

INSPECTION REPORT

Chichester High School for Boys
Chichester

West Sussex

126062

Headteacher : Ms. D. Dockrell

Reporting inspector: Mr. David Williams
4288

Dates of inspection: 15th – 19th November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 708276

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school :	Comprehensive
Type of control :	County
Age range of students :	11 - 18
Gender of students :	Boys
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Appropriate authority :	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors :	Mr. R. Plowman
Date of previous inspection :	21st- 26th May1995

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Pauline Latham	History	Teaching Leadership and management
John Price	Design & technology	Accommodation and learning resources
Brin Martin	Physical education	Staffing
Sylvia Kopecek	Art	Key Stage 4 The Sixth Form
Peggy Harris	Special educational needs Equal opportunities	Special educational needs assessment
Roger Waddingham	Science	Curriculum and assessment
Anne Feltham	Modern foreign languages	Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Jeff Lord	Geography	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development
Nick Roberts	Information technology Business education and economics GNVQ	
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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- 1 The headteacher has a clear vision for the way in which the school should develop.
- 2 Standards are high in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 3.
- 3 Standards are above national averages in GCSE examinations and students do particularly well in art, English literature, geography, geology, graphics and information technology.
- 4 Students make good progress in the Sixth Form.
- 5 When opportunities are presented, students show very good initiative, maturity and they work well independently.
- 6 Teaching in the Sixth Form is very good.
- 7 The curriculum is enhanced by vocational courses and good flexibility in the Joint Sixth Form arrangements with Chichester High School for Girls.
- 8 There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities with outstanding opportunities for students to take part in sport, where very high standards are achieved.
- 9 Good quality information about the school is provided for parents.

Where the school has weaknesses

- X. Although standards achieved in GCSE examinations in 1999 were above national averages, students made less progress than expected in relation to their previous achievements in the tests at the end of Key Stage 3.
- XI. Students' achievements in food technology and religious education are below national expectations; in science and food technology in Key Stage 4 and modern foreign languages in Key Stages 3 and 4, teaching is unsatisfactory and students do not make enough progress.
- XII. Statutory requirements are not met for collective worship or for religious education in Key Stage 4 and the Sixth Form.
- XIII. The school's provision for spiritual development is unsatisfactory.
- XIV. A significant minority of students do not behave well enough in some lessons and their behaviour prevents them and other students from making enough progress.
- XV. Tutor time and other lessons do not provide sufficient academic and pastoral support and guidance for students or develop sufficient strategies for helping them to think and work independently.
- XVI. The school does not monitor systematically the quality of teaching and learning in order to raise standards of achievement.

The school has many strengths and a number of weaknesses which have already been identified by the school and are being addressed. 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 students.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, standards achieved in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 3 have risen. In GCSE examinations, standards have consistently been above the national average, but have not risen at a time when

national standards are rising. In the Sixth Form, attainment has been above national averages other than in 1999 when results were broadly in line with national averages. Students who sat the examinations in 1999 made good progress in relation to their previous GCSE results. Since the last inspection, the school has made satisfactory progress in responding to the issues raised, despite a slow start in some areas. It has improved the quality of teaching, although there is room for further improvement. The balance of funding between staffing and resources has been improved and the school day has been reorganised. The provision for creative and expressive subjects has been broadened although there are still some inconsistencies in time allocations and access to some arts subjects. Although it still does not meet statutory requirements, the school has significantly improved provision for collective worship. The school does not provide well enough for religious education. Good progress has been made in developing greater awareness of the needs of students with special educational needs. The headteacher has identified accurately where the school has weaknesses and, in conjunction with the senior management team, is putting effective strategies in place to deal with them. The school, therefore, has good capacity for improvement in the future.

Standards in subjects

The following table shows standards achieved by 14, 16 and 18 year olds in national tests, GCSE and A/AS-level examinations in 1999:

Performance in:	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Quality	Key
Key Stage 3 Tests	A	B	Well above average	A
GCSE Examinations	B	D	Above average	B
A/AS – levels	C		Average	C
			Below average	D
			Well below average	E

Results in Key Stage 3 tests were above the national average for all students in English and mathematics and well above in science. In English, results were well above those achieved nationally by boys.

In GCSE, results were above average for boys and girls in all schools nationally and well above the average for boys nationally. They were below the average for similar schools. Results in 1999 were not as good as might have been expected when compared with students’ achievements in their Key Stage 3 tests. The strongest subjects in GCSE were English Literature, art, graphics, geography, geology and information technology, where results were well above national averages. Results in mathematics, French, music and physical education were above average. The weakest subjects were business studies, food technology, drama, single science and German where results were below average. Standards seen during the inspection were better in business studies and drama than had previously been indicated by GCSE examinations.

At A level, results are higher than those predicted from students’ GCSE results and students make good progress in the Sixth Form. Results were particularly high in art, business studies, English, graphics, history, politics and physics. Standards in the Joint Sixth Form in the 1999 A level results were above average. Standards in vocational courses were also above national averages.

Quality of teaching

	Overall quality	Most effective in:	Least effective in:
Years 7-9	Satisfactory	Graphics, history,	Modern foreign

Years 10-11	Satisfactory	mathematics. Art, drama, geography, graphics, history, leisure and tourism, music.	languages Food technology, modern foreign languages, science.
Sixth form	Very good	Design and technology, English, graphics, history, leisure and tourism.	
English	Satisfactory		
Mathematics	Good		

The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Teaching was satisfactory or better in 89 per cent of lessons; in 20 per cent it was very good or excellent. Teaching was unsatisfactory in 11 per cent of lessons. There was no unsatisfactory teaching in the Sixth Form where almost all of the teaching was good or better and over a third was very good or excellent.

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	Satisfactory in most cases, but in a few lessons, behaviour is unsatisfactory. In these lessons, the progress made by students is unsatisfactory.
Attendance	Students' attendance is satisfactory. There is slightly less absence than the national average.
Ethos*	Students' attitudes to work are satisfactory although, in a minority of cases, students do not have positive attitudes to work. Relationships are good in most cases, but, in a few cases are unsatisfactory. The headteacher and staff are committed to achieving high standards.
Leadership and management	There is a strong and clear sense of direction and vision from the headteacher who is supported well by governors, senior managers and other staff. Although there are examples of good practice, there is no systematic monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms in order to improve standards.
Curriculum	This is satisfactory overall although insufficient time is allocated for religious education across the school and for the arts in Key Stage 3. GNVQ courses effectively broaden the curriculum in Key Stage 4 and the Sixth Form. The Sixth Form curriculum is good overall and is further enhanced by the Joint Sixth Form provision.
Special educational needs	There is good management and good specialist support. Students make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Relationships between students and specialist staff are very good.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Moral, social and cultural provision are sound; spiritual provision is unsatisfactory.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	These are satisfactory overall. Staff are well-qualified and, although the accommodation and resources have some limitations, they are adequate overall.
Value for money	The school provides satisfactory value for money. The school adds the most value in the Sixth Form, when students make good progress in their studies.

**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

- The school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school.
- It is easy to approach the school with problems.
- Parents are well informed about their children's progress.
- The school enables students to achieve good standards of work and they do well at the school.
- Students are encouraged to become involved in activities beyond the classroom and parents are especially pleased with the range of extra-curricular activities.

What some parents are not happy about

- They are not given a clear enough understanding
- There is not always enough emphasis on helping
- A minority of students does not behave well
- Some teachers do not manage students'

The inspection findings support most of the parents' views about what they like about the school, except that, while most students do achieve good standards of work, some could do better in their studies. The inspectors agree with the view that the school does not have a sufficiently consistent approach to helping individuals to do well. The care and general guidance provided is satisfactory, but more could be done to advise and help students on a one-to-one basis on how they could improve their work. The inspectors also agree that a minority of students, especially in Key Stage 4, do not behave well enough. During the inspection there were a small, but significant, number of lessons where teachers did not manage students well, while in a few lessons discipline was too rigid to encourage students to participate and respond confidently.

§ KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to improve the school further, the governors, headteacher, senior management team and all staff should ensure that:

Ø1 students make better progress overall during Key Stage 4 in relation to their prior achievements, especially in science, and in modern foreign languages in Key Stages 3 and 4, by ensuring that:

- 1 lesson planning identifies an appropriate sequence of learning activities that are well matched to students' abilities;
- 2 expectations of standards of work, especially from middle and lower attaining students, are raised;
- 3 a wider range of teaching strategies is used and that these are adapted to suit the needs of differing groups;
- 4 students are more actively involved in their learning;
- 5 more consistent approaches are taken to the management of unsatisfactory behaviour;

(refer to paragraphs 9 –10, 23 – 24, 43, 81 – 84, 131 - 135)

Ø1 standards of attainment are raised in:

- 1 religious education by providing adequate curriculum time;
- 2 food technology by broadening the range of teaching strategies and ensuring that the theoretical aspects of the subject are taught appropriately;

(refer to paragraphs 10, 11, 27 – 28, 33, 98 – 102, 148 - 151)

Ø1 students' attainment, progress and the quality of teaching and learning are monitored and improved through

implementing a structured programme of lesson observations and scrutiny of students' work;

(refer to paragraph 50)

Ø ➤ students' personal development and approaches to learning are improved by ensuring that teachers, form tutors, and middle managers:

Ø ● extend the range of teaching approaches which encourage independent thinking and working and develop students' learning skills;

- 1 raise expectations of students' self-discipline, high standards of behaviour and courtesy to others;
- 2 improve the personal and academic guidance provided for students and monitor their progress more effectively;
- 3 improve the provision for students' spiritual development.

(refer to paragraphs 15 – 18, 41, 52, 83, 91, 134)

In addition to the key issues above, the following weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- 4 curriculum: the lack of co-ordination of similar topics in science and rural science; the repetition, in Key Stage 3, of work covered earlier in English, mathematics, science, geography and art; the need to show more systematically how students' understanding of information technology is to be developed across all subjects; the adverse effect on progress in modern foreign languages of the withdrawal from lessons of students with special educational needs for additional support; inconsistent time allocation for arts subjects in Key Stage 3 *(refer to paragraphs 28 - 31)*
- 5 assessment: the inconsistent use of target setting and performance data by departments; *(refer to paragraphs 34 – 36, 50)*
- 6 arrangements for monitoring students at Stage 1 of the special educational needs Code of Practice in order to identify when students should be removed from the register; *(refer to paragraph 35)*
- a lack of consistency across the school as a whole in providing planned opportunities for the moral, social and cultural development of students; *(refer to paragraphs 37 - 40)*
- 1 the lack of effective involvement of all staff in development planning; *(refer to paragraph 51)*
- 2 the continuing difficulty which the school has in meeting statutory requirements for a daily act of collective worship; *(refer to paragraphs 54 - 55)*
- 3 unsatisfactory accommodation and resources in the library, and unsatisfactory accommodation in physical education and music; *(refer to paragraphs 58 - 59)*
- 4 the inconsistency in the ways in which departments link their spending plans to educational priorities. *(refer to paragraph 60)*

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. Chichester High School for Boys is a comprehensive school for students aged 11-18, which is located near the centre of the city. The school is larger than most comprehensive schools and the number of students, currently 1445 including 227 in the Sixth Form, has remained fairly constant for the last six years. Students are drawn from 45 primary schools, including many from outside the school's immediate catchment area. The school occupies two main buildings and a number of smaller buildings on a large campus. The intake of the school represents the full range of ability although in some year groups there is a smaller than average number of lower-attaining students. There are 137 students with special educational needs, at stages 2 – 5 of the Code of Practice, including 41 with statements. This is a larger number than at the time of the last inspection. The percentage of students recorded as eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Thirteen students come from homes where English is not the first language. Joint Sixth Form provision is made in collaboration with the neighbouring Chichester High School for Girls.

2. Following the retirement of the previous headteacher at the end of 1998, and temporary arrangements for two terms, the current headteacher took up post in September 1999, nine weeks before the inspection. The school's main aim is to improve the quality of teaching and learning for all students and the school's development plan is firmly based on this aim. There is a current emphasis on raising achievement in Key Stage 4. Other aims include the improvement of the school's assessment, recording and reporting systems, where much has already been achieved. The school plans to extend the opportunities for students to exercise leadership and accept responsibility for leadership. It also plans to develop further the pastoral system and the range of courses and approaches to learning in order to meet the needs of different students. The school also plans to improve the use of, and provision for, information and communication technology for all students and staff. The school has set targets for 51 per cent of students to achieve five or more GCSE passes at grades A* - C in 2000, for 90 per cent to achieve grades A – E and 38% to achieve grades A - B in Advanced level examinations in 2000.

2. **Key indicators**

Attainment at Key Stage 3¹

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	239	0	239

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of students at NC Level 5 or Above	Boys	176 (186)	186 (192)	168 (192)
	Girls	0	0	0
	Total	176 (186)	186 (192)	168 (192)
Percentage at NC Level 5 or above	School	74 (76)	77 (78)	70 (78)
	National	63 (65)	62 (60)	55 (56)
Percentage at NC Level 6 or above	School	33 (51)	53 (56)	35 (46)
	National	28 (35)	38 (36)	23 (27)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of students at NC Level 5 or above	Boys	161 (148)	194 (190)	189 (157)
	Girls	0	0	0
	Total	161 (148)	194 (190)	189 (157)
Percentage at NC Level 5 or above	School	68 (61)	82 (78)	79 (65)
	National	64 (62)	64 (64)	60 (62)
Percentage at NC Level 6 or above	School	29 (34)	56 (49)	36 (40)
	National	31 (31)	37 (37)	28 (31)

¹ Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

Attainment at Key Stage 4²

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	232	0	232

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 students achieving standard specified	Boys	115 (104)	218 (216)	223 (222)
	Girls	0	0	0
	Total	115 (104)	218 (216)	223 (222)
Percentage achieving standard specified	School	50 (45)	94 (93)	96 (96)
	National	47.8 (44.6)	88.4 (89.8)	95 (95.2)

Number studying for approved vocational qualifications and percentage who achieved all those they studied:

	Number	% Success rate
School	51	74.5
National		n/a

Attainment in the Sixth Form

Number of students aged 16, 17 and 18 who were entered for GCE A/AS examinations in the latest reporting year:

Year	Male	Female	Total
1999	100 (81)	0	100 (81)

Average A/AS points score Per candidate	For candidates entered for 2 or more A-levels or equivalent			For candidates entered for fewer than 2 A-levels or equivalent		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
School	16.3 (17.9)	0	16.3 (17.9)	5.3	0	5.3
National	17.7	18.7	18.2 (17.6)	2.7	2.8	2.8 (2.8)

Number in final year of approved vocational qualifications and percentage of *such students* who achieved these qualifications:

	Number	% Success Rate
School	31	96.8
National		79.1

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

Attendance

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

		%
Authorised Absence	School	6.8
	National comparative data	7.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	1.0
	National comparative data	1.3

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of students (of statutory school Age) during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	32
Permanent	2

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	20.39
Satisfactory or better	89.32
Less than satisfactory	10.68

2.

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

2. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

2. Attainment and progress

3. Students achieve high standards in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 3. In 1999 results were above the national average for boys and girls in English and mathematics and well above the average in science. In English results were well above the national average for boys. In English and science the percentage of students reaching higher levels was above average and in mathematics it was well above. In comparison with students in similar schools, attainment in English was in line with national averages, well above in mathematics and above in science. Students make good progress during Key Stage 3 in the aspects of English and science which are included in the tests. They also make good progress in mathematics and in design and technology. They make satisfactory progress in other subjects except modern foreign languages and religious education, where their progress is unsatisfactory. Other than in religious education, where standards are below the expectations of the local Agreed Syllabus, standards in all subjects are at least in line with national expectations.
4. In their GCSE examinations in 1999, the percentage of students who gained five or more passes at grades A* - C was higher than the national average for all students and well above the figure for boys only. It was below the national average for similar schools. The 1999 results were higher than during the past four years, although slightly lower than at the time of the previous inspection. Before this year's improvement in standards, school results had remained level while the national results had improved. Results were broadly in line with the targets set by the school. In many subjects, standards are high. GCSE results in English Literature, art, graphics, geography, geology and information technology were well above national averages. Those in mathematics, French, music and physical education were above national averages. In business studies, food technology, drama and German results were below national averages. They were similar to national averages in other subjects, including English Language and science.
5. Although standards were high in many subjects, students who took GCSE examinations in 1999 achieved less well overall than might have been expected in relation to their previous achievements in the tests at the end of Key Stage 3. In lessons and work seen during the inspection, students in Key Stage 4 made satisfactory progress in most subjects. They made very good progress in geography, good progress in art and history, but unsatisfactory progress in modern foreign languages and science, and poor progress in religious education.
6. Students' attainment in Advanced level courses has been high in recent years and consistently above the national average. In the examinations in 1999, although results were similar to national averages, students' achievements demonstrated good progress in relation to their previous achievements in GCSE examinations. A level results in the Joint Sixth Form provision with Chichester High School for Girls were above average. Results in vocational courses were well above average. There were strengths in art, business studies, English literature, graphics, history, politics, physics, and the GNVQ leisure and tourism course, where results were above the national average. Results were below the national average in economics and similar to the national average in other subjects. Results were broadly in line with the targets that the school had set.
7. Standards attained in English, as seen during the inspection, are in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stages 3 and 4 and students make satisfactory progress. Standards are above expectations in the Sixth Form where students make good progress. Students' attainment in Key Stage 3 is lower than the Key Stage 3 tests indicate because their standards in speaking and listening, which are not included in the national tests, are not as well developed as other aspects of the subject. Students in Key Stage 3 develop good comprehension skills and write in a good range of styles. In Key Stage 4, students write well about

literature, including poetry. However, in both key stages, speaking is not sufficiently well developed and writing is not always well structured. In the Sixth Form, students write with increasing precision and have good knowledge of relevant linguistic terminology. In other subjects, students' skills allow them to achieve well in their work. For example, in geography students write in suitable styles, while in history well-developed oral skills allow them to discuss ideas confidently.

8. In mathematics, students achieve above national expectations by the end of Key Stage 3. Their work in number and shape is particularly good and that in algebra and data handling is sound. They achieve satisfactory standards in using and applying mathematics and more able students work well independently to hypothesise and investigate problems. Students' attainment in Key Stage 4 is above national expectations, other than in data handling where attainment is in line with expectations. Most students calculate mentally with confidence but are too ready to use calculators. Attainment in the Sixth Form is in line with expectations where, for example, students hypothesise and use investigation skills confidently to solve problems. Students use their mathematical knowledge well in other subjects. For example, they use graphs well in geography and science and undertake complex calculations in physics and chemistry and statistical work in biology.
9. By the end of Key Stage 3, students' attainment in science is above the national expectation in knowledge and understanding and they make good progress in their work on physical processes and materials. However, progress in investigative and experimental science is unsatisfactory because students do not build sufficiently on the skills they have learnt earlier. Attainment by the end of Key Stage 4 is in line with national expectations but there is significant variation in the progress of different groups of students during the key stage. High attaining students make good progress and apply their understanding well. A significant number of middle and lower attaining students make unsatisfactory progress in topics where the work is not challenging enough or the pace of work is insufficiently demanding. Lower attaining students make good progress in the rural science course. Attainment at A level in the different science subjects meets expectations. High standards are achieved in physics.
10. In other subjects, students' attainment meets or exceeds national expectations, except in religious education and food technology where attainment is below national expectations. Students make at least satisfactory progress in other subjects except for modern foreign languages and religious education. In modern foreign languages, although attainment by the end of Key Stages 3 and 4 meets national expectations, students make unsatisfactory progress. Results in the GCSE examinations are lower than might be expected in relation to students' prior attainments in national tests at the end of Key Stage 3. Since the last inspection, results in both French and German have been generally in line with, or above, the national average but German results have shown a decline year on year. Higher attaining students achieve high standards, especially in French. Listening skills are sound but students lack confidence when speaking and rarely extend answers beyond a word or short phrase. In religious education, standards attained by the end of Key Stage 3 are below those expected in the local Agreed Syllabus and are lower than reported at the time of the previous inspection. Standards attained by the end of Key Stage 4 are well below the standards expected in the local Agreed Syllabus, although they are slightly higher than at the time of the last inspection. Progress over time in religious education is unsatisfactory.
11. In information technology, high standards were achieved by the students who entered the subject at GCSE in 1999, where results were well above the national average. Attainment across the school is in line with national expectations. There are strengths in communication, data handling and modelling but weaknesses in control and measuring. The best work is of a very high standard with some work of near professional quality. In design and technology attainment is well above national expectations in graphics; in line with expectations in automotive engineering and resistant materials; well below expectations in food technology. Practical work is satisfactory in food technology, but theory work and students' subject knowledge are weak. Attainment in business studies by the end of Key Stage 4 is in line with national expectations. While GCSE results in 1999 were below the national average, the trend over the last three years has been consistently upward. The quality of work seen during the inspection confirms this upward trend.

12. In geography and geology, students achieve well above national expectations by the end of Key Stage 4. A level results in 1999 were in line with national averages and similar standards were found in lessons observed. While students in Key Stage 3 attain above average standards, they repeat some of the work they have experienced earlier and they make only satisfactory progress in Key Stage 3. In history, students attain in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stages 3 and 4. Lower attaining students achieve well orally, although their written work is not always satisfactory. In the Sixth Form, students' attainment in history and politics is above course expectations and they make good progress.
13. Standards have risen significantly in art since the last inspection. Results in the GCSE examination have improved year on year from well below the national average at the time of the last inspection to well above it in 1999. Most students make sound progress in all aspects of the subject. In music, students make satisfactory progress overall during Key Stage 3 and good progress during Year 7. Many have too limited skill levels and, although they progressively develop satisfactory skills as performers and composers, a significant minority do not perform or compose in an expressive enough way or analyse and discuss music with sufficient discrimination. Standards in drama in Key Stage 4 have improved since the time of the last inspection. There has been an upward trend in GCSE results over three years, although 1999 results remained below the national average. Recent changes in the scheme of work and an increase in the number of higher attaining students studying drama have resulted in higher standards, particularly in Year 10 where work meets expectations. Attainment overall has improved since the last inspection and progress in both key stages is satisfactory. Standards achieved in extra-curricular sport are very high. In physical education the attainment of most students by the end of Key Stages 3 and 4 and in the Sixth Form is in line with national expectations. Standards in games are above expectations.
14. Students with special educational needs make good progress towards the individual targets related to comprehension and accuracy in reading and writing. Students with specific learning difficulties achieve well in mathematics and science despite their literacy difficulties. They make good progress in extracting information from texts and in drafting and editing work on word processors. Students with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress across all subjects of the curriculum.
14. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**
15. Students have satisfactory attitudes to their learning and a positive approach to their work overall. There are significant variations in the attitudes of students across the school in different ability groups and subjects. Small, but significant, minorities of students in Years 8 to 11 behave in an unsatisfactory way in lessons. Attitudes in most lessons in Key Stage 3 are good or very good, although there is some restlessness and inattention in a few classes in Years 8 and 9. Most students in Key Stage 4 sustain their interest in lessons and are well motivated to learn, but a significant minority of students are poorly motivated or disaffected in their work, especially in modern foreign languages and science. In these and in a few other lessons in other subjects, their unsatisfactory behaviour is a distraction to others. Students in the Sixth Form respond very well in lessons.
16. The standard of behaviour around the school and in classrooms is satisfactory overall. Behaviour is particularly good in assemblies, in lessons in Year 7, in the Sixth Form and at other times where students are managed well by staff. Movement in and between the school sites is sometimes rather boisterous. The number of exclusions has reduced since the last inspection and numbers are in line with other similar schools. The school has satisfactory policies and procedures in place to address poor behaviour and, in general, behaviour is monitored well, although there is some inconsistency in managing behaviour in classrooms. Students with special educational needs concentrate, respond and behave very well when they are withdrawn from lessons to receive specialist support. They collaborate very well in small teams, planning together and preparing group presentations. Students with emotional and behavioural difficulties respond particularly well to teachers and assistants in the special educational needs department.

17. There are very good relationships in the Sixth Form and relationships elsewhere are generally satisfactory. In a small minority of classes, however, relationships are unsatisfactory. In a few lessons, for example, students are disrespectful to teachers and do not co-operate or behave well. In almost all cases, however, students collaborate and co-operate very well when required. In physical education, for example, they work together well as team members, especially in extra-curricular sport. They also respond very well when opportunities for independent work are provided, for example, in design and technology, religious education, geography, history, music and drama. In these lessons they engage positively in group and individual work and discuss ideas in a mature way.
18. In many instances, students show sound respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. They listen well to each other's contributions, for example in group work and in discussions. When they are allowed to use initiative and to develop their independent thinking, students show good capacity for personal study. Students are too restricted, however, in the number of opportunities they have to develop these skills. They take responsibility well when they are given the opportunity. For example, older students take good responsibility for developing joint reading with younger students and in their leadership roles in Year 7 induction camps and in the Combined Cadet Force. Students who are involved in Year and School Councils respond well. Sixth Form students collaborate well in developing charity and social events. They are confident in putting forward their views in a mature manner and appreciate the respect and responsibility conferred on them by staff.

18. **Attendance**

19. Attendance is satisfactory and similar to the national average. The great majority of students arrive at school on time, leading to a prompt start to the day. However, a minority of students, particularly in Years 9 and 11, arrive late. Some lessons start up to ten minutes late, mainly because of the distance students have to walk between some lessons. The school is making good efforts to encourage prompt attendance. The satisfactory attendance and punctuality of most students contributes positively to their standards of attainment.

19. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

19. **Teaching**

20. The quality of teaching was satisfactory or better in about nine out of ten lessons. Teaching was good or very good in just over half of the lessons and very good or excellent in one lesson in five. Teaching was unsatisfactory in about one lesson in ten. This is an improvement on the previous inspection where one lesson in five in Key Stages 3 and 4 had significant shortcomings. In lessons observed during this inspection, teaching was better in Key Stage 3 than in Key Stage 4. In Key Stage 3, the greatest proportion of satisfactory or better teaching was in Years 7 and 9. Teaching in the Sixth Form is a strength of the school. In all these lessons, teaching was at least satisfactory and in nearly nine out of ten lessons teaching was good or better. Teaching was very good or excellent in just over one third of the lessons in the Sixth Form.
21. There are strengths in the teaching of art, geography, graphics, history, music, drama and leisure and tourism in Key Stage 4. In these cases, the teaching contributes well to students' positive responses and progress. It is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 4 in food technology, science and modern foreign languages, where students make unsatisfactory progress. In Key Stage 3, teaching is good in graphics, history and mathematics. It is satisfactory in all other subjects except in modern foreign languages where it is unsatisfactory. The school was initially slow in responding to the key issue from the previous inspection report to improve the quality of teaching. In the last year improvements have been made in focusing on teaching and learning and in providing professional development based on classroom issues. The school is

now well placed to make further improvements in the quality of teaching.

22. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach is good in most subjects, and a very strong feature of Sixth Form teaching. In English, for example, teachers are very knowledgeable about texts and use this knowledge well to inspire their students. Teachers' subject knowledge is less secure in some lessons, for example drama in Key Stage 3 where not all teachers are skilled at working in role. In many cases, teachers' expectations of students' work are high. In history, for example, lower attaining students in Year 8 were challenged to present a topic from a historical perspective and others in the group were required to respond critically. Expectations are low in some lessons. In science, for example, expectations of some middle and lower attaining students are too low and contribute to unsatisfactory progress. Lessons are planned well in most cases and particularly in lessons with the Sixth Form. Clear objectives for lessons are identified but sometimes the learning sequence is not well thought through and activities do not build logically on students' previous knowledge and understanding.
23. Many teachers use a good range of teaching methods effectively. Good practice included the use of source material and texts, varied activities to encourage students to participate, reflect and ask their own questions and plenary sessions at the end of lessons which prompted students to reflect on and identify what they had learned. In English, good use is made of overhead projectors to focus on specific teaching points in texts. In design and technology skilful presentation and questioning motivated students. In history careful questioning helped to establish students' understanding. In some cases, however, the range of teaching strategies is too limited. In some lessons the teaching is over-directive and does not allow students to use their initiative, to consider and discuss ideas or to reflect on how well they have met the objectives of the lesson. In science, too few practical opportunities are offered to students and teachers rarely use extended class discussion to develop students' understanding. The pace of lessons is satisfactory in most cases, except when there is too much teacher input or too great a dependence on worksheets, which restricts students' participation and their opportunities to expand their thinking and ideas.
24. Most teachers manage students' behaviour well. In a minority of cases, teachers lack the strategies for dealing effectively with students who misbehave and there is inconsistency between teachers in how they manage unsatisfactory behaviour. In these cases, students often make unsatisfactory progress. Relationships are good in lessons where varied and appropriate teaching styles involve and motivate students and where effective use is made of group and paired work.
25. Teachers' marking of work and the feedback given to students provide good, clear guidance on how students should improve their work. In geography and history in Key Stage 4, for example, careful guidance and preparation for examinations alert students to the requirements of GCSE courses and ways in which they can improve their performance. Work is often supported well by homework that is challenging and varied, requiring students to research, summarise, question and write extensively. Homework is frequently marked carefully and is used effectively as a firm basis for subsequent lessons. There were, however, too many examples of homework requiring only the completion of work begun in lessons.
26. The quality of teaching for students with special educational needs is good. Students are managed very effectively. Lessons are well informed by individual education plans and are well structured to include a range of activities such as whole group explanations, paired work and independent use of information technology. The content of withdrawal sessions is not always well linked to the needs of the students in individual subjects. In some subjects, including history and design and technology, some teachers use assessment information from the individual education plans well, but practice is not consistent across the whole school. Teachers' contributions to reviews of students with special educational needs has improved since the last inspection.

26. **The curriculum and assessment**

27. The school's curriculum meets the statutory requirements for all National Curriculum subjects. However, the time for religious education is insufficient to allow proper coverage of the local Agreed Syllabus. This adversely affects students' progress and standards of attainment. Overall there is good breadth to the curriculum, with well-established provision for vocational courses and good flexibility in the Joint Sixth Form arrangements with the neighbouring girls' school. The option arrangements at Key Stage 4 have been improved to widen student choice and the inclusion of GNVQ courses and a rural studies option enhance the range of subjects. The timings of the school day have been changed from those at the time of the last inspection to give increased lesson lengths and more time for communication between staff during the day.
28. There are some weaknesses in the balance of provision at Key Stage 3, some of which were also raised in the last inspection report. Although statutory requirements are met, there is not enough time allocated to ensure the appropriate depth of study and progress by all students in music in Years 8 and 9. The provision for drama has improved since the last inspection, but there is a lack of continuity in the syllabus for middle and lower attaining students and limited coverage of the subject for higher attaining students who study a second language. In design and technology the time allowed for work on food is too limited in Key Stage 3.
29. The school's curriculum provides sound opportunities for students to make progress in their understanding. Work in the Sixth Form is based effectively on previous GCSE topics, and schemes of work in Key Stage 4 build well on work from Key Stage 3. However, Key Stage 3 schemes of work do not always link well with earlier work. There is repetition in Year 7 of work covered earlier in a few topics in English, mathematics, science, geography and art. Most subject schemes of work show the objectives for students' learning clearly, and there are some valuable references to requirements for the development of students' literacy, especially with respect to vocabulary. Most subjects do not identify sufficiently systematically their contribution to the development of students' understanding of information technology.
30. Students with special educational needs are well integrated into the life of the school and most follow a broad and balanced curriculum. Pastoral liaison with their feeder primary schools is good. There are effective arrangements for implementing the specialist provision set out in their statements. There is usually a satisfactory balance of provision between withdrawal and in-class support but, in modern foreign languages, withdrawal inhibits progress for students with special educational needs in Year 7. The after-school homework club effectively helps students to make progress in key skills.
31. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities, including sport, clubs and educational visits. A very large number of students participate in the outstanding range of sporting teams and clubs. This is a strength of the school. School teams compete against a wide range of other schools and institutions with significant success, and many students participate enthusiastically in a wide range of school tournaments and sporting competitions. The quality of these activities is very good due to the involvement of large numbers of the teaching staff. There is a good range of other clubs and activities after school, including art, drama, music, public speaking and information technology. The Combined Cadet Force meets weekly and provides students with a good range of training and outdoor activities.
32. Personal and social education is well organised in Year 7 and has been improved since the last inspection. The course in Years 8 to 11 covers an appropriate range of topics although they are not always presented in a sufficiently imaginative and challenging way. The programme for health and sex education is well-structured and the arrangements for careers education are good. They are well supported by effective links with the Careers Service. There are helpful opportunities for students to develop their knowledge of career paths in Key Stage 3, and Key Stage 4 students benefit from a well-organised work experience programme. The Careers Service interviews all students and in Year 11 the school makes good provision for them to have further interviews within the business community.

33. The Joint Sixth Form arrangements provide a good range of A level and GNVQ courses. The curriculum is enhanced by A level general studies for all A level students and a key skills programme for GNVQ students. The time allocated to religious education is insufficient. The curriculum in the Sixth Form is enhanced very well by sport, which caters well for most students.
34. School policies and practices on assessment have been subject to substantial review in the past year, resulting in a range of positive developments. For example, teachers' assessments of students' work against National Curriculum levels are now accurate in history and design and technology. Appropriate criteria have been developed for students to use in self-assessment in many subjects including history, design and technology and music. Teachers do not consistently make enough use of assessment information to help them plan further work.
35. A new school grading system related to individual student targets has been recently introduced and is helping to involve students more fully in the monitoring of their own progress. The procedures for individual target setting are already working well in history, geography and English but need further development in most other subjects. Target setting in the Sixth Form is well established. Whole school assessment information is very well used in the special educational needs department to track the progress of students on the register. Not all subject teachers use this data well enough to support the monitoring of students' progress. This results in some students being inappropriately retained on the special needs register. The annual reviews for students with statements of special educational needs, including the transition plans at 14+, are efficiently managed.
36. There is a good system for the collection of individual student attainment data at whole school level and for the transfer of assessment information from year to year, although the arrangements for the collection of data from primary schools has not been systematic or consistent. The school is increasingly making available to departments a good variety of data drawn from examinations, standardised tests and internal monitoring, and a few departments are actively using this information in their review of long-term plans. There is a need to ensure that the best practices are used more widely in departments and to monitor the overall effectiveness of the uses of data.

36. **Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

37. The school's provision for students' social, moral and cultural development, both through the formal curriculum and its care of students in the day-to-day life of the school, is sound. The school's provision for spiritual development is unsatisfactory.
38. There is a lack of consistency across the school in providing for students' moral development. There are insufficient planned opportunities across subjects as a whole to develop students' thinking about moral issues. This was highlighted at the time of the previous inspection and has not been fully addressed. Satisfactory contributions are, however, made in some subjects such as design and technology, history and drama, where moral issues are frequently discussed. The school's personal and social education programme also offers structured opportunities to explore moral issues. Beyond the formal curriculum, students' moral awareness is developed well through involvement in the work of a range of charities. Good opportunities are provided during tutorials for students in the Sixth Form to debate controversial issues such as abortion and foxhunting. There is an Aids Education Sixth Form conference which provides good opportunities for students to question their own preconceptions and extend their knowledge and understanding of real life issues.
39. Opportunities for students to develop social awareness and responsibility are provided within the curriculum and beyond. Year 7 students, well supported by Sixth Form students, are offered an intensive induction

experience, involving residential camps, which allows them to integrate swiftly into the life of the school. Good opportunities for students to collaborate were seen in group and team activities in music, physical education and geography. The range of sporting opportunities beyond the school day is a strength of the school. A good feature of the school's social provision is the Combined Cadet Force, which offers opportunities for students from Year 9 onwards to work together in a range of situations beyond the day-to-day life of the classroom. Students in Key Stage 4 and the Sixth Form mentor younger students on a literacy support programme. Links with the neighbouring High School for Girls enable students to experience aspects of co-educational life, especially in the Sixth Form, and links with the Youth Wing provide good social opportunities for students. Extra-curricular activities offering opportunities for social and cultural development include a wide range of visits within the United Kingdom, continental Europe and beyond. Students represent the school at the City's annual Remembrance Service and the Sixth Form Committee debates students' views and independently organises events such as a fashion show and events during charity week. However, although there are many positive examples, contacts across the age range and the emphasis placed on students' social interactions are not always well developed.

40. The school makes satisfactory arrangements to develop students' cultural understanding. Through the history programme, for example, they develop an appreciation of cultural change over time and students involved in the GNVQ Leisure and Tourism course explore cultural issues very effectively. Opportunities to explore cultural diversity are offered best in music, art and modern foreign language lessons, where cultures originating outside Europe are well represented. Work in other areas of the curriculum focuses mainly on European traditions and does not adequately reflect the cultural heritage of ethnic minority groups and of British society beyond the school.
41. Provision for students' spiritual development, reported as inadequate at the time of the last inspection, remains unsatisfactory overall. In response to the key issue in the previous report, the school has recently doubled the number of assemblies for all students. During the inspection week, a number of assemblies were observed where carefully prepared presentations, occasionally involving student participation, were followed by appropriate opportunities for reflection. In one assembly, music was used well to create a calm and meditative atmosphere. There is, however, scope for fuller student involvement in these events. Tutor periods were generally less well used to encourage students to explore spiritual issues. Planned opportunities for students to explore such issues in the formal curriculum are insufficient, despite satisfactory contributions from religious education, English, music and geography.
41. **Support, guidance and students' welfare**
42. The support and guidance provided by the school make a satisfactory contribution to students' achievements and progress. Teachers know students well, especially in the Sixth Form where support and guidance are good. The monitoring of students' academic performance is not consistent across the school, although there is a good system of reporting students' performance on a subject basis to form tutors and heads of year. The use of tutorial time is inconsistent in quality and, although there are examples of good practice, tutor time is not used effectively to support students' personal development or academic progress. In many cases, too much time is spent on routine matters. Strong emphasis is placed on supporting students with learning or behavioural difficulties, but insufficient emphasis is placed on monitoring their academic performance or helping students on an individual basis to understand how to improve their work. Sixth Form students are well supported by the tutorial system and they are given good support and guidance about Sixth Form courses, careers and higher education. There is good support for students with special educational needs who require special arrangements during the end of key stage assessments and GCSE examinations.
43. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and discipline are satisfactory overall. Detailed behaviour records of individuals and groups of students causing concern are well documented and monitored regularly. Students value the rewards system, which recognises their good work and good conduct, and know and respect the sanctions for inappropriate behaviour. However, some parents and

students feel that these sanctions are inconsistently implemented. Evidence from the inspection indicates that behaviour management is not always consistent and expectations of behaviour are sometimes too low. This at times leads to disruption in lessons. Satisfactory procedures are in place to deal with any incidents of bullying should they arise. The school takes such incidents seriously and is reviewing its policy in order to improve further the support for students experiencing difficulties.

44. The school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance. Stringent efforts are made to follow up and improve students' attendance. There is a good partnership with the educational welfare officer, who visits the school regularly and follows up any concerns the school may have. There are also good arrangements in place to ensure the health, safety and general well-being of students and no health and safety concerns were identified during the inspection. Child protection procedures are in place and staff are aware of their responsibilities. The day-to-day welfare of students is effectively supported by well-qualified staff.

44. **Partnership with parents and the community**

45. The school's partnership with parents and the community is good. Most parents feel that the school is easy to approach with any problems they may have and that their children are enabled to do well at school. They also feel encouraged to play an active part in the life of the school. The recently appointed headteacher places a high priority on the further development of good liaison with parents. The school gives parents good quality information. For example, they receive good information in the school prospectus, the governors' annual report and "Parents' Post", a fortnightly newsletter for parents. Annual reports on students' work contain good information about the level of their attainment and what has been learned. However, reports do not always identify clearly the areas of strengths and weaknesses in different subjects or the ways in which students can improve their work.

46. Since the last inspection, parents have been encouraged to be more involved in their children's education through the introduction of student planners and regular information evenings. A recent curriculum evening for Year 10 parents provided them with useful information about how they can help to prepare students for GCSE examinations. There is good communication with parents regarding the needs of individual students with special educational needs. Parents of students with special educational needs contribute to the annual review of statements and almost all are satisfied with the level of provision. Heads of Year work very closely with parents of students who are experiencing behavioural difficulties and home-school agreements are being used as a means of modifying inappropriate behaviour. The school greatly appreciates the significant contribution that members of the Parent Teacher Association make to school life. Their successful fund-raising and social activities support the school in various ways. For example, parents regularly provide refreshments at all school events, including the numerous sporting events. The Association sends a helpful newsletter to parents each term, informing them of a wide range of activities and encouraging parental support and involvement.

47. The school has established good links with local industry and commerce. A range of contacts, including Year 9 industry days, Year 10 work experience and a Year 11 mock interview programme are well supported by local businesses and make a significant contribution to the curriculum and to students' attainment and personal development. Work experience for A level and GNVQ students also extends the range of business and community contacts that have a positive impact on students' development.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

47.

Leadership and management

48. The recently appointed headteacher has a clear vision and sense of direction for the future of the school.

These build well on existing strengths and developments and priorities are strategically and appropriately focused on improving teaching and learning. Governors and the senior management team provide positive support and professional challenge to staff, which contribute well to a common sense of purpose and give good direction to the work of the school. The Governing Body carries out its statutory responsibilities well, contributing expertise in a constructive way to the school's development. There is an appropriate range of governors' committees that are efficiently organised. Governors play an important part in planning and target setting and are well informed and involved in the life of the school through, for example, their links with departments.

49. Recently established line-management links between senior staff and faculties are a positive development and good working relationships have been established. However, the expectations for this link are not clearly understood by all and working practices are inconsistent. Faculty and pastoral meetings support the school's strategic priorities, but some need a clearer focus on developmental issues in addition to administrative matters. Channels of communication are effective although the reliance on faculty meetings as opposed to whole-staff meetings does not provide sufficient opportunities for staff as a whole to consider and debate important issues. Staff, however, value the developing two-way communication between senior managers and other staff and the open approach taken to the discussion of issues within the school.
50. The monitoring of teaching is unsatisfactory. It is not consistent across the school as a whole although there are some areas of strength. The art department, for example, has an effective programme for monitoring students' work, which has contributed to a significant improvement in standards. There is no systematic approach for senior or middle managers to routinely monitor standards of work or the quality of teaching through, for example, lesson observations. At whole-school level, data about students' attainments is analysed well but the use of this data within departments is inconsistent. Some teachers use the data and draw conclusions confidently, while others are less able to use it as an important part of the planning and target setting cycle in order to raise standards. The school has good data on students' attitudes but this is not used effectively to inform planning or to evaluate the effectiveness of policies.
51. The structure for school development planning is good and appropriate priorities are identified. The format used is clear and helpful and also provides a good structure for departmental planning. There are, however, some procedural weaknesses. Staff overall are not sufficiently involved in the whole-school development planning process in its early stages. Departmental development plans do not consistently identify clear priorities linked to student achievement or give clear indications of how the plans will be implemented.
52. The ethos of the school is reflected in aims and values which are well understood by students, parents and staff. The focus on high achievement and a clear commitment to students are evident in the most effective lessons where good relationships exist between teachers and students. In a minority of lessons, however, attitudes and relationships are less positive. As was noted in the previous inspection report, opportunities for students to explore ideas and develop self-esteem, independence and self-confidence are too restricted, sometimes as a result of over-directed teaching or behaviour management.
53. The school policy for special educational needs meets statutory requirements and includes a clear set of criteria for evaluation and procedures for parents to follow if they are concerned about the provision made. Additional funding from the Local Education Authority for students with special educational needs, including those with statements, is clearly defined and very well managed. The Governors' Annual Report to parents provides an account of provision for students with special educational needs but does not include a sufficiently clear breakdown of funding.
54. Since the last inspection, the school has made satisfactory progress in responding to the issues raised, although initial progress was slow in some areas. The school is developing a teaching and learning policy and some teachers have been involved in peer observation and school-based in-service training on classroom and behaviour management. The school has successfully and appropriately redressed the balance of

expenditure between staffing and other resources. Provision has been broadened for creative and expressive subjects although time allocations are inconsistent. The school has increased provision for collective worship although statutory requirements are not met. The school states that this is because there are insufficient spaces for large groups to meet on a daily basis. The school has successfully reviewed and reorganised the pattern of the school day and is actively developing the involvement of parents in their children's education. The headteacher has identified accurately where the school has weaknesses and, in conjunction with the senior management team, is putting effective strategies in place to deal with them. The school, therefore, has good capacity for improvement in the future.

55. The school complies with statutory requirements except for religious education, where the time allocation is insufficient to deliver the Agreed Syllabus, and for the daily act of collective worship.

55. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

56. There are sufficient experienced and well-qualified teachers to cover the full range of the curriculum in all subjects except for modern foreign languages where temporary, short-term appointments have been made to cover recent, unexpected vacancies. Most of the shortages identified in the previous inspection report have been appropriately addressed. Administrative and other support staff are well-qualified and contribute well to the work of the school.

57. The school has sustained the strengths identified at the time of the previous inspection with regard to appraisal and has made good progress in moving towards new proposals for teacher appraisal. Induction procedures for new staff and for students undertaking initial teacher education are well co-ordinated and play an important part in ensuring that new staff understand how the school operates. The school has effectively managed the successful redeployment of a few teachers from one curriculum area to another. The school continues to place a strong emphasis on the professional development of teaching and support staff and has developed good strategies to link professional development needs more closely to school priorities. Informal support, sharing of practice and lesson observations take place in a number of subjects. The school has appropriately prioritised the need for further professional development in information technology. Learning support assistants are provided with a good in-house training programme on practical strategies for supporting students in class and many have also achieved external accreditation.

58. The school has developed a coherent rolling programme of adaptation, repair and re-decoration of its accommodation. Good progress has been made since the last inspection in improving, for example, physical education changing rooms, provision for the special needs department and storage space in art. Despite relocation into the main school since the last inspection, library provision continues to be unsatisfactory. The layout of the room and limitations in the overall floor space place too many restrictions on its current use and future development. Appropriately, the school has identified the need to develop a learning resource centre in a new location. There are sufficient classrooms and in almost all cases departments make good use of their accommodation and resources. The accommodation for humanities subjects, however, is divided over the site, adversely affecting the deployment of resources. The lack of sufficient small rooms restricts opportunities for group work in music. In other departments, including design and technology, art and science, some refurbishment or upgrading is still required. Outdoor physical education provision is good but indoor accommodation is unsatisfactory because of the lack of space. This inhibits the development of a wider curriculum and limits the quality of students' achievements in indoor sporting activities. The school has made notable progress in improving the quality of display in classrooms and some public areas, although this is inconsistent across the site as a whole.

59. The last inspection identified that insufficient money was allocated for learning resources. This has now been satisfactorily addressed and resource allocation as a percentage of the overall budget has more than doubled. Library provision was criticised in the last report. The stock of books and level of information technology provision in the library remain inadequate. Textbook and other deficiencies identified in the last

inspection in most subjects have been improved.

59. **The efficiency of the school**

60. The school manages its resources efficiently and effectively. Whole-school financial plans are carefully calculated. They focus on appropriate priorities and use trends in student numbers to plan carefully for future development. At whole-school level, budget setting is now linked to the school's educational objectives. The allocation of funds is more flexible and appropriate than at the time of the previous inspection and the balance of the allocation between staffing and resources is now appropriate. Funding for departments is allocated on a formula basis and is well administered, with departments being updated regularly about spending levels. There is some uncertainty at departmental level, however, about how the formula is calculated and inconsistency in how departments plan their spending against educational priorities.
61. Governors have a very good understanding of their financial responsibilities. They are well informed about the school's finances and priorities and well supported by the school's financial staff. They contribute very well to the school's overall strategic planning. The delegation of powers for setting and managing the budget and other financial matters are clear and appropriate. Financial controls within the school are very good and the latest audit report identified no areas of concern. Additional funding allocated to the school for students with special educational needs is very well targeted to meet the needs of these students across the curriculum.
62. The school deploys teachers and support staff very well. Allocated money for special educational needs training is very well targeted to improve the teaching skills of support staff. Accommodation and resources are used well in most subjects although there is an over-emphasis on the use of worksheets in some subjects including design and technology and geography. The local community makes effective and efficient use of the site beyond the school day. For example, a local church uses the Sixth Form centre each Sunday, the hall is used by a local drama school and the Chichester Festival Theatre for rehearsals. The school grounds and all-weather pitch are used extensively for sporting activities.
63. Students' attainment on entry to the school represents the full range of ability although attainment is above average in some year groups. Students make good progress during Key Stage 3 in most aspects of the core subjects and attain above average standards in the tests at the end of the key stage. They achieve standards in GCSE that are above national averages, although not all students make as much progress as they should in all subjects. In the Sixth Form, A level students make good progress in relation to their attainment in their GCSE examinations and GNVQ students achieve above average standards. The unit cost per student is very slightly above the national average and the school provides satisfactory value for money.

63. **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

63. **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

63. **English**

64. GCSE results in 1999 in English were in line with the national average for all students and above the national average for boys. Results in English Literature were well above the national averages. Standards in both subjects have improved since the last inspection. At A level, results in English Literature were above the national average and the trend has been upward since the last inspection. In English Language, a new course since the last inspection, results were close to the national average. In the national tests for fourteen-year-olds in 1999, results were above the national average for all schools and in line with standards achieved in similar schools. Standards have improved since the last inspection. Students' attainment in lessons is in line with national expectations and they make satisfactory progress in Key Stages 3 and 4. Students' attainment in lessons is lower than that found in the tests because their standards in speaking and listening are not as well developed as in other aspects of the subject. Attainment at A level is above the national expectation and students make good progress. Students with special educational needs make good progress.

1. In Key Stage 3, students listen attentively and sometimes, but not sufficiently often, use talk to develop their ideas in collaboration with others. This was particularly effective, for example, in the discussion of reading preferences in Year 9. Because there are not sufficient planned opportunities, students' range and use of talk are under-developed. They develop good reading comprehension skills and write in a range of styles. For example, they produce high quality picture books for younger children, which they read with pupils at a local primary school. At best, students write lively narrative but much of their writing is not technically well constructed and there are insufficient opportunities to write at length especially in the early parts of the key stage. Too much writing is in response to textbook tasks and exercises which duplicate work done in earlier years. Students of a wide range of abilities make good progress when teachers share assessment criteria with them and focus clearly on techniques of writing.
2. In Key Stage 4, students use their speaking skills well, for example, to explore their understanding of Shakespeare and to prepare speeches for performance. Overall, however, opportunities for collaborative talk are too limited. Many students respond well to the study of literature and other texts, especially a wide range of poetry, and make good progress in conveying their ideas in sustained writing. Lower attaining students make poor progress in writing because the tasks set do not always make sufficient demands of them and their weaknesses are not monitored or dealt with consistently. Students read non-fiction well, retrieving main points from complex texts, separating fact from opinion and learning the skills of argument through writing. To do this they make effective use of a range of sources including contemporary newspaper extracts taken from the internet on a theme linked to their set text for the Literature examination.
3. In the Sixth Form, students write with increasing precision about character, language and technique and have a good awareness of assessment criteria when writing and redrafting their work for both English Language and English Literature. Students taking A level English Language use linguistic terminology with ease to describe and analyse a range of language styles.
4. The response of students is satisfactory overall. They listen attentively and show commitment to their work, for example in the high quality of some coursework presentations. When given opportunities to work collaboratively in well-structured lessons they maintain good levels of concentration. However, they are often too dependent upon their teachers for direction and encouragement.
5. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and is better than during the previous inspection. Teachers are highly knowledgeable about texts and examination requirements. In the best lessons, clear aims are shared

with students. These lessons are clearly structured, move at very good pace and use a range of teaching strategies including teacher demonstration and good group tasks. Teachers use visual aids well to focus attention on language and use a high level of technical vocabulary effectively with lower ability Year 7 students. Assessment is used well to inform students of how to improve and there is good checking of their understanding. In less successful lessons, work is not well matched to the needs of different students with, for example, the same textbook exercises being taught to all levels of ability regardless of their appropriateness. Assessment information is not used to determine the particular needs of the class or groups within it. The range of teaching strategies is too narrow, with an over-reliance on teacher talk and exercise-based tasks. The marking of writing is thorough and conscientiously done but feedback to students does not consistently and precisely focus on the aspects of writing which they need to work on. Too frequently there is a focus on accuracy rather than the major structural features of the writing. The management of the department has been successful in leading curriculum development and the professional development of staff. There are systems in place to monitor standards of attainment and the quality of teaching but the information gathered is not sufficiently well collated and used to raise standards. The sharing of assessment criteria with students at all levels has increased the progress made by these students.

6. Other areas of the curriculum make a sound contribution overall to the development of students' literacy skills. For example, in geography and history students are taught to use and spell the specialist vocabulary and appropriate strategies are used to help them to write in an appropriate style. In history, students' learning is improved by the use of well-structured opportunities to discuss ideas in groups. In drama, GCSE students use dramatic monologues well to respond to source material about war. Subjects have recently developed literacy targets as part of a very detailed whole school literacy programme. This includes, for example, revision of reading materials in history and design and technology. The detailed language reference book, in student planners at Key Stage 3, supports literacy work across the curriculum well.

70.

70. **Mathematics**

7. GCSE results in 1999 were above the national average and A level results were in line with the national average. In the national tests for fourteen-year-olds in 1999, results were above the national average and well above for those reaching the higher levels. Overall standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Students' achievements during the inspection and in their written work show that they achieve similar standards. They achieve above national expectations by the end of Key Stages 3 and 4 and in line with course expectations in the Sixth Form. Students, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.
8. By the end of Key Stage 3 students apply and use mathematics satisfactorily, although only a minority work independently at higher levels to investigate problems and develop hypotheses. Number work is good and algebra sound. Students work accurately with fractions, decimals and percentages to solve problems. They solve equations, apply directed numbers in practical examples and draw algebraic graphs, some using graphical calculators well. Students' understanding of shape is good. They draw angles accurately and find areas of plane shapes with confidence. Many can reflect and rotate plane shapes and some higher attaining students use trigonometric ratios well to solve problems. Students' understanding of data handling is sound. For example, they use statistical data to draw graphs and pie charts. They calculate the probability of an event happening and use related vocabulary appropriately.
9. In Key Stage 4 students develop their investigation skills well. They hypothesise and draw conclusions from their findings. Students' attainment in number and algebra is good. They have a good knowledge and understanding of number. Many estimate and round to one significant figure and use their knowledge confidently to solve problems. Most students calculate mentally confidently but use calculators too readily. They sketch and interpret algebraic graphs well. Higher attaining students solve complex equations and other problems in algebra. Students' attainment in shape and space is good. They know the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes and some use negative and fractional scale factors to enlarge shapes. Higher

attaining students understand challenging work in trigonometry such as the sine and cosine rules and apply these to solve problems. Students' attainment in data handling is sound.

10. Year 12 students solve problems in algebra successfully. They hypothesise and use their skills of investigation confidently to solve problems. By Year 13, students solve problems successfully in pure mathematics and mechanics. However, attainment is not always high and progress is sometimes slow, for example, in learning how to use some formulae and trigonometrical identities.
11. Students' ability to cope with other subjects' mathematical demands is sound and in some subjects, such as science and geography, good. They use mathematics well to describe and explain situations. Their competence in spatial awareness and measurement is good. Their ability with mental mathematics, number work, graphing and data handling is sound.
12. Students' attitudes to mathematics are good. Almost all respond well, are enthusiastic and take pride in their work. In the majority of mathematics classes behaviour is good and students co-operate well with each other and the teacher. This contributes positively to their attainment and progress. In a minority of mathematics classes behaviour is unsatisfactory. In these classes some of the students do not co-operate with each other or the teacher and consequently the attainment and progress of the whole set is affected. Students do not participate adequately in practical work or shared group activities. They rarely have opportunities to work independently or show initiative.
13. The quality of teaching is good overall and in some lessons it is very good. Teaching has improved since the last inspection. In a minority of lessons, especially in Key Stage 4, teaching is unsatisfactory. In these lessons either the teaching is too autocratic or discipline is too weak. In most cases, teachers use their good subject knowledge well to explain problems and plan lessons. In many lessons, a mix of strategies is used appropriately to aid student understanding. Expectations of student achievement are generally appropriate. Good examples of realistic expectations were seen in Key Stages 3 and 4 in practical probability, data handling and trigonometry and in Year 12 algebra lessons. On occasions, however, expectations were not well matched to students' abilities. Lower attaining students, for example, were not able to cope with the full implications of some of the tasks set. Although teachers use differing strategies there are insufficient examples of practical lessons or of differing styles of teaching. Homework is set but rarely identified in exercise books and frequently consists of the completion of classwork.

77. Science

14. Overall GCSE results were broadly in line with the national averages in 1999 and have remained at a similar level over the past four years. A level results in 1999 were above the national averages in physics and in line with the national averages for biology and chemistry. Results in the national tests for fourteen-year-olds were above the national average, maintaining the standards found at the time of the last inspection. Key Stage 3 students, including those with special educational needs, make sound overall progress. Progress is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 4, particularly for middle and lower ability students. At A level, students' progress is at least satisfactory and good in physics in particular.
15. By the end of Key Stage 3, students' attainment is above the national expectation in their knowledge and understanding of science. Their progress in work on life processes and living things is good. High attaining students show good attainment in devising their own identification keys and students with special educational needs make good progress in practical tasks with a model skeleton. Students make good progress working on materials and their properties. They use diagrams well to explain their understanding of rock types and many show a good understanding of chemical symbols. Students' attainment in physical processes shows good features in work on forces and energy.

16. Key Stage 3 students' progress in investigative and experimental science is unsatisfactory. They do not build sufficiently on the skills they have learnt earlier and the initial work in Year 7 is not challenging enough. All students need more opportunities to devise and carry out fair tests and make predictions. Higher attaining students do not always use a sufficiently high level of science understanding to explain their findings.
17. There is significant variation in the progress of different groups of students by the end of Key Stage 4. High attaining students make good progress in the top sets. They apply their understanding well in a variety of areas of study, such as respiration, neutralisation and waves. Many middle ability students make sound progress in work on force and energy, using their number skills well in solving problems. A significant number make unsatisfactory progress in topics where the work is not challenging enough or the pace of work is insufficiently demanding. Lower attaining students make good progress in the rural science course, but unsatisfactory progress in their separate single science lessons, where tasks are often poorly matched to their level of understanding. Overall progress in investigational work is satisfactory by the end of Year 11.
18. A level students achieve standards in biology and chemistry in line with their previous attainments. They show sound practical skills, make good quality scale drawings and show a good understanding of structural formulae. In physics they attain high standards in work on mechanics, waves and electricity. Students' application of number is very well developed in complex calculations in physics and chemistry and statistical work in biology.
19. Students' attitudes to science are unsatisfactory overall. Higher attaining students are well behaved and motivated. They cooperate well in practical work and are very well organised. However, many middle and lower ability students are inattentive or lack concentration and do not show enjoyment of the subject. Students' overall progress was adversely affected by immature or disruptive behaviour in a quarter of lessons observed, particularly in Key Stage 4, where relationships between teachers and students were not sufficiently well established.
20. Although teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 3 and good in the Sixth Form, the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory overall. Teachers demonstrate a good knowledge of their subjects, particularly at A level, and set homework that is relevant and appropriately challenging. Most manage practical resources well in the classroom and give sound written feedback in their assessment of students' written work. Many plan clear aims for lessons, but few show an adequate understanding of ways of matching tasks to the needs of different students or planning activities to interest and involve students. Too few practical opportunities are offered to students, and teachers rarely use extended class discussion to develop students' understanding. A significant minority of staff find the management of uncooperative students a difficulty, as reported during the last inspection. Some staff maintain a good pace of working, for example in a lesson where the teacher's regular reminders to students about the time they had to complete a series of practical tasks ensured that there was time for an effective summary at the end. However, the pace of lessons with under-achieving groups was often too slow with too much time wasted on settling students down and repeating instructions. Teaching was unsatisfactory in a quarter of lessons observed and this weakness contributes significantly to the poor progress observed in Key Stage 4.
21. The day-to-day organisation of the department is effective and good support is provided by the well-qualified technician team. Arrangements for the curriculum in Key Stage 4 and support for it in the scheme of work are not yet satisfactory. Planning for the development of teaching and the curriculum needs to be more detailed and systematic.

85. **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

85.

Art

85.

86. GCSE results in 1999 were well above the national average for all students and significantly above when compared to boys' results. Results for A level in 1999 were above the national average. In 1999 students' attainments in art in GCSE examinations were higher than in most other subjects in the school. Standards of attainment at GCSE and A level have improved significantly since the last inspection. The majority of students achieve the national expectation by the end of Key Stage 3 as reported in teacher assessments.

1. In Key Stage 3, most students, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress and by the end of the key stage achieve in line with the national expectation. A minority of students do not make sufficient progress because of low motivation or lack of confidence. Many higher and middle attaining students make good progress over the key stage and some achieve beyond what is expected nationally. Students make good progress with printmaking and achieve sound results in their sculpture although their skills in ceramics are weaker. Students use their sketchbooks regularly to record from observation and develop their skills well in a broad range of media. This is an improvement since the last inspection. They produce satisfactory, and in a minority of cases, high quality studies based, for example, on portraits. Many students acquire good knowledge and understanding of the work of other artists, designers and craftspeople as reflected in their investigation work in sketchbooks and in their spoken contributions to discussions in class. Though some students make use of information technology, for example for homework, it is used too infrequently to support work in lessons. Most students make good use of homework to enhance their progress.
2. In Key Stage 4, most students make at least satisfactory progress. Particular strengths in students' work include the broad range of investigations, which they make in a range of media. GCSE students experiment well with the theme of movement through large-scale figure drawings from observation. Students following the GNVQ course show good planning skills and good understanding of some of the contexts for generating art and design. However, the quality of their practical work is below that found nationally because their designs show only a basic level of drawing, and colour investigations do not show the ability to create depth and atmosphere sufficiently consistently. Though many students are slow to make progress at first, they steadily gain more skills of independent thinking and develop their personal ideas and responses well by the end of the key stage. Their work is often enhanced by the growth of their knowledge of art. Progress since the last inspection has been very good in the regular use of sketchbook investigations, sculpture making and access to art historical sources in classrooms.
3. Students in the Sixth Form studying A level make good progress. They develop ideas well through a breadth of experiments with drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture and relief work. Their observation drawing often demonstrates confident technical expertise and a strong interest in the manipulation of visual imagery. Their own work shows the influence of a range of artists' work, though too many students are content to use artists' imagery without researching in sufficient depth. Students often articulate their own ideas well in discussion and show practical strengths in portrait and figurative themes.
4. Most students enjoy practical work and respond well to the regular setting of homework. Almost all students show positive interest in their work, responding well, for example, to opportunities to make sculpture and work with clay. They show initiative by asking and answering questions and take part in class discussions. Sixth Form students respond particularly well to challenge. They are lively, well motivated and show a high level of independence in their studies.
5. The quality of teaching is good overall, especially in Key Stage 4 and the Sixth Form. Teaching has improved since the last inspection. Strengths of the best teaching include good subject knowledge and high expectations of students' ability to achieve good quality practical work in lessons. Students are challenged well and this results in their experimenting with their

own ideas and methods to generate individual outcomes. Teaching is never less than satisfactory. In a minority of lessons in Key Stage 3, the planning for individual tasks is too prescriptive and students are unable to respond imaginatively or develop their own ideas. Teachers' attention to behaviour management in some lessons in Key Stage 3, where a significant number of students behave badly or cannot sustain interest for more than a short time, sometimes results in over-prescriptive teaching with less emphasis on the development of ideas. Feedback to students both in lessons and through helpful written commentaries in sketchbooks is good.

6. The department is well led and managed and teachers work well as a team. The monitoring of students' work is a strong feature of the work of the department. This has had a positive impact on standards of achievement especially in Key Stage 4 and the Sixth Form. Schemes of work are sound though there is some repetition of popular themes such as figure and portrait. In areas where there are displays of artwork, they are of good quality and contribute significantly to the school environment and ethos. Recent developments such as the millennium gallery based in the science department demonstrate the positive and productive link between the departments.

92. **Business studies, economics and vocational subjects**

7. Students taking business studies in Key Stage 4 are working in line with course expectations. While GCSE results in 1999 were below the national average, the trend over the last three years has been consistently upward. The quality of work seen during the inspection confirms this upward trend. Standards are currently broadly in line with the national average. Results in business studies at A level in 1999 were well above the national average, while those in economics were below it. GNVQ Leisure and Tourism results in 1999 were above the national average. Students make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 4 and good progress in the Sixth Form.
8. Students in the early stage of the business economics GCSE course have a sound knowledge and understanding of business concepts and of some of the key terms used in describing the economic context for commercial organisations. Students develop understanding of key concepts such as revenue and growth, and they identify accurately the significance of location and other external influences upon business decision-making. Key Stage 4 students following the leisure and tourism GNVQ course have a good understanding of the diverse range of business organisations within the leisure and tourism industries, their purposes and markets. They describe accurately the features of public and private leisure facilities in and around the local area, detailing with care the positive and negative impacts which developments can have on surrounding areas. They calculate effectively the actual and potential market for existing attractions, and they derive good information from visits they undertake to popular national leisure destinations in order to organise and present leisure events of their own.
9. In the Sixth Form, A level students are developing an appropriate knowledge of standard analytical models of business and economic activity. Students apply their understanding of business theory and practice well by analysing examples of real issues. They consider how effectively specific companies manage the opportunities and constraints presented to them. Students following the A level course in economics are making good progress and standards

are broadly in line with the course expectations. Throughout both courses, students use appropriate business and economic tools and techniques to interpret business, social and economic information, and they understand the significance of national and international macroeconomics in determining the nature and scope of business development.

10. GNVQ students in the Sixth Form investigate efficiently examples of the national structure and scale of the leisure and tourism industries, including their history, ownership, location and availability. They recognise the significance of factors such as disposable income and transport opportunities within target markets, and they analyse accurately the range of market factors that influence popularity and profitability. They use computers competently to produce appropriate reports, surveys, questionnaires and numerical analyses for incorporation in their coursework, and they are confident in interrogating information sources such as the Internet for details of leisure organisations' strategies and marketing campaigns.
11. The quality of teaching across the full range of subjects within the faculty is good. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. In the small number of less effective lessons, teachers need to draw more widely from the effective examples of task-setting and teaching strategies used particularly well in GNVQ lessons. In all of the areas of the faculty's work, teachers have good subject knowledge, and they make productive use of their experience with the world of business by introducing relevant examples from companies and organisations in a way that is understood by students. They use questions well in checking that students understand tasks and in reinforcing key aspects of knowledge. The faculty makes substantial and effective use of its partnerships with a wide range of local and national business and community organisations. The faculty is well led and managed. The co-operation and collaboration between teachers has a positive impact on the standards achieved by students.

97. **Design and Technology**

12. Standards achieved in the GCSE examinations in 1999 varied in the different design and technology subjects from well above to well below national averages. The highest standards were achieved in graphics, where results were well above the national standard. In automotive engineering and resistant materials, results were in line with the national average but in food technology results were well below. A level results in graphics improved in 1999 to well above national averages and in design technology results declined to below the national average. In Key Stage 3, teacher assessments indicate that students achieved in line with the national figure for all students, and well above the national figure for boys. Overall, standards have risen since the last inspection.
13. By the end of Key Stage 3, inspection evidence shows that students' attainment is above the national expectation and they make good progress. Standards are higher than at the time of the previous inspection because of effective grouping of students by ability and the good use of information technology in new projects. Students develop their designing and graphical skills well throughout the key stage and achieve very high standards of computer-aided design and cardboard engineering. Students in Year 8 have a secure knowledge and understanding of food safety and hygiene and basic dietary needs. Higher attaining students achieve high standards in their computer-aided design work, have good technical knowledge and understanding and

use technical vocabulary well. Lower attaining students produce simpler but well-crafted frames for use in their mechanical models. Students with special educational needs find aspects of designing challenging, but make satisfactory progress in their making.

14. In Key Stage 4, standards achieved by students reflect the results of the GCSE examinations in 1999. In automotive engineering, Year 10 students develop good understanding of transmission and lubrication systems and by Year 11 students attain well in their final coursework projects. In contrast, food technology students in year 10 have unsatisfactory levels of knowledge and understanding. By year 11, students' practical food handling and presentation is of a satisfactory standard but progress over time in aspects such as the quality of presentation and the use of information technology is unsatisfactory. In resistant materials a minority of students in Year 10 have good making skills in wood and plastics but a significant number work at an unsatisfactory standard because of inappropriate choice of materials or techniques. In Year 11, designing is satisfactory and most students develop satisfactory skills. Students' work in graphic products is a significant strength. Students in Year 10 understand and produce accurate developments of complex geometric forms well, and show high levels of skill and graphic presentation technique. By year 11, students have very good problem-solving and analytical skills. Most use information technology and computer-aided design applications well to enhance their coursework, although much of the work is undertaken at home. Students with special educational needs produce effective designs and achieve satisfactory standards in their making.
15. In the Sixth Form, students' attainment is high and better than in previous years because they have developed better subject skills. They make good progress and by Year 13 most are exceeding the course expectations in both graphics and design technology. Students research well from a range of sources and produce initial and final design drawings of good quality. They have good craft and machining skills and good technical knowledge. Students studying graphics have very good research, analytical, drawing and presentation skills. They use their knowledge of materials well in resolving design problems. Students in Year 13 make good progress in new work such as resolving force diagrams through graphical rather than mathematical means. They have very high quality computer-aided design and architectural modelling skills.
16. Overall, the vast majority of the students respond well to their teachers and the subject as a whole. They have very positive interest in the subject and particularly enjoy their practical work, which they undertake at a good pace. In a small minority of lessons, the response of some students is unsatisfactory. In the Sixth Form, students are responsible and mature and respond very well to small group and seminar styles of learning.
17. The quality of teaching is good overall. It is good in Key Stage 3, very good in the Sixth Form and satisfactory in Key Stage 4. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. The quality of teaching in graphics is very good and expectations are high. In Key Stage 4, teaching is unsatisfactory in food theory work and some aspects of designing and planning within resistant materials. Teachers' specialist subject knowledge is strong, work is appropriately planned and objectives are clearly identified. In Key Stage 3, some worksheets are not well matched to the needs of lower attaining students because the language and style of written materials is inappropriate. The range of teaching styles and management of students and resources are good in most specialisms, but are unsatisfactory in theory-based food

lessons, where the teaching style is too didactic and does not engage the students sufficiently. In the Sixth Form, teachers have high subject expertise, teach in a lively manner, assess regularly and set high expectations through constant referral to exemplar work of former students and commercial practitioners such as architects and product designers.

18. Since the last inspection the use of information technology has improved but much of students' computer-based work is done at home. Although appropriate software exists in some areas, students' progress is limited in computer-aided manufacture and control because of insufficient resources. The subject is ably managed and staff operate effectively as a team. However, there is insufficient monitoring of standards of attainment, students' progress and the quality of teaching.

Drama and Theatre Arts

19. The attainment of students in Key Stage 4 drama has improved since the time of the last inspection. There has been a steady upward trend in standards at GCSE over three years, although results in 1999 remained below the national average. Recent changes in the scheme of work and an increase in the number of higher attaining students taking drama have improved standards in Year 10, which now meet expectations.
20. Students in Year 7 create drama with strong conviction and high levels of concentration. For example, in the "Oregon Trail" project, students use still image well and co-operate well in groups to improvise scenes, which they perform confidently to their peers. Students respond well to teachers in role and use appropriate drama strategies. When they present their work they demonstrate satisfactory understanding of drama conventions including slow motion action, flashback and ritual. Students respond sensitively to others' work, listen well and offer positive and constructive criticism. The spoken aspects of the subject make a good contribution to the development of students' speaking and listening skills. All students complete satisfactory written analyses of their performances, write in role and research their characters. Students in Years 8 and 9 who study drama as part of a carousel timetable arrangement respond less well. They are less confident in performing to each other and have limited skills in working together independently to explore ideas and express these in theatre form. Their presenting and critical skills are under-developed. There has been increasing opportunity for all students to take part in drama within English in Key Stage 3 but some students do not have sufficient opportunity to focus on specific theatre skills.
21. In Key Stage 4, most students explore ideas well and express them dramatically. For example, in response to a photograph of First World War soldiers, they adopt and sustain a role and respond emphatically and well. They use appropriate language and varied vocal skills including tone, accent, pace and the good use of pause to communicate emotional content to an audience. Students working on their preparation for their practical examination use research materials sensitively, they understand different physical theatre techniques and use them appropriately. The written analysis of some higher attaining students is good. Lower attaining students are well supported to produce satisfactory practical work but do less well in their written response.
22. Students' attitudes to work are satisfactory overall and are good in Year 7 and Year 10. Most

students are well motivated and show interest and excitement in their work and co-operate well when they discuss the work they are planning to perform in groups. Students in Year 7 listen and watch the work of their colleagues with interest and consideration. Students in Key Stage 4 work without close supervision, respond positively to challenge and modify, rehearse and polish their performance. Some groups of students in Years 8 and 9 are less well motivated and reluctant to take initiatives or think for themselves. They make unsatisfactory progress, rely heavily on input and organisation by the teacher and are less confident to perform in front of their peers.

23. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and good in Key Stage 4. Planning for drama is detailed. Objectives are clearly shared with students and work is generally suitable, purposeful and well-structured. In most cases, the pace of lessons is good and teachers set clear exceptions and give positive responses to students. Homework is used well for preparation and for students to record their response to their work. Teachers' flexibility to respond to students' specific practical needs is restricted by their limited specialist knowledge of the curriculum and drama teaching strategies. For example, insufficient use is made of strategies such as teaching in role in order to challenge and stimulate response, and aspects such as mask work require greater understanding of the physical aspects of performance. There is insufficient emphasis on appreciating and appraising drama, and little teaching about the practical, technical aspects of theatre in Key Stage 3.
24. Drama is a developing curriculum area within the school. The department is well managed and curriculum links are good, but not all students have equal access to the subject throughout Key Stage 3. This restricts the take-up for the subject in Key Stage 4. Extra-curricular drama activity is good and provides good opportunities for initiative and independence. Students of all ages organise themselves and work very well together co-operatively and collaboratively.

110. **Geography**

25. GCSE results in 1999 were well above national averages in geography and in geology. The results in geography have continued to improve from an already high base. A level results in 1999 were in line with the national average at grades A-E but below the national average at the higher A/B grades. This was consistent with the prior attainment of the cohort of students. Assessments by teachers of students' achievements at the end of Key Stage 3 show that in 1999 attainment was above the national average.
26. In Key Stage 3, students currently make satisfactory progress and attainment by the end of the key stage is above national expectations. Students have a good understanding of environmental issues, describing, for example, the floods in the local area and their impact. They have a good knowledge of the places they study and describe places and processes carefully. Students make effective use of maps and atlases. Most of the work they cover engages them appropriately but in Year 7 they cover some of the same work that they would have experienced at Key Stage 2 and the work lacks context and coherence. Across the key stage they have too few opportunities for classroom-based enquiry and too few opportunities to explain in depth, using a rich range of resources and a variety of writing styles. Students in Year 9 undertake valuable coursework in Arundel, which combines human, physical and environmental geography leading to good data collection and, for the more able, good data

analysis.

27. In Key Stage 4, students make very good progress and achieve standards that are well above national expectations. They achieve high standards of individual coursework enquiry, using their fieldwork experience to good effect. Students display their work well, using a very good range of charts and graphs. Individual students make very effective use of information technology but there is insufficient use of, or access to, information technology within school to support their geographical studies. Students have a good knowledge of physical and human processes based on good technical knowledge and careful descriptions. They have a good knowledge of case studies, which they apply effectively, and a good understanding of environmental management issues. Geology students in the Lower 6th also achieve standards well above national expectations. For example, students make good use of scientific enquiry to measure the specific gravity of different rocks and to test their findings against a range of criteria.
28. A level students make good progress and achieve standards in line with national expectations. They achieve high standards of data collection and analysis in their coursework, demonstrating a good level of individual initiative. However, their evaluations are limited in scope. Students have a good knowledge of places to support case studies and a clear understanding of the syllabus criteria. They make effective use of their fieldwork to provide context for their classroom studies, particularly in their physical geography. Students have too narrow a range of study skills and lack access within school to information technology to support their studies.
29. Students have a good, and often very good, attitude to learning geography and behave well in lessons. Most students sustain their concentration well and make good and sensitive contributions, for example, when discussing different perspectives on urban deprivation. A small minority of students is less attentive and restless in Key Stages 3 and 4 where the teaching fails to stimulate and challenge.
30. Teaching is good and occasionally very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge, particularly in their use of fieldwork to exemplify geographical issues. They have good relationships with students overall and this helps to establish a good ethos for learning, especially in Key Stage 4 and the Sixth Form. Teachers use a particularly good range of strategies in Key Stage 4 and provide clear and well-sequenced activities which allows students to develop their knowledge and understanding and achieve well in the GCSE examination. The more able students in Key Stage 3 are not given a consistent level of challenge to explain and to develop skills of independent enquiry in the classroom. There is good oral assessment of students' knowledge but there is overall a too narrow range of teaching strategies in Key Stage 3 where published worksheets are over-used.
31. The geography rooms provide an attractive learning environment demonstrating the commitment of the teachers and students to high standards of work and presentation. The good range of fieldwork opportunities makes an important contribution to both the standards achieved by students and their motivation. The scheme of work for Key Stage 3 is based closely on a published textbook and worksheets. There are insufficient planned opportunities for in-depth work, the use of a breadth of resources or effective assessment. There has been

sound overall progress on the issues raised in the previous inspection report including good overall improvement in the provision for less able students, improved marking, improved opportunities for discussion and fewer classes split between teachers.

117. **History**

32. GCSE results in 1999 were in line with the national averages for all students and above those for boys. They have improved since the previous inspection, although results have remained fairly static in the last three years. A level results are above the national averages in both history and politics. In Key Stage 3, students achieve in line with the national average and above the national average at the higher grades. They consistently achieve higher levels than boys nationally.
33. The attainment of students by the end of Key Stage 3 is in line with national expectations. Higher attaining students achieve above national expectations. Lower attaining students achieve well orally, although their written work is not always satisfactory. Students make satisfactory progress overall and higher attaining students make good or very good progress, particularly in Year 9. Students with special educational needs make good progress, particularly in oral work. All students demonstrate a good working knowledge of the periods and people studied and identify causes and consequences of events. They use source material competently and understand the different interpretations of some historical events. They have good recall of previous work and students of all abilities apply their knowledge to new situations. Many of them use the opportunities to research and investigate and pose their own questions using historical terms. As a result, for example, students in Year 8 understand the significance of the events of the Gunpowder Plot and many present arguments from different perspectives. More able students produce extended pieces of writing and use a range of demanding texts well.
34. By the end of Key Stage 4, most students attain in line with national expectations and a significant minority attain above expectations. Students make good progress. They analyse reasons for war effectively, recall and apply work from previous lessons well and demonstrate a good overview of the periods studied. They analyse events and are competent in researching and using a range of primary and secondary sources. They evaluate different interpretations of history well and are able to develop their arguments using appropriate historical terms, formulating their own questions and reaching conclusions. Students analyse the reasons for historical events, make links between them and agree their relative importance. For example, students in Year 10 demonstrated a high level of knowledge about the civil war in Russia in 1918, suggested reasons for the success of the Reds and justified their views. Higher attaining students produce good written work, for example, to interpret government actions and to develop their understanding of aspects of citizenship.
35. In the Sixth Form, students' attainment in history is above national expectations and they make good progress. They have a good understanding of the period studied, interpret source material well and recall, select and organise their information effectively. They draw suitable inferences from text, cartoons or illustrations and structure written work well. In politics, students' attainment is at least satisfactory and they make good progress using texts and in consolidating their understanding of American politics. They use appropriate terminology and

understand the impact of media, party and social factors in politics.

36. Students enjoy their work in history. They listen and participate well, read aloud willingly and work well in lessons. They demonstrate an empathy and understanding of people in the past and a high level of curiosity in responding to, and posing, questions. They make good use of information technology in the presentation of their work.
37. The quality of teaching is consistently good and never less than satisfactory. In about eight out of ten lessons, teaching was good or very good. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Teachers are knowledgeable, plan effectively and have high expectations of students. For example, students in Key Stage 4 responded well to challenging opportunities to develop their interpretation of primary source material. Teachers match work well to students' abilities and make good use of literacy strategies to encourage language development. They use a good range of teaching and learning approaches, which engage and motivate the students well. They question effectively and prompt students to think, interpret and respond. The new assessment policy is developing well and students are given good oral and written feedback, particularly in Key Stage 4 and in the Sixth Form, where they are guided well to understand the level of work necessary for raising their standard of attainment in examinations. The department has not developed a sufficiently clear common understanding of expectations for written work at Key Stage 3, particularly for less able students.
38. Resources at Key Stage 3 have improved since the previous inspection. Resources are now satisfactory overall and good in the Sixth Form. The department has two dedicated history rooms, which are managed well and have very good displays. Other teaching takes place in general classrooms throughout the school. This restricts the availability of resources. The subject has a positive ethos and is very well led.

Information Technology

39. In 1999, GCSE results for those students who undertook the formal examination course were well above the national average. By the end of Key Stage 3, students' attainment meets the national expectation and progress is satisfactory. By the end of Key Stage 4, students overall meet national expectations across the curriculum in communication, data handling and modelling but most have insufficient skills and opportunities to meet fully the national expectation in using computers for control and measuring.
40. In Key Stage 3, students use word processing, drawing and graphing software competently to organise and communicate information. They produce character studies, newspaper pages and lively brochures in their English work, integrating text and pictures skillfully into professional products well suited to their intended readership. They use software effectively in information technology lessons to present data graphically, to model profit and loss accounts, and to organise descriptions of computer-based resources into clear lists and tables. Students retrieve information from CD-ROMs and the Internet, for example, in researching the causes of natural disasters in Geography and in making appropriate comments on images they have printed or imported into their own work. They use databases to assemble, sort and present detailed information on food, technology and a range of consumer products. In design and technology, good use is made of information technology for computer-aided design of packaging and promotional materials, and a minority of students use a computer-controlled

cutting machine. However, they lack regular opportunities to programme a computer in controlling external devices such as electric motors and buzzers. Their first-hand experience of using information technology, in subjects such as science, to measure physical events needs to reflect more closely the frequency and extent of computer-based work in the world of the professional scientist.

41. In Key Stage 4, standards of attainment are satisfactory in communicating ideas, researching information through information technology, and modelling data. They work confidently with desktop publishing, spreadsheet and database programmes to produce effective questionnaires, data analyses and reports. They combine text and graphics to produce attractive commercial publicity material and they understand the potential of the Internet for electronic commerce and the significance of e-mail in operating a modern business. Some students are beginning to build Web sites combining text, graphics and hyperlinks intended for specialist audiences, and to create user guides, for example, on how to operate a specific database program, which emulate successfully those available professionally. In design and technology, although a few students are beginning to work with specialist software, they do not have enough experience of using information technology for common designing and making tasks. In science, the use of sensing equipment by some students to enhance learning in experimental activities, should be more consistently planned for all Key Stage 4 students. Individual students make substantial use of home computers to present coursework through word processing, graphing and picture handling tools, with some attaining near professional levels of data analysis. However, this deployment of computer skills is not formally acknowledged in schemes of work across the curriculum, and there is insufficient exploitation of computers available within areas such as the school library.
42. Sixth formers in the early part of their intermediate GNVQ course are beginning to develop a sound knowledge of the benefits and limitations of information technology systems in commercial contexts. They recognise the advantages of speed and adaptability, and they make accurate assessments of the cost and security implications of information technology provision in enterprises. Other students taking an A level in computer studies are competent in programming computers and presenting software applications for a range of uses in the outside world. A number of sixth form students make independent use of a range of software available at school and at home, but more planned opportunities for group and individual work with ICT would benefit a wider range of students across the curriculum.
43. In all key stages, students enjoy their work with ICT and show good commitment to their learning. They take initiatives, collaborate where appropriate, and they manage resources and time efficiently. The quality of teaching in Key Stages 3 and 4 has improved since the last inspection and is always at least satisfactory where formal units of discrete information technology work are built into the curriculum. Some teaching is good. For example, in one lesson the teacher briefed the students clearly on what they were going to learn by using specialist software and invited them to reflect on their success in the light of these objectives as the lesson progressed. In other lessons, some teachers spend too much time responding to individual enquiries from students, instead of ensuring that students draw from notes taken during whole-class explanations or presentations. In some cases, teachers' well-chosen lesson objectives need to be made more explicit to students to clarify what they should know, understand or be able to do by the end of each session. Insufficient emphasis is also placed on providing planned opportunities for students to reflect on how well they have met these targets. Across the curriculum, there are good examples of the planning and management of the use of information technology to enhance learning. However, opportunities vary widely

between different groups and not all teachers across the curriculum build successfully on students' enthusiasm and experience of using computers within information technology lessons and in the world outside school.

44. Leadership and management of information technology across the school have successfully addressed the significant issues raised in the last inspection: access to computers and the tackling of sufficiently challenging work. However, the ratio of students to computers remains well above national averages and there is still not enough opportunity for students to undertake activities in control and data-logging. Good management of the discrete information technology courses needs to be matched by thorough planning within other curriculum areas for its integration as a tool for learning and teaching in all subjects.

130. **Modern Foreign Languages**

45. GCSE results in French were above the national average in 1999, whilst those in German were below. Since the last inspection, results in both French and German have been generally in line with, or above, the national average but German results have shown a decline year on year. Results in the GCSE examinations are lower than might be expected in relation to students' prior attainments in national tests at the end of Key Stage 3. The number of students taking French and German at Advanced Level has been low and no boys currently study modern foreign languages in the Sixth Form. A level results have been in line with national results. Teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 3 indicate that students are achieving in line with national expectations.
46. By the end of Key Stage 3, students' attainment meets the national expectation in both main languages, and also in Spanish which is studied by a small number of students in Year 9. Higher attaining students make good progress but the progress made in lessons by the majority of students, including those with special educational needs, is currently unsatisfactory. Following a recent period of staffing instability, with recruitment difficulties and prolonged absence caused by illness, many students are currently rather unsettled, lacking in self-confidence and sometimes disaffected. Some teachers are not able to manage this situation well and this results in many students making unsatisfactory progress. Listening skills are sound, where students regularly hear the foreign language in class. Speaking skills are often characterised by a lack of confidence and students in some classes do not extend answers beyond a word or short phrase. Pronunciation and intonation are variable in quality but students are responding well to contributions in French from a recently appointed foreign language assistant. Students cope adequately when reading passages from textbooks but do not select reading material independently on a regular basis. Dictionary and reference skills are generally underdeveloped. Writing skills develop satisfactorily over the key stage, with accuracy and presentation improving well through the imaginative use of information and communication technology. More able students speak and write with confidence, fluency and accuracy.
47. By the end of Key Stage 4 students' attainment meets the national expectation, with the most able students reaching very high standards of competence, particularly in French. Progress is variable across teaching groups, with notably slow progress for many students of German who are underachieving in their modular GCSE course. Students of French and Spanish are making more secure progress and many Year 11 students have achieved appropriate results in

the early modules.

48. Although students in some groups have very positive attitudes to their language-learning, most currently lack enthusiasm and commitment to the subject. Behaviour in a significant minority of lessons is poor and in many is unsatisfactory. Several teachers in the team find difficulty in coping with these attitudes and the quality of teaching is often unsatisfactory. Nevertheless, in a minority of lessons observed during the inspection, teaching was very good, with teachers managing and motivating their students very well, enabling them all to make consistent progress. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, planning is unfocused, often insufficiently differentiated to meet the needs of all students, and classroom management skills are weak.
49. Day to day management of the modern languages faculty is being undertaken effectively by an acting head of faculty, who is supporting colleagues well at a time of transition in staffing. Clear and rigorous administrative procedures, a good and developing assessment framework and a continuing commitment to an impressive range of extra-curricular experiences have enabled students to achieve a degree of success in their language learning, despite the staffing instability experienced. The faculty has the clear potential to improve and recent adjustments to the curriculum, reducing access in the short term to Spanish and German, will enable the teaching team to focus on developing further their students' confidence and interest in language-learning.

135.

135. **Music**

50. GCSE results were above the national average in 1999, although the numbers entered were too small to make reliable comparisons with national figures. Numbers opting for music in Key Stage 4 are small and students are taught music as an additional subject in their own time. Very few students have been taught music at A level in the school in recent years. Assessments by teachers of students' achievements at the end of Key Stage 3 indicate that there is a wide spread of attainment, with overall attainment being broadly in line with national expectations. Attainment is similar to that at the time of the last inspection.
51. The work observed in classrooms confirms that there is a wide spread of attainment in Key Stage 3. Many students in Year 7 are working below the expectations for Key Stage 3. Students, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in Year 7 and satisfactory progress in Years 8 and 9. Students perform their compositions accurately, keeping in time reasonably accurately with others. Their compositions are well constructed and they use simple musical starting points well, but the level of sophistication and refinement of most is below that expected during Key Stage 3. Higher attaining students show a good understanding of differences in musical styles. For example, stylistic performances were given of pieces based on Indian raga and blues styles. Many students, however, do not have the technical skills to interpret the mood or effect of the music effectively and give insufficient emphasis to the expressive quality of their music-making. Students of all abilities listen attentively and carefully when playing or composing. They know the meaning of simple musical terms but only a minority can identify and discuss the more subtle musical features they hear. As students move through Years 8 and 9, although they make satisfactory progress, a significant proportion do not develop sufficiently to compensate for their comparatively low starting point.

52. By the end of Key Stage 4 and the Sixth Form, most of the small numbers of students involved in music attain good standards. Some Key Stage 4 students do not have a well-established base of instrumental skills and standards vary from student to student and year to year. Higher attaining students make good progress and achieve well. Their compositions, for example, are particularly stylistic and fluent and make very good use of harmony, melody and rhythm to exploit contrasting moods. Good use is made of computers and other electronic equipment to record, sequence and manipulate sounds in Key Stage 4 and the Sixth Form.
53. Students' attitudes to learning are, in most cases, good in Key Stage 3, although a relatively small number of students behave badly and adversely affect the quality of learning for others in the class. In the best cases, however, students work very well in whole class work, in small groups and individually. Students in Year 7 co-operated very well in small group work, discussing their ideas sensibly and in a mature way. In contrast, some older students in Key Stage 3 had an immature approach to their work, appeared to have little self-discipline and, in one instance, were particularly difficult to manage. These students made unsatisfactory progress in the lesson seen. Students in Key Stage 4 and the Sixth Form concentrate very well, discuss ideas sensibly and respond well to challenges, working well to improve the quality of their work.
54. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 3 and is good in Key Stage 4 and the Sixth Form. Its strengths are in teachers' very good subject knowledge, which in almost all lessons was used effectively to identify clearly what students are intended to learn. Learning activities are planned in an appropriate way to take students through a sequence that allows them to make progress, although in a few cases the musical repertoire selected was not entirely appropriate to the age and interests of the students. In most lessons, teachers involve students appropriately in making decisions and allow them to develop their own thinking through the use of strategies such as very good questioning and well-organised group or individual work. The department is small and physically isolated. While the department is well-managed there is a need to clarify its place within the whole-school structure. The accommodation for music is unsatisfactory because there are insufficient small rooms for students to work in groups without being affected by the sound of others working.

140. **Physical Education**

55. GCSE results were above the national average in 1999, the first year in which students have been entered for the examination. A level results in 1999 were in line with the national average and were similar to previous years. Assessments by teachers of students' standards at the end of Key Stage 3 show a spread of attainment similar to that found in other schools nationally.
56. The attainment of most students by the end of Key Stage 3, as seen in lessons, is in line with national expectations, while a significant minority achieve high standards, especially in games. Students, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. In games, where overall attainment is above expectations, students have secure individual skills, and apply these confidently in small-sided games. Higher attaining students use simple tactics well in games. For example, in a rugby lesson, all students tackled and passed confidently, and more able students applied their skills well. Students' work in gymnastics is satisfactory.

They perform a range of simple actions and, when well-focused, they achieve good quality results.

57. By the end of Key Stage 4, attainment in lessons is at least in line with national expectations, with a small number of students exceeding them. Although all students make satisfactory progress, in some indoor lessons, the constraints of the accommodation hinder their learning and restrict their progress, especially that of the more able. Examination students undertake observational analysis of performance well and their ability to apply knowledge in a sporting context is sound. Students' attainment in games is above national expectations. Their skills are secure and controlled. In soccer, higher attaining students work with a high degree of close control and have a good understanding of support play. Students' work in gymnastics is satisfactory, although most perform with limited quality or control. In both key stages, when opportunities are provided, students make satisfactory progress in planning and evaluating aspects of their own work. In order to improve provision further, the department should ensure that planning and teaching methods enable all students to progress in all strands of the attainment target.
58. In the Sixth Form, students' attainment is in line with the syllabus requirements and their knowledge of how to improve performance is appropriate. Attainment by students in extra curricular work is well above expectations, with a significant number achieving standards that are very high or outstanding. This makes a significant contribution to their overall attainment.
59. Students have good attitudes towards the subject. Most are enthusiastic and committed to performing. When given the opportunity, they show good initiative by, for example, accepting responsibility for aspects of their own learning, such as leading warm-up activities. The extensive and high quality extra-curricular sporting tradition in the major games is a significant feature of the department and of the school. Students have achieved outstanding successes in a number of regional and national competitions over many years.
60. The quality of teaching is always at least satisfactory and in about half of the lessons seen it was good. Teaching is slightly better in Key Stage 3 than elsewhere. Teachers have good subject knowledge, which in the best cases is used well to enable students to progress. Teachers' knowledge of and relationships with students are good. This plays an important part in encouraging and motivating students to achieve high standards. For example, in an examination group, the teacher enabled students to understand and apply principles of first aid well. Teachers' expectations of students' responses are high, although in a small minority of lessons, students are not sufficiently challenged to achieve high standards. For example, in a gymnastics lesson on the theme of flight, students' attainment was low as a result of insufficiently demanding tasks. In some lessons, activities encouraged participation but did not focus on new learning. In these lessons the activities were not sufficiently focused on the learning objectives.
61. The department is well-led and the staff form an effective and committed team. Although the quality of the changing accommodation has improved since the previous inspection, indoor accommodation is unsatisfactory and is having a detrimental effect on standards of achievement and students' progress in some activities. In volleyball, for example, the restricted space available does not allow students to perform to their full potential.

147. **Religious Education**

62. Very few students take a GCSE examination in religious education. In 1999, a small group of students extended their general religious education to sit the GCSE Short Course. Half of these students achieved grades A-C while the others achieved a grade D. This represents good progress by these students.
63. Standards attained by the end of Key Stage 3 are below those expected in the local Agreed Syllabus and are lower than reported at the time of the previous inspection. Standards attained by the end of Key Stage 4 are well below the standards expected in the local Agreed Syllabus, although they are slightly higher than at the time of the last inspection. In both key stages, standards achieved in the limited range of aspects covered are broadly in line with expectations and sound progress is made by students, including those with special educational needs. However, over time, standards fall below expectations and progress is unsatisfactory.
64. The lack of progress and the low standards achieved by students are mostly caused by the lack of adequate curriculum time. This is a similar situation to that found in the previous inspection. In Key Stage 3, the breadth of the curriculum is good but topics are not covered in sufficient depth to enable students to make satisfactory progress and achieve in line with expectations. Throughout Key Stage 3, students are beginning to develop knowledge and understanding of the main features and principles of Christianity. They achieve a satisfactory understanding of the beliefs and practices of Christianity. They demonstrate a grasp of the Biblical origins through a study of the life of Jesus and how this is carried out in practice today. Students are introduced to other principal religions represented in Great Britain through short studies of Buddhism, Hinduism and Judaism with references to other religions in studying themes. However, their knowledge and understanding of the main religions and the importance of these religions to their followers are not developed adequately.
65. In Key Stage 4 the school bases its teaching on the content of the short GCSE course which all students follow. Insufficient time is allocated and most students do not reach the required minimum standards. A few who sit the examination extend their studies by undertaking extra lessons after school. There is very little provision or written work in the Sixth Form on which to base judgements. The time allowed, however, is insufficient to allow students to adequately develop their knowledge and understanding.
66. Students' attitudes to learning are satisfactory. They are good in many lessons in Key Stage 3 where students enjoy much of the work. Most students show interest in the work and concentrate on the tasks well but have insufficient opportunity to develop their capacity for personal study because of the lack of time.
67. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and has improved since the last inspection. Teachers use their good subject knowledge effectively to plan well and use a variety of teaching and learning strategies effectively. For example, teachers make good use of their skills in explanation and instruction. The level of challenge is not always adequate and work is

insufficiently differentiated between classes and for individuals within classes. For example, matching pictures of Christian symbols to the correct explanation did not provide a challenge to more able students. Most classes are managed well although there are a few examples where a minority of students do not keep on task. Good relationships are established in all lessons and this contributes substantially to the quality of learning. Students' work is assessed regularly but this does not always result in sufficient guidance to help them to make progress. The school meets statutory requirements in relation to Key Stage 3 but not in Key Stage 4 or the Sixth Form.

153. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

68. During the inspection the team of 15 inspectors spent 60 days in the school. They observed 206 lessons for a total of 163 hours. They also observed 20 tutorial and registration sessions, 6 assemblies and a range of extra-curricular activities. The team inspected the work of six students from each year group and each subject inspector scrutinised the work of other students representing all courses, years and abilities. They discussed aspects of the school with students and talked to them about their work. They interviewed the chairman of governors and other members of the governing body, the head teacher, members of the senior management team, and teaching and non-teaching staff. Documentation provided by the school was analysed before and during the inspection. The Registered Inspector held a meeting attended by approximately 45 parents before the inspection and analysed 294 responses to a questionnaire about parents' opinions of the school.

154.

154. **DATA AND INDICATORS**

Student data

	Number of students on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of students with statements of SEN	Number of students on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time students eligible for free school meals
Y7 – Y13	1445	41	137	90

154. **Teachers and classes**

154. **Qualified teachers (Y7 – Y13)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent): 80.9

Number of students per qualified teacher: 17.86

154. **Education support staff (Y7 - Y13)**

Total number of education support staff: 25

Total aggregate hours worked each week: 590

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes: 73.7

Average teaching group size: KS3 26

KS4 23

154. **Financial data**

Financial year: 1998/1999

£

Total Income 3,386,901

Total Expenditure 3,332,279

Expenditure per student 2,323.76

Balance brought forward from previous year 45,718

Balance carried forward to next year 100,340

154. PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:	1438
Number of questionnaires returned:	294

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	15	65.7	14	5.2	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	27	61.1	6.7	4.9	0.4
The school handles complaints from parents well	15.4	45.7	32.5	4.3	2.1
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	16.9	51.8	15.1	15.5	0.7
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	16.8	62	14.2	5.8	1.1
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	26.3	61.6	8.9	2.5	0.7
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	28.9	57.7	9.6	3.4	0.3
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	17.9	59.1	10	10.7	2.4
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	24.5	52.4	15.7	6.6	0.7
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	21.5	50.4	19.3	5.1	3.6
My child(ren) like(s) school	24.7	59.2	9.9	4.8	1.4

Other issues raised by parents

Parents praise the school's good qualities, recognise its many strengths and say that they are very happy with the education it provides. Many are very pleased with, and proud of, the school's academic and extra-curricular sporting activities and high standards. A few mention that they are sorry that there appears to be less interest from students in some other extra-curricular activities, including those in the arts. A small but significant number of parents express concerns about unsatisfactory behaviour in some classes, where teachers have difficulty in establishing good discipline in order that learning may take place. In a few cases, they feel that some teachers adopt over-aggressive teaching styles and over-react to minor incidents in the classroom. The inspection found some evidence of this and evidence to support parents' views about unsatisfactory behaviour. In most cases, teachers manage behaviour well but in a few cases, this is not done effectively. A few parents complain that the school does not respond to complaints. Inspection evidence does not support this.

154.