

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Kineton High School**  
Warwick

LEA area: Warwickshire

Unique Reference Number: 125734

Headteacher: Mr P Logan

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Reporting inspector: Dr Philip Budgell  
11579

Dates of inspection: 6 – 10 December 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 708509

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Modern (Non-Selective)
Type of control:	County
Age range of pupils:	11 to 18
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Banbury Road Kineton Warwick CV35 0JX
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr David Savory
Date of previous inspection:	23 – 27 January 1995

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

<b>Team members</b>	<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
Philip Budgell, RgI	N/A	Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management Sixth form
Trevor Smith, Lay Inspector	N/A	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Natalie Moss	English	N/A
Jennifer Adey	Art	N/A
Peter Clifton	Science	N/A
Mark Gill	Physical education	N/A
Paul Hartwright	Design and technology Information technology	N/A
Thomas Howard	Mathematics	Efficiency
Patricia Mitchell	History	N/A
Terence Payne	Music Special educational needs Equal opportunities Religious education	N/A
Anthony Pearson		Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Diane Shepherd	Modern foreign languages	N/A
Vernon Williams	Geography	Curriculum and assessment KS4

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

- Pupils are well motivated and are keen to respond to the challenges offered, they enjoy learning and, in class, their behaviour is consistently good and often very good.
- Pupils' personal development is good and the procedures for monitoring and promoting their good behaviour are good.
- Relationships between pupils and between pupils and teachers are good and this makes a significant contribution to the quality of education provided.
- The teaching is good and makes a significant contribution to the progress that the pupils make.
- Overall, the curriculum provided by the school is good and the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.

### Where the school has weaknesses

- I. The current assessment policy is complex and progress over time is not always clear to pupils and parents.
- II. The school improvement plan lacks sufficient detail on how it is going to be implemented, monitored and evaluated.
- III. The data on pupil performance are not kept on a central database.
- IV. Not all subject leaders routinely monitor the quality of teaching in their department. Similarly, they do not all routinely analyse the performance of pupils in end of key stage assessments and in the GCSE examinations to monitor the pupils' progress and evaluate the effectiveness of their department.
- V. A substantial proportion of the building is badly in need of redecoration.
- VI. The quality of the presentation of pupils' work, particularly in public areas of the school, does little to enhance the quality of the learning environment.
- VII. Attainment in information technology in Key Stage 3 is below national expectations and progress is limited by the timetable and the curriculum.
- VIII. The behaviour of some pupils in corridors and public areas is unsatisfactory and school rules are not always reinforced consistently.
- IX. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is unsatisfactory.

The school has more strengths than weaknesses. The governors' action plan will set out how the weaknesses identified during the inspection are to be tackled. The school is in a good position to address the issues raised in this report. The plan will be sent to all parents and guardians of pupils at the school.

### How the school has improved since the last inspection

The central management team has placed great emphasis on the quality of teaching which has improved since the last OFSTED inspection and is at least satisfactory in nine-tenths of lessons. It is now good, sometimes very good and occasionally excellent in six-tenths of lessons. The teaching time has been increased to 25 hours. Links with parents have improved since the last inspection and are now generally good. The school has targeted funds at resolving key issues raised in the last OFSTED report. There is now better heating in the sports hall and storage for pupils' bags. A number of temporary classrooms have been removed and this, together with a substantial re-roofing programme, has had a positive effect on the general quality of the external environment. There is now good provision for music although practice rooms are spread throughout the school. Accommodation for information technology has been improved. A programme of asbestos removal is taking place. The school has made good progress in replacing obsolete computers.

There are signs in classes that the difference in the attainments of boys and girls in Key Stage 3 English is being effectively addressed.

· A specialist drama teacher has been appointed and most pupils now have drama lessons. Procedures for assessing pupils' work are now in place in art. Improvements in the teaching of history now ensure that there is also a good use of information technology in history in both key stages.

· The school is at an early stage in its current cycle of development and is in a good position and has the capacity to improve further.

**Standards in subjects**

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

<b>Performance in:</b>	<b>Compared with all schools</b>	<b>Compared with similar schools</b>	<b>Key</b>
<b>Key Stage 3 Test</b>			
English	C	N/A	<i>well above average</i> A
Mathematics	C	N/A	<i>Above average</i> B
Science	B	N/A	<i>Average</i> C
All core Subjects	C	N/A	<i>Below average</i> D
<b>GCSE Examinations</b>			<i>well below average</i> E
5 or more grades A*-C	C	N/A	
5 or more grades A*-G	C	N/A	
1 or more grades A*-G	D	N/A	
GCSE points score	C	N/A	
<b>GCE A level</b>			
Average points score, pupils entered for 2 or more A levels	D	N/A	

As a non-selective school in a selective area with less than five per cent of pupils eligible for a free school meal there are no comparative data that represent similar schools. The pupil population is not similar to that of secondary modern schools nor is it similar to that of non-selective schools in non-selective areas with less than five per cent of pupils eligible for a free school meal. Overall, the standards achieved by the pupils are in line with national averages but, in 1999, they were lower than recent years and lower than would have been predicted from other measures of the pupils' abilities. Progress is at least satisfactory in the majority of lessons and is good in over half of lessons. Standards in information technology in Key Stage 3 are below national expectations. In music, singing is underdeveloped in Key Stage 3.

· **Quality of teaching**

	<b>Overall quality</b>	<b>Most effective in:</b>	<b>Least effective in:</b>
Years 7-9	Good	Mathematics, geography, history and special educational needs	Information technology and some music lessons.
Years 10-11	Good	Art, geography and special educational needs	Music
English	Good		
Mathematics	Good		

The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory in over 91 per cent of lessons and is good, and very good or occasionally excellent, in 61 per cent of lessons. The overall quality of teaching has improved since the last OFSTED inspection and makes a good contribution to the progress made by the pupils.

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

· **Other aspects of the school**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Behaviour	In class, behaviour is consistently good and often very good. In unsupervised corridors and public areas there are instances of pushing and shoving; particularly at changeover times between lessons.
Attendance	Levels of attendance are just above the national average and unauthorised absence is well below the national average for secondary schools.
Ethos*	Attitudes to work are good. Pupils are well motivated, enjoy learning and are keen to respond to the challenges offered. The quality of relationships between the pupils and between pupils and staff is good. There is a relaxed and harmonious atmosphere in the school that is occasionally spoilt by the behaviour of some pupils when they are unsupervised.
Leadership and management	The governing body is actively involved in all major decisions and provides advice, support and expertise in key areas. The governors and the central management team have established a clear set of aims for the school. The headteacher and the chair of governors have a concise view of the development cycles that the school has been through and a good understanding of the stage that the school is at in its current stage of development. The school improvement plan provides a good basis for development. The governing body has agreed challenging targets for the next three years. The school has an extensive array of data on pupil performance but they are not kept on a central database or in a form that makes it easy to monitor the progress of individual pupils. The school has yet to develop criteria that can be used to evaluate the performance of those in crucial middle management positions.
Curriculum	The curriculum has breadth and balance and statutory requirements are met. The curriculum and timetable for information technology in Key Stage 3 limits progress. There is a well-planned and valuable personal and social education course. Statutory requirements for sex and drugs education are fully met. Careers education and guidance includes a helpful and comprehensive programme in Year 9 in preparation for choosing options in Key Stage 4. A very good range of extra-curricular sporting activities, a good range of art, music and drama activities and theatre and museum visits all enhance the curriculum.
Pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them in their individual education plans. This is the result

	of the level of support and commitment provided by the school community.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Provision for pupils' moral and social education is good. The adults are good role models and promote a strong moral code. They provide good guidance for acceptable behaviour and caring attitudes. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Provision for pupils' spiritual education is unsatisfactory.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	The number, qualifications and experience of the teaching staff are generally well matched to the demands of the curriculum. The school has developed a very good programme to induct teachers who are new to the school. Although clean, a substantial proportion of the building is badly in need of redecoration. The school has made good progress in replacing obsolete computers. With the exception of music, physical education and religious education where they are good, resources in most areas of the curriculum are just adequate.
Value for money	The school's income is very low compared to national figures. Overall, the management of financial resources in the school is very good. Given the very low income per pupil the school offers good value for money.

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

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

<b>What most parents like about the school</b>	<b>What some parents are not happy about</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school.</li> <li>• Parents find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with their children.</li> <li>• The school enables pupils to achieve a good standard of work.</li> <li>• The school encourages pupils to get involved in more than just their daily lessons.</li> <li>• The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on pupils.</li> <li>• The pupils like school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school does not handle complaints from parents well.</li> <li>• The school does not give parents a clear understanding of what is taught.</li> <li>• Some parents are not satisfied with the work that their children are expected to do at home.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree that pupils are encouraged to get involved in more than just their daily lessons and that the school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on pupils. Although some parents are not satisfied with the work that their children are expected to do at home, inspectors found that, other than in information technology, homework is regularly set and marked. Inspectors found that the examination results in 1999 were lower than recent years but that the governors had set challenging targets for improvement.

### **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

In order to improve the quality of education and the standards achieved by the pupils, the governors and the central management team at Kineton High School should:

- include success criteria and procedures for monitoring in the school improvement plan that will enable the governors and the central management to evaluate when priorities have been successfully implemented (83,85);
- review the assessment procedures and keep the data on pupil performance on a central database so that the progress of pupils can be monitored and shared with them and their parents (62,84);
- ensure that all subject leaders evaluate the effectiveness of their departments by

- a) analysing the performance of pupils to monitor their progress
- b) routinely monitoring the quality of teaching in their department (74,86,92);
  - review the information technology curriculum and timetable in Key Stage 3 (55,167,168 ).

## **OTHER ISSUES**

The school should consider including these in the governors' post-inspection action plan:

- ensure that the governors' reports to parents contain all the required information (79);
- ensure that all registers are properly completed (76);
- when sufficient funds are available, continue with the programme of redecoration (94);
- improve the display of pupils' work, particularly in public areas of the school (94);
- review the duty system to ensure that pupils' behaviour outside lessons is monitored more systematically and that school rules are consistently applied (37,40,75).

## · INTRODUCTION

### · Characteristics of the school

1. Kineton High School is a mixed non-selective school with 949 pupils aged 11-18 in Warwickshire local education authority. There are selective schools in the local authority and many of the more able pupils in the nominated feeder schools go on to attend these selective schools. The school is currently under-subscribed but after a period of falling rolls the school is becoming increasingly popular and pupil numbers are rising significantly.
2. The school is in the Kineton ward and serves an area of relative social advantage. The percentage of households in which the adults have higher education is above the national average; the percentage of children who live in high social class households is above the national average and the percentage of children who live in overcrowded households is below the national average. The percentage of children that comes from ethnic minority groups (0.3 per cent) is a long way below the national average and 0.1 per cent of the pupils comes from homes where English is not the first language.
3. There is a broad range of ability in the school but there are fewer pupils of either very high or very low ability than is true nationally. Overall levels of attainment on entry, as reflected in independent tests carried out by the school, are directly in line with national averages. There are, however, below average percentages of pupils in the top and the bottom ability bands. There are 224 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs and 1.5 per cent of the pupils have statements of special educational needs.
4. Within a culture that is both challenging and inclusive, and based upon genuine partnerships, the main aims identified in the school improvement plan are:
  - .To ensure continuous improvement in teaching and learning, notably,
    - through the use of differentiated material, approaches and assessments, suited to differing individual needs and abilities;
    - through the effective and increasing use of information and communication technology in all curriculum areas;
    - through a concerted attempt to raise literacy and numeracy levels.
  - .To celebrate and reward achievement at all levels, and to add value to our outcomes, particularly in respect of
    - individual students' achievements;
    - individual staff performance and development.
  - .To increase our effectiveness through the evaluation and improvement of our systems.
  - .To create, establish, promote and build on an environment in which all concerned have positive attitudes to their work, their relationships, and their membership of the school community.
1. The priorities identified in the school improvement plan for 1999/2000 are:
  - . to improve the teaching environment throughout the school;
  - . to evaluate the effectiveness of the new behaviour policy;
  - . to enhance staff performance by providing a modern teaching environment;
  - . to review the Key Stage 4 curriculum to maximise the opportunities for pupils to succeed and be motivated in their learning;

- to review the post-16 curriculum in line with the changes to A levels and GNVQ;
- to consolidate and develop cross-curricular information and communication technology delivery at Key Stages 3 and 4;
- to develop a whole-school assessment policy (including marking, recording, reporting, target setting using prior attainment, value added systems);
- to examine the possibility of industrial sponsorship and/or matched funding;
- to review possible efficiency savings and new sources of funding;
- to evaluate the newly qualified teacher and new staff training and induction programme and
- to improve staff information and communication technology skills.

· **Key indicators**

1. **Attainment at Key Stage 3<sup>2</sup>**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	80	70	150
	(1998)	(81)	(70)	(151)

6. National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils	Boys	39 (43)	51 (56)	44 (59)
at NC Level 5 or	Girls	52 (51)	47 (48)	47 (42)
Above	Total	91 (94)	98 (104)	91 (101)
Percentage at NC	School	58 (62)	63 (69)	60 (67)
Level 5 or above	National	63 (65)	62 (60)	55 (56)
Percentage at NC	School	29 (36)	38 (38)	26 (28)
Level 6 or above	National	28 (35)	38 (36)	23 (27)

6. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils	Boys	39 (45)	49 (53)	47 (55)
at NC Level 5 or	Girls	53 (53)	47 (52)	48 (47)
Above	Total	92 (98)	96 (105)	95 (102)
Percentage at NC	School	59 (65)	62 (70)	61 (60)
Level 5 or above	National	64 (62)	64 (64)	60 (62)
Percentage at NC	School	22 (29)	43 (39)	26 (28)
Level 6 or above	National	31 (31)	37 (37)	28 (31)

.....

2

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

2. **Attainment at Key Stage 4<sup>3</sup>**

Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest Reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	71	94	165
	1998	(78)	(91)	(169)

<b>GCSE Results</b>		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A* to G	1 or more grades A* to G
Number of pupils	Boys	26 (27)	64 (70)	68 (75)
Achieving	Girls	43 (55)	85 (89)	87 (89)
standard specified	Total	69 (82)	149 (159)	155 (164)
Percentage achieving	School	42 (49)	90 (94)	94 (97)
standard specified	National	46 (44)	91 (87)	96 (95)

Number studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and percentage of <i>such pupils</i> who achieved all those they studied:	Number	% Success rate
	School	17 59
	National	n/a

3. **Attainment in the Sixth Form<sup>4</sup>**

Number of students aged 16, 17 and 18 who were entered for GCE A/AS examination in the latest reporting year:	Year	Male	Female	Total
	1999	21	15	36
	(1998)	(21)	(25)	(46)

<b>Average A/AS points score per candidate</b>	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	9.5 (18.1)	16.1 (14.0)	12.3 (15.8)	5.0 (0)	0.0 (0)	3.3 (0)
National	n/a	n/a	n/a (17.5)	n/a	n/a	n/a (2.8)

.....

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

Number in final year of approved vocational qualifications and Percentage of <i>such students</i> who achieved these qualifications:		Number	% Success rate
	School	13	92%
		(10)	(100)
	National		n/a

4. **Attendance**

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:			%
	Authorised	School	7.4
	Absence	National comparative data	7.9
	Unauthorised	School	0.7
	Absence	National comparative data	1.1

9.

10. **Exclusions**

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:		Number
	Fixed period	34
	Permanent	1

11. **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	24
	Satisfactory or better	91
	Less than satisfactory	9

## **11. PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **11. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

#### **11. Attainment and progress**

5. In 1999 the attainments of pupils at the end of Key Stage 3 in English were just below the national average, in mathematics they were in line with the national averages and in science they were just above the national average. In the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examinations, pupils' attainments were just below the national average and in the General Certificate of Education (GCE) A level examinations the pupils' attainments were below the national average. The particular circumstances of Kineton High School as a non-selective school in a selective area mean that there is no national information on similar schools against which it is appropriate to make comparisons.
6. Cognitive ability tests conducted by the school indicate that more recently the average ability of the pupils entering Year 7 is in line with the national average. There are, however, below average percentages of pupils in both the top and the bottom ability bands.
7. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests conducted at the end of Key Stage 3, the proportion of pupils attaining level 5 or above in English was just below the national average but the proportion attaining level 6 or above was in line with the national average. In mathematics, the proportions attaining level 5 or above and level 6 or above were in line with the national averages. In science, the proportions attaining level 5 or above and level 6 or above were just above the national average.
8. In the GCSE examinations in 1999, the proportion of pupils achieving grades A\*-C in five or more subjects (42 per cent) was just below the national average (46 per cent). The proportion of pupils achieving grades A\*-C in five or more subjects decreased in 1999. In part this was as a result of the school admitting pupils who had already been excluded from other schools or who were already showing significant attendance problems. There were, however, 20 pupils who achieved four A\*-C grades and failed to achieve a C grade in mathematics (five pupils), science (four pupils), design and technology (five pupils) or French (six pupils). The proportion of pupils that achieved grades A\*-G in five or more subjects (90 per cent) was in line with the national average as was the proportion that achieved one or more A\*-G grades. In 1999, the average total points score per pupil in the year group was 37.7 and was in line with the national median figure (37.1). The average total GCSE points score per pupil shows a rising trend over the last five years.
9. In 1999, there was a variation in pupils' performance in different subjects. The school participates in a national project conducted by Durham University (YELLIS). One element of the project analyses the relative performance of pupils in different subjects. In 1999, it indicated that, when the pupils taking particular subjects were taken into account, pupils were more successful in music, biology, drama, history and physics and less successful in design and technology.
10. In the GCE A level examinations in 1999, the average points score of pupils entered for two or more subjects (12.3) was below the national average. Over the last five years the average points score of pupils taking two or more A levels does not show a rising trend.
11. The prior attainment data that the school has on the pupils who sat the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 3 in 1999 has not been used for a detailed analysis of pupils' progress across the key stage. Progress in lessons in Key Stage 3 is at least satisfactory in just under nine-tenths of lessons and is good or very good in six-tenths of lessons.
12. The GCSE results in 1999 were affected by the poor attendance of some pupils, were below those in 1997 and 1998 and were just below the national average. There are very few lessons in Key Stage 4 in which progress is less than satisfactory and it is good or very good in over half of lessons.

13. The overall A level results in 1999 were below those in 1998. The pass rates in chemistry and physics were particularly low but they were higher in art and politics. Progress in lessons in the Sixth Form is never less than satisfactory.
14. The difference in attainment between girls and boys narrowed considerably between 1998 and 1999. In 1998, 25 per cent more girls than boys achieved five or more A\*-C grades. In 1999, the difference was only 10 per cent, but was a result of a significant drop in the performance of the girls.
15. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards the targets set for them. Good progress is made in German and religious education. The progress made is a result of the level of support and commitment provided by the school community; the value placed on pupils with special educational needs and the appropriate communication between learning support staff, external support staff, class teachers and the special educational needs co-ordinator.
16. The overall attainment of pupils in English at the end of Key Stage 3 is broadly in line with the national average. Pupils can convey ideas with relevance and illustration, and most can read fluently with a growing degree of comprehension. Pupils' written work often shows the ability to write thoughtfully and with an understanding of many genres, as in a Year 7 lesson in which they were planning, in the formal register, a trial of the villain in the novel 'Charlotte Doyle'. Progress in Key Stage 3 is good, especially for pupils of average attainment. The GCSE results in 1999 were in line with the national averages. By the end of Key Stage 4, most pupils have learned to speak in a wider variety of styles of speech, choosing that which is appropriate to the occasion. They can argue, debate and express clear opinions on literature and on written styles in media work. A particularly impressive example of the pupils' abilities to see the sub-text of what they read was an examination of modern love poetry in a Year 11 seminar, where pupils were quick to see beyond the obvious and were able to compare the poems with others on the same theme. In Key Stage 4, pupils of average attainment make the most rapid progress. The A level results in 1999, in both English language and English literature, were in line with national averages. Students speak in a more mature fashion, choosing their words with care and using some critical vocabulary. They write with a widening vocabulary and they use critical terms with more confidence.
17. Levels of attainment in mathematics in Key Stage 3 are in line with the national averages. By the end of Year 9, high attaining pupils use direct and inverse proportions, draw graphs of quadratic equations and analyse grouped data. Most pupils can interpret graphical data and they can calculate angles within various shapes and properties of compound shapes. Progress in Key Stage 3 is satisfactory. In the GCSE examinations in 1999, results were above the national average. High attaining pupils in Year 11 can calculate the area of a sector of a circle, can solve quadratic equations and use the sine and cosine rules for solving general triangle questions. Average attaining pupils use basic trigonometry in two dimensions, they have good graphical skills and can calculate areas and volumes of compound figures. Progress in Key Stage 4 is satisfactory for most pupils and high attaining pupils make very good progress in most lessons. In the A level examinations in 1999, the average points score was close to the national average. By Year 13, students understand significance testing of population samples and can handle vector forms for calculating angles between planes.
18. Levels of attainment in science in Key Stage 3 in 1999 were slightly above national averages. In Year 9, pupils can talk about the force needed to overcome air resistance and can link the size of an electromagnet to the number of coils. In the GCSE examinations in 1999, the proportion of pupils achieving A\*-C grades was slightly below the national average. By Year 11, pupils can balance chemical equations, describe the functions of the heart and other organs of the body and calculate pressure when given force and surface area. Generally, the pupils are able to relate their knowledge and understanding to explain a range of everyday phenomena. Pupils make satisfactory progress in both key stages. The A level results in 1999 were above average in biology but were below average in chemistry and physics. In the Sixth Form, the students work confidently with algebra and can link observations to scientific theory. Note taking and summarising skills are well developed and students ask questions about what they learn in order to develop understanding in collaboration with their teachers.

19. Pupils' attainments in art in Key Stage 3 are in line with those expected nationally. By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils have a basic understanding of colour theory and have acquired good painting and printing skills. In 1999, the GCSE results in art were above the national average. Pupils have a growing understanding about past movements. They are able to make informed decisions about their own work and select from a wider range of media and scale. Progress in art is good in both key stages. By the end of the Sixth Form, students have acquired a wider appreciation and knowledge of the art world, including modern art movements.
20. In 1999, the pupils' attainments in design and technology, as assessed by their teachers, were above the national expectations. In Year 8 pupils can explain the techniques of quilting and appliqué, using flowcharts, they develop their skills gradually during the key stage but progress in graphics and textiles is particularly good. In 1999, the GCSE results in design and technology were low when compared with other subjects. Progress is good in the majority of lessons in Key Stage 3. In Key Stage 4, presentation skills are well developed, with frequent use of information technology for communicating ideas by means of text, diagrams and photographs. Progress in lessons in Key Stage 4 is usually good. In the A level examinations in 1999, most students achieved their highest grades in technology. Students are able to explain cross-linking of polymers and the use of alloys.
21. Pupils' attainments in geography are above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 3. They can use and interpret maps very well and have a good understanding of global problems. Most pupils make good progress in geography in Key Stage 3. In the GCSE examinations in 1999, the results were above the national average. By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils can explain a range of physical and human processes well and apply their geographical skills to fieldwork and individual project work. A useful knowledge and understanding of social and cultural issues is gained through studies of Kenya and Egypt. Progress in Key Stage 4 is good. The results at A level vary but are close to the national average. In the Sixth Form students generally organise themselves well and develop a good grasp of geographical concepts in a variety of contexts.
22. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils' attainments in history are broadly in line with national expectations. Pupils are quick to find evidence of situations in the past from written and pictorial sources. Year 8 pupils enthusiastically found symbols of monarchy in portraits of Tudor kings and queens. The majority of pupils make good progress in Key Stage 3. In 1999, the GCSE results were well above the national average. In Key Stage 4, some written work shows good historical perceptions and the pupils understand the reasons for change. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 4. In the A level examinations in 1999, the majority of students achieved good grades. Highly motivated students in the Sixth Form analyse documents critically and relate them to their background knowledge and to the prevailing attitudes and ideologies.
23. In 1999, the pupils' attainments in information technology, as assessed by their teachers, are below national expectations. In Year 7, pupils gain some useful knowledge of keyboard use, systems and software but they do not have sufficient experience of using the most useful software and applications. Progress is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 3. In Key Stage 4, the attainment of the pupils who take the GNVQ course is in line with national averages. The attainment of other pupils is below the national average. Pupils taking the GNVQ course make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 4.
24. In modern foreign languages, pupils' attainments in French at the end of Key Stage 3 are below national expectations. In German the attainments are in line with national expectations. In a very good lesson in Key Stage 3, which was carefully geared to the pupils' needs, they asked and answered questions in French, which was used throughout. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 3. Achievements in the GCSE examinations in 1999 showed the same discrepancy, with results in French below the national average and those in German above the national average. Higher attaining pupils extend their skills to produce writing that reflects an understanding of grammar. Pupils make good progress in German and satisfactory progress in French in Key Stage 4.
25. In music, pupils' attainments at the end of Key Stage 3 are below national expectations. In Key Stage 3,

singing is underdeveloped. It lacks gusto and pupils pay too little attention to expression, posture, breathing, diction and singing in tune. Pupils appraise each other's work sensibly but show limited vocabulary and poor general musical knowledge. Progress is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 3. In 1999, the GCSE results were above the national average but standards in the current Year 11 group are below average. Higher attaining pupils show a secure understanding of musical language but most pupils do not know how to develop tunes. Progress is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 4. In the Sixth Form, current standards are above average and compositions show good understanding of a range of styles and techniques.

26. Attainment in physical education is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 3. Pupils in Year 9 have a sound knowledge of positions in netball, understand the role of the umpire, move into space well and produce occasional fluent attacking patterns of play. Progress is good in Key Stage 3. Attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 4. Pupils in Year 10 have a sound grasp of the main factors that contribute to healthy life style, manage their own warm-up effectively, model circuit-training activities correctly and record their results accurately. Progress is satisfactory in Key Stage 4.
27. The attainment of pupils at the end of Key Stage 3 is in line with the expectations of the Warwickshire Agreed Syllabus for religious education. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the key features of belief and practice in Christianity and other major faiths. Progress is good in Key Stage 3. In the GCSE short course in religious studies in 1999, the results were below the national average. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the attitudes of different Christian denominations and Islam to issues such as euthanasia and abortion are good. Pupils appreciate that there is a moral and spiritual dimension to life and can make personal responses to difficult questions such as the possibility of life after death. Progress is satisfactory in Key Stage 4.
28. Speaking and listening skills have improved since the last OFSTED inspection. Pupils are very willing to volunteer ideas, are much more articulate in formal situations and learn to use sustained speech and to adopt an appropriate tone. For the most part, pupils read well with good comprehension skills and an ability to see the sub-text of what they read and to understand nuances. Many can handle unfamiliar texts with relative ease. Writing shows more technical expertise than was suggested in the last report. Although many pupils write in a sustained and concentrated manner, not all pupils use personal initiative and research skills as a matter of course.
29. The numeracy skills of the pupils are sufficient to support their learning across the curriculum and they increase in each key stage. Science, geography and history make significant contributions to the development of numeracy skills. In history, pupils handle population and census data and teachers encourage the use of number, graphs and percentages for analysis. Pupils in geography handle statistics well and are able to produce compound graphs. In science, pupils collect and display data in many forms and use a variety of units, including compound units of velocity and mass. In some modern foreign language lessons, pupils play number games in the target language and produce graphs using spreadsheets.

### 36. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

1. The quality of pupils' attitudes to work, their relationships and personal development have been sustained since the last OFSTED inspection. Their standards of behaviour, however, are not consistently good.
2. Attitudes to work remain good. This has a positive impact on the standards achieved. Pupils are well motivated, enjoy learning and are keen to respond to the challenges offered. They listen carefully to their teacher, or when others are speaking, answer questions confidently and make sensible contributions to discussions. Pupils are ready to work and pursue each task they are given with purpose, determination and good levels of concentration. Their work is usually neat and well presented.

3. Most pupils with special educational needs show positive attitudes and a willingness to learn. A minority find it difficult to sustain their concentration, especially in larger groups or in groups without support when they sometimes lack confidence.
4. Some aspects of behaviour have deteriorated since the last OFSTED inspection, when it was described as excellent, and is now only satisfactory overall. In class, behaviour is consistently good, and often very good. Around the school, however, it is far less positive. In unsupervised corridors and public areas, pupils are often rowdy, and many instances of pushing and shoving were observed during the inspection, particularly at changeover times in between lessons. This constitutes a potential health and safety hazard. Exclusions are dealt with appropriately, and have decreased significantly since the last inspection. No incidents of bullying were observed during the inspection, and pupils consider that it is not a problem. In general terms, pupils shows due respect for the school's fabric and fitments. There is no graffiti, but they frequently drop litter and eat food in corridors in clear contravention of school rules.
5. The quality of relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and staff is good. This makes a significant contribution to the quality of education provided. There is a relaxed and harmonious atmosphere within the school. Pupils are usually polite and always ready to be helpful. In lessons they work well together in pairs or groups and share ideas and equipment sensibly. During their breaks, and when eating in the cafeteria, they are friendly and sociable.
6. Pupils' personal development is also good. They all feel part of the school community and are clearly aware of and respect each other's rights feelings and beliefs. Pupils are confident and articulate, but opportunities for them to work independently or to plan their own learning are often limited. When they do occur, they are used productively as, for example, in geography and physical education. Pupils appreciate the merit system, and consider that rewards and sanctions are operated fairly. Although the pupils accept increasing responsibility as they grow older, the prefects are not used as well as they could be. Pupils are generous in their support for charity and this greatly enhances their awareness of the needs of others. Charities week, for example, is well organised by students in the Sixth Form and is very well supported by pupils and staff. Pupils in Year 10 and in the Sixth Form acquire valuable knowledge about future careers through the work experience scheme, with many of them arranging their own placements. Involvement with activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award, the Youth Award Scheme, residential visits and overseas trips also helps to enhance their personal values.

#### 42. **Attendance**

1. The reported level of attendance has fallen slightly since the last OFSTED inspection but, overall, it remains just above the national average for secondary schools. However, current efforts to encourage better attendance by pupils are proving successful, and so far this year it is already showing a marked improvement, particularly in Year 11. Unauthorised absence remains well below the national average for secondary schools.
2. Lateness was not a problem during the inspection. Almost all pupils arrived on time, and very little time is lost when they moved from lesson to lesson during the day.

### 44. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

#### 44. **Teaching**

1. The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in 91 per cent of lessons and it is good and sometimes very good or excellent in 61 per cent of lessons. The overall quality of teaching makes a positive contribution to the progress made by the pupils and students. The central management team have laid

great emphasis on the quality of teaching and it has improved since the last OFSTED inspection.

2. Overall, the teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of their subjects. In English, most teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of their subject. The teachers of mathematics have very good subject knowledge and the science teachers have good subject knowledge and are enthusiastic about imparting this knowledge and understanding to the pupils. In art, teachers are up-to-date in their knowledge and expertise. In design and technology, most teachers use their knowledge and understanding of techniques to plan appropriate lessons. In the best lessons in geography, the teachers have very secure knowledge of their subject and are confident and competent practitioners. The long serving teachers of history have a strong belief in the value of their subject and their enthusiasm is infectious. The information technology co-ordinator is well qualified and experienced but other teachers have less secure knowledge and sometimes lack confidence. The music teachers have good subject knowledge and very good musicianship, for example in accompanying and arranging. In physical education, the teachers' overall knowledge and understanding are good and within their subject areas it is very good.
3. The teachers' expectations promote satisfactory standards of achievement. In some English lessons, expectations are high and pupils are constantly challenged. In the least successful lessons, however, the pace is often slow and expectations are too low. Drama lessons almost always offer a very high degree of challenge and stimulus. In mathematics, the effectiveness of the teaching is reduced by modest lesson objectives and a lack of pace. When teaching is very good in science, teachers have high expectations and time is used to the full. However, when it is unsatisfactory in science, the pupils are not sufficiently challenged by the work. Expectations are high for the presentation of coursework in design and technology and many exemplar projects are available to encourage pupils. In geography, the best lessons are delivered with good pace and challenge. In the best lessons in French, the teacher used the target language throughout and had high expectations of all the pupils but less successful lessons are conducted at a slow pace. In music, expectations are too low, especially in Key Stage 3; tasks do not challenge pupils and often too much time is allowed for them to be completed. In the best teaching in religious education, teachers use secure subject knowledge to challenge pupils through skilful questioning.
4. Overall, teachers plan their work well. In English, lesson plans are generally well focused. They have clear objectives and contain opportunities for the practice of all modes of language teaching. Planning at all levels is comprehensive in drama and schemes of work are carefully planned and reviewed. In design and technology, schemes of work have been prepared for each subject area but these need further details of the time to be spent on each topic. In geography, teaching is well-structured and well-directed. All the history teachers prepare lessons well and give good attention to learning skills. The scheme of work in information technology provides a structure so that less experienced teachers can be used, but this limits expectations in Key Stage 3 and reduces the effectiveness of lesson planning. In modern foreign languages, some lessons, but not all, are planned to cover the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. In music, lesson planning does not relate to the pupils' needs. Lesson planning in physical education is satisfactory and the activities in most lessons are progressive. In religious education, planning takes account of the needs of individual pupils.
5. When teaching is most effective a range of appropriate methods and strategies is employed. In science, teachers use resources effectively to illustrate and develop pupils' understanding. A good use of information technology is being introduced into art. In design and technology, resources are used effectively and organisational strategies are efficient when pupils are directed to varied activities in textiles and to individual projects in other areas. The introduction of more enquiry work has broadened the appeal and learning opportunities in geography. The history teachers use primary sources for historical evaluation. In modern foreign languages, the lack of authentic resources means that pupils have insufficient opportunity to experience directly the language and culture, and there is an over-reliance on photocopied worksheets. In the most successful lessons in religious education, teachers challenge pupils through skilful questioning.
6. In the majority of lessons the pupils are well managed and they achieve a good standard of discipline. Teachers know the pupils well and relationships between the pupils and the teachers are good. Teachers

use firm sensitive control and support the pupils in their learning.

7. The majority of the teachers are aware of pupils' special educational needs. In English, German, history, physical education and religious education, the needs of the pupils are addressed through work that is organised to cope with the range of attainment in lessons. This is less true in mathematics, science, French, art and music. The quality of teaching and support for pupils with special educational needs promotes their good progress. Teachers are well prepared to teach pupils with special educational needs and identify them in lesson plans. In the best lessons, the teachers have high expectations that challenge the pupils appropriately and they plan and organise their lessons to give the necessary support to the pupils. Teachers, support staff and visiting specialists support pupils well in lessons. Individual attention is often provided and work is well matched to the pupils' needs that are clearly identified in their individual education plans. The quality of teaching by the specialist teachers is uniformly high and learning support is uniformly high. When specialist staff work in classrooms, there is good rapport between them and the class teachers and their skills are often used effectively to benefit all the pupils in the class.
8. Pupils' work is marked regularly in both key stages and in the Sixth Form. In English, marking is generally conscientious and constructive advice is offered to pupils. Assessment is thorough and developmental in mathematics. Teachers mark work carefully in science but comments are not clear enough to enable pupils to know what is good about their work and how it can be improved. In art, it is not always clear what pupils have to do to improve their work. Teachers assess pupils' work in design and technology and give advice to make improvements possible. Pupils' work in geography is regularly marked and there are very helpful comments on written work that aid their progress. The marking of pupils' work in Key Stage 4 in religious education is inconsistent and does not always inform pupils of the standards they are achieving.
9. Most departments set homework regularly. In English, a consistently implemented homework policy is in place, which complements well work done in lessons. Homework is used in mathematics to consolidate learning or to allow pupils to prepare data for use in following lessons. In art, homework is good in Key Stage 3. Homework is set in design and technology but it could give greater emphasis to increasing knowledge and understanding. The policy of not setting homework in information technology limits progress and reduces the status of the subject in the eyes of younger pupils. Homework is set regularly in music and religious education.

### 53. **The curriculum and assessment**

1. There is a sound curriculum that is regularly monitored and reviewed. Curriculum planning involves heads of subject department, key stage co-ordinators, the central management team and the governors' curriculum committee. Since the last OFSTED inspection teaching time has been increased to 25 hours each week to bring it in line with national recommendations.
2. The curriculum has satisfactory breadth and balance at Key Stage 3 and meets statutory requirements. The time provided for subject teaching is generally adequate. More time has been allocated to information technology in Key Stage 3, which is now taught as a discrete subject in Years 7 and 8 and across the curriculum in Year 9. However, there is insufficient time to teach mathematics in Year 9, which reduces opportunities for pupils to progress to required levels, the curriculum does not sufficiently meet the needs of all pupils in science and the time allocated to French at Key Stage 3 is low. Generally, equality of access is good at Key Stage 3 and no pupils are disapplied.
3. In Key Stage 4, the time allocated to National Curriculum subjects is close to the national average but since the previous OFSTED inspection more time has been made available for religious education. Statutory requirements are met. There is a broad core of GCSE subjects that includes design and technology, a modern foreign language and the short GCSE course in religious education. Optional subjects include drama, physical education, child development, the Youth Award Scheme (ASDAN) and a Certificate of Achievement course in French in Year 10. Pupils can study the GNVQ Part 1

information technology course in place of the two options. The curriculum offered is suitably varied at Key Stage 4 given the nature and size of the school and provides good flexibility. The optional programme provides good opportunity to study areas of common interest such as two arts or two humanities or two modern foreign language subjects. There is also scope for selected pupils to follow a triple award course in science within the double award time available and this provides a very good foundation for progression to the Sixth Form. The Key Stage 4 options reflect the school's policy and ensure that the curriculum is accessible to all pupils. Only the two top sets in Years 10 and 11 take English literature. In Key Stage 4, one pupil is disapplied in Year 11 in modern foreign languages and six pupils do not study a modern foreign language in Year 10. These pupils undertake an alternative practical vocational course at Warwickshire College at Leamington Spa that is more appropriate for their needs.

4. In the Sixth Form statutory requirements are met. There is a good range of A level subjects for relatively few students and this results in small teaching groups in many subjects. Consideration needs to be given as to ways in which group interaction, discussion and student experience can be increased within such groups. The time allocated for teaching some A level classes is insufficient to fully cover syllabus requirements. The school continues to offer a range of GNVQ courses but only GNVQ business studies at intermediate and advanced level is currently taught. Since the previous OFSTED inspection the provision for religious education in the Sixth Form has been increased, but the time allocation does not meet the time recommended for the Warwickshire Agreed Syllabus. In the Sixth Form, the school offers the community sports leaders award and opportunities to study for vocational French. These are positive developments. There is a personal development programme in the Sixth Form that includes a programme of work experience but there is no general studies course offered.
5. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. All pupils have full access to the whole curriculum, with support provided when possible. Pupils are grouped appropriately and are well integrated. Withdrawal arrangements are satisfactory. Teachers' planning reflects the match of the curriculum to the needs of the pupils. Special attention is paid to developing the literacy and numeracy skills of the pupils with special educational needs, who are taught in smaller sets.
6. Links with primary schools are generally sound; the head of Year 7 is responsible for the oversight of pastoral and academic links. There is scope for some further links in core subjects. Overall, there is a good curriculum foundation in Key Stage 3 for pupils proceeding to Key Stage 4. The information technology curriculum in Key Stage 3 lacks progression and there is a lack of co-ordination of the pupils' experience across subjects and this adversely affects progress. The curriculum provides a suitable range of GCSE subject choices and progression for most pupils wishing to proceed on to post-16 education.
7. A very good range of extra-curricular sporting events enhances curricular provision. A full and successful programme of sporting activities exists and the school has a wide range of representative teams for both boys and girls at local, area and county level. The sports training sessions are well supported by pupils with half of pupils and eleven staff involved in over ten different activities. A good range of non-sporting activities is available, for example, in music and there are regular drama and art activities. The modern foreign languages department organises visits to France and there is a variety of fieldwork activities in geography, history and science. School links have been forged with Japan and Hong Kong and there are curricular projects in design and technology in conjunction with a school in Sweden. There is also a very full activities week programme. There are numerous after-school clubs including one for the Duke of Edinburgh Award.
8. There is a well-planned and valuable personal and social education course. It provides good progression from more basic information in Year 7 to more complex discussion, role-play and decision making in later years. Statutory requirements for sex education and drugs education are met. Careers education and guidance are effectively co-ordinated by the careers co-ordinator and include a helpful and comprehensive programme in Year 9 in preparation for choosing options for Key Stage 4. There is a two-week, valuable work experience placement for every pupil in the summer term in Year 10 that is usually organised by the pupils themselves. All students in Year 12 undertake a one-week work experience placement. The school has strong and supportive links with Warwickshire Education

Business Partnership and a developing link with local industry through the GNVQ business studies programme.

9. The school's assessment policy is under review and is to be revised during the present school year. The current assessment policy is complex and unwieldy and does not consistently assess pupils' attainment within and between subjects. Consequently, the measurement of progress over time is not always clear to pupils and parents. The system needs review. Procedures and practice for day-to-day assessment vary between subjects. They are good in English, geography, history, modern foreign languages, physical education and religious education. Although there are inconsistencies in marking, both within and between subjects, it is generally thorough and at best it provides useful written comment that help pupils improve the standard of their work. The central management team monitor marking and individual pupils' progress with regular sampling of a selection of pupils' work from all age groups. This has contributed to the improvement in marking standards in the school.
10. The school uses Key Stage 2 National Curriculum test results, reading and spelling tests and cognitive ability tests (CATs) to determine benchmark levels for pupils on entry. These together with end of Key Stage 3 assessments help the school in the evaluation of pupil performance. In Key Stage 4 a useful process of targeting predicted grades for GCSE has been developed for all subjects but it is not consistently nor systematically applied. The school also uses Year 11 information (YELLIS) and A level information (ALIS) value added data and predictions in Year 11 and in the Sixth Form where close and helpful monitoring of student performance occurs. However, the school generally does not make full use of the assessment data available and this needs addressing.
11. Assessment is regularly discussed, both formally and informally, in most departments and is generally well used to inform curricular planning and in the setting of pupil groups. In art, for example, pupil evaluations, which describe areas of work that pupils have found difficult, are used for this purpose. In some subjects, such as art, pupil and teacher evaluation regularly occurs at the end of project work or units of study but the practice needs extending more widely across the school
12. The arrangements for assessing pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory. The good communication between staff, including the special educational needs co-ordinator, assists the early diagnosis of pupils with special educational needs. This results in pupils receiving additional support and individual educational plans when appropriate. These programmes for pupils with special educational needs provide clear strategies to assist teachers in their planning. Every term, the special educational needs co-ordinator reviews and updates individual educational plans in consultation with teachers and, when necessary, external agencies. New targets and strategies that reflect individual pupils' achievements and progress are introduced whenever appropriate.
13. Pupils' progress is reported to parents regularly throughout all key stages with termly grade scores and a detailed annual report which comments on pupils' ability and application and includes target grades. They do not however indicate what pupils have studied.
14. A National Record of Achievement accredited by Warwickshire Education Business Partnership is produced in Years 10-13. The records are of good quality and many employers value the recognition of what has been achieved.

#### **67. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

1. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development remains satisfactory overall. The school substantially meets its aims to promote the development of pupils as whole persons and as responsible members of society. Their spiritual development, however, is not well promoted. Pupils with special educational needs have access to the same provision as the rest of the pupils.
2. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is unsatisfactory. Amongst curricular subjects it is most

strongly evident in religious education. Here pupils are encouraged to see the relevance of religious teaching in their own lives and to appreciate its relevance in the lives of believers of different faiths. They are challenged to reflect on their own beliefs and to evaluate those of others through issues such as life and death. In English, they have good opportunities to express their feelings through drama and literature. Although some opportunities arise in history, geography, art and music, spiritual development is much more limited in other areas of the curriculum.

3. There is an appropriately planned programme of weekly Year Group assemblies and of a 'Thought for the day' in morning tutor sessions. This, however, has little overall impact on pupils' spiritual, moral or social development. Opportunities provided on these occasions for pupils to reflect on issues raised or to contemplate in moments of quiet prayer are very limited. When they do occur, they are frequently superficial and hasty. There is also rarely any acknowledgement of a deity. Acts of collective worship, therefore, do not meet statutory requirements and, as such, have not improved since the last OFSTED inspection when the matter was raised as a key issue for the school to address.
4. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is generally good. Teachers are good role models and promote a strong moral code. They provide good guidance for acceptable behaviour and caring attitudes. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong, and are expected to behave well and to respect others. An effective programme of personal and social development provides good opportunities for pupils to consider wider moral, social and ethical issues. As they grow older, pupils are encouraged to take increasing responsibility for their own work and they respond well. Good relationships exist throughout the school. Pupils work and play well together. This is very evident in sport and in drama, where, for example, a group of pupils was observed building a stage set, complete with lighting and sound. Generous support for charity and links with elderly residents enhance pupils' awareness of the needs of others. School and Year Group Councils enable pupils to contribute to the school community, but their roles are not effectively developed.
5. Provision for pupils' cultural development remains satisfactory. Pupils learn about different cultures and civilisations through history, geography, art, literature and drama, but opportunities for them to develop an understanding of Britain as a multi-cultural society remain limited. Where they do exist, they are mainly restricted to the study of different faiths in religious education and recipes in food technology. Good use is made of a local arts centre at Compton Verney, and there are organised visits to Oxford to study architecture. Through dance pupils explore rhythms of the world. In a Year 8 lesson, for example, pupils gained an appreciation of African culture through music from the Lion King. Foreign visits and language exchanges continue to provide good first-hand opportunities for pupils to experience the way of life in other countries.

## 72. **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

1. The school provides satisfactory support and guidance for its pupils, but guidance on appropriate behaviour outside lessons is inconsistent. Pupils in Year 7, and their parents, are introduced into the school with understanding and given clear guidance about its routines and expectations. Older pupils in Year 11 and in the Sixth Form are given effective guidance about careers and further education. Almost all parents indicate that their children like coming to school and are well supported by staff.
2. Form tutors operate the pastoral system well, and procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development, behaviour and attendance are effective. Any pupil giving cause for concern is quickly identified and appropriate action is taken. Systems for tracking pupils' academic progress and achievements as they move through the school are satisfactory. There is a good system of record keeping but the data collected are not yet analysed sufficiently to enable clear and appropriate targets to be set. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they make good progress towards their individual targets.
3. The school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting high standards of behaviour and discipline, but these are not always implemented consistently. In particular, school rules are not enforced

properly when pupils are out of class and, as a consequence of this, their conduct is often unsatisfactory on these occasions. Rewards and sanctions are appropriate and operated fairly. Effective arrangements are in place to deal with bullying. Pupils are confident that any reported incidents are taken seriously and dealt with efficiently.

4. Registers are marked promptly at the start of sessions but they are not always completed properly. They are, however, monitored regularly and effective measures are in place for investigating unexplained absence. The recent drive to encourage better attendance is proving effective. Attendance is improving and is now at least satisfactory for all year groups. Rates of attendance are reported appropriately to parents.
5. Procedures for ensuring pupils' general welfare are satisfactory. Local authority guidelines have been adopted for child protection and two members of staff have designated responsibility for liaising with outside agencies if cases of abuse are suspected. Suitable health and safety arrangements are in place, and full risk assessments are carried out annually. Pupils are supervised carefully in lessons, but they are often inadequately supervised in corridors and public areas during breaks and in between lessons. Rules governing the use of stairs are usually followed closely. Cafeteria arrangements operate smoothly. There are clear procedures for dealing with accidents and illness, and a fire drill is held each term.

#### 77. **Partnership with parents and the community**

1. Links with parents have improved since the last OFSTED inspection and are now generally good. Parents feel welcome in school and are encouraged to support their children's learning. Parental discussions groups are well supported and there is good support when special workshops are arranged. Parents also regularly give up their time to help with various after-school sporting activities. The school does not now have a Parent Teachers Association, but receives many generous voluntary contributions from parents that are used to enhance curricular facilities.
2. Communications with parents remain satisfactory. They are kept fully informed about all aspects of life in the school through ongoing correspondence and newsletters, and most are happy with the information they receive about their children's progress. Written annual reports are generally informative and give appropriate indications of where improvements could be made. Overall, parents find the school is approachable if they have any immediate worries or concerns, but express mixed views about the way matters raised are handled. The prospectus meets requirements. The governors' annual report, however, lacks the necessary information on the election of parent governors, progress towards implementing the action plan following the last OFSTED action plan and details of authorised absence.
3. Communications with parents of pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory and appropriate arrangements are made to involve the parents in the education of their children. Most parents are very supportive and appreciative of the school's work in this area and are keen to help in any way they can at home. There are strong links between the school and the many outside agencies who support the pupils with special educational needs.
4. Good links have been sustained with the local community and these have a beneficial effect on pupils' learning. Organised visits to places of interest and visitors to the school, such as drama instructors and artists in residence, extend the work pupils do in class and provide good first-hand experiences for them. Residential visits and foreign exchanges make significant contributions to pupils' personal and cultural development. Several pupils continue to make regular visits to elderly people in Kineton as part of the school's involvement with the local community. Pupils also generously support charity. This helps to raise their awareness of the needs of others. There are well-established educational links with local business, and helpful work experience opportunities are provided through the school's careers guidance programme. A web site has recently been produced, and pupils are now starting to use e-mail and video-conferencing facilities to communicate with other pupils around the world.

## **81. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

### **81. Leadership and management**

1. The governors and the central management team have established, through an extensive consultation process, a clear set of aims for the school. These aims are incorporated in the school improvement plan, which contains a strategic overview and sets the drive for school improvement in context. The governing body is actively involved in all major decisions and provides advice, support and expertise in key areas.
2. The headteacher and the chair of governors have a concise view of the development cycles that the school has been through and have a good understanding of the stage that the school is at in its current cycle of development. The aims and the school improvement plan provide a good basis for the development of the school but the action plan lacks detail on success criteria and how it is going to be implemented and monitored and evaluated.
3. The governors receive an extensive account of test and examination results each year and have agreed challenging targets for the next three years. The school has begun to collect an extensive array of data on the performance of the pupils. However, the data are not kept on a central database or in a form that makes it easy to monitor the progress of individual pupils across the key stages. Targets are set for individual pupils but they are not analysed sufficiently at individual pupil level in order to evaluate progress and to inform the next phase of target setting.
4. The newly extended central management team have properly established individual responsibilities that are reviewed annually and have established a common sense of purpose. The key stage co-ordinators are already making an important contribution to the management of the school. Subject leaders, in common with others in middle management positions, have newly adopted job descriptions. These provide a good basis for raising attainment but the school needs to develop criteria against which the central management team can monitor and evaluate the performance of those in crucial middle management positions.
5. The responsibility for evaluating the quality of teaching and the standards of pupils' achievements has been extended from the central management team and the key stage co-ordinators to subject leaders. In English, overall leadership is good but there has not been enough opportunity for monitoring teaching and sharing good practice. In mathematics, there is sound practice but the prediction of attainment and individual target setting are underdeveloped. The science department runs smoothly but there is little monitoring of teaching. The analysis of test and examination results to improve pupils' performance needs to be addressed. In art, the pupils' assessment sheets are not held centrally in the department and this makes it difficult to compare class achievement and monitor individual performance. In the geography department monitoring, but no evaluation of teaching and learning or the work of the department occurs. In modern foreign languages, day-to-day planning and the pupils' performance are not monitored closely enough to ensure a consistent quality of teaching and to raise attainment.
6. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is effective. The special needs co-ordinator provides appropriate direction, guidance and support for the teachers who work with the pupils within their classes or take smaller groups to give one-to-one support. All departments have appropriate policies for special educational needs and there is good liaison between departments and the special educational needs staff.
7. Overall, there is a coherence and consistency between the school's aims and values and its policies. This reflects the strength of the governors' overview as well as that of the central management team. This has generated a good basis for development and the school now needs to concentrate on the detail of how the plans will be implemented and then monitored and evaluated.

8. Documentation produced by the school is thorough. The staff handbook is a comprehensive account of all the procedures in the school. All committee meetings are minuted carefully and staff are kept fully informed of all new developments. This leads to purposeful relationships at all levels and contributes to the development of a common sense of purpose.

#### 89. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

1. The number, qualifications and experience of teaching staff are generally well matched to the demands of the curriculum. A few teachers are required to work in more than one subject area and some non-specialist teaching of religious education is necessary in Key Stages 3 and 4. The teachers concerned are well supported by the department and possess generally adequate subject knowledge, which has also been improved by appropriate in-service training. In some subjects the staffing is appropriate to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs but in English, art, geography, modern foreign languages and music there is insufficient support.
2. There are more men than women in the most senior positions in the school, which was also the case at the time of the previous OFSTED inspection. Below this level, there is a more even balance of female and male teachers holding posts of responsibility. Staff roles and responsibilities are generally clearly stated in teachers' job descriptions, which have recently been revised. Numbers, experience and qualifications of administrative and technical support staff, including support for pupils who have special educational needs, are generally satisfactory, although the school does not employ a professionally qualified librarian.
3. There has been a relatively high turnover of staff in recent years and the school has developed a very good programme to induct teachers who are new to the school, including those who are starting their teaching careers. In addition to relying on a more senior mentor, a good feature of this programme is the allocation of a "critical friend" from among those who have recently experienced the induction process themselves. Good support for the managerial aspects of the role is currently provided where a relatively inexperienced teacher has assumed subject responsibility. The school's appraisal system, which was well regarded by teachers, is currently being redesigned in order to bring it in line with new national requirements. The school has good arrangements for the professional development of staff. These are linked to whole-school and departmental development plans and have the flexibility to respond to personal development needs. Departmental responses to professional development are inconsistent but most use the arrangements effectively to improve classroom performance and standards. There has been appropriate in-service development on special educational needs.
4. A key issue for the school to address as a result of the previous OFSTED inspection was to "continue to improve the accommodation through the School Development Plan, in particular, the provision of better heating for the sports hall and storage for pupils' bags". These improvements have taken place. Other improvements to the accommodation have also been made in response to the previous inspection. A number of temporary classrooms have been removed and others have been upgraded and this, together with a substantial programme of re-roofing, has had a positive effect on the general quality of the external environment. There is now good provision for music, although practice rooms are spread throughout the school. Accommodation for information technology has been improved. A programme of asbestos removal is taking place. Other improvements are planned, notably to science laboratories, as finances allow. Some internal redecoration has recently taken place.
5. Although clean, a substantial proportion of the building is badly in need of redecoration and lacks stimulation. The quality of presentation of displays of pupils' work, particularly in public areas of the school, does little to enhance the quality of the learning environment. Litter is a problem in many parts of the building. Most subjects are taught in adequate specialist rooms, which are conveniently situated. Exceptions are English, where rooms are too small and scattered around the site, and the design technology area, which needs refurbishment including improvements to provision for multi-material use. The accommodation for pupils with special educational needs is inadequate. The number of pupils and teachers using the two small rooms makes them very crowded and it is difficult for the teachers to organise their work and prepare materials.

6. A key issue from the previous OFSTED inspection was to “replace obsolete computers”. The school has made good progress on this issue. The new operating systems which were installed made existing resources less productive and further improvements have since been made by taking advantage of interest free county loans at a time when the school’s own finances have been insufficient to respond to these needs. Learning resources are good for music, physical education and religious education. For most other areas of the curriculum they are just adequate, which was also the case at the time of the previous inspection. The learning resources for pupils with special educational needs are relevant to their ages and requirements except in modern foreign languages, where resources are lacking, and religious education, where there are insufficient computers. In art, more resources are required to introduce three-dimensional work, and ceramic work cannot be developed because the kiln is out of action. Resources for the majority of subject areas generally reflect the variety of pupils' interest and present gender and cultural diversity in a positive way. The work of women, black artists and contemporary movements is under-represented in art. The school library is under-funded and under-stocked but its capacity to support the work of subjects and respond to individual pupil interests has recently improved by rejoining the county schools’ loan scheme.

#### 95. **The efficiency of the school**

1. Overall efficiency within the school is very good. The school has very effective development planning in place, with appropriate personnel, costs and evaluation criteria identified for each target. This process has served them well over recent years of severe financial constraint. Cost centres within the school reflect the high quality of development planning and link aims to the whole-school plan. Effective planning identifies resource needs and this is linked to budget decisions that are integrated into departmental funding.
2. The school’s income per pupil is very low compared to national figures. Spending by the school on staffing and resources are in line with national norms in relation to the overall budget. The school has managed an eleven per cent reduction in staff since the last OFSTED inspection and the staff contact ratio is now 80.7 per cent, which is well above national levels. Expenditure on resources and accommodation has been maintained within limits set by the governors, with advice from the central management team. The aim of governors has been to avoid the operation of a deficit budget. The school has been active in securing additional funding and has utilised this income appropriately for accommodation improvement, developments in provision of information and communication technology, an artist in residence and other areas specified by governors. The school was unable to attract sufficient matched funding to secure Technology College status, but intends to try again in 2000.
3. The management of financial activities in the school is very good. The auditors' report comments on satisfactory systems being in place with “excellent control and co-ordination for all financial aspects” and the active involvement of the governing body. Good financial control extends to departments, which receive monthly spending updates. General administrative activities are well organised and offer effective support within the school. Specific funds targeted for special needs education are correctly used and accounted for.
4. The whole governing body is making decisions on funding allocation during this time of financial constraint, ensuring that full consideration is given to pressing problems. The school is now entering a period of growth, it has registered as a charitable trust and there is now an opportunity to return to a more developmental model of financial planning.
5. Since the last inspection, the school has targeted funds at resolving key issues raised at the last inspection. The provision of information and communication technology remains an ongoing target for development. The governors and the central management team are currently discussing best options to maintain a supply of up-to-date equipment for the school.
6. Overall, pupils' attainment and the quality of education provided within the school are satisfactory, use of finance is very effective, expenditure per pupil is very low and the use of staff is very efficient.

Consequently, the school offers good value for money.

101.  
**CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

**PART B:**

101.  
**MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

**ENGLISH,**

101. **English**

1. The attainment of pupils in English on entry to the school is close to the national average. Standardised tests in reading and spelling, taken on entry, show that the average attainment in reading and writing is just below the national average and that a significant percentage of pupils have special educational needs related to linguistic skills.
2. In the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 3 in 1999, 58 per cent of pupils attained level 5 or above and 29 per cent reached level 6 or above, broadly in line with the national averages. The school is very aware of the need for emphasis on speaking and listening skills and does a great deal to promote them. Pupils' written work often shows the ability to write thoughtfully and an understanding of many genres, as in a Year 7 lesson in which pupils were planning a trial in formal register of the villain, Captain Jaggery, in the novel 'Charlotte Doyle' which they had just read. They were very successful in capturing the sense of the courtroom and its conventions. Presentation is often neat and structured. Throughout Key Stage 3 progress is good, especially for pupils of average attainment and some with special educational needs
3. The GCSE results in 1999 were in line with the national averages. In English, 64 per cent achieved grades A\*-C, a percentage matched overall in the last three years. In English literature in 1999, over 98 per cent achieved grades A\*-C, a percentage well above the national average. English results have remained generally consistent over the last three years and, although the entry in English literature is confined to the two top sets in each year, results have improved. In Key Stage 4, progress is good. Many pupils show commitment and are ready to work hard, with thought and care. Pupils learn to write lucidly, as observed in Year 10, about their views on the characters in 'Our Day Out' and show sensitive understanding of poems in the examination anthology, as well as being able to form their own coherent judgements. Again, average attaining pupils and some with special educational needs make the most rapid progress.
4. For the last two years 100 per cent of pupils have achieved A-E grades at A level in English language and in 1999, the percentage of A-C grades rose considerably, well in line with course expectations. In English literature, results are also well in line with national expectations. They read texts from all periods with interest. They need guidance on approaching texts, but become increasingly more capable of extracting meaning for themselves, as seen in an Upper Sixth lesson on 'The Selected Poems of Edward Thomas' and a Lower Sixth lesson on 'King Lear'. Those taking the A level language course become increasingly familiar with lexis, style and register. Some pupils occasionally tend to rely too heavily on the ideas of their teachers and to offer too little personal response. Throughout the Sixth Form progress is good. Pupils learn to work with interest, and an increasing ease of familiarity with texts. Teachers convey much of their enthusiasm for the subject to pupils and are repaid by their good response. The quality of teaching is making a marked impact on pupils' progress in the Sixth Form.
5. The attitudes of pupils are usually satisfactory. Most listen with interest to the opinions of their teachers and fellow pupils. Levels of concentration and perseverance vary a great deal with ability, as does the motivation to study. In classes where there more boys than girls, which tend to be the lower sets, concentration flags and pupils are less co-operative. In Key Stage 4, there are many examples of pupils who provide significant time and energy in order to produce good work and take a pride in it. In the Sixth Form, all students demonstrate a high sense of responsibility towards their work. Relationships with teachers are usually good, with an ethos of mutual respect permeating lessons, though some instances of poorer behaviour were seen, usually in sets largely composed of boys. Some pupils are reluctant to develop the skills of working by themselves and rely on their teachers to tell them exactly what to do.

6. The teaching of English is at least satisfactory in the majority of lessons and in only a very few lessons is it unsatisfactory. In half of the lessons it is good or very good. Most teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject. The least successful lessons are those in which work is not sufficiently graded for all abilities, where control is not secure and pace is therefore slow. In these lessons, pupils often work in groups or pairs instead of independently, methods are not sufficiently varied to keep the interest of pupils for the long lesson periods and expectations of pupils are often too low. The best lessons are those where the teacher conveys interest and enthusiasm to the pupils and where clear targets are set and reinforced by good classroom management and control. In these lessons, expectations are high, pupils are constantly challenged and all levels of attainment receive advice, support and attention.
7. Schemes of work have been devised which are helping teachers to plan across parallel classes within a year, while keeping some autonomy over their methods and approach. Lesson plans are generally well focused, with clear objectives and they contain opportunities for practice of all modes of language teaching. Oral work is always well stimulated and pupils have much practice at speaking in different styles and registers. Good use is made of literature in those classes where it is taught. Where extension work is given to higher attaining pupils, as seen in a Year 11 lesson, it is eagerly accepted. Strategies for teaching differ from teacher to teacher and there is scope for more sharing of good classroom practice. The standard of discipline and management is usually satisfactory. Many classes are managed through friendly relations and respect, but in some teachers' classes pace is not always brisk and concentration is sometimes allowed to lapse. The assessment procedures used to track pupils' progress and to record it are good. However, there is still scope at all three key stages for more analysis of examination data, in order to isolate areas for improvement and strengthen standards of attainment. A consistently implemented homework policy is in place, which complements work done in lessons well. Marking is generally good in the degree of conscientious attention and constructive advice offered to pupils. Although teaching is generally good, some teachers do not sufficiently stimulate pupils to a sense of the beauty and power of words through literature, preferring to stay with the literal level of comprehension rather than exploring the richness of imagery and style.
8. The leadership of the department is good. The head of department is clearly nurturing a capable department, containing many committed teachers, with vision and energy. Although she has made great strides in this area, there is not yet enough opportunity for the monitoring of teaching and sharing of good practice in the classroom. The continuous review of the curriculum, the professional development of teachers and the use of the results of monitoring to set appropriate targets for all pupils are all areas of strength within the department. The head of department is concentrating on these areas, in order to sustain and improve progress. Resources in the department are adequate, but there is too little inviting fiction in the library, as well as a thin supply of reference books, and few other resources available to pupils, such as CD-ROMs. The integration of information technology skills into the curriculum is proving to be a strong factor in improving the level of literacy. Accommodation is inadequate, since the small suite of rooms used by the English department is not large enough to contain all classes and the size of the rooms is cramped for many classes. Other departmental rooms are placed at a distance, in mobile classrooms and this makes the deployment of resources difficult, as well as wasting much teachers' and pupils' time in transition from class to class. The opportunity for the use of drama in English teaching afforded by the drama studio is used to the full and with great success and benefit to the subject.
9. The last OFSTED report commented on the significant difference in attainment between boys and girls. Although this issue has been targeted and some measures put in place, the problem remains, though there are signs of improvement in Key Stage 3 classes. Examination results, though still fluctuating a little at Key Stage 3 and GCSE, are more stable and show steady progression. Speaking and listening skills have improved, in that pupils are very willing to volunteer ideas, are much more articulate in formal situations and learn through the school to use sustained speech and to adopt an appropriate tone. Writing shows rather more technical expertise than was suggested in the last report. Other areas that attracted comment were the need to monitor work more closely, which is now being done well and accurately. Accommodation is still scattered and unwieldy. The head of department has begun to develop many areas with commitment and strong management, co-ordinating and training teachers in order to improve attainment further. This is a strong department, with much potential.

## 110. **Speaking, listening, reading and writing**

1. The pupils have begun to acquire a sense of formal appropriate speech by the end of Key Stage 3. They can convey ideas with relevance and illustration, if not always in a fully sustained manner at this stage. Most pupils can read fluently, increasingly so as a result of the Independent Reading Scheme initiative, but a few still struggle with basic reading skills. They read with a growing degree of comprehension, though not always with full expression when reading aloud. Pupils make good progress in oral skills, learning to speak more fluently and they read with increasing levels of comprehension, with the help of the new initiatives developed by the department. Written work develops too, in content and quality, though spelling is not always strong in practice.
2. By the end of Key Stage 4, most pupils have learned to speak in a wider variety of styles of speech, choosing whatever is appropriate to the occasion. They can argue, debate and express clear opinions on literature and on written styles in media work. Many read Shakespeare with some understanding. They read well, for the most part, with good comprehension skills and an ability to see the sub-text of what they read and to understand nuances. A particularly impressive example of this was an examination of modern love poetry in a Year 11 seminar, where pupils were quick to see beyond the obvious and were able to compare the poems with earlier ones on the same theme. Reading aloud improves and many can handle unfamiliar texts with relative ease, as observed in a Year 9 lesson where pupils were examining a Shakespeare sonnet for the first time, with understanding and enthusiasm. Pupils write in a more sustained and concentrated manner, though not all pupils use personal initiative and research skills as a matter of course, many preferring to rely on notes from their teachers. All pupils progress in the development of oral, reading and writing skills and the quality of work often increases in terms of National Curriculum levels by two levels within one key stage.
3. By 19, students speak in a more mature fashion, choosing their words with care and using some critical vocabulary. They write with a widening vocabulary and they use critical terms with more confidence.

## 113. **Drama**

1. Standards of attainment in drama are well above those of national expectations. The number of pupils gaining grades A\*-C at GCSE in 1998 and 1999 are above the national averages. A level drama is in its early stages and pupils will be taking the examination for this first time this summer.
2. Attainment in lessons is varied according to the quality of teaching, but it is generally at least in line with national expectations and is often high. Pupils who do not come to school with drama skills acquire them in Year 7 and throughout Key Stage 3, if they do not opt for German. From Year 7, pupils are encouraged to reflect on and evaluate their own and others' work and by the end of Key Stage 3 the majority are able to do this with confidence and knowledge. Group work is very effective and most pupils learn to control and organise their imaginative energies during this key stage. Lessons in this key stage are weekly, thus keeping continuity. In Key Stage 4, when the subject becomes optional for GCSE, pupils acquire skills in improvisation, performance and critical appraisal and performance skills are unusually strong. Pupils can produce concentrated improvisations that carry conviction. This was observed in a Year 10 lesson on 'Of Mice and Men', where atmosphere and characterisation were being firmly and successfully established by improvisation before beginning work on the script itself. Role-play is sustained and realistic and pupils' use of speech become more fluent and expressive. Written work is begun and carefully developed at this stage to increase its range and accuracy.
3. Pupils make steady progress, which accelerates in Key Stage 4. Throughout the school, pupils work with interest and enjoyment. Pupils of very differing academic attainment collaborate constructively and develop a strong sense of teamwork, as well as the ability to work independently. At A level, pupils are making very good progress in all areas of the syllabus. This was observed in a Year 12 lesson where

pupils had improvised and were performing their own work, based on a sensitive area of modern culture, and were bringing to it great conviction, high seriousness and full use of all their talents and skills.

4. The quality of teaching is generally good and sometimes excellent. Very good specialist knowledge and practical skills are evident in the full-time drama teacher, who has the ability to inspire concentrated and serious effort, enjoyment and understanding, as well as having the ability to demonstrate practical skills with great expertise. In a Year 7 lesson on 'The Island' unit of work, oral skills, empathy and performance work were promoted to a very high level for that age group. Lessons are well managed and clear objectives are shown to the pupils. Evaluation is constructive and encouraging. Lessons almost always offer a very high degree of challenge and stimulus.
5. Planning at all levels is comprehensive. Schemes of work are carefully planned and reviewed. There are some cross-curricular elements with GCSE English where, in a Year 10 lesson for example, pupils were working with energy and enthusiasm on the script of 'Of Mice and Men'; performance complements appreciation. Extra-curricular activities include regular theatre visits, school productions and a very well supported and successful school drama company. Assessment is constant, with formal reports and day-to-day lesson evaluations for the pupils' benefit and great emphasis is laid upon the power of pupils to assess their own performances and those of others. Resources are adequate and appropriate and, although the accommodation is a little spartan and scattered, the drama studio is an asset and is very well used. The last OFSTED inspection suggested scope for the development of the subject and this has now been implemented by the appointment of the specialist drama teacher, the inclusion of most pupils in drama lessons and the instigation of A level drama.

#### 118. **Mathematics**

1. On entry to the school pupils' ability in mathematics is in line with the national average.
2. At the end of Key Stage 3 attainment is in line with national expectations. In the 1998 National Curriculum tests in Year 9 the percentage of pupils reaching level 5 or above was above the national average and the percentage of pupils reaching level 6 or above was close to the national average. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests in Year 9, the percentage achieving level 5 or above was in line with the national average; however, the average point score moved below the national average. This is supported by attainment in lessons and by teachers' assessment. By the end of Year 9, high attaining pupils work to levels above national expectations. They use direct and inverse proportions, draw graphs of quadratic expressions and analyse grouped data. Most pupils can interpret graphical data, they can calculate angles within various shapes and calculate properties of compound shapes. Low attaining pupils work on similar topics but at a reduced level of complexity. They can plot simple shapes using coordinates in all four quadrants and understand the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 9.
3. At the end of Key Stage 4 attainment is average. In 1998, GCSE results were above average for grades A\*-C and have been just below average in most years since the previous OFSTED inspection. Results for A\*-G grades have been consistently above the national average. In the 1999 GCSE examinations, 42 per cent obtained grades A\*-C and the percentage achieving A\*-G grades was above the national average. Girls out-performed boys in the A\*-C band by ten per cent. The ability base of each group of pupils in the past three years has been variable but pupils' achievement in 1999 fell below expectation compared with their predicted levels. Pupils in Year 11 work at levels appropriate to their ability. High attaining pupils calculate areas of sectors of circles, solve quadratic equations and use the sine and cosine rules for solving general triangle questions. Average attaining pupils use basic trigonometry in two dimensions, they have good graphical skills and calculate areas and volumes of compound figures. Most low attaining pupils achieve GCSE grades at foundation level.
4. Attainment in the Sixth Form is in line with the course expectations. Students' performance has varied since the last inspection. In every year except 1997, all students were successful in gaining a pass grade

in the A level course. The average point score in 1999 was 5.57, close to the national average. Small numbers within the courses make statistical comparisons uncertain. By Year 13, students work successfully on significance testing of population samples for their statistics course and can handle vector forms for calculating angles between planes. A successful Year 12 GCSE course improves students' levels of numeracy skills for use in their GNVQ and A level courses.

5. Progress Key Stage 3 is satisfactory. Pupils' ability on entry to the school is average in mathematics and was close to the national average at the end of Year 9. Raw data from the end of Key Stage 3 show an addition of one to two levels of attainment. Pupils are set after the first term to match teaching more closely to pupils' ability. The late application of setting adversely delays appropriate progress within these sets. Progress is often very good during lessons, as seen in a Year 7 lesson when pupils investigating properties of polygons were able to use correct terminology and produce rules relating sides and diagonals. However, progress through the key stage is hampered by modest lesson targets, as seen in a top set, Year 9, lesson in which pupils constructed nets of cuboids in order to find total surface area.
6. Progress for all pupils is satisfactory at Key Stage 4. High attaining pupils make very good progress in most lessons. In a lesson on vectors, pupils progressed from basic addition of vectors to finding their magnitude by using their previous knowledge of Pythagoras' theorem. Modest lesson aims limit pupils' progress toward their course objectives. This was observed in a Year 10 set, where pupils working at low levels of attainment, on types of numbers, were given tasks which did not extend their range of understanding or challenge their ability to progress. Generally lessons offer good progress, as seen in a Year 11 low attaining set in which pupils gained understanding and success in solving equations using the flowchart method. While individual lessons often produce good progress, the effect of modest lesson objectives has a cumulative effect that contributed to the fall in standards and a loss of added value in pupils' achievement in the 1999 GCSE results.
7. Overall attainment of pupils in mathematics is marginally below their average attainment in other subjects studied. Low attaining pupils and those with special educational needs make progress in line with others in each key stage, producing work at an appropriate level.
8. The curriculum meets statutory requirements, although the reduction of time for mathematics in Year 9 reduces the opportunity for pupils to progress to the required levels.
9. Progress in the Sixth Form is good; students are constantly challenged with new concepts. In lessons observed, students successfully gained understanding of statistics and pure mathematics at relevant times in their course.
10. Pupils' attitude to their work is good at both key stages, enabling an effective learning atmosphere. Throughout the key stages, pupils co-operate readily with staff and one another when working as groups or in pairs. This was seen in a Year 7 lesson when pupils enjoyed the teacher's humour without taking advantage of the relaxed atmosphere and in a Year 12 lesson where the pupils appreciated the group atmosphere and shared observations with one another. Presentation in pupils' books is neat and tidy, reflecting a positive attitude to the subject.
11. Teaching in Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 is good. The true skills of teachers rank higher than the overall grade, but the effectiveness of their teaching is reduced by the lack of pace during lessons. In over half of lessons, teaching is very good and occasionally excellent. Teachers are suitably qualified and have very good subject knowledge. Good organisation, high expectations of pupils' behaviour and a respect for the individual help maintain good discipline. Teaching was least successful when teachers did not fully control sound levels or when non-productive activities were allowed to continue. Teachers focus on the concepts to be learned and demonstrate understanding of the needs of the pupils. Assessment is ongoing during lessons and is thorough and developmental. Homework is used to consolidate learning or to allow pupils to prepare data for use in following lessons.

12. The head of department provides sound leadership and is an exemplar of good practice. The ethos within the department is one of willingness to improve personal skills and a wish to improve standards for all pupils. Strategies for improving the quality of teaching and learning have been introduced, with all staff studying to improve their information and communication technology skills. There is a comprehensive departmental development plan, linked to that of the school. Teachers have their own rooms and this enables the development of a subject identity and an efficient access to resources. Rooms are modestly decorated with pupils' work but lack stimulating posters. The assessment system enables pupils' progress to be monitored but attainment prediction and individual target setting, using these data, are underdeveloped.
13. Since the last OFSTED inspection examination results have moved to marginally below the national averages. Recent changes in schemes of work in both key stages have been introduced to increase progress. The department needs to increase the provision of sufficiently differentiated work and to improve the achievements of boys so that they match those of girls.
- 131.

\_\_\_\_\_131.      **Numeracy**

1. There is no whole-school numeracy policy and the process of consultation has not yet begun to determine departmental contributions to the numeracy of pupils. Various subjects use or make significant contributions to the numeracy skills of pupils. History, geography and science departments use and develop pupils' skills significantly. In history many opportunities arise for handling population and census data. Teachers encourage the use of number, graphs and percentages as tools for analysis. In geography, pupils handle statistics well from many contexts, including climate and population, and pupils are able to produce compound graphs. Science offers opportunities to collect and display data in many forms. They use a variety of units, including compound units of velocity and mass. In some modern foreign language lessons, pupils play number games in their target language and produce graphs using spreadsheets. Technology lessons include measurement of length, and weight. Many subject teachers miss opportunities for using pupils' number skills. Students, in their Sixth Form courses, confidently use high-level skills of statistics in politics and algebra in science. Overall, the numeracy skills of pupils are sufficient to support their learning in other subject areas and increase in each key stage.

132.      **Science**

2. Pupils' attainments at the end of Key Stages 3 and 4 are in line with the level expected nationally at the ages of 14 and 16. National Curriculum test results at the end of Key Stage 3 in 1999 were slightly above national averages. The results over the previous three years are similar, with both boys and girls attaining results above national averages. The percentage of pupils achieving A\*-C grades in the GCSE examinations in 1999 were slightly below the national average; the percentage that achieved A\*-G grades was broadly in line with the national average. In 1998, the percentage that achieved A\*-C grades was in line with the national average. Although some A level groups are small, the school has a good number of students studying science in the Sixth Form and attainment is in line with course expectations. In 1999, the A level results indicate average attainment in biology and below average attainment in physics and chemistry. In 1998, the results in physics and chemistry A level show attainment to be above average.
3. In Year 7 pupils can make a series of observations and record results appropriately. They have well-established basic experimental skills and work confidently in the laboratory. In Year 8 the pupils can name different types of energy and discuss the energy changes that occur when a kettle boils and when a compressed spring is released. By the time the pupils reach Year 9 they can talk about the force needed to overcome air resistance and link the size of a magnetic force in an electromagnet to the number of coils. By Year 11 pupils can balance simple chemical equations, describe the functions of the heart and other organs of the body and calculate the pressure when they are given force and surface area. Generally the pupils are able to relate their knowledge and understanding to explain a range of everyday

phenomena. In the Sixth Form the pupils work confidently with algebra and can link observations to scientific theory. Note taking and summarising skills are well developed. Pupils ask question about what they learn in order to develop understanding in collaboration with the teachers.

4. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stages 3 and 4, and satisfactory to good progress in the Sixth Form. Pupils make good progress in some aspects of their science work. These include looking at scientific evidence and drawing appropriate conclusions and understanding the limitations of the nature of scientific evidence. In contrast to this, progress in the use of information technology to support scientific work is unsatisfactory. Pupils' writing is generally well presented but opportunities for the pupils to consider writing for a sufficiently wide range of audiences are missed. Progress in the early part of Key Stage 3 is hampered by insufficient acknowledgement and use of prior attainment information and a curriculum that does not sufficiently meet the needs of all pupils. Good teaching in the Sixth Form and good learning habits lead to good progress being made at A level. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.
5. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good at Key Stages 3 and 4 and in the Sixth Form. The pupils show interest in their work and behave well in class. For example, during an investigation for GCSE biology pupils sustained concentration, organised their own work and worked co-operatively with each other to complete the task. Pupils generally show respect for one another and to the teachers. Materials and equipment used to carry out practical work are treated with care and tidied away at the end of lessons. Listening skills are good throughout the school and very good in the Sixth Form. Teachers work hard to maintain a positive approach to pupils through their teaching and set a good example. Pupils respond to questions with confidence and are willing to learn from their mistakes. They often raise question themselves to clarify understanding or explore a scientific principle.
6. In the majority of lessons the teaching is at least satisfactory and in one-third of lessons it is good and very good in roughly equal proportions. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 3, good at Key Stage 4 and good in the Sixth Form. The higher proportion of good teaching in the upper school is characterised by time in lessons being used well to introduce and reinforce key learning points. All teachers have good subject knowledge and are enthusiastic about imparting their knowledge and understanding to the pupils. They manage pupils well in the classroom and use resources effectively to illustrate and develop pupils' understanding.
7. There is some very good teaching, particularly in the Sixth Form. In one very good lesson the pupils learned about the relationship between force and pressure. The teacher had high expectations of what could be achieved and organised a range of activities to explore this relationship. Time was used to the full and explanations were clear and concise. The pupils explained their understanding and applied it to a range of different situations. Similarly, in another lesson pupils developed their understanding about using biological keys and the underlying principles used to compile an effective key. There is a small number of unsatisfactory lessons in which limited learning takes place. In these lessons pupils are not sufficiently well managed or challenged by the work given. The teachers work hard and mark work carefully. Comments given often relate to the amount of effort pupils have made to complete the work; praise is given. However, feedback is insufficiently precise to enable pupils to be clear about what is good in their work and how it can be improved.
8. The department is well managed and runs smoothly. The development plan identifies a range of issues for improvement but, because of there is little monitoring of teaching, opportunities for staff to share best practice in the department are missed. Teachers are highly committed to the pupils and offer regular sessions being offered outside of school time for pupils to do extra work and revise work previously covered. The single sex teaching groups in Key Stage 4 promote a culture of high attainment. Non-teaching staff work well together to support teaching. The laboratories are spacious and well organised. However, in some, the decorative order is not good and some of the furniture is old and worn. There are sufficient materials and equipment to deliver the National Curriculum effectively with the exception of computer hardware and software, which are currently unsatisfactory. Displays of pupils' work are limited and uninspiring.

9. Given the proportion of good teaching and the good response of pupils, the progress since the previous OFSTED report is satisfactory. A few issues remain to be addressed - in particular, the exploitation of information technology as a learning resource and the analysis of examination results to identify aspects of pupils' performance that can be improved.

140.

## **SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

## **OTHER**

140.

## **Art**

1. The teachers' assessment of pupils' attainments at the end of Key Stage 3 are in line with those expected nationally. At the end of Key Stage 4 GCSE results for art are above the national average. Pupils tend to obtain higher grades in art than in many of the other subjects that they take. Girls' attainment is higher than that of boys but both are above the national averages. Attainment in the Sixth Form varies but since the previous OFSTED inspection remains lower than the course expectation.
2. In work seen during the inspection, attainments at the end of Key Stage 3 were good and above the national expectation for 14 year olds. Much of the pupils' work in this key stage tends to be in two dimensions, though some good three-dimensional work is carried out in Year 8. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils have a basic understanding of colour theory and have acquired good painting and printing skills. They have looked at the work of different artists from secondary sources but have little knowledge of art in the context of time and place. The attainments of pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 is good and higher than the national expectation. Although pupils at this stage have a growing knowledge of past movements in art, the work of women artists and contemporary black and Asian artists is little represented. Pupils are able to make informed decisions about their own work; they select from a wider range of media and scale but continue to work within a structured framework.
3. The attainment seen in the Sixth Form during the inspection was below national course requirements. In Year 12 there was not sufficient progression from Key Stage 4. Many projects are similar to those undertaken previously and students are given insufficient challenge and opportunity to experiment and become fully independent learners. Attainment in the personal study component of the course is satisfactory. By the end of the Sixth Form students have acquired a wider appreciation and knowledge of the art world including modern art movements. There are more opportunities to talk about their work, and student presentations on artists and art movements form an integral part of the course.
4. Progress is good by the end Key Stage 3 and remains good by the end of Key Stage 4. Most pupils with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress. In Key Stage 3, the curriculum supports progression and continuity. Pupils make better progress towards Attainment Target 1 (Investigating and Making) than they do towards Attainment Target 2 (Knowing and Understanding) because, although the art contextual work is good, it does not always link to earlier work or build on previous knowledge. In Key Stage 4, the open-ended nature of many of the GCSE projects encourages initiative and pupils with marked aptitudes make better progress when they are encouraged to produce more individual work. Gallery visits at this stage also help to raise standards and progress. In the Sixth Form progress is sound and students make better progress in their art historical studies. The residential visit to the Wye valley during which students work directly from the environment has a positive effect on standards.
5. The pupils' response at both key stages and at Sixth Form level is good. Most are well motivated and able to sustain a good level of concentration. Pupils with special educational needs respond well and work with interest. Pupils enjoy being asked about their work and many are able to use specialist subject vocabulary. Several come and work in the department at lunchtime. Relationships are positive, behaviour is generally good and classes are well managed and orderly.
6. Overall, teaching is good and teachers are up to date in their knowledge and expertise. In two-thirds of

the lessons teaching is good and it is very good in over a quarter of lessons. Schemes of work meet statutory requirements and good use of information technology is being introduced into the curriculum. There are now well-developed procedures for assessing pupils' work; previously, these were unsatisfactory, as mentioned in the previous OFSTED inspection. Pupil assessment sheets build up to give a good overview of individual attainment. However, these records are not held centrally in the department, which makes it difficult to compare class achievement or monitor individual performance through the curriculum. Homework is good in Key Stage 3 though it is not always clear from the marking what pupils have to do to improve their work. Sketchbooks are well developed in Key Stage 4 and the Sixth Form. The department is well led and managed. Accommodation is good and has been further improved by the addition of a Sixth Form studio. Computers are a recent acquisition but other resources are limited, which means that work in three dimensions is underdeveloped and ceramics cannot be offered. This is a good department that makes a significant contribution to the ethos of the school.

146.

### **Design and technology**

1. Attainment during lessons is similar to that reported at the time of the last OFSTED inspection but GCSE results for combined technology subjects have been below the national average for the past three years. However, the girls' results have been near average while the boys' results have been well below average.
2. In subjects chosen mainly by girls (for example, textiles) the results have been in line with national averages. In subjects chosen mainly by boys, such as resistant materials, results have been very low. Pupils who studied GCSE child development achieved above average results in 1998. Although seven GCSE A\* grades were obtained in 1999, the overall technology results are low when compared with other results in the school. However, Key Stage 3 teacher assessment results were above average for 1999 and A level technology students have achieved a high proportion of A grades. In Key Stage 3, pupils' attainments are in line with and sometimes above national expectations. For example, in a Year 8 textiles lesson pupils' files gave details of their designs and explained, by means of flowcharts, the techniques of quilting and appliqué. Although the stages involved in the design process could be given greater emphasis, design work and making are usually near the national expectation at Key Stage 3. In Key Stage 4, coursework is often good and attainment is above national expectations.
3. Progress during Key Stage 3 is sound or better in all lessons and good or very good in four out of five lessons. Pupils develop their skills gradually during the key stage in all areas, although progress in graphics and textiles is particularly good. During Key Stage 4 progress is mainly good, although a Year 10 lesson on levers and gears was poorly structured, so that the pupils' activities lacked purpose. However in a graphics lesson, progress was good when Year 11 pupils were making items from wood, fibreboard, plastic and metal that often had a professional finish. Pupils with various previous attainments are given help at the design stage and when making products so that they make appropriate progress. Presentation skills are well developed so that design work is a strength of the department, with frequent use of information technology for communicating ideas by means of text, diagrams and photographs. Some Sixth Form students make sufficient progress to gain the highest grades.
4. The response of the pupils was satisfactory or better in nearly all lessons and is good or very good in about two-thirds of the observed lessons. Students generally show interest in the work and show creativity when creating various designs. They have no difficulty in sustaining concentration and regularly work together to help each other as, for example, when Year 11 pupils were clamping a box after gluing the edges. They behave well during lessons and show respect for property. They use initiative when preparing coursework and respond to targets set for them.
5. During Key Stage 3 teaching is sound or better in all lessons. In most lessons it is good or very good. For example, teaching and progress were very good during a Year 7 graphics lesson when pupils were using previously gained knowledge of structures to design and build a bridge and test it competitively. During Key Stage 4 most lessons are good, although an occasional lesson is unsatisfactory because the targets

set are too low. Teaching is sound in the Sixth Form, where two teachers have smaller classes and are able to give regular individual help to the A level students. The teachers are well qualified and mostly have considerable experience. In most cases, they use their subject knowledge and understanding of techniques to plan appropriate lessons. Expectations are high for the presentation of coursework and many exemplar projects are available to encourage pupils. Time and resources are used effectively except on occasions when a lesson is not structured sufficiently and targets are too low. Standards of discipline are high and organisational strategies are efficient when pupils are directed to varied activities such as the groups in textiles or the individual projects in other subject areas. Homework is set when appropriate, especially when developing coursework. It could be given greater emphasis to increase knowledge and understanding in some subject areas. Some useful applications of information technology are often overlooked. The assessment process is well developed. The pupils evaluate their own work for each project. The teachers evaluate both attainment targets and provide National Curriculum levels and an effort grade. Teachers assess pupils' work and give advice and feedback to make improvements possible. With older students the feedback is recorded in writing.

6. The technology co-ordinator has prepared comprehensive documentation and policies for the department. Schemes of work have been prepared for each subject area but these need further details of time to be spent on each topic. An overview of the subjects taught and the timetable arrangements would clarify the curricular organisation. The planned curriculum provides continuity and progression in both designing and making. There are sufficient staff to teach the subjects of child development, electronics, food, graphics, resistant materials and textiles. A wide and appropriate variety of materials is used during Key Stages 3 and 4, such as card, wood, fibreboard, plastic, textile, metal, food and concrete in the Sixth Form. Technicians provide valuable assistance in the food and resistant materials areas. Monitoring and support for teaching take place mainly in the resistant materials area but policies apply to all technology subjects. Development planning takes place during departmental meetings held at regular intervals. Accommodation is adequate for both teaching and storage, although refurbishment is needed in most areas. Some additional computer controlled machines are needed to strengthen the pupils' understanding of automated manufacturing processes.

152.

## **Geography**

1. The pupils' attainments are above the nationally expected level by the end of Key Stage 3 and well above it by the end of Key Stage 4. Recently the percentages of pupils achieving GCSE A\*-C grades have been consistently above the national average. In 1999, 65 per cent achieved A\*-C grades with 22 per cent achieving A\* and A grades. The boys' performance was high against national norms but girls performed even better. Pupils studying the GCSE course usually perform well in geography when compared with their other subjects. There has been an improvement since the last OFSTED inspection. At A level, results have varied, but broadly, they are close to the national average. Pupils with special needs generally work well when provided with learning support and produce work at least as good as that expected for their attainment level and often considerably better.
2. By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils have a good grounding in geographical skills and vocabulary. They can use and interpret maps very well and have a good understanding of global problems. The plotting of statistical data is, however, limited. By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils can explain a range of physical and human processes well and apply numerous geographical skills competently to fieldwork and individual project work. Useful knowledge and understanding are gained of social and cultural issues through studies of Kenya and Egypt. In the Sixth Form students generally organise themselves well and develop a good grasp of geographical concepts in a variety of contexts.
3. Most pupils have made good progress by the end of Key Stage 3, which is due to the consistently good, well-structured, focused and supportive specialist teaching and the positive attitude and high motivation level of most pupils. The setting in Years 8 and 9 also contributes to this. In Key Stage 4, there is also good progress. Some pupils' very good progress is a consequence of teachers injecting good pace and challenge to lessons and of pupils being keen to achieve well as GCSE examinations approach. Progress was more marked in Year 12 than Year 13, where students did not participate well in discussions. Higher attaining pupils progress satisfactorily as a result of changes made since the last OFSTED

inspection. There is now more enquiry work in Key Stage 3 and a greater use of more open-ended assignments in Key Stage 4 and the individual projects for GCSE which require more investigation and research. The progress of low attaining pupils varies. It can be good but in mixed ability classes in both Key Stages 3 and 4 it is not good enough. Too often class work is not appropriate to the pupils' needs and it cannot be completed in the time available. Pupils' performance is suitably assessed but their progress needs evaluating in more detail. There is need to extend pupils' self-evaluation and for teacher-marked assessment to be linked to individual targets to ensure sustained progress at both key stages. Progress in the Sixth Form is sound, with students taking on more responsibility for their work.

4. Pupils' attitude to learning in class is generally very positive; they concentrate well, are attentive in class and work conscientiously, often with real interest and enjoyment. Behaviour is normally very good. Most pupils, both boys and girls, take much pride in the presentation of their work and this is a strength of the department. Pupils form constructive relationships with their teachers and relate well to one another. Pupils' response to questions is variable. In many Year 7 and 8 lessons pupils are eager to contribute but generally they tend to be passive in discussion and there is a need to develop oral skills.
5. All the teaching is satisfactory or better; in over three-quarters of lessons it is good. Teachers are committed and very supportive of pupils and generally manage them well. The best teaching has clear aims shared with pupils, integrated and detailed planning, and lessons delivered with good pace and challenge using suitable teaching methods and aids. In these lessons staff have a very secure knowledge of the subject and are confident and competent practitioners. Teaching is well-structured, well-directed with a clear focus, and is interesting. More enquiry work since the previous OFSTED inspection has broadened the appeal and learning opportunities of the course. At times, however, learning would be enhanced by more consolidation of the main teaching points of the lesson with pupils' contributions placed on the board or overhead projector. More reinforcement using world maps and atlases for the location of places is desirable. Key words identified with each topic need to be highlighted and interactive teaching and learning need to be developed. The fieldwork undertaken is effective, of high quality and greatly enriches study but, in Key Stage 3, it needs extending to include study of landforms and study of an environment outside the local area. Significant progress has been made in integrating information technology with curricular themes but a programme of information technology skills needs devising to ensure progression over all key stages.
6. This is a good department with sound curriculum leadership and good quality documentation. Schemes of work have been much improved but they do not identify precisely what pupils can do, know and understand and how their progress is to be assessed. Monitoring but no evaluation of teaching and learning or the work of the department occurs. Pupils' work is regularly marked and appropriately graded and there is much very helpful comment on written work and this aids their progress. Resources are satisfactory but there is no separate fieldwork budget and not all specialist teaching rooms have an overhead projector and screen and large video monitor as standard equipment.

## 158. **History**

1. The majority of pupils at age 13 achieve standards that are broadly in line with national expectations. Pupils are quick to find evidence of situations in the past from written and pictorial sources. Year 8 pupils enthusiastically found symbols of monarchy in coloured portraits of Tudor kings and queens.
2. In 1999, the percentage of pupils who achieved A\*-C grades in the GCSE examinations was well above the national average. In two of the past three years all candidates achieved A\*-G grades and in the third year the percentage that achieved A\*-G grades was still above the national average. At age 15, attainment in lessons during the inspection was largely at the level expected nationally but that evident in work scrutinised and examination results is higher. Some written work and course work showed evidence of good historical perceptions. Pupils in Key Stage 4 understand reasons for change, such as in the history of medicine. Seven candidates entered A level in history in 1999 and all passed. In politics A level, sixteen of the eighteen candidates passed, five with A or B grades. Highly motivated students in the Sixth Form in history and politics confidently handle and evaluate large quantities of material. They

analyse documents critically, relating them to their background knowledge and to the prevailing attitudes or ideologies.

3. A large majority of pupils in Key Stage 3 are making good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Pupils of all abilities are developing their learning skills. In Year 8, they can distinguish well between the long-term and short-term causes of the Civil War. In Key Stage 4, pupils are making at least satisfactory progress and many are making good progress. Comparison and evaluation of sources are well developed. Opportunities for empathy are given at both key stages. Pupils with problems in learning receive much help from class teachers and from in-class support staff when they are available, especially during individual and paired work. Pupils make satisfactory and sometimes good progress. In the Sixth Form, history and politics students make at least satisfactory progress and more than half make good or very good progress. They are highly motivated and are increasingly encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning.
4. It is a strength that there is a tradition of hard work in the department. Over the whole age range, classes settle quickly, nearly all pupils have positive attitudes and many are engaged by the topics studied. Good concentration is normally maintained, greatly helped by the variety of teaching strategies. Opportunity for group work or work in pairs is frequent, sensibly limited in time and often very successful. Discussion and listening to each other are well developed, especially in the Sixth Form.
5. A great strength of the department is in the quality of its teaching. Virtually all lessons promote satisfactory standards: a large majority are good and some are very good. The two long serving teachers are wise historians with a strong belief in the value of their subject for the young. They are good communicators and their enthusiasm is infectious. All the teachers prepare lessons extremely well, all give good attention to learning skills and continuously use primary sources for historical evaluation. Good efforts are made to increase pupils' general and historical vocabulary. Spelling needs to be directly addressed more often. Some good links are made with present day national and international events. Opportunities could usefully be taken to do this more often, especially in Key Stage 3.
6. The management of the department is lively and efficient, providing clear educational direction. Good use is made of information technology as a tool for history at all key stages. Study units are chosen in Key Stage 3 that appeal to pupils' imaginations. They illustrate patterns of continuity and contrasting breaks in those patterns such as life in a feudal village and the coming of the Black Death. The take-up rate for GCSE is good. An unusual course work topic is the role of women in the car industry, studied through the archives at the Heritage Motor Museum. The A level syllabuses in both history and politics are mature and wide-ranging. They are both particularly good preparation for progression to higher education. Over the whole age range considerations of right and wrong in human action are frequent, such as in studies of the slave triangle or of child labour in early urbanisation. Pupils' social and cultural development is assisted by studies of past societies very different from their own. Weaknesses reported in the last OFSTED inspection have been rectified.

#### 164. **Information technology**

1. The teachers' assessment of pupils' attainments at the end of Key Stage 3 in 1999 showed that they were below national expectations. In Year 7, lessons and folder work show that attainment is below the national expectation. Pupils gain some knowledge of keyboard use, systems and software through the "KeyBytes" programme but do not have sufficient experience in using the most useful software and applications. In Year 8 lessons, attainment is in line with expectations as pupils learn word processing, desk top publishing and the use of spreadsheets. Attainment during Year 9 relies on cross-curricular input and is below national expectations. Attainment at Key Stage 4 is near average where students follow a timetabled GNVQ Part One course in information technology. The attainment of other pupils is lower but they can gain a GNVQ Key Skills award at level 2 in information technology for cross-curricular work. Sixth Form students gained low results in the AS information technology examination in 1999 and 1997 although results were near average in 1998.

2. Progress is unsatisfactory during Key Stage 3 because pupils do not follow a sufficiently balanced curriculum. Progress is also reduced in some lessons because targets are not clear and the lessons are poorly structured. More able pupils become frustrated because they are not able to develop their skills adequately, especially during Key Stage 3. Pupils with special needs make progress similar to other pupils but increase their skills more quickly when extra classroom help is available. A competent technician who is able to help pupils and staff directly sometimes provides this. The balance of activities during Year 7 needs to be reconsidered to provide regular targets and adequate progression to satisfy the requirements of all pupils. As indicated in the previous OFSTED report, pupils would benefit from worksheets that have a progression of activities to allow for widely varying competences. Day-to-day assessment could also be used to increase pupils' pace and motivation.
3. Cross-curricular input is not sufficient to provide satisfactory progress during Year 9 or during Key Stage 4. However, pupils following the GNVQ information technology course make sound progress. This was the case during a Year 11 lesson in which pupils were using textbooks and other information to make notes on stand-alone computers. Their folders showed a considerable quantity of useful work. Sixth Form students make sound progress and produce well-developed coursework. Potential progress in information technology is also reduced by the low time allocation and infrequency of lessons caused by the ten-day timetable cycle, particularly during Key Stage 3.
4. The response of students is always satisfactory or better. The pupils enjoy using the computers but need a variety of different tasks and regular targets to maintain their interest. They gain most satisfaction from projects that have a definite outcome such as those when they are able to create their own pages in colour. The pupils behave well and show respect for property. They help one another when necessary. The work during Years 7 and 8 does not provide sufficient opportunities for the pupils to show initiative.
5. The teaching in Key Stage 3 teaching is sometimes unsatisfactory because lessons are not well planned. For example, in a Year 7 lesson some pupils finished the set task and were not clearly directed to other work, so that the second half of the lesson was not well used. Teaching in Key Stage 4 and in the Sixth Form is satisfactory and sometimes good. The information technology co-ordinator is well qualified and experienced but other staff have less knowledge and sometimes lack confidence. The scheme of work provides a structure so that less experienced teachers can be used. This policy limits expectations during Key Stage 3 and reduces the effectiveness of lesson planning. The management of pupils is generally good, although more frequent changes are needed when two pupils share a computer. Pace slackens during some lessons when pupils have completed the set work. The policy of not setting any information technology homework limits progress and reduces the status of the subject in the eyes of younger pupils. Relationships among pupils and between teachers and pupils are good. Pupils are taught about the social and moral issues of using information technology.
6. The subject co-ordinator has effectively planned and implemented the installation of new information technology equipment throughout the school. The planned curriculum covers the requirements of the National Curriculum during each year of information technology teaching but the schemes of work do not give enough guidance for time to spent on each topic. Monitoring of the information technology provision is being developed. Some pupils would benefit from a GCSE information technology option to provide progression after Year 9. A few pupils have been encouraged to make international contacts via e-mail. There are sufficient staff to teach the present number of timetabled information technology lessons but only about half are adequately qualified and experienced. Other staff are benefiting from training provided by the information technology co-ordinator and are gaining in confidence. The computers are well distributed throughout the school, although there are too few in information technology teaching rooms and pupils have to share in the larger classes.
7. Cross-curricular information technology makes a significant contribution to pupils' knowledge and skills. A comprehensive mapping system shows where other subjects can meet information technology targets but the implementation is variable between subjects and in content. Subjects such as English, design and technology, geography, history, modern foreign languages and business studies use information technology for a variety of purposes. Measurement and control are taught in the design and technology department during electronics and systems modules. Mathematics and science make little use of information technology, although some lessons are planned to use the computing facilities that

can be booked. Accommodation provides well for the information technology requirements of the school and allows some spare capacity for booking by departments. Staff from each area provide an information technology National Curriculum level for each pupil but have too little experience to be able to give an accurate assessment in many cases.

171.

### **Modern foreign languages**

1. The pupils' attainments in French at the age of 14 are below those expected for pupils of their age. Those pupils who also study German reach a satisfactory standard of attainment given the fact that little time is allowed for teaching.
2. The proportion of pupils achieving A\*-C grades in French in GCSE examinations in 1999 was below the national average. With a small group of pupils it was well above the national average in German. In recent years the proportion of pupils gaining A\*-C grades in French has been below the national average but the proportion gaining A\*-G grades has been broadly in line with the national average. Attainment at the age of 16 is below that expected nationally in French but above in German. All pupils were entered for an external examination in either French or German last year, although few took both languages. Pupils of all levels of prior attainment start to develop their listening and speaking skills and are able to understand straightforward language. Higher attaining pupils extend their skills to produce writing that reflects an understanding of grammar. Lower and middle attaining pupils are able to seek information from a variety of sources in order to understand short texts. Pupils are not given enough opportunity to develop their speaking through pair and group work. The results of boys are consistently much lower than those of girls. Very small numbers of students take A levels in languages and results fluctuate. It is therefore not possible to discern a trend.
3. The progress of most pupils is satisfactory. It is best in German at Key Stage 4 and in some French groups in Year 7 where rapid progress is made towards the targets set. Although pupils make progress at both key stages, this is limited by tasks that are not appropriate to their needs or abilities. The inconsistent use of the foreign language by teachers and the lack of additional taped listening material mean that pupils do not hear enough language to develop their listening skills to their full potential. The type of tasks undertaken, which are grammar based rather than directly related to the examination, limit the progress in writing at Key Stage 4. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, especially where support material is used. Those pupils who are not studying for GCSE examinations are making steady progress towards the realistic targets that are set for them on the Certificate of Achievement course.
4. The attitudes of pupils are satisfactory and behaviour in class is generally good. Where lessons provide challenging and carefully prepared work, pupils respond with enthusiasm and enjoy taking part, regardless of their ability. There are few opportunities for pupils to undertake collaborative work such as role-play activities. Relationships between pupils, and with the teachers, are good. A positive feature of some lessons is pupils' willingness to volunteer to answer questions by the teacher.
5. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in French and good in German. Teachers do not consistently use the foreign language as the main teaching tool in the classroom and the lack of resources means that pupils do not have the opportunity to experience language and culture through the use of videos. A very good lesson at Key Stage 3 successfully involved the pupils in asking and answering questions in French. These were carefully geared to the pupils' needs and the teacher, who had high expectations of all pupils, used the language throughout. A poorer lesson was conducted at a slow pace and was not planned carefully enough to ensure that the pupils made sufficient progress. The aims of the lesson were unclear and no resources were used to add interest. Some lessons, but not all, are planned to cover the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. An assessment scheme is being developed but targets set are not specific enough at present.
6. Since the last OFSTED report the amount of curricular time spent on French at Key Stage 3 has remained low. German is now offered to a wider ability range and is achieving pleasing results.

However, few pupils continue to study two languages at Key Stage 4 and the current curriculum model is not efficient. Although resources are just adequate, there is over-reliance on photocopied worksheets and teachers would benefit from the opportunity to evaluate other courses before purchasing new material. Day-to-day planning and pupils' performance are not monitored closely enough to ensure a consistent quality of teaching and to raise attainment, particularly of the most able pupils.

## 177. Music

1. When pupils enter the school, there are wide differences in their attainments. This is related to whether they have received specialist or instrumental teaching in their previous schools and their level of parental support. In Key Stage 3, singing is underdeveloped. Pupils sing too infrequently and irregularly; it lacks gusto without enough attention to being in tune, expression, posture, breathing or diction. Most pupils play pure percussion in instrumental work. Performing and music reading skills are insufficiently developed, as, for example, when pupils play their own compositions. Pupils who play instruments can name given notes or recognise common signs. Others do so mathematically from theory work rather than naturally from using music, but the vast majority show little understanding of notation. In composing rags with given ideas, most pupils do not understand structure and lack techniques to develop pieces or the performing skills to realise them. Pupils listen respectfully to each other and to recordings. They appraise sensibly but show limited vocabulary and poor general musical knowledge of, for example, composers, instruments, forms, styles and artists.
2. In recent years, GCSE results have been above average. Standards in the current small Year 11 group are below average. Pupils show below average instrumental skills; the average pupil performs at about Grade 3 level in Year 11. The guitar is the most played instrument. Pupils do not sing as a class; this is a weakness, as they do not develop vocal skills or experience a range of vocal repertoire - for example, madrigals, extracts from opera, musicals, folk music from around the world or rock music. In composing, higher attaining pupils show a secure understanding of musical language, including harmony, but most pupils do not know how to develop tunes. They are beginning to make good use of computers to develop and notate their work. Pupils listen attentively but show limited vocabulary in discussion; they show very poor general knowledge of instruments, composers, styles, forms and well-known pieces of music.
3. A level examinations have not been taken since 1997, when results were average. In the Sixth Form, current standards are above average. Most students taking A level are Grade 8 performers and all play a second instrument well. Compositions show good understanding of a range of styles and techniques. Aural work is secure. Students in Year 13 show a wide general knowledge of musical history.
4. In Key Stage 3, progress is unsatisfactory. High attaining pupils who are instrumentalists and read music make the best progress, building on their previous learning, experience and their personal interests. However, work does not yet adequately build on work done in the primary schools to develop instrumental, vocal and music reading skills to enable pupils to achieve their potential in performing, composing and listening. Pupils with special needs make similar progress and are well integrated. Progress at Key Stage 4 is unsatisfactory for similar reasons and because of the lack of commitment of many pupils. In the Sixth Form, progress is good because of the clear targets and the mature attitudes of the students.
5. Most pupils show positive attitudes and good behaviour supports achievement. Pupils are friendly, open, responsive, respectful towards staff and each other, use equipment sensibly, work well collaboratively and concentrate on their tasks when the work interests them. They show initiative and enjoy taking responsibility, for example when composing in groups. They enjoy music making, especially using instruments and singing when it occurs. Over 90 per cent of the pupils have their own instruments but they do not use them in lessons. In GCSE work, attitudes are variable. Some pupils are hardworking but many do not show enough commitment. Not all GCSE pupils take advantage of opportunities in tuition; most disadvantage themselves as well by not joining extra-curricular musical activities, which would support their work. Attitudes in the Sixth Form are enthusiastic. The involvement of other pupils,

including Sixth Form students, in school music strengthens achievement but relatively few are involved other than examination pupils. At all levels, the more committed pupils join groups in the community such as rock bands, church choirs or county ensembles. Pupils recognise that music contributes significantly to their social, cultural and personal development.

6. In Key Stage 3, the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory in a quarter of lessons but it is good in almost half the lessons. About half the teaching at Key Stage 4 is unsatisfactory and a half is sound. In the Sixth Form, teaching is good. Teachers show good subject knowledge and very good musicianship, for example in accompanying or arranging. Expectations of pupils, especially at Key Stage 3, are too low; tasks do not challenge pupils and often too much time is given to complete them. The most talented pupils are not stretched. Discipline is secure and relationships are good. Lessons use a range of resources but not enough use is made of visual aids or musical terminology. The lack of regular singing means that the National Curriculum is not being fully implemented at Key Stage 3. The better lessons proceed at a suitable pace but the weaker ones lack pace and rigour. Assessment is encouraging and supportive but goals specifying targets related to standards are lacking. Homework is set regularly.
7. Music is organised appropriately by the hardworking head of department but much remains to be done, especially to raise standards in classroom work in the lower school and increase numbers on examination courses, instrumental tuition and activities. Much work has gone into developing schemes of work but pupils' potential is not developed because of the lack of corporate music making. Multi-cultural aspects of music are well covered; the music of Fiji is included, with the valuable support of a parent. Curricular links with primary schools are not strong enough to ensure continuity. Assessment schemes are appropriate. Resources are good except for the shortage of classroom instruments, especially bass tuned percussion, personal address equipment, a piano for the second room and audio equipment. There is no technical support which imposes great pressures on the already overburdened staff.
8. Nine visiting teachers provide a wide range of instrumental lessons involving 52 boys and 64 girls. This is 12 per cent of the school's population and is above the national average. Standards, pupils' attitudes, progress and the quality of teaching are mainly good. Some very good teaching was observed in steel band and cello tuition; results in woodwind are disappointing. These staff and their lessons support extra-curricular activities that involve about 60 girls but fewer than 20 boys. Standards, attitudes and progress are very good, especially in steel pans, but work is restrained by the very short lunchtimes. School concerts are held regularly. Current activities include the orchestra, jazz group, choir and steel pans, and steel pans. These groups perform regularly in the community but there is no music in assembly and the opportunity to promote pupils' cultural development is lost. The visits of musicians, who run workshops, support work. The activities reflect the dedication of staff, the support of parents and the enthusiasm of the competent musicians whose performances and successes bring credit to the school.

#### 185. **Physical education**

185.

1. Attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 3. Pupils lead the warm-up, with some teacher assistance, in Year 8 dance lessons. They display much variety in the performance of circular movements, with the work of the most able displaying good control and some precision. Year 9 pupils have a sound knowledge of positions in netball, understand the role of the umpire, move into space well and produce occasional fluent attacking patterns of play. Attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 4. Year 10 pupils have a satisfactory grasp of the main factors that contribute to a healthy life style, manage their own warm-up effectively, model circuit training activities correctly and record their results accurately. Although there is insufficient evidence to make a judgment on attainment in the Sixth Form, students following the Community Sports Leader Award display good planning, clear communication and effective support of a class of Year 6 pupils taking part in a broad programme of sporting activities. Standards achieved in rounders, netball and rugby are higher than in other activities. Overall, there is little difference between the attainment of boys and girls in either key stage. The work of pupils following the GCSE course, which will be examined for the first time in 2000, is in line with the course expectations.

2. Progress is good across Key Stage 3 and satisfactory across Key Stage 4. Year 8 boys, working in groups, produced vigorous if unrefined movements of increasing variety and complexity in their gymnastic routines that were performed confidently after 30 minutes practice. In a hockey lesson, Year 9 girls learned the strategies for attacking and defending at short corners and, by the end of the lesson, were able to demonstrate them successfully in competition. In Year 10, pupils who had designed skills practices displayed improving effectiveness at demonstrating them to other pupils and in adapting them to help pupils of differing abilities. A class of Year 10 pupils following the GCSE course consolidated their knowledge of the bones of the human body and by the end of the lesson displayed a clear understanding of the five main functions of the human skeleton. The less able Year 11 boys taking part in a football lesson made good progress with the timing, weighting and control of wall passes. Less able pupils are very well supported and their progress is at least as good as and sometimes better than that of more able pupils.
  
3. The overall attitudes and behaviour of pupils are very good. The great majority show a very good level of interest in their work and older pupils in particular sustain their concentration very well. Some younger pupils can lose their concentration if their work is not closely directed. There are high levels of participation in both the Junior and Community Sports Leader Award Schemes and they and the pupils they work with benefit significantly from the experience. Participation in the Sixth Form is voluntary and between 15 and 30 per cent of pupils take part in any particular week. Most pupils of all ages collaborate well in pair and small group activities and the collaboration of the girls is often very good. Equipment is handled sensibly and safely. Pupils are willing to take responsibility and this shows through well in their collaborative activities. There is a very small number of pupils, mostly boys, whose attitudes and behaviour are unsatisfactory.
  
4. Teaching is good at both Key Stages 3 and 4. The teachers' overall knowledge and understanding are good and within their specialist areas are very good. Most activities are well matched to the potential of the pupils and less able pupils in particular are well supported and effectively motivated. Lesson planning is satisfactory and the activities in most lessons are progressive. In some lessons the balance of time between theory, skills practices and performance is inappropriate. A good range of teaching and learning styles is employed and a positive feature of many lessons is the opportunities provided for pupils to plan for and manage their learning and for lessons to finish with an evaluation of the progress made within which pupils participate actively. Pupil management is mostly very good, though on occasions unsatisfactory behaviour is not effectively challenged.
  
5. The curriculum is good and has a number of continuing and emerging strengths. It is largely balanced and activities are organised effectively to aid progress and continuity of experience. The department makes use of single and mixed sex groups judiciously. Opportunities to apply information technologies are well structured within the GCSE course. Unpredictable attendance for Sixth Form lessons results in a narrower range of activities taking place than was originally planned for. A good range of extra-curricular opportunities is available for pupils of all abilities and participation rates are excellent, with 45 per cent of pupils involved. There are strong links with a range of local sports clubs to encourage continued participation. Assessment practices are good. There is consistency of practice and effective internal moderation to secure consistency in judgments. Leadership and management are very good and professional relationships are strong. All areas of responsibility are clearly defined and are allocated to individual members of staff to make best use of their strengths. Administrative communication systems are efficient. Monitoring, staff development and development planning procedures are well linked and effective.
  
191. The department has given close attention to weaknesses identified at the time of the last OFSTED inspection and very good progress has been made. There has been an overall improvement in the quality of teaching. Opportunities for aesthetic experiences for boys have improved. Effective strategies have been introduced to counter the poor progress of boys at Key Stage 4. Non-participants are largely provided with appropriate tasks. There are now substantial opportunities for pupils to plan and evaluate their work and pupils now use information technology effectively to support their learning.

191.

191. **Religious education**

1. The attainment of pupils at the end of Key Stage 3 are in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Knowledge and understanding of the key features of belief and practice in Christianity and the other major faiths such as Islam and Buddhism, which are covered in depth, is good. Pupils can describe differences between the major Christian denominations, for example by comparing the interiors of Methodist and Roman Catholic churches. The technical religious vocabulary used in analysing some common features of all faiths, such as rites of passage, is generally good. However, pupils seldom reflect on their findings because the opportunities to do so are limited. Pupils appreciate that there is a moral and spiritual dimension to life and can make personal responses to difficult questions such as the possibility of life after death. They can make links between belief and behaviour, for example by recognising that Hindu respect for the environment may arise from a belief in reincarnation. Pupils produce personal projects on topics such as poverty, some of which are of high quality.
2. At Key Stage 4, all pupils study a short GCSE course in religious studies. In 1998, the first year that pupils were entered for the examination, 68 per cent achieved A\*-C grades, which was well above the national average. An impressive 80 per cent of girls achieved A\*-C grades. The proportion of girls achieving A\*-C grades was much higher than that of boys, by a margin greater than that which is found nationally. In the 1999 examination, the proportion of pupils who achieved A\*-C grades fell to 44 per cent which is below the national average. The attainment of girls was again higher than that of boys. In both years, the proportion of pupils achieving A\*-G grades was slightly higher than that found nationally. The inspection evidence indicates that attainment of pupils currently in Year 11 is broadly average, with a greater proportion of higher attaining boys than in the previous year. Knowledge and understanding of the attitudes of different Christian denominations and Islam to issues such as euthanasia and abortion are good. Pupils can express personal opinions, some at impressive length, but many do not make sufficient use of evidence from the faiths studied in supporting the conclusions that they reach.
3. No compulsory religious education was being taught in the Sixth Form during the period of the inspection and so it is not possible to make an informed judgement about the standards being achieved.
4. Pupils make good progress through Key Stage 3 because they have mostly positive attitudes to their learning and because the overall quality of teaching is good. Pupils rapidly develop their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and aspects of other major faiths, which are studied in detail. For example, pupils in Year 7 are able to discuss and compare differences identified in recent visits to Methodist and Roman Catholic churches. This both prepares and motivates them to examine and suggest the appropriate symbolism and use of religious objects that have been well chosen by the teacher for this purpose. They confidently report their findings to the rest of the class and good progress is made. Their capacity to make personal responses to spiritual and moral issues increases as they pass through the key stage and some pupils make perceptive interpretations, for example of the meaning of parables. Pupils make good use of the opportunities for research and independent work in projects undertaken throughout the key stage. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because teachers are sensitive to their individual requirements and some learning materials are adapted for them. There is good liaison between teachers and classroom assistants, who effectively support individual pupils.
5. Progress through Key Stage 4 is satisfactory. Steady gains are made in knowledge and understanding of the views of different Christian denominations to issues such as the ordination of women and of Christian and Islamic attitudes to abortion, euthanasia and divorce. Pupils generally work hard to formulate and express personal opinions; some write at considerable length. Most pupils are prepared to accept challenge to preconceived views. Lower attaining pupils do not make sufficient use of specifically religious evidence in evaluating issues. The marking of the work of some higher attaining pupils does not show them what to do in order to achieve the highest examination grades. The progress of a minority of pupils is restricted because they do not feel motivated to work hard at this subject.
6. Attitudes to the subject are mostly very positive other than in a minority of older boys. Levels of concentration are good in the hour long lessons, helped by the fact that learning activities are often interesting and varied, particularly in Key Stage 3. Behaviour is good and in the few occasions where pupils lapse, they respond well to the teacher. Opportunities for personal research are good and pupils

produce project work of sometimes impressive length and quality. They are used to working in a variety of settings and classroom arrangements and do so productively, co-operating and collaborating in pair and group work, where boys and girls work easily alongside each other. The subject encourages the development of respect for views and beliefs that are different from their own. Pupils also handle religious objects from a variety of traditions with care and evident interest. Most pupils are happy to volunteer to answer questions or read aloud for the class.

7. The overall quality of teaching is good and is so more consistently in Key Stage 3. Teaching is never less than satisfactory, and in a third of lessons it is very good. The major strengths of the teaching are the secure subject knowledge of specialists. Planning takes account of individual pupils' needs and the learning activities are varied and interesting. Good classroom relationships encourage learning and are supported, when necessary, by firm discipline and good use of homework that extends and develops learning. Too few opportunities are provided in most lessons for pupils to reflect on their learning. Non-specialist teachers of religious education work hard and in some cases have taken part in relevant in-service training. They receive good support from the department and possess subject knowledge that is generally adequate but lacks depth and precision. The marking of pupils' work in Key Stage 4 is inconsistent and does not always inform pupils of the standards they are achieving. Features of the best lessons where teaching was very good include secure subject knowledge used effectively to challenge pupils through skilful questioning. Pupils are made to feel that their contributions are valued and this encourages full participation. There is variety, and a good pace is set which nevertheless includes time for purposeful reflection. Lessons are effectively summarised, which allows pupils to evaluate their progress. Homework is set appropriately.
  8. The school has created a good system of support for the relatively inexperienced head of department, whose hard work is having a positive impact. However, greater attention needs to be given to developing and implementing strategies aimed at bringing the level of boys' attainment in the GCSE examination closer to that of girls. In Key Stage 3, procedures for the assessment of pupils' work are not sufficiently well linked to the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Strategies for monitoring progress towards targets identified in development planning require strengthening. The strengths identified at the time of the previous OFSTED inspection have largely been maintained and provision for religious education in the Sixth Form has been increased although the time allocated is still less than required by the Agreed Syllabus.
- 199.

## PART C: INSPECTION DATA

### 199. INSPECTION EVIDENCE

### SUMMARY OF

1. The team consisted of 13 inspectors, who spent a combined total of 51 days gathering first-hand evidence in the school. They observed 182 lessons and, in all, 182 hours were spent visiting classes, in discussion with pupils and their teachers, looking at pupils' work, and visiting assemblies and registration times. All staff teaching subjects inspected under Section 10 of the Schools Inspection Act 1996 and who were in school at the time of the inspection were seen at least once and many several times. Lesson visits were arranged to sample the work of each subject across year groups and the range of ability of the pupils in the school.
2. A wide variety of evidence was considered. Planned discussions were held with staff responsible for different subject areas and different aspects of the work of the school. There was a formal discussion with the chair of governors. Examples of pupils' work were looked at in lessons and representative samples of pupils' work in each year group for each curriculum subject were scrutinised by inspectors. Planned discussions were held with pupils in each year group and informal discussions with many more. Documentation provided by the school was analysed both before and during the inspection. The registered inspector held a meeting attended by 39 parents. The team considered 227 replies from parents to a questionnaire about the school.

### 201. INDICATORS

### DATA AND

#### 202. Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
Y7 – Y13	949	14	224	36

#### 203. Teachers and classes

##### 203. Qualified teachers (Y7 – Y13)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	55.74
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	17.03

##### 203. Education support staff (Y7 – Y13)

Total number of education support staff:	13
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	335
Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes:	80.7
Average teaching group size:	KS3 24
	KS4 20



## 204. Financial data

Financial year:	1998/99
	£
Total Income	1958245
Total Expenditure	1982334
Expenditure per pupil	2166.5
Balance brought forward from previous year	77378
Balance carried forward to next year	53289

## 205. PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:	915
Number of questionnaires returned:	227

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	18	61	15	5	1
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	26	57	11	6	1
The school handles complaints from parents well	11	42	37	7	2
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	12	56	19	11	1
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	26	48	19	7	1
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	23	61	12	3	1
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	27	58	10	4	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	18	60	7	9	5
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	23	56	16	5	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	14	60	19	6	1
My child(ren) like(s) school	37	51	6	4	1