades. Attainment based on evidence seen during the inspection is in line with what is found nationally.
6. Pupils make good use of discussion as a valuable learning tool which they use to revise and extend their own knowledge and understanding. Most pupils have a basic and subject related vocabulary which is

adequate to express increasingly complex ideas with clarity.

7. All pupils show a sensitive response to a wide range of literary and other media, for example film, and their comments go well beyond the level of story. Pupils show awareness of the literary devices which are employed by writers and comment clearly on the way in which these are used to achieve a specific effect. Most pupils have an appropriate range of specialised vocabulary to enable them to express their ideas with precision and authority. Pupils tackle a full range of writing assignments, for example writing instructions, children's stories and personal responses, and vary their style to meet these intentions. Pupils across the range of attainment spell basic and more common words accurately, although pupils for whom spelling is difficult show inconsistent spelling of more difficult or unusual words.
8. The standard of attainment is very similar to that which was reported at the previous inspection
9. Progress made by pupils in Key Stage 3 is good. In particular they make good progress in accuracy of spelling and punctuation and develop an appreciation of the importance of this. They develop good habits in the way in which they check their spelling, using a range of methods to do this including the routine use of dictionaries. Most pupils considerably increase their range of their vocabulary, including vocabulary which is specific to the subject and especially the basic vocabulary relating to literary analysis. Pupils move from writing mainly narrative, personal accounts when they join the school to the ability to write for a range of audiences and purposes. Good progress is made in the way in which pupils use the library and in the development of research skills using both reference books and the Internet.
10. The progress in Key Stage 4 is good and this can be seen in individual lessons, in the work they produce during their GCSE courses and by comparing attainment made by pupils at the end of Key Stage 3 with their examination results at the end of Key Stage 4. Good progress is made in the development of the ability to respond to and write about literary and other genres on a variety of levels and in the acquisition of an appropriate vocabulary for this. Pupils develop an understanding that writers intend to achieve a particular effect and use a range of literary devices in order to achieve this. Pupils develop a sensitive response to the study of poetry and acquire a vocabulary which enables them to express this clearly and appropriately.
11. The skills of literacy and oracy are used extensively in a wide range of subjects across the curriculum. In music and drama pupils make very effective use of written self review and self evaluation to record their own progress and in music pupils discuss their work very coherently. There are many opportunities for writing in ICT lessons when pupils are learning word processing and desk top publishing skills. In many subjects there is good reinforcement of key words and concepts through the display of these in classrooms and good use is made of reading in science, for example, older pupils are able to read and summarise articles from newspapers and journals in order to enhance their knowledge of current scientific developments.
12. The attitude and behaviour of pupils in lessons is always at least satisfactory and nearly always it is good. In Key Stage 4 this is sometimes very good, in response to very good teaching which stimulates and maintains pupils' interest and commitment to succeed. Pupils arrive at lessons expecting to work hard and prepared to settle down to this straight away. They listen carefully to their teachers and to each other. They respond well to the wide range of activities and tasks with which they are presented and show great zest to participate. Despite the fact that they are often very stimulated by their lessons they remain sensible and move on to written tasks very willingly. Pupils respond well to more informal

sessions such as library lessons, where they show good self organisation and motivation in making headway with what is expected of them. All pupils make good use of the numerous opportunities to participate in pair and group work and are confident to make contributions. The hour long lessons sometimes stretch pupils' concentration spans to their full capacity and while most pupils maintain admirably high levels of concentration, some begin to lose impetus towards the end of some lessons. Overall this is a very similar positive picture to that commented on in the previous inspection report.

13. The quality of teaching is good. All teaching seen was at least satisfactory and most was good, with some teaching in Key Stage 4 being very good. Teachers' planning is good, throughout. The objectives for each lesson are clear, are often shared explicitly with pupils and show good development from previous lessons. A feature of the good and very good teaching is the varied activities, tasks and resources which are used, producing a high level of interest, even excitement, among pupils and clearly contributing to their understanding of some challenging concepts. For example in a lesson on a poem comparing the many levels of love with an onion, a real onion was used to demonstrate this concept to pupils in a way which was very clear and memorable. Good use is made of discussion and question and answer sessions to promote and extend pupils' thinking. All teachers have high expectations of attainment, behaviour and hard work and set challenging tasks. Teachers set a brisk pace. In a situation where much of the work is challenging and where there is a considerable spread of attainment within groups, little evidence was seen of setting a variety of tasks to meet the needs of all pupils, some of whom were not always able to approach tasks without the intervention of their teacher. The previous inspection report commented that teachers do not always ensure that lower attaining pupils make appropriate progress. While this is no longer the case, the lack of tasks set specifically to meet the needs of such pupils means that they are sometimes dependent on teacher assistance in order to be able to understand and make a start on their work.
14. The subject is managed efficiently and effectively with a strong commitment to raising the standards of attainment of all pupils. There is a clear and helpful set of subject policies and a good scheme of work for Key Stage 3. There is subject guidance, a full set of units of work and a bank of activities and resources for all sections of the Key Stage 4 examination syllabus. However, the lack of a specific scheme of work for Key Stage 4 is not helpful for newly-qualified or newly-appointed members of the department. The library is a strong feature of the English provision, is excellently and extensively used in English lessons and makes a significant contribution to the acquisition of research skills. The library staff have worked closely with English teachers to provide and make readily accessible a good range of books intended to encourage boys to become regular readers. This is part of the department's commitment to narrowing the disparity in attainment between boys and girls.
15. Attainment in drama at the end of Key Stage 3 is in line with national expectations. Pupils are able to use an appropriate range of techniques, for example freeze frame, mime and flashback and have clear knowledge and understanding of the correct terminology connected with these. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 in GCSE in 1998 was close to the national average in terms of the percentage of pupils who attained grades A*-C. All pupils entered for the examination achieved within the range A*-G. Pupils are able to plan and present convincing scenarios, showing understanding and sensitivity about the way in which people behave and respond. They are able to select the most appropriate dramatic techniques from the range at their disposal and use these effectively to prepare performances. Pupils' response to their drama is always at least satisfactory and usually it is very good. Pupils work very well together showing high levels of trust and mutual respect. They give supportive response to each other's work and give helpful evaluative comments. All teaching seen was at least good and nearly all was very good. Lessons are very well planned and move at a brisk pace. Teachers have very high expectations of their pupils and use their good relationships with pupils to encourage and support them in achieving these.

Mathematics

16. Attainment in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 3 from 1996 to 1998 was close to or slightly above the national average for Level 5 or higher, and also above the average for similar schools. Figures for pupils reaching Level 6 or above are below the average for similar schools. 70% of pupils attained Level 5 or higher in 1999, a higher figure than in 1998 and above the national average. At the end of Key Stage 4, the percentage achieving A* to G grades (99% in 1998, 100% in 1999) in GCSE examinations was above the national average, and above average for schools with a similar profile. The percentage of A* to C grades had increased to 55% in 1998, but fallen in 1999 to 43%, compared with the national average of 48% but this particular year group had a low mathematical ability on entry and their attainment was slightly above expectation. The percentage of A* to C grades in mathematics is low in comparison with other subjects. Gender differences have varied from year to year. Pupils of all abilities are given every opportunity to succeed and many apply themselves well, their achievement is to their credit and that of their teachers.
17. Overall, comparisons show that patterns of attainment from Year 7 to Year 11 are improving and there is a departmental emphasis on raising achievement. Year 7 had begun a chapter on coordinates in the first quadrant; they had made a good beginning to understanding and were able to apply their knowledge to new tasks. The computers in the departmental ICT suite were observed being used effectively to support the work on coordinates. Pupils were able to give confident spoken descriptions of what they were doing. In Year 8, pupils could understand and explain their work on data-handling, while a middle ability set were beginning to understand more clearly the use of the formulae for the circumference of a circle. Year 9 were mainly working on polygons, the majority of the lower ability group could follow the work on their investigations and were willing to attempt questions independently; the higher ability groups were tackling simultaneous equations with some success. The levels of attainment in Year 8 and Year 9 ranged from below average in the lower ability sets to average for their age in the higher ability sets. In Year 10, higher ability groups were successfully working on their coursework and middle and lower attaining groups were consolidating number work at a lower level. In Year 11, the higher set were beginning to understand how to solve quadratic equations by the iterative method. From lessons and the scrutiny of work, levels of attainment are generally in line or slightly above expectation for the different ability levels at Key Stage 3 and 4.
18. Progress through Key Stage 3 is good. Current progress through Key Stage 3 varies between the year groups; it is good in Year 7 and Year 8. Progress is less satisfactory in some classes in Year 9, there is a continual murmur of conversation, mostly irrelevant to the classwork. In classes where pupils are co-operative, well motivated and willing to apply themselves, much better progress is made.
19. In Key Stage 4, progress is satisfactory. In some classes, progress is limited for some pupils who are not interested in or motivated by the work they are asked to do. At times they appear to be insufficiently clear about what they are expected to do and the time spent on independent work on exercises allows opportunities for general conversation to develop. A member of the mathematics staff has responsibility for liaising with the special needs department and generally there is a good departmental awareness of the requirements of less able pupils who are well integrated and supported and who generally make satisfactory progress. There is a commercial package available which benefits the lower attaining pupils especially and gives continual information on attainment and progress to staff.
20. The response of the pupils throughout the year groups is generally good; in only a very few classes there was a lack of motivation and concentration. Pupils are generally co-operative, well motivated, attentive and alert, sustaining concentration and able to question and respond to questioning. They work successfully individually or in small groups or in pairs. There are good relationships between pupils and

their teachers, much patience is evident and in most classes there is respect for the teacher and consideration of each other's needs. Homework is regularly set throughout the key stages with a clear grading system; the head of department places emphasis on the importance of homework and monitors the marking.

21. The teaching of mathematics is good in both key stages. The majority of teaching is carried out by experienced subject specialists, with secure subject knowledge. Lessons are based on the general planning in the schemes of work, supported by the text books and worksheets. Efforts are made to make the material relevant, interesting and meaningful. Tessellating shapes to give a design for wrapping paper, the use of coordinates related to car parking, the use of class data in statistics are just a few examples. The teachers generally review previous work at the beginning of lessons, they circulate well and there is much individual help and encouragement. There were very few unsatisfactory lessons and in those either the behaviour of the pupils prevented effective learning or there was too much dependence on the text book and insufficient clear and helpful explanation. In these lessons learning and progress was therefore limited because the pupils could not sustain concentration on written exercises. In the best lessons, objectives were clear and shared with the pupils, there was good open questioning and effective use of time, with targets set as they worked.
22. The curriculum is well planned in accordance with the National Curriculum and in line with examination requirements. Lessons are based on the schemes of work and on different textbooks and well planned worksheets for different ability levels. Results and scores on tests from age 11 onwards are recorded and compared, giving a picture of progress and value added for individual pupils. The Key Stage 3 scheme of work has been revised following consultation with junior schools as the Key Stage 2 tests and the national numeracy strategy have brought changes. There are additional voluntary sessions to help Year 11 pupils revise for their GCSE examination but these were not well attended last year. A modular GCSE examination is available for lower sets and much careful work has been done to implement this. The Head of Department is guiding the development of the subject with immense commitment. Management is efficient, methodical and forward looking; many new ideas are being put into practice in this well led department. Praiseworthy efforts are made to involve the pupils in their own learning and success. The emphasis on investigational work from an early stage has improved the standard of coursework noticeably. There is a good departmental development plan much of which has been achieved on target and there is recognition of the need to formalise the present ongoing support and monitoring for planning and teaching in order to raise standards further. There is monitoring of pupils' work and the extension of this to teaching should lead to a necessary and valuable sharing of expertise and dissemination of good practice. The annual budget is carefully controlled and skilful management is still required to ensure the increased provision of text books.
23. Since the previous inspection, new textbooks have been introduced in Years 7 to 11 as well as an excellent staff handbook; schemes of work have been successfully rewritten and updated, and there has been greater emphasis on the interpretation of results. There has been an increased emphasis on investigational skills.
24. The newly appointed second in department has a brief to formalise numeracy across the curriculum. During the inspection there was evidence of numeracy and the use of mathematics in many of the subjects.

Science

25. Analysis of the 1998 GCSE results for double science shows the percentage of pupils achieving A*-C grades close to the national average, and above average for similar schools. Girls attainment was well

above average, boys attainment was below. Attainment in A*-G grades was about average both nationally and compared with similar schools. Standards in single science A*-C grades were above average, girls well above average. In 1999, GCSE results have improved; every pupil achieved a grade in double science, and only one failed single science. Boys have achieved the same percentage as girls in A*-C grades, above the national average and that of similar schools. Over the last three years, there has been an overall improvement every year, that of boys being greater.

26. Analysis of the 1998 Key Stage 3 national test results shows standards above average in tests and teacher assessments, and well above the average for similar schools. Results have been consistently above the national average for the previous three years. There is no significant difference between boys= and girls= attainment, although it fluctuates from year to year. In 1999, compared with similar schools, results are well above average. Boys and girls did equally well.
27. Inspection evidence shows attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 to be above average. In top sets, much work which was well above average was seen. Middle attaining pupils in Year 11 describe the structure and function of the eye and use this knowledge well to predict how the lens is able to focus on near and far objects, testing this with the use of a convex lens in the laboratory. Practical skills are good, and middle attaining pupils investigating refraction of light are able to measure accurately to show the point at which light becomes trapped inside a transparent object, modelling optic fibres. Lower attaining pupils know that one method of following the rate of a chemical reaction is to measure carefully the amount of gas produced over time.
28. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 is above average. Middle attaining pupils in Year 9 have a satisfactory knowledge of the properties of metals and non-metals, and relate them to their uses. Lower attaining pupils also show good practical manipulative skill when testing plants for starch. They predict, with help, that only the green parts containing chlorophyll will produce starch. Higher attaining pupils have a good knowledge of electricity and use ammeters well in series and parallel circuits and are able to predict changes in current reading when the position of the meter is changed.
29. Progress shown by work samples and in lessons is good through both key stages. Year 7 pupils take a laboratory skills course in their first term of school, for example learning quickly to focus a microscope in the correct way when looking at pollen grains. They successfully practise fine manipulative skills by doing chromatography with inks and coloured sweets. Pupils in Year 8, including those with special educational needs, extend their knowledge of electricity into simple electronics, solving problems by the use of logic gates, and higher attaining pupils are learning very well to use the kinetic theory of matter to explain the structure of solids, liquids and gases. Middle attaining pupils in the Year 10 single science group make good progress when learning to wire a plug with one hundred per cent accuracy, being able to identify common faults in diagrams of incorrectly wired plugs. Generally, pupils with special educational needs make as much progress as others when they have the appropriate additional support.
30. Most pupils use their numeracy skills well throughout both key stages in science, frequently doing increasingly harder calculations involving for example forces, energy and speed. They draw graphs with increasing accuracy to show the course of their experiments. Older pupils in particular use their literacy skills well when reading, summarising and debating newspaper articles about current topics, such as embryo testing, cloning and genetic engineering. Insufficient use is made of ICT as a general tool and only minimum use is made of sensors to monitor the course of experiments.
31. The quality of all teaching is good, with over a third being very good or excellent. This was consistent across both key stages. Teachers are highly professional and have a very good knowledge of their specialist subjects, with a good knowledge of general science. They share their expertise well at

department meetings, enabling them to teach successfully outside their specialisms at both key stages. They are a close team which works well under the able leadership of the Head of Department and the two subject heads. They have high expectations as shown by the very high levels to which the subject is taken. This was well exemplified in an excellent lesson seen on techniques used to elucidate the structure of the earth. The teacher used skilful questioning techniques to enable the pupils to extend their previous knowledge to an understanding of how different types of seismic waves can be used in the process.

32. Teachers= planning is very good. Schemes of work are very full and detailed, and their accessibility to the technicians enables lessons to be well prepared. An imaginative variety of teaching methods is outlined; good use is made of the accelerated learning techniques, which were recently a focus for in-service training in the school. Work is planned well to match pupils= ability in sets, but not always sufficient to meet the needs of all pupils in mixed ability classes in Year 7. Organisation of practical work is particularly good. Good relationships exist between staff and pupils. Behaviour is generally managed satisfactorily, though some pupils, especially boys, do prove problematic to some teachers. Good resources are managed well. Most lessons start and finish on time; some teachers have particularly good dismissal techniques with questions from the lesson which pupils must answer correctly before leaving. Teachers mark work regularly. Most give targets for improvement, though there are some errors in books where incorrect chemical equations are marked right. Teachers use homework well; it is regularly set to extend the curriculum. Teachers are very well supported by their two laboratory technicians who are well qualified and very efficient, but the department has insufficient technician time for the number of laboratories and classes served, particularly since these are not all in the same building.
33. Pupils= attitude to science is good. They show great interest in their work and sustain concentration well in lessons. Only a small fraction of pupils are not well motivated. Capacity for personal study develops very well, exemplified by the science fair projects in Year 8 where pupils plan and carry out an investigation or construction over several months, using much of their own time in order to present such projects as a working model hovercraft, and an investigation into the growth of beans. Older pupils show respect for each others= points of view during discussion, and most pupils work together well during practicals.
34. The curriculum caters for all pupils= needs and choices by the provision of both dual and single award science at GCSE. The two syllabuses in use for double science cater well for the ability range, enabling all to gain a grade. Pupils choosing single science can opt for an arts subject to complement their particular aptitude. Insufficient ICT is planned into the curriculum. Although classes are accommodated in the computer suite by prior arrangement, easy access for spontaneous use is denied. Moreover, the five computers in the department are insufficient in number to enable them to be used regularly as a tool in lessons.
35. The department has maintained and improved its high standards since the last inspection.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

Art

36. Attainment in art at the end of Key Stage 3 is above national expectations. During lessons the majority of pupils make good progress in the development of their practical skills. They develop skills in working in two and three dimensions, and in using a range of media, techniques and processes, such as paint, printmaking, textile weaving, pottery and computer generated imagery. As pupils move through the

school they also become more confident in reviewing and modifying their practical work as it progresses. At GCSE level the percentage of higher grades achieved by pupils is above the national figure. Over recent years girls have consistently achieved more of the highest grades than boys. At Key Stage 4 pupils develop the skill of planning their own work; investigating, researching and experimenting with materials to create imaginative and innovative responses. Individuality is expressed through the accomplished handling of imagery and form, which often shows original ideas and reflects the influence of other art works. Pupils learn to draw for different purposes but insufficient time is spent on developing the fundamental skill of recording from observation. The progressive use of ICT as a medium for the generation of original artwork and as a tool for research and investigation is a strength in the subject. For example pupils in Year 11 are able to manipulate digitised photographs of their three-dimensional models prior to using the images as stimulus for drawing and painting. Sketchbooks are beginning to be used well to record from observation, to make visual notes and to generate ideas. In all the lessons observed pupils behaved well, listened to their teachers and responded positively to the work set, showing interest and enjoyment. Pupils were keen to show and explain their work.

37. Teaching is good, being very well informed, engaging and effective. Pupils are fortunate in having a wide range of expertise available to them. Effective links are made between practical work and the application of associated knowledge. The planning shows how the development of pupils' conceptual and technical skills is structured, managed and monitored. The introductions to lessons are particularly effective, including where necessary, confident and proficient demonstrations of techniques, for example effective weaving techniques. During lessons all staff were seen intervening sensitively with concise and accurate verbal assessments of pupils' work which are effective in helping them to make progress. Teachers encourage pupils to evaluate and reflect critically on their own work, supporting this by displaying the work of other pupils and other artists, discussing and comparing the techniques and approaches used. However, more could be done to support pupils in expressing opinions about their own and others work helping them to move from colloquial to more formal language.
38. A positive feature is the strength of teamwork and the extent to which effective practice is shared between teachers with a focus on improving standards. The teaching time made available for the subject in Key Stage 3 is inadequate. This constrains the coverage of National Curriculum programmes of study and the teaching of specific skills, particularly in drawing. The accommodation made available for three dimensional studies and printmaking is too small. On occasions there is overcrowding, particularly when some of the large teaching groups in Key Stage 4 are present. The inadequate accommodation and lack of appropriate storage also constrains the scale and ambition of the work that can be attempted by pupils. Good efforts have been made to provide a visually stimulating learning environment. Pupils experience well planned visits to galleries in Key Stage 4. These opportunities and others in art make a significant contribution to pupils' cultural and multi-cultural education, but similar opportunities are less frequent at Key Stage 3. The Artist in Residence scheme funded by the Education Achievement Zone succeeds in stimulating pupils' interest and enriching the curriculum on offer.

Design and technology

39. At Key Stage 4 achievement overall is good. GCSE results have greatly improved over the last 3 years. In 1997 pupils were achieving in line with the national average but in 1998 and 1999 there was an impressive leap in attainment where more than 60% of pupils gained grades A* - C, which is well above the national and the school's average. In lessons in both Key Stages 3 and 4 the majority of pupils achieve standards higher than the national expectation, particularly in their making skills and technical knowledge.
40. Progress made in the majority of lessons and over time in both key stages is good. Most pupils apply

their knowledge and skills well. Quality skills of accuracy and precision, when measuring, modelling and confidently and competently handling a wide range of tools and materials, results in them developing good capability in their designing and making skills. They produce products of a high standard, of which the pupils are proud.

41. The vast majority of pupils' response to learning is good at both key stages. Most pupils willingly settle to their work and enjoy being actively involved in learning. Most of them work with sustained interest, commitment and concentration, listen well and answer knowledgeably to questions posed. Behaviour by most of them is very good and they work co-operatively well together.
42. The vast majority of teaching is good with over a quarter of the teaching observed being very good. Where it is very good, teachers give clear explanations, good demonstrations, ask probing, challenging questions delivered at a brisk pace in an interesting lively and manner. The department is well led and supported by a dedicated team of highly competent specialist teachers and technician, whose commitment to high achievement is at a premium.
43. The curriculum is well balanced in content providing stimulating, interesting, yet challenging tasks. Assessment overall is sound. Ongoing assessment at Key Stage 4 helps pupils gain good grades. At Key Stage 3 National Curriculum assessment is not fully addressed by the whole team in Years 7 and 8, and is therefore unsatisfactory. Day to day oral assessment is satisfactory.
44. The use of ICT has improved greatly since the last report. ICT enhances design and technology wherever possible. All pupils in Year 9 experience a module of computer control. Most pupils make efficient use of it to aid the quality of their GCSE coursework portfolios for drafting and redrafting, modelling, bar and pie charts, star profiles, research from the internet etc. The emphasis on the correct use of technical language is a key feature of the department and enhances pupils' literacy skills.

Geography

45. In GCSE examinations in 1998 a third of pupils achieved grades A* to C which is significantly below the national average of 52% in all maintained schools. It is also lower than the school results in the previous year when 40% of pupils attained the higher grades. Pupils achieving grades A* to G, 91%, is similar to national averages. Pupils do significantly less well in geography than they do in their other subjects. Results for boys are poorer than for girls. Results for 1999 are similar. Results do not show the trend of steady improvement in higher grades which is found nationally. This is a worse picture than at the last inspection when results were above the national average.
46. For pupils at the age of 14, teachers' National Curriculum assessment shows a trend of improvement over the last three years, with the percentage of pupils achieving or exceeding the level expected nationally rising from 48% in 1997 to 68% in 1999. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, show substantial improvement in geographical knowledge and understanding from Year 7 to Year 9. In Year 7 pupils use map work skills to give grid references, identify symbols and work out distance and compass direction. By Year 9 they describe and begin to offer explanations for geographical patterns and, for example, know that rapidly growing cities are mostly in the southern hemisphere. Higher attaining pupils know how to calculate population density. Pupils understand that physical factors and human response are related and that, for example, few people live in central Australia because of its desert environment.
47. At the age of 16 attainment in lessons is in line with that found nationally. In course work pupils select and make use of a wide range of geographical skills. Higher attaining pupils ask challenging questions

drawing on their previous learning, for example, questioning why solar energy does not feature in an energy data list for Britain. They show understanding of how factors like fuel sources can indicate levels of development in countries such as Brazil and Kenya and are able to explain how human responses will be different in response to this. Middle and lower attaining pupils are not sufficiently confident in understanding and using a wide enough range of geographical vocabulary and their work in consequence is not sufficiently accurate or detailed. Pupils do not routinely include named examples in their writing and this reduces their ability to gain credit when responding to examination questions.

48. Progress of pupils, including those with special educational needs, is good at Key Stage 3 and satisfactory at Key Stage 4. In most lessons progress of the higher attaining pupils is restricted by limiting tasks and lack of different work to suit different abilities. Where pupils in Year 7 use computer programs to assist learning their progress is particularly swift but there are too few such opportunities. In Year 9 inspection evidence shows development of skills in sketches, diagrams and general writing but written work is short and lacking in example and detail. There is increasing understanding of geographical concepts and a satisfactory amount of work is covered. Pupils consolidate their understanding of geographical terms like, >sparse= and >dense= in their study of population distribution and change. Year 10 increase their understanding of physical processes like differential erosion and learn the relevance of this in the local area at Worebury Hill and Weston Bay. Year 11 pupils revisit earlier work and revise topics like ground water and its relationship to sea level. They develop their understanding of what global warming is, its causes and the problems it may create. Pupils in Year 11 have not yet had experience of a full GCSE paper and are unsure of their progress.
49. In all lessons at both Key Stages 3 and 4, pupils= behaviour is good. They do their best to get on with their work. Care over presentation and neatness of handwriting and maps and diagrams is a good feature. Pupils work well together but do not have enough opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning by working independently of the teacher. Relationships are good between teachers and pupils and are characterised by respect and pleasantness.
50. All teaching is satisfactory or better and in half it is good or very good. A large number of suitably qualified or experienced teachers contribute to geography teaching. Teachers have the subject knowledge needed to teach schemes of work effectively. Except where teaching is very good, there is lack of rigour and higher level expectations. Teachers do not make enough use of learning materials suited to pupils at different attainment levels so lower attaining pupils can find work too difficult and higher attaining pupils are not challenged to raise the standard of their work. Lessons are not planned with sufficiently varied activities. Pupils are managed well, there is good organisation and control and this ensures that pupils spend their time concentrating on their work. There is not enough written comment on homework or class work which tells pupils what they can do to make their work better. Teachers do not make sufficient use of National Curriculum levels in assessing attainment. Where time targets are set this quickens pupils work and is a good feature which improves progress. At Key Stage 3 teachers and pupils do not routinely use sufficient subject vocabulary in oral exchanges. The inclusion of key vocabulary in all displays in all teaching rooms is a good feature and this raises standards as well as creating a stimulating geographical environment. Access to the curriculum for those with special educational needs is helped by staff awareness of those needs and by the effective individual support pupils receive in lessons from the teacher and, where necessary, from a learning support assistant.
51. Schemes of work are being thoroughly revised and these are sound and ensure that pupils in all classes are moved forward through their work in a planned way. Fieldwork and enquiry opportunities are included for all years and this is a good feature. Management of the department is not sufficiently

focused on the raising of achievement, particularly at GCSE. There are not adequate arrangements to routinely examine teacher and pupils' work or relate these to achievement targets. The department makes some use of ICT in its teaching but there is not yet enough of this.

History

52. Attainment in history at the end of Key Stage 3 is in line with that expected of pupils of similar age nationally. The schools' own end of Year 9 assessment grades were higher but this was not reflected in the work observed during the inspection.
53. At GCSE results are below the average for schools with a similar intake of pupils. In 1998 44.7% of the candidates achieved grades A* to C and boys' results were low at 33.3%. This was a marked decline in results from 1997. However in 1999 the results improved slightly, in that 45.8% were at A* to C and with five pupils being awarded A* or A. Some pupils are now entered for the short course or for the Certificate of Achievement. In 1999, of the eleven pupils entered for this, five were at distinction grade and six at merit. Since the last inspection there has been a drop in standards of attainment at Key Stage 4.
54. Pupils in Year 7 show that they have a understanding of change over time and are able to use and evaluate a range of sources to find out about life in the Roman fort at Caerleon. By Year 9 they are able to find out about the impact of modern war fought between 1914 and 1918 by reading contemporary commentaries on its causes and its effect on the soldiers on the Western Front. Pupils acquire a satisfactory understanding of the causes of change by studying the key events and developments in history such as the Reformation and the Civil War in England and the policies of Tudor and Stuart monarchs. In Year 9 they are able to understand the causes and results of the major developments of this century including the two world wars. Study of life in the trenches during the First World War enables them to empathise with the experience of people in the past. Written work in all year groups is often well presented and the history rooms are used for impressive displays of pupils' work which includes letters, posters and newspaper accounts. Classroom displays provided evidence of pupils' skills in word processing and of the high standard of their work in illustration and creative writing. However the literacy skills of some pupils are poorly developed and many have difficulties with specific vocabulary. Pupils often have difficulty in remembering key events or why a particular source of evidence is so important. Their recall skills are limited and this has an impact on their knowledge and understanding.
55. Work is satisfactory in GCSE classes with many pupils showing that they have both a detailed knowledge of the period that they are studying and the high level of skills in essay and document work which will help them to succeed. Pupils answer and ask questions with confidence and in doing so they often show a good level of knowledge and understanding. Most pupils are able to base their ideas and judgements on a careful study of extracts and source material. In Year 10 the majority are able to cope well with the complex factors that led to the success of Lenin in securing power in Russia in 1917. By the end of the GCSE course they are able to complete course work of an appropriate quality, for example on aspects of life in England during the Blitz and to answer source based questions on aspects of modern world history. However, many pupils have poor recall of important facts and they are not able to answer questions at an appropriate level. Some have not completed essential course work.
56. The majority of pupils make good progress. Progress in all lessons observed was at least satisfactory and sometimes good or very good. The consistent use of homework in all year groups contributes to this as does the effective support for pupils with special educational needs. This support is provided either in special groups as in Year 7 or in class. However support is not available in all classes and the majority

of classes are not set by ability. In some of these only the average pupils were making good progress because there was insufficient support for those of lower ability or with special educational needs and insufficient challenge for the most able. Younger pupils were observed making good progress in the use of extracts and in the development of skills in research and the evaluation of evidence. They also progress well in the understanding of cause and effect, for example when considering the clash between Charles 1 and the Presbyterians in Scotland.

57. The majority of those who choose to take the subject at GCSE make good progress in the acquisition of the knowledge content of the course and in developing skills in answering questions and completing course work.
58. Observation in the classrooms and discussions with pupils showed that the majority of pupils enjoy their work in history. An increasing number of pupils are choosing to study the subject at GCSE and of these the majority are hard working and well motivated. Younger pupils often take great pride in their work which is generally very well presented and very effectively displayed by the teaching staff. They enjoy the variety of written activities which include imaginative writing as well as factual reporting. All pupils have the opportunity to go on visits to historic sites and museums and these are much enjoyed. In examination classes most pupils respond well to the intellectual challenge of the subject and show the ability to sympathise with people in the past while also evaluating evidence about issues such as the use of propaganda films to maintain morale during the last war. Pupils are encouraged to respect the views of people who lived long ago and to understand that, had they themselves been faced with the same problems, for example personal hygiene in Roman times, they might have responded in the same way.
59. The quality of teaching observed was always sound and sometimes good, with almost a fifth being judged very good. Teachers are using a variety of approaches to teaching and learning and they are setting a variety of tasks which make a valuable contribution to imaginative writing and to numeracy. However in some classes the pattern of lessons is very predictable and there is too much reliance on whole class teaching and the content of the text book. Pupil presentations and role play are used to increase the level of understanding of pupils and the department makes good use of artefacts from the past. All the specialist teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the subject and they are able to use video and overhead projectors very effectively. The last inspection found that the use of computers was effective. However at present the department does not use ICT in the classroom although pupils are encouraged to use it at home or in the library. Non- specialist teachers sometimes lack the knowledge or confidence to teach the subject well. In Key Stage 3 classes the tasks, variety of resources and classroom activities do not always challenge the most able or meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties. Although the teaching of history makes a good contribution to the social, moral and cultural education of pupils, its potential for the development of literacy skills has not been fully developed. In many classes all pupils, whatever their potential level of attainment are using the same resources and attempting the same task. Work is marked frequently and assessment is used effectively particularly in the GCSE course. In examination classes the very careful monitoring of work makes a considerable contribution to pupil progress and to the decision as to whether individuals should be entered for the GCSE or the Certificate of Achievement.
60. The history department is well run and efficiently managed. The subject is the responsibility of an experienced teacher who has developed a strong team ethos in the department. This ensures that resources and assessment procedures are effectively used to ensure progression and continuity. The high quality of available resources and of displays, the detailed schemes of work and the quality of experience provided for pupils through interesting field work are all indications of the successful management of the department.

Information and communication technology (ICT)

61. Attainment in ICT at the end of Key Stage 3 is well above expected levels, a considerable improvement over last year when attainment was broadly average. Pupils are making good progress, particularly with their coursework for the GCSE short course in ICT, which they begin in the last term of Year 9. Examples of work prepared for projects to promote a hotel show a good standard of word processing and desk top publishing skills.
62. Results of the GCSE short course, now taken by all pupils in Year 10, are above average, an improvement over last year when results were well below average. Very good examples of the progress made are seen in well-designed leaflets, posters and letters and multi-media presentations prepared for coursework. They cover a wide range of topics such as fox hunting and vivisection requiring complex searches and downloading of information from the Internet.
63. The GCSE full course results in 1998, taken only by more able pupils, were well above the national average. Pupils of all abilities may now enter and as a result overall attainment in 1999 was lower. It is in line with national averages for grades A* to C and above average for grades A to G. However, the pupils currently studying for GCSE are making at least sound and frequently good progress. For example, the pupils are able perform complex searches of databases they have created and copy tables into word processors and spreadsheets to produce reports and charts at above average standards.
64. The pupils' attitudes are good. Pupils of all ages generally work well together when using computers. Lower-attaining pupils are often motivated to achieve higher standards when using ICT. Most pupils are independent users of word processing and this makes a valuable contribution to the development of reading and writing skills. Others take advantage of further opportunities to build on their ICT experiences before and after school and at lunchtime.
65. The quality of teaching of ICT was good in Key Stage 3. It was at least sound, and often good or very good, in the GCSE short and full courses. In the best lessons the pace was brisk, expectations high and teachers shared their enthusiasm for the subject. The teachers know their subject well. With some subjects across the curriculum there is good teaching using ICT, such as English, music, technology and modern languages. In other subjects the amount of provision is very patchy.
66. The department is well led and efficiently organised by the ICT Co-ordinator and the management style promotes good teamwork. The Network Manager has carefully planned a programme of upgrading the computer networks, providing a secure, reliable environment for all users. Provision of staff training is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' work with ICT across the curriculum. While training is provided upon request, there is no structured programme of in-service training, nor arrangements to monitor its impact.
67. Since the last inspection, the teaching of ICT has been carefully revised. The Key Stage 3 curriculum is a particular strength in laying foundations for the subject throughout the school. The introduction of the GCSE short course for all pupils in Year 10 ensures full coverage at Key Stage 4, and all pupils can opt for the

GCSE full course to be taken in Year 11.

68. There has been considerable investment in ICT. The school now has 130 computers, including a well designed computer department containing 40 computers in two rooms and further computers distributed around the school. There is a good range of equipment including scanners, CD-ROMs, laser and colour printers and Internet access. Powerful, but easy to use software packages promote high standards of work. However, computer equipment in some departments is ageing and a number of departments lack sufficient hardware or software to ensure full access to ICT.
69. These improvements are leading to a greater use of ICT by pupils and staff throughout the school, enhancing both learning and teaching.

Modern foreign languages

70. The percentage of pupils gaining GCSE grades A*-C in French in 1999 was 39%, well below national figures and below the figure for other subjects in the school. This percentage has, however, risen from 33% in 1998 and 25% in 1997. Figures for boys have improved more dramatically (31% in 1999, 22% in 1998, 13% in 1997), and the difference between boys and girls is now close to the national average. Figures for grades A*-G were 100% in 1998 and 1999. A*-C grades for the small numbers of candidates in German were 60% in 1997, 77% in 1998 and 73% in 1999.
71. French and German are now taught equally as first languages in all years; the allocation is by Houses in Year 7. Levels of attainment at the end of both Key Stage 3 and 4 suggest that the combined A*-C rate will continue to improve, though perhaps by smaller percentages over time. At both key stages little formal reading comprehension was seen during the inspection, but past GCSE scores suggest that this skill receives due attention. Pupils enjoy listening comprehension tests and do them carefully, with results in line with their abilities. French and German spoken by teachers is well adjusted to the needs of different abilities and usually well understood. Writing has a high priority. Pupils of all abilities produce written work regularly and workbooks are mostly neat and tidy. Work is often limited to copying, but more demanding work is done by higher sets. Pupils' use of spoken language is weak at all levels. They respond to questions from teachers and do simple pair work quite well, but speaking skills are not well developed and there is little use of French or German in authentic conversation.
72. Progress at Key Stage 4 is satisfactory over time. It was less than satisfactory in two out of eight lessons observed during the inspection, when disruptive behaviour, mostly by boys, meant that the objectives of the lesson were not achieved. At Key Stage 3 pupils of all abilities are progressing satisfactorily over time. Progress was satisfactory or better in all lessons observed except one; here again poor behaviour, mostly by boys, was a disruptive factor. Pupils with special educational needs receive careful and caring help from class teachers and support staff.
73. Relations between pupils and teachers are in general good or very good. Language classrooms are attractively decorated with posters, examples of pupils' work and a profusion of other aids to written work. Nearly all pupils at both key stages respond favourably to this learning environment, with little evidence now of the poor attitudes to language learning experienced in recent years; indeed, in discussions with inspectors, pupils mentioned French or German as a subject particularly enjoyed. There is a good atmosphere in classes and most pupils work co-operatively.
74. The quality of teaching varies, with good features offset by less successful aspects. Teaching was good or very good in seven of sixteen lessons observed, and satisfactory in six; it was unsatisfactory only in

three lessons affected by poor behaviour. All teachers are well qualified and have a good command of French and German. Lessons are carefully planned and prepared, with objectives usually well adjusted to the abilities of pupils. In the best lessons a variety of activities provides pace and momentum and helps to maintain pupils' interest, involvement and attention. In some others the pace is too slow, there is too little variety, and pupils are not sufficiently challenged to be actively involved throughout sixty minutes. At all levels pupils' spoken contributions are limited, with too much input from teachers and insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop speaking skills. Teachers use the target language effectively but there is still too much English used in the classroom from both teachers and pupils.

75. The department is well organised and ably led by a very hard working Head of Department. She is well supported by her colleagues and by the French and German Assistants, both of whom have stayed for a second year at the school. There are detailed and informative records of pupils' progress and potential. The departmental handbook includes excellent and comprehensive schemes of work. Good use is made of a variety of resources for learning. A recently acquired suite of computers is used effectively in lessons and there are exciting plans for further use in the future.

Music

76. The standards of attainment in music are a little above those expected nationally at the end of Key Stage 3. By the end of Key Stage 4 pupils attain at levels firmly above the national average, which is borne out by examination results in recent years. However, the overall attainment at the end of Year 11 by pupils who also have instrumental lessons and who take part in one or more of the schools' many orchestras, bands and choirs is well above the national average. This is clearly illustrated by the compact disc 'A Worle School's World of Music', and the audio tape 'A Rutter's Requiem' recently produced for the commercial market, and the school's forthcoming performance at the Colston Hall.
77. Music and drama lessons are alternated in Year 9, which is an unhelpful arrangement for pupils at the end of a key stage, when they are expected to make considered option choices for their Key Stage 4 work. Nevertheless, by the end of Key Stage 3 pupils have a thorough and secure knowledge of a wide range of musical styles, and good skills in tempo, pitch, harmony and melody. In Key Stage 4 they listen to a variety of music, and record what they hear in a Listening File. They become well acquainted with traditional, classical and popular styles. During the inspection an accomplished illustration of the original gravel-voiced Blues singing style was given by a Year 10 pupil, to the great delight of her teacher and classmates. Pupils throughout the school show a consistent improvement in their critical listening ability, and increasing skill in composition. They perform these to their classmates with pleasure and panache.
78. All pupils make good progress, and this is often very good in Key Stage 4. They use the skills and knowledge which they already have, in order to understand new techniques, and styles within the subject. In Key Stage 4 their secure and polished range of skills and experiences means that progress usually becomes more rapid.
79. The pupils show very positive attitudes to their music lessons. They arrive promptly, eager to acquire new skills and knowledge. They thoroughly enjoy their lessons. When they work in pairs or small groups, they show very high levels of co-operation, generosity of spirit, and real enthusiasm. Very often at Key Stage 4 they set their own targets for the lesson, and work conscientiously towards them.
80. All rehearsals of the orchestras, bands and choirs take place outside the normal school day. That at least half of these well-attended practices take place during the hour before school is a measure of the pupils' enthusiasm for, and commitment to, their musical development.

81. The quality of teaching is very good overall, sometimes outstanding. There is excellent subject knowledge in the department, which includes the twelve peripatetic music tutors, and the very valuable music technologist. Class lessons are well planned, well-controlled, and contain the crucial element of disciplined inspiration.
82. The standards of attainment are directly dependent on the very well planned curriculum and on very good teaching in each lesson. Assessment tasks, and their levels are clearly indicated to pupils, so that they know precisely what they have to do. Pupils have a great deal of responsibility. Older pupils take responsibility for aspects of training younger ones - the Year 7 special choir was well-trained by a Year 11 pupil during the inspection. They have recently helped with music lessons in the neighbouring primary school.
83. The extra curricular music widens pupils' experiences to an unusually high degree, while maintaining the school's strong choral tradition. It makes an excellent contribution to the standards of musical attainment and to the cultural life of the school.
84. Attainment overall is better than recorded in the last report. The management of the department is now excellent. The standard of live performance by extra curricular groups has been raised even higher since that time. The value added by the work of this department is impressive.

Religious education

85. Overall, standards in religious education at Key Stage 3 are broadly in line with national expectations. A minority of pupils are achieving above these expectations where the teaching is consistently good and a small percentage of pupils, predominantly disaffected boys, are under achieving.
86. At Key Stage 4, standards are good. For the GCSE full course, offered as an optional subject, standards of attainment are above national expectations with 78% achieving A*-C passes and 100% achieving A*-G passes in 1999. However, it is important to note that numbers were small, nine pupils were entered out of a possible twelve candidates. In the previous year, a single candidate was entered gaining an A* pass as a result of no timetabled provision but self supported study. With such low entries it is difficult to make comparisons with in house trends, local or national data.
87. The GCSE short course is now compulsory for all Key Stage 4 pupils, with Year 11 pupils being examined for the first time in the year 2000. Overall, standards appear to be in line with national expectations. However, a minority of pupils, predominantly boys, is currently failing to achieve standards commensurate with their abilities.
88. Curriculum time at Key Stage 3 is 4%, slightly below national recommendations. At Key Stage 4 the short course is in line with national recommendations as is the full course GCSE option which receives 10% of curriculum time. The school has made progress since the previous inspection when there was no core provision reported at Key Stage 4. The GCSE short course is now compulsory for Years 10 and 11. Currently there is some repetition and overlap for those following the full GCSE option course. Those pupils achieving Grade 5 and above in music may be excused from the compulsory short course, with parental consent, for music self supported study. Where numbers prove to be unviable for the full course, the department has offered self supported study time, as happened in 1998, in order to maintain interest in religious education as a worthwhile examination subject.
89. The schemes of work for Key Stage 3 are satisfactory and adequately reflect the North Somerset agreed syllabus for religious education. At Key Stage 4 the schemes of work are also satisfactory reflecting the

examination syllabus. There is a need to review the schemes of work and evaluate their effectiveness in the light of recent developments and staffing changes.

90. The quality of teaching is satisfactory or good in the majority of lessons across Key Stage 3 and satisfactory or good in most lessons at Key Stage 4, particularly in the teaching of the full course. All staff are secure in their knowledge and understanding of the subject and aim to inspire their pupils with confidence and self esteem.
91. Lessons are planned with clear objectives in mind. They begin promptly and in the best there was evidence of pace and rigour throughout the lessons.
92. Behaviour is generally satisfactory. Where there is poor behaviour the authority of the teacher is challenged and progress hindered. Where discipline is good, pupils show evidence of being able to express themselves coherently, being able to listen to each others= arguments and demonstrate a tolerance and understanding for each others= points of view.
93. Staff encourage pupils to participate actively in lessons following the school=s emphasis upon >accelerated learning= techniques. Pupils are willing to contribute orally to lessons, either within a whole class or small group situation. However, at both key stages some pupils do not appreciate the value of >listening= as a useful skill in the learning process.
94. Homework is set regularly in line with school policy and is marked showing positive comments. Pupils= work at Key Stage 3 show no grades or levels of attainment although at Key Stage 4 pupils= work is marked in line with coursework requirements. Pupils appreciate knowing where they are in terms of attainment and spoke positively about receiving reports about their progress and merits for their good work and best efforts. At best, pupils are encouraged to set themselves targets and to display >best= work. This is currently in operation in Year 7 and the department is aware of the benefits of target setting and the need to develop this practice across all year groups.
95. Homework is used effectively as a tool for developing pupils= individual skills, interests and abilities. Higher attaining pupils in particular, use this as an opportunity to extend their knowledge and develop their skills, particularly in ICT, where the department lacks the necessary resources. However, staff are exploring strategies for developing the use of ICT and appreciate its potential. The department makes use of the >Learning Resource Centre= where there is a computer network and has access to various multi media packages as well as the Internet. This use is very limited as the department possesses no ICT hardware of its own.
96. The department is adequately stocked with a wide variety of artefacts and resources such as video recordings and slides which support pupils in their learning. The specialist base rooms also contain attractive, colourful displays which are used by the staff to develop their pupils= understanding of and enjoyment for the subject.
97. The department is currently managed by an >acting= Head of Department who is working hard to run the department but she also has the additional responsibility as Head of House. This follows the long term sickness of the current postholder. There are two other full time specialists, but both of them are newly qualified teachers and require support. The department is supported by a member of the senior management team. Senior staff are aware of the issues to be tackled in the religious education department if standards are to be improved.

98. Progress since the previous report have been good with religious education offered at Key Stage 4 as a compulsory short course as well as an optional full course, with the influence of >accelerated learning= strategies and ICT on teaching and learning.

Physical education

99. Attainment in physical education is above the national expectations at the end of both key stages and some pupils demonstrate standards and progress well above those expected. In all the years pupils are selected for local and regional teams, the most recent during the week of the inspection was the selection of boys and girls for the local cross country squad following local trials. Standards seen in lessons were always appropriate and in about a third of the lessons were above average. In dance lessons the standards were always above average and sometimes well above. Pupils take a number of GCSE courses, both Physical Education and Performing Arts (Dance). In GCSE Physical Education examinations the percentage of students achieving Grades A*-C has been about the national average other than in 1998 when it was above the national figure. In Performing Arts (Dance) at GCSE the results between 1995 and 1997 were above the national average but were below in 1998 and well below in 1999.
100. In many Key Stage 3 lessons pupils are grouped by their ability in the subject. Overall pupils achieved standards which were above the national expectations in areas such as gymnastics and badminton. Pupils in the lower sets achieved standards in line with those expected nationally and those identified as having greater ability in this area achieved standards above those expected. Above average standards in games were confirmed by the performance of pupils in inter-House teams such as for football. Pupils in Year 7 generally demonstrated standards in line with those expected nationally. These standards were observed in a racquet skills lessons for a mixed gender group and in a girls= netball lesson. The progress overall of the pupils in Key Stage 3 is good. Both boys and girls showed their aptitude for gymnastics in their good progress from Year 7 to Year 8 in their standards of performance, including good starting and finishing positions and devising original sequences including balances, rolls and jumps. Pupils incorporated suggestions made by their fellow pupils into their performances and standards improved. Standards above average were also demonstrated in the Gym Club, a lunchtime activity attended by 31 pupils from Key Stage 3.
101. In Key Stage 4 pupils maintain standards which overall are above the national expectation Above average standards were seen in dance, aerobics and rugby. Year 10 boys showed good passing and handling skills in a rugby lesson. They showed good progress in their skills in the ruck and the maul and their knowledge of the rules of the game. Pupils who were asked to referee demonstrated that they could use this knowledge well to control a game of their peers. Year 10 girls taking a health related fitness module had made good progress in their knowledge and understanding of physiology and during the lesson showed a 50% improvement in performance in their second round of activities. Year 11 pupils on recreational games made good progress with their accuracy and techniques in ten-pin bowling and translated these skills into high scores when playing team games. In aerobics Year 11 students showed a good understanding of preparation and recovery and co-ordination and a good knowledge of anatomy when suggesting stretching routines. This showed good progress in building on the skills of the earlier key stage when attempting new activities. In the GCSE Physical Education groups standards achieved were always appropriate and in line with the expectations of the syllabus. In Year 11 Performing Arts (Dance) standards above and sometimes well above those expected were observed and pupils had made good and sometimes very good progress in planning their choreography for individual or group performance. In GCSE Physical Education most pupils had made appropriate progress in gaining knowledge and understanding of factors affecting participation in sporting activities.

102. The pupils respond well and often very well to their lessons and to the wide range of extra-curricular activities. There is a very good take-up to the many opportunities offered to them. Older pupils are able to show good initiative and a positive response to opportunities to exercise responsibility as, for example, in their roles in running the inter-House competitions and school teams. In many situations they persevere well with the strenuous activities offered to them, for example in the rugby and health related fitness. They work well in pairs and small groups and games are played with appropriate sporting behaviour. They usually listen carefully to the teachers' inputs and also to the observations and comments of their fellow pupils. The good quality of pupils' learning has been maintained and in some lessons improved upon since the last inspection.
103. The quality of teaching is good. In lessons observed the quality of teaching was always satisfactory and in over two thirds it was good and sometimes very good and this is an improvement on the quality reported in the last inspection. The staff have a very good knowledge of their subject and their expectations are high in terms of both performance and attitudes. In the best lessons teachers make very clear to the pupils their intentions as to what the students will learn. This was seen to particularly good effect in the rugby session, where the criteria for good evaluations of the performance of others including the referee were made very clear, and in dance lessons, where the requirements to attain high grades were made explicit and followed up in individual coaching. Pupils warm up well for the different activities and teachers plan a range of activities to challenge the pupils. There are some inconsistencies in the incorporation of warm-down opportunities at the end of sessions. While most of the classes are grouped by ability, there is insufficient emphasis on the provision of strategies to challenge the different groupings within those lessons.. Pupils are assessed at the end of each module. This has developed well since the last inspection but there is insufficient evidence of consistent on-going assessment informing the teachers' planning of different activities within sessions or for future sessions. Some very good examples of on-going assessment were seen, as in the Year 7 netball lesson, where the teacher used it to change the activity and put in an extension when pupils could turn in mid-air rather than just pivot on the ground. Teachers have established good and sometimes very good relationships with their groups and this contributes positively to the establishment of a good quality learning environment where pupils take great pleasure in performing to high standards. The staff give very freely of their time to a very wide range of sporting activities outside lessons and bring the same high expectations of performance and attitude to these sessions as they do to lessons during the school day. In this they contribute strongly to the ethos of the school and to pupils' social and moral development.
104. The dance curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to extend their cultural dimension, including the appreciation of the diversity and richness of other cultures. Less evident is the subject's contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Teachers do plan the use of technical vocabulary well but other than this the subject's contribution to the whole school initiatives on literacy, numeracy and the use of ICT is less evident.
105. The National Curriculum requirements are met in physical education and greater opportunities are provided for pupils to evaluate their own and the performance of others in the light of the emphasis on this aspect in the subject's development plan.
106. The indoor accommodation available is good and the school do use the local leisure centre to extend pupils' opportunities in Year 11. Staff make very good use of the equipment available. The external facilities are less impressive. While there are extensive playing fields which are well used, the all weather surface is reaching the end of its life expectancy and the netball courts are uneven and are a health and safety risk. There is a footpath through the school grounds and the school has to take enormous steps to keep the facilities free from dog excrement and to reduce the amount of vandalism.

Travel and Tourism

107. The school has been entering pupils for GCSE travel and tourism since 1997. In each year the great majority of those entered have been able to meet course requirements in that they are awarded at least A* -G. Recent results show that pupils do better than the national average and better than those entered from other local schools. They also exceed their own predicted grades. In 1997 of thirty two pupils entered 56% were at A* -C. In 1998 of the 20 pupils entered 36% achieved A* -C. In 1999 of eleven pupils entered 91% were at A*-C and of these 27% were at grade A.
108. Attainment observed in lessons was in line with what was expected. Currently more pupils have chosen to take the subject in Years 10 and 11 as it is a popular area of study and it is the only vocational course offered in the school at GCSE. The potential attainment of pupils varies considerably and many pupils will be entered for the foundation level examination. Pupils in Year 10 are able to consider the advantages and disadvantages of tourism in different areas for example in the National Parks. They also have the ability to evaluate different forms of publicity material. In Year 11 they are able to use complex data to examine the tourism potential of particular areas - for example the city of Edinburgh.
109. Progress is good for all pupils including those with special educational needs. It is good in that pupils acquire a detailed knowledge of the leisure and tourism industry and new skills in a business related course. They all complete a period of work experience and then write a piece of course work related to it. This aspect of the course contributes to progress in skills in communication. Pupils also develop real knowledge of working conditions and opportunities within the industry. Work experience placements are very varied and include work in travel agencies, hotels, the local airport and in the tourist destination of Tenerife. Pupils enjoy their work in travel and tourism and most work hard in order to produce good quality course work. A number of pupils in Year 11 have decided to study the subject at a higher level in local colleges. However, there are some pupils who do not work hard or complete work on time and last year some pupils could not be entered for the examination for this reason.
110. Teaching observed was judged to be satisfactory and was often better. The staff who teach travel and tourism are all qualified in geography and have a good knowledge both of the subject content and of the skills required by the pupils. Very good links have been established with leisure and tourism centres in the local area, including a sea life centre and a theatre. The department makes good use of Weston-super-Mare and other local attractions such as Cheddar as examples of tourist destinations. Resources have been well developed and they are well used and assessment and other documentation is effectively managed.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

111. The team consisted of 14 inspectors. During the inspection 213 lessons or part lessons were observed. Time spent observing classes, sampling pupils' work and talking to pupils amounted to over 194 hours. Discussions were held with pupils within lessons, as appropriate, and at break and at lunch times. Inspectors observed assemblies, registrations, the conduct at break times, lunch arrangements and the arrival and dispersal of pupils at the beginning and end of the school day. A sample of pupils of all abilities from all years discussed their work with inspectors and present and past work was examined as part of the specific planning of the inspection. Displays and photographs were included in the evidence gathered.
112. All teachers were observed teaching, some on many occasions. Support and peripatetic staff were observed. Planned interviews were held with the Chairman and members of the Governing Body, the Headteacher, teaching and non-teaching staff.
113. The school documentation was scrutinised. This included the school prospectus, policies, schemes of work, curriculum planning and assessment information, the School Development Plan and the budget, minutes of meetings and the governors' annual report to parents, college reports and other examples of written communication with parents, attendance registers and SEN documentation.
114. The Registered Inspector held a meeting attended by 21 parents about two weeks before the inspection and their views were considered by the team. The team also considered 181 replies in response to the parental questionnaire.

DATA AND INDICATORS

Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
Y7- Y11	1274	41	246	130

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (Y7 B Y11)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	72.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.5

Education support staff (Y7 B Y11)

Total number of education support staff	19
Total aggregate hours worked each week	481.5

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes:	72.9
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Average teaching group size:

KS3	26.4
KS4	22.5

Financial data

Financial year:	1998/99
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Total Income	2,748,750
Total Expenditure	2,750,279
Expenditure per pupil	2,267
Balance brought forward from previous year	98,605
Balance carried forward to next year	97,076

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

1274

Number of questionnaires returned:

181

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	13.3	62.4	13.8	8.3	2.2
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	35.4	55.2	5.5	3.3	0.6
The school handles complaints from parents well	18.8	45.3	29.3	5.0	1.7
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	23.2	59.7	9.9	6.6	0.6
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	24.9	50.8	14.4	8.3	1.7
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	24.9	61.9	6.6	4.4	2.2
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	29.8	56.9	10.5	2.8	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	21.0	65.7	4.4	6.1	2.8
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	19.9	58.6	13.3	6.6	1.7
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	16.6	58.0	16.6	6.1	2.8
My child(ren) like(s) school	30.4	52.5	12.2	2.8	2.2

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