

## INSPECTION REPORT

### NEVILLE LOVETT SCHOOL

Fareham

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116467

Headteacher: N Dewhurst

Reporting inspector: Romy Markham  
OFSTED No 1387

Dates of inspection: 27-31 March 2000

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	11-16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	St Anne's Grove Fareham Hants
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs E Webb
Date of previous inspection:	December 1995

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Romy Markham Registered inspector		Characteristics and effectiveness. The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? School improvement
J Lovell Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
D Benstock Team inspector	Science	Resources for learning.
J Evans Team inspector	Physical education	Accommodation
C Griffin Team inspector	English	How good are the curricular and other opportunities?
L Greenwood Team inspector	Religious education	Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
D Gwinnett Team inspector	Art, music	
G Hunter Team inspector	Mathematics	Financial management
A King Team inspector	Modern foreign languages	Staffing.
G Lawson Team inspector	Special educational needs; equality of opportunity	
S Matthews Team inspector	Geography, history	
H Webb Team inspector	Design technology, information technology	

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>11</b>
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>31</b>

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This comprehensive school provides education for 941 boys and girls aged 11 to 16 in the Hampshire town of Fareham. Pupils attending the school come from a broad social mix and average economic circumstances but very few come from ethnic minorities. The number of pupils with special educational needs is well above average. The number with formal statements of need is about average and the proportion claiming free school meals is below average. The school hosts a local education authority resourced unit for pupils with hearing impairment. About 30 pupils enter the school part way through the school year and a similar number leave. Pupils have broadly average attainments when they enter the school but there are fewer higher attaining pupils than might be expected. Pupils leave the school at age 16 and about three-quarters of each cohort have gone on to further education. The school has had formal community status since 1987 and works closely with the district and county council in a wide range of community activities.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a good school where pupils achieve well and reach standards that are as good as they should be. Teaching and other provision is good. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and overall management is good. The school uses its resources well. There has been good improvement since the last inspection and the school gives good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Pupils achieve as well as they should for their ages and have sound literacy and good numeracy skills.
- The school is well managed at all levels and the headteacher provides excellent leadership.
- Teaching is of good quality overall and in most subjects and a significant proportion is very good.
- The curriculum is particularly broad and provides good learning opportunities for pupils of all levels of attainment including the most able, those with learning difficulties or hearing impairment.
- Provision is excellent for extra curricular activities and very good for social and cultural development.
- There is a strong corporate will and good procedures to improve teaching and learning by careful monitoring and evaluation.
- The strong pastoral system provides good care but also challenges pupils to improve their learning.
- There are good relationships and partnerships with other schools and colleges and good community links enhance the provision of learning opportunities.
- There is a strong arts and cultural bias which is reflected in the quality of teaching and learning and in an unusually attractive learning environment.

#### **What could be improved**

- The unsatisfactory teaching in religious education in Key Stage 3.
- The variable quality of arrangements for personal, social and health education, including tutor time.
- The unsatisfactory behaviour of a small but significant number of pupils in Key Stage 3.
- Arrangements to ensure that statutory requirements are met for the inclusion of a design technology course for all pupils in Key Stage 4 and provision of a daily act of collective worship for all pupils.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has made good improvements since the last inspection in December 1995. Standards of attainment overall have been maintained, examination results have risen in line with the national trend and the underachievement in information technology, modern foreign languages and geography has been remedied. There are now good procedures to evaluate teaching and learning and the proportion of good and very good teaching has improved. The curriculum continues to provide excellent extra curricular programmes and there is now good provision for both the most and

least able. Standards have been maintained in management, how pupils are cared for, the partnership with parents, pupils' attitudes and personal development. Resources for learning are sound. Departments have made sound improvements overall, although the extent of improvement varies; it is outstanding in information technology but unsatisfactory in physical education for the time available. Senior staff have reviewed provision for collective worship and personal, social and health education but deficiencies in these areas have not been fully remedied.

### STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 16 year olds based on average point scores in GCSE examinations.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
GCSE examinations	C	C	C	D

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 in 1999 is broadly average when compared with all schools and those with similar intakes. Pupils did better in mathematics and science tests than they did in English, where results were below average, but teachers' own assessments in English showed that pupils' attainments were broadly average. Inspection findings confirmed these teacher assessments. In 1999 overall, boys achieved slightly better than boys nationally and the girls achieved as well as girls nationally. These results are similar to those over the last four years and have improved in line with the national trend.

Results in GCSE examinations in 1999 are broadly average compared with all maintained schools but below the average of similar schools. Similar results have been achieved over the last four years. When these GCSE results are compared with the same pupils' end of Key Stage 3 tests in 1997, the results show that pupils' progress is above the average for similar schools. Results in design technology and French were significantly below those of other subjects but inspection evidence shows that standards are now as expected, because of improvements in teaching and learning. The school has set challenging targets for above average point scores and higher grade passes in 2000 and 2001, based on a detailed analysis of pupils' prior attainment. Inspection evidence suggests that pupils are well on course to achieve these targets.

From lesson observations and other inspection evidence, pupils are attaining in line with national expectations overall by the end of both key stages. Pupils are achieving as well as might be expected from their attainment when they started at the school. Attainment is above expectations overall in English, art and music and this represents good achievement. Literacy and information technology skills are sound and numeracy skills are good.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Generally good and this has a positive impact on standards of achievement.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good in most circumstances. Pupils respect each other's views and property and work well together in lessons. A small group of pupils in Key Stage 3 are badly behaved.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils show good personal development and relationships are good between pupils and pupils and staff. Pupils of all ages respond positively to opportunities to exercise responsibility. By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils are developing confidence as independent learners.
Attendance	Attendance and punctuality to school and lessons are satisfactory. The number of exclusions is below average.

The great majority of pupils have positive attitudes and good behaviour. A small group of pupils in Key Stage 3 however, do not come to school prepared to work, they disturb others, shout out in class, are rude to teachers and cause physical disturbance.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 11-14 years	aged 14-16 years	aged over 16 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	N/A

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

The quality of teaching is good overall and a significant proportion is very good. In the inspection, 92 per cent of the lessons seen were satisfactory or better, of which 70 per cent were good or better, including 22 per cent which were very good and 3 per cent which were excellent. This high proportion of good teaching leads to good learning. Teachers provide a variety of learning activities which encourages all to achieve well, including the most and least able. Pupils try hard at their work; they maintain interest and concentration and do not waste time. They steadily improve their knowledge and skills and most have a secure understanding of how well they are achieving and what they need to do to improve. Eight per cent of lessons however, were less than satisfactory, including two per cent that were poor. A significant proportion of less than satisfactory lessons were taught by temporary or part time staff employed pending permanent appointments.

Teaching is good at both key stages in English and mathematics. In science, teaching during the inspection was good in Key Stage 3 but had a significant unsatisfactory element in Key Stage 4. Over time however, teaching in science has been sound and led to satisfactory levels of achievement. Teaching is good in both key stages in design technology, history, geography, modern foreign languages, art and physical education. Teaching in music improves from sound at Key Stage 3 to good at Key Stage 4. Teaching in religious education is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 3 because of weaknesses in class control but it is good in Key Stage 4. In information technology, teaching is very good at both key stages because of very good leadership and support for teaching. Teaching was good in the small sample of lessons seen in drama, GCSE business studies and in GNVQ courses. Teachers promote basic skills of literacy and numeracy satisfactorily.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL



Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall with particular strengths in the arts, extra curricular provision, vocational and careers education and community links. There are weaknesses because provision for personal, social and health education is of variable quality. The school does not meet legal requirements for all pupils in Key Stage 4 to follow a course in design and technology.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision through in-class support, small withdrawal groups and the use of amended materials.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision overall. Opportunities are very good for social and cultural development, good for moral and sound for spiritual development. However, the school does not provide collective worship each day for all pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Provision is satisfactory overall. Strong pastoral care and monitoring of pupils' academic progress and personal development is used effectively to improve standards and learning. There are particularly high levels of support and guidance for pupils with hearing impairment. Routine health and safety procedures are sound but there is inconsistency in formal risk assessments.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Partnership with parents is satisfactory and the school seeks to involve them in the work and life of the school for the benefit of pupils.

#### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good management overall. The headteacher provides excellent leadership. He is ably supported by the senior management team and strong heads of department and heads of year.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is well informed, committed to school improvement and has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. However, it has not ensured that the school meets all statutory requirements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There are good procedures to monitor teaching and learning and to evaluate levels of attainment in tests and examinations.
The strategic use of resources	The governing body and senior staff ensure that the school makes good use of its resources. They rigorously apply the principles of best value in reviewing school performance, curriculum provision or major purchases.

There are sufficient well-qualified teachers but some temporary lack of expertise in music and design technology. Support staff are well qualified but there is no network technician for information technology. Administrative staff provide good support for the daily routines. Accommodation is good and very well maintained but there are not enough spaces for large gatherings. There is limited access for disabled pupils. There are satisfactory learning resources overall. Access to computers is limited but will improve as a new network is installed in the school later this year.

#### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school expects pupils to work hard and achieve their best.</li> <li>• Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.</li> <li>• The good progress that pupils make.</li> <li>• The good quality of the teaching.</li> <li>• The school helps pupils to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• The good leadership and management of the school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The way in which the school works with parents.</li> <li>• The amount of homework given to pupils.</li> <li>• The information provided to parents about pupils' progress.</li> </ul>

Most parents are satisfied with the school and the education it provides. Inspectors' judgements support these positive views. The school has satisfactory links with parents and seeks to work in close partnership with them providing satisfactory information on the progress of all pupils. However, parents are not made aware of the annual timetable for parents' evenings and the provision of subject reviews and reports. Good information is provided about events and the life of the school. Appropriate homework is set regularly and details of the amounts of homework that can be expected are included in the homework planners, which parents sign regularly.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. Pupils entering the school have broadly average attainments in the national tests in English, mathematics and science, taken at the end of their studies in primary school and this pattern is reflected in the tests and examinations taken by pupils aged 14 and 16.
2. In the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 3, for pupils aged 14, the average point score was broadly average overall. Results varied by subject however, and pupils did better in mathematics and science than they did in English, both for the average point score and the proportion reaching the expected Level 5 and above. These results are similar to those of previous years. Taking the four years 1996-1999 together, results over the core subjects together have been above the national average, mainly due to the consistently above average performance in science. Over the same period, boys consistently achieved higher results than boys nationally in all three core subjects, whereas girls achieved above the national average for girls in science and close to average in mathematics and English. The overall trend of results is broadly in line with that nationally, although that for English is much more variable than mathematics and science. Inspection evidence however, suggests that the 1999 results in English underestimated the proportions reaching Level 5 and above, as the pupils concerned are now working at the standards expected nationally with a significant proportion above this.
3. When results are compared to similar schools, based on the eligibility for free school meals, they were broadly average overall in 1999. Again, results were better in mathematics and science than in English, for those achieving the expected Level 5 and above and for the average point scores.
4. The results of assessments in 1999 by teachers in the foundation subjects, show attainment above average in geography and French, broadly in line in history, art, music and physical education but well below in design and technology and very low in information technology.
5. Pupils aged 16 had broadly average results in the 1999 GCSE examinations for the average point scores and for those achieving five or more passes at grades A\*-C. Results were well above the national average for those achieving five or more passes at grades A\*-G. The average point scores have been in line with national figures over the last three years for both boys and girls. The trend over the last six years however, has been below the national trend, mainly due to an unusually high average point score in 1994. The school has set challenging targets for above average point scores and higher grade passes in 2000 and 2001, based on a detailed analysis of pupils' prior attainment.
6. When the 1999 results are compared to those of similar schools, based on the eligibility for free school meals, they are below average for those achieving five or more grades A\*-C and for the average point score. They are however, well above average for those achieving five or more passes and very high indeed for those achieving one or more pass grade. When these GCSE results are compared with the same pupils' end of Key Stage 3 tests in 1997, pupils' progress was above average in comparison with similar schools. The local education authority provides comparative data on attainment, comparing groups of similar schools using more indicators than free school meals, for example the proportion of pupils with special educational need. These figures show that the school results are consistently above the average for a group of similar schools.
7. The GCSE results in 1999 showed a considerable variation between subjects. Pupils attained significantly more higher grades in art, science, drama, English literature, geography, mathematics and religious education than they did in their other subjects. Results in design and technology and French were significantly below those of other subjects.

8. From lesson observations and other inspection evidence, pupils are attaining in line with national expectations overall by the end of both key stages. Pupils are achieving as well as might be expected from their attainment when they started at the school.
9. Pupils attain above the standards expected nationally in English and this represents good achievement. Attainment is as expected nationally by the end of Key Stage 3 across the four attainment targets of speaking and listening, reading and writing. Pupils of all levels of attainment communicate their ideas clearly and the highest attainers analyse language effectively and write accurately in a range of styles, for example poetry, discursive, persuasive or narrative. Pupils consolidate their learning well and attainment is above expectations by the end of Key Stage 4. Pupils express themselves clearly and logically, they understand the impact of character, cause and effect and all but the lowest attainers write with generally accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation.
10. Pupils' overall attainment in mathematics is in line with national expectations and this represents satisfactory achievement across the attainment targets of number and algebra, shape, space and measure and data handling. Attainment does however vary widely; lower attainers in Key Stage 3 are more secure with number than with algebra whereas there are some very high attaining pupils in Key Stage 4 who attain very high levels in Year 10 and are ready to start A-level work in Year 11.
11. The attainment seen in lessons in science is above expectations by the end of Key Stage 3 and as expected by the end of Key Stage 4. This represents satisfactory achievement from their attainments on entry. Pupils in Key Stage 3 have a secure understanding of materials, life and physical processes and they can carry out a scientific investigation with due regard for fairness, accuracy of observation and recording of results. By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils have a sound understanding of key scientific concepts and higher attainers can apply these to complex situations. Attainment by the end of Key Stage 4 is less consistent than at Key Stage 3 because of recent changes in examination courses, how groups are organised and because of some unsatisfactory teaching.
12. In other subjects of the curriculum, attainment is as expected overall in design technology, information technology, modern foreign languages, history, geography and physical education and attainment is above expectations in music. Attainment is generally consistent in both key stages, except in information technology, which is above expectations at Key Stage 3 because of the recent improvements in teaching and provision; in art, attainment is above expectations at Key Stage 3. The GCSE course in Key Stage 4 provides good teaching and learning and attainment is well above expectations. Attainment in religious education is below expectations in Key Stage 3 because some classes have unsatisfactory teaching whereas those in Key Stage 4 have good teaching and attainment is above expectations.
13. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well both in lessons and over time, making good progress towards targets set for them in their individual education plans (IEP). Pupils meet the great majority of their key and lower priority targets across a range of subjects, through good teaching and well planned and carefully focused in-class support. Targets are challenging and are reviewed each term. Pupils with formal statements and those with hearing impairment also make good and sometimes very good progress through the appropriate specialist provision. Pupils achieve well in daily workshop sessions when they receive effective help from teachers, learning support assistants and school prefects who help to reinforce basic skills; for example pupils with moderate learning difficulties make good gains in skills of literacy and numeracy. Pupils follow examination courses in Key Stage 4 with successful results.
14. Overall, standards of literacy meet expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress and are able to show their understanding and knowledge in their writing. Most read with sufficient independence and accuracy to ensure they can identify relevant information. Pupils can communicate their ideas clearly and confidently when speaking and their listening skills meet expectation.
15. The pupils display good numerical skills in their work across the school curriculum. Pupils use bar charts, pie charts and line graphs accurately in science. Lower attaining pupils in geography

cope with four figure grid references. In food technology, the pupils weigh ingredients with accuracy and use correct units. In graphical communication, they make good use of geometric skill measuring angles accurately for orthographic representation. When working at electronics in systems technology the pupils manipulate numbers with the correct use of decimal notation.

16. Pupils are attaining as expected in their use of information technology (IT) across the curriculum. In science, pupils learn how a computer can be used to directly collect and plot information from experiments through sensors. Using temperature sensors, they investigate the way penguins conserve heat by huddling together. IT is used appropriately to teach music but the ageing computers and software limit possibilities. IT is used very effectively at Key Stage 4 as part of the business studies course and pupils develop above expected skills in communicating information and data handling. Pupils with special educational need benefit from using a computer based independent learning application to improve their skills in numeracy and literacy. IT is used productively in other subjects of the curriculum despite the limited resources: for example, pupils in a religious education lesson recorded the differences in the Gospel stories of the Resurrection in tabular format. In mathematics, pupils are able to write and edit control procedures to instruct a computer to draw repeated geometrical shapes on the screen. (Logo). Some pupils have produced very advanced examples of this work.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

17. Pupils' attitudes to school are generally good, as in the previous inspection, and have a positive impact on standards of achievement across the school. Pupils come to school expecting to learn and to make good progress. They are interested in their work, especially when lessons are purposeful and the quality of teaching is good. Their level of involvement in the general life of the school and extra-curricular activities is good. Pupils enjoy undertaking responsibilities within the school and are committed to fulfilling their roles, such as in serving as form prefects, supporting younger pupils and as representatives on the school council which has recently been re-established.
18. Pupils' behaviour is good overall. The majority of pupils show interest and enthusiasm for their work particularly when the pace and challenge are appropriate. The standard of behaviour in lessons and around the school is usually good and this is reflected in the rate of exclusion, which is below the national average. There were two permanent exclusions in the last academic year. Pupils are usually courteous, trustworthy, and behave well in class, as in Year 8 geography lesson when pupils were assessing the dangers, dilemmas and problems to be faced when a group of people are marooned in a village following an avalanche. There is however, a small group of pupils in Key Stage 3 who behave badly and seek to disrupt lessons by calling out in class and disturbing others. They display challenging behaviour, even with experienced teachers. This is in contrast to the great majority who are polite to teachers and, when set tasks that challenge their abilities, work productively without distracting one another.
19. Pupils show respect for the school's and other people's property. For example, in science lessons they use equipment with care. There is no evidence of graffiti or vandalism. In general, students behave well out of class and conform with the expected high standards of behaviour during the lunch break and when moving between lessons. The majority of pupils respect the school's code of conduct. On occasions, pupils are unduly noisy, for example while queuing to enter classrooms and at lunchtimes, there are examples of boisterous behaviour but oppressive or aggressive behaviour is rare. Pupils do not deny that some bullying does take place, but there is no evidence of any systematic bullying. Pupils report that they are confident that any incidents are addressed quickly and effectively. They value the willingness of staff and form prefects to listen to them and provide support in resolving such issues and in seeking to reconcile relationship difficulties.
20. The quality of relationships throughout the school, between pupils and between pupils and staff is good. Pupils trust their teachers and feel comfortable about turning to them for support and guidance. Pupils work well together in lessons in pairs and groups, and have good respect for other people's feelings as was evidenced in a Year 10 drama lesson in which pupils were sensitive to any extraneous noises which might affect those performing and provided very

positive support and encouragement to each other. They show understanding and consideration for the needs of hearing impaired pupils and have a good understanding of the needs of others. This is developed through their support of local and national charities.

21. Pupils of all ages respond positively to opportunities to exercise responsibility throughout the school. Pupils serve as librarians and act as receptionist and they may serve on the school council. Some become involved in considering a diverse range of issues such as how to make the draft school/home agreement more 'pupil friendly' and whether the school uniform should be changed. Year 11 pupils pay their own expenses to accompany Year 7 pupils to their residential experience and to support them in their activities. Pupils show initiative and maturity when carrying out these duties. The majority of pupils make good progress as independent learners and many, particularly at Key Stage 4, have the confidence to take responsibility for their own learning and to identify their own strengths and weaknesses. This was seen well in a Year 11 mathematics lesson when pupils were working with trigonometry and had a clear understanding of what concepts they needed to grasp in order to make further progress.
22. Most pupils with special educational needs like school and work hard. They take part in all the school's activities including the homework club and some come to school early to work on the computers. They make significant progress towards becoming independent and taking responsibility for their own learning.
23. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. Registers are completed efficiently and comply with requirements. In 1998/9, the attendance level of 91.4 per cent, with 0.9 per cent unauthorised absence, was broadly in line with the national average. The significant majority of pupils are punctual at the start of sessions and to lessons throughout the day. Attendance rates over recent years have been consistent and have a positive effect upon pupils' learning and standards of attainment.

#### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

24. The quality of teaching is good overall; a significant proportion is very good and this represents good improvement since the last inspection. In the inspection, 92 per cent of the lessons seen were satisfactory or better, of which 70 per cent were good or better, including 22 per cent that were very good and 3 per cent that were excellent. This consistently high quality of teaching has a significant impact on learning which is good in all subjects except music and religious education, where it is sound. Eight per cent of lessons however, were less than satisfactory, including two per cent which were poor. A significant proportion of less than satisfactory lessons were taught by temporary or part time staff employed pending permanent appointments.
25. Teaching is good in both key stages in English, mathematics, design technology, history, geography, modern foreign languages, art and physical education. Teaching in music improves from sound at Key Stage 3 to good at Key Stage 4. During the inspection, teaching in science was good in Key Stage 3 but more variable in Key Stage 4 from good to unsatisfactory; evidence from pupils' attainments suggests that over time teaching is satisfactory. Teaching in religious education is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 3 because of weaknesses in class control but it is good in Key Stage 4. In information technology, teaching is very good at both key stages because of very good leadership and support for teaching. Teaching was good in the small sample of lessons seen in drama, GCSE business studies and in GNVQ courses.
26. Good teaching is based firmly on teachers knowing their subject well. They draw on a wide range of experience and expertise, give many examples to illustrate their teaching points and can explain clearly. Teachers' knowledge is particularly strong in information technology, modern foreign languages and in English where teachers are not only well-informed about texts or examination requirements, they also provide lessons that are lively and stimulate interest. These ranged from high quality whole class questioning to explore understanding, the use of storyboards to support descriptive writing and a 'Director's Workshop' to help pupils to explore the meaning and language of 'Romeo and Juliet'. All of these different approaches were well suited to the varying levels of attainment of the pupils and led to enthusiastic responses and good

learning. Teachers in business education are up to date in the ever-changing business world and make lessons relevant by using contemporary materials and issues, such as e-commerce.

27. Teachers have responded well to national initiatives to promote literacy and numeracy. They teach these basic skills satisfactorily and consolidate the work done in English and mathematics. Good examples of this were seen in the reading of war poetry in history lessons on the First World War and in explaining the need and method for accurate measurements in science.
28. The great majority of lessons are successful because teachers plan thoroughly both what they are going to do and what they expect pupils to learn. They set high expectations for pupils' response and behaviour and they give a good structure to lessons by making the objectives clear at the start of lessons and reviewing progress at the end. Good strategies for this were seen in mathematics where teachers asked pupils to identify what they had learned by the end of lessons and what they still had to achieve. These written comments were then used to inform future lesson planning, as well as giving increased motivation to pupils. This high quality of planning, evaluation and feedback helps pupils to make good improvements in their knowledge and skills. Most have a secure understanding of how well they are achieving and what they need to do to do even better.
29. Good teaching includes a variety of tasks and activities which engage and motivate pupils and help them to consolidate or extend their learning. These include direct instruction, discussion, role play, simulation, problem solving and practical activities. This variety means that the learning needs of pupils of all levels of attainment are met; the work is neither too hard nor too easy and pupils are motivated to achieve. This was seen well in lessons in business education in Key Stage 4 where enjoyable, competitive practical activities were sound foundations for calculations and business theory for pupils of very different levels of attainment. Good teaching in religious education makes effective use of witness by contemporary Christians to explain how their faith affects their lives. Discussions based on interviews with famous people enabled pupils to develop a better understanding of what being a Christian means.
30. Most teachers are accomplished managers of their pupils to make sure that lesson time is used well. The best lessons are brisk, purposeful and every minute is used productively. This was seen in a Year 9 IT lesson where a teacher with exceptional skills set a lively pace. This combined with enthusiasm and pupils' enjoyment, led to very good learning, although the lesson contained some difficult concepts. Teachers establish routines and keep to them, so that pupils try hard at their work, they maintain interest and concentration and do not waste time. Teachers set clear rules but also show respect for pupils' contributions to discussion or in written work. This helps to develop good relationships and encourages pupils to respond well. Good teaching deals effectively with the small minority of pupils in Key Stage 3 who are poorly motivated or badly behaved. Very occasionally, less experienced teachers are unable to manage these pupils effectively and this leads to unsatisfactory teaching and learning.
31. Teachers use a range of stimulus materials such as video clips, overhead transparencies, artefacts or pictures to enhance their teaching by providing different types of interest. Teachers in art make very good use of a visit to the Bayeux Tapestry as stimulus material and devise particularly imaginative cross curricular work with drama, by helping pupils to create masks based on "A Midsummer Night's Dream". Lessons are enhanced by the good use of support staff to assist pupils and when teachers of practical subjects have good quality help from technical staff.
32. Teachers make good arrangements to assess how pupils are making progress and if they are achieving as well as they should be. Work is marked regularly and pupils are told what they have to do to improve. Teachers consistently use the school system of grades to show attainment but do not always show how pupils are achieving against national expectations in the core subjects in Years 7 and 8. Teachers in design technology have very good assessment procedures, which promotes consistency across all aspects of the subject and helps pupils to understand how they are being assessed. They use these assessments very well to set work that will challenge pupils of different levels of attainment. They often provide detailed comments that help pupils to learn from their mistakes and make progress.

33. Teachers encourage pupils to consolidate or extend their knowledge and skills by setting relevant homework tasks, which may be research, written or practical activities. Work is set and marked regularly. In Key Stage 4, homework is often based around GCSE coursework tasks and pupils are given clear deadlines for completion. Good examples of the effective use of homework to extend pupils' knowledge and skills were seen in modern foreign languages where higher attainers were set tasks to develop their extended writing skills.
34. Support teaching is good and successfully promotes the learning of pupils with special educational needs. The close links between the learning support department, the hearing impaired resource and subject departments ensure that teaching meets the special needs of pupils most of the time. Learning support staff have a comprehensive knowledge of the range of special educational needs within their group, in particular the educational implications of hearing impairment, and they are experienced and competent. Pupils reflect this expertise by good and often rapid progress.

### **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?**

35. The curriculum and other learning opportunities are of good quality and range, with particular strengths in the excellent quality of extra curricular provision. However, the school does not require all pupils to follow a course in design and technology in Key Stage 4; this is a breach of statutory requirements and the curriculum is unsatisfactory in this respect.
36. Overall, the school has drawn up an appropriate list of curriculum aims that refers to potential, high standards, preparation for adult life and appreciation of diversity. The curriculum is underpinned by a sound sense of values including the establishment of a positive learning environment and of mutually respectful relationships. These principles are consistently realised.
37. The school has responded satisfactorily to the last report. The breadth and balance of the Key Stage 3 curriculum has been maintained. The school has maintained and extended the good provision at Key Stage 4 with vocational courses now firmly established. Although the time allocated to religious education at Key Stage 4 is slightly below what is usually found in most schools, the quality of the provision has improved with the introduction of a core short GCSE course for all pupils. There has been a good response to providing more challenge for higher attaining and talented pupils, both within the curriculum and through extra curricular activities. The well-attended extra curricular opportunities and effective links with the community are still a prominent feature of the school. However improvement in personal, social and health education has been unsatisfactory. It is not taught regularly or rigorously enough to complement the good opportunities that exist in other parts of the school's provision such as extra curricular activities. The time allocated for teaching at Key Stage 4 is still below the minimum recommended time.
38. The curriculum at Key Stage 3 is satisfactory. It covers all National Curriculum subjects plus religious education and drama. Although there is some variation in time allocations to subjects in different years, the overall distribution across the key stage is appropriate. There are separate lessons for information technology in Year 7 and 9 and in Year 8 it has been integrated into the design technology programme. The first modern foreign language is French but the more able linguists may start Spanish from Year 9, although the provision of only one lesson a week is not enough to lead to more pupils opting for it at Key Stage 4. Curriculum balance in subjects is sound, but there are shortcomings in the distribution of some groups' learning: some classes in Years 8 and 9 have all their history on the same day; standards in music and art are undermined by the discontinuity inherent in the rotation system with drama.
39. The curriculum at Key Stage 4 has good breadth, balance and relevance but is unsatisfactory because it does not meet statutory requirements for design technology. All pupils take courses in English, mathematics, science, modern foreign language, physical education, religious education, information technology and personal and social education. In addition they can take options from other National Curriculum subjects plus physical education, drama and business studies. All pupils take a short course in GCSE religious education and a GNVQ key skills course in information technology. There are also GNVQ/NVQ courses available in health and



social care, catering and motor vehicle maintenance. These courses are now well established and pupils respond positively and effectively to the different learning styles involved. Provision for able and talented pupils is good. Able mathematicians sit their GCSE examination a year early and start courses in GCSE statistics and A-level mathematics in Year 11. Pupils with a special aptitude for science take GCSE examination courses in separate sciences while the remainder of the year mainly takes double award courses with a smaller number following single award. In the arts, there are opportunities for music tuition and participation in a major theatrical production each year. There are additional classes in GCSE art. Overall, the curriculum provides appropriate opportunities for pupils of all levels of attainment.

40. Vocational education is a strength at Key Stage 4 and the provision is very good because is very well led and managed by an extremely enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator. The organisation of the course is thorough and the teaching makes very high expectations of the pupils. They respond well by being up to date with case studies and behaving with good responsibility when they go out into the community for their health and social care course or to Fareham College for their catering and motor vehicle maintenance courses. Discussions with pupils established they enjoy and value the course and that it has having a positive impact on their emerging self reliance, confidence and skills in literacy, numeracy and information technology.
41. The school makes satisfactory arrangements for the teaching of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum. The school is developing a whole school policy for literacy and has established a literacy management group that is successfully raising staff awareness of the issues involved on both a practical and theoretical basis. For example, staff have been given exemplars of different levels of writing to guide their expectation. Under the direction of one of the deputies and the school's literacy co-ordinator there is good capacity for further development. There is no equivalent group for numeracy. Basic skills are covered well in the mathematics department and opportunities exist for application of numeracy skills in many subjects including geography, science and English. However, the lack of systematic development of a whole school policy is a relative weakness.
42. The curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Provision is particularly good in Key Stage 4 where there are highly relevant vocational courses tailored to meet the needs of lower attaining pupils. The school successfully integrates pupils with special educational needs into school life. In the main, support is given in lessons with small amounts of withdrawal for specific development of basic skills. Pupils with difficulties with literacy and numeracy receive daily intensive small group and individual work in form time. Some pupils with hearing impairment appropriately follow individual programmes in literacy and communication skills with some speech therapy for two hours a week. The use of specialist support from outside agencies is well managed within the school. Planning is effective in meeting the individual learning needs and supporting systematic progress of pupils in most subject areas. Good planning is being developed to meet the needs of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties but this is at an early stage of development. Additional provision for pupils with moderate behavioural difficulties in the lower part of the school is not as successful. At times, this has a negative impact on pupils' progress.
43. The school makes good provision to ensure equality of opportunity. There is a strong emphasis on the entitlement curriculum and this leads to good outcomes such as high entry rates and success in mathematics and English. Pupils have equal access to the curriculum in both key stages apart from the hearing impaired and the lowest attainers in French. However, access to all sections of the school for pupils with a short term physical disability is restricted.
44. Arrangements for teaching personal, social and health education (PSHE) are satisfactory in terms of the overall time and the aspects taught. There are however weaknesses in the lack of consistency of the programme for all pupils. PSHE is taught in tutor time each week and in one double lesson each half term and there are other contributions from curriculum areas and residential visits. During tutor time, some pupils are withdrawn for additional support or to work with Success Maker, which means they miss part of their PSHE provision. During the inspection, the quality of provision for PSHE during tutor time was vary variable from good to unsatisfactory. The previous inspection report identified that tutor periods should contribute

more effectively to pupils' personal development. Although some improvements have been made to the programme, the school has already recognised the need for further improvements to ensure consistency of quality and to meet new curriculum requirements for September 2000.

45. The school's ethos and the good role models provided by staff, promote pupils' personal development through lessons and the continuing excellent range of extra-curricular activities that are offered to pupils. The monitoring and assessment of pupils' personal and social development is very closely linked to that of their academic progress and supports the development of pupils as whole individuals. Lunch in the 'Bishop's Bistro' is a good quality social occasion. In Year 7, all pupils participate in a residential visit, which benefits their personal and social development and includes activities that depend upon working as a team and 'trusting' colleagues. Older pupils are able to participate in the Duke of Edinburgh Award, which provides further opportunities for their personal development. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and to collaborate in developing ideas and undertaking practical tasks. Sex education is taught by a specialist, involving external agencies, and is also included within the science programme in which pupils are encouraged to reflect upon moral issues such as genetic engineering. Pupils are made aware of drugs issues and the school matron is able to provide pupils with a wide range of health promotion material.
46. The provision for extra curricular activities is excellent. There is an extremely wide range of sporting, musical and general interest opportunities. They are well supported by many pupils. The school has a long tradition of sporting achievement with success at area and county level. There are also football and ski trips to Europe and North America. There are also annual musical productions, concerts involving the steel band, the choir, orchestra and wind band. Other activities include the school bank, sailing, the Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme, a creative writing club and charity fund raising for local and national organisations. There is a good range of educational visits including a camp for all Year 7 pupils, a tour of the First World War battlefields, geography field visits and a Year 8 visit to Boulogne. Year 11 pupils talk very enthusiastically about these opportunities which they clearly value. Particularly noteworthy is the support teachers give to colleagues. For instance, several staff watched a Year 11 GCSE group perform their drama assessment piece one afternoon after school
47. Careers education is good and provides impartial advice on opportunities for work and further education. Advice on option choices at the end of Year 9 is good and parents are involved through a consultation evening. The school is well supported by the Careers Service and its involvement with project Trident which ensures that all Year 10 pupils are able to undertake two weeks work experience which they then evaluate. All pupils in Year 11 meet individually with a careers adviser. The support provided, through specific careers advice, addresses the needs of pupils and actively engages them in taking responsibility for action planning and making informed choices. Access to the resources is good for all pupils, although there is no specific careers guidance software available for pupils with special education needs. The head of department is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and has access a satisfactory range of up-to-date resources within good accommodation that is suited to independent research and interviews.
48. Since the previous inspection, the school has developed good curriculum relationships with other schools, colleges and the local community. It has established constructive links with the principal feeder schools, with a shared curriculum focus in areas such as literacy, numeracy and physical education. These have been supported by shared tracking of pupils from Year 6 to Year 8. The school supplements these links with effective presentations for parents of prospective pupils before transfer. There are good links with the local colleges through the development of vocational courses and through community education provision. These links and the good provision for careers education, mean that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

### **Community education**

49. The school has been an LEA designated community school since 1987. The range of community links is good and this provides good enhancement to the schools' curriculum and other learning opportunities. During the day a number of community groups make full use of the facilities

offered by the school or by voluntary groups. The Children's Centre was built after very successful fund raising by the school. It provides accommodation for playgroups and an after school club. This club is over subscribed and provides a good wide range of social, recreational and educational facilities for pupils in primary and secondary schools from 3 to 6 pm. Adult education classes are held in community accommodation during the day and in the school in evenings and weekends. These classes are organised with Fareham College and include a good range of vocational as well as general interest courses. At evenings and weekends there is extensive community use of the youth club, sports hall and gymnasium.

50. The community provision on site makes a good contribution to pupils' personal and social development. Pupils in Key Stage 4 have the opportunity to undertake community service, helping younger children, local voluntary groups or elderly local residents. Those attending the after school club work or relax co-operatively with pupils from different schools and age groups. Pupils organise successful large community events such as the annual Christmas Party for elderly neighbours. The school is also a holder of the Schools Curriculum Award that constitutes national recognition of the strength of its community links in the curriculum.
51. Community provision is well managed by a dedicated Community Manager, well supported by a small team of community assistants. The community office and lounge provide a warm welcome to pupils and adults alike. As yet the community management and staffing is separate from that of the school, although relationships are good and the system works well. Several school staff give freely of their time supporting community events as volunteers.

#### **Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

52. The school's overall provision is good. There is explicit planning in some subjects such as art or religious education and most other subjects make a contribution where appropriate. The school also provides opportunities for development in daily routines and in the ethos of the school.
53. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. The school does not provide a daily act of collective worship for all its pupils but the weekly assembly of each year group succeed well in producing a time when moral, social and cultural messages are considered. Subjects include 'friendships', 'forgiveness' and 'the journey of life' but pupils are not given the opportunity to reflect individually. There are however examples from most subject areas of a spiritual dimension. In religious education, pupils are able to share in 'stilling experiences'. Here a deliberate pause is made to invite pupils to enter into a particular experience, perhaps a prayer card found at Auschwitz or the worship of a synagogue during a visit. Both English and art invite individuals to reflect on and then express feelings about 'Myself'. A school trip to World War I battlefields helped make reflection on death in both history lessons and a year assembly very moving.
54. The school's provision for moral development is good. Members of staff are good role models and pupils respond well. What is right and good is respected and affirmed through a sound structure of merits, commendations and records of achievements. The school council seeks to further pupil participation and Year 11 prefects contribute in Year 7 tutor time. Lessons such as physical education encourage pupils to develop fair play and sporting competition. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) course, along with religious education, gives opportunities to explore a range of moral issues such as birth control and drug abuse. Pupils consider moral aspects of environmental issues in geography, including humankind's use of world resources.
55. Provision for social development is very good. The school promotes this positively and successfully in different ways. The Year 7 residential camp sets a pattern followed by other residential courses and trips in almost every subject area. The time commitment of staff to all these extra curricular activities is impressive. There is a very wide range of such opportunities for all pupils. At least sixteen types of sport are available. As a result there is a great deal of togetherness in many aspects of the school life. There is a deliberate policy to create a positive atmosphere in the dining room. Year 10 pupils have the opportunity within the timetable to serve in the wider community. This in turn helps bring the community into school when senior citizens share Christmas with pupils. The whole school has demonstrated its desire to help future generations through the planting of the millennium hedge.

56. Provision for cultural development is also very good in most subject areas. There is a strong drama department that contributes well through productions within school and organises many visits beyond. There are well displayed good quality artworks, musical concerts in school and trips beyond school, participation in larger events, such as World Book Day and good use made of the local rich heritage. Pupils are well prepared for life in a multicultural society. The PSHE course promotes discussion on racial issues. In modern foreign languages, French is seen as the language of not only France but of all French speaking countries. Music and dance of other countries such as India, Indonesia and the Caribbean enrich the life of the school. The different cultures within the five major religions are brought alive in religious studies by, for example, artefacts and displays, visits to other faith centres such as the Buddhist temple at Chithurst and a sensitive vision of the diversity of religious experience.
57. The school maintains all that was commended in the last report in the areas of moral, social and cultural development. However it has not resolved the issue of provision of daily collective worship. There remain the difficulties of lack of suitable space and staff commitment.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

58. Teachers and support staff have good and effective procedures for assessing, monitoring and recording pupils' academic and personal progress. There are good records of prior attainment and teachers have these records in planners and mark books, together with records of regular tests and some moderation tasks. Teachers evaluate data and make good use of it to inform lesson planning and to raise standards. Pupils are given clear feedback about their progress and their levels of attainment. Teachers and pupils share criteria for marking coursework so that all are aware of what pupils need to do to improve their target grades, although in some cases such as English at Key Stage 3, teachers do not always use National Curriculum levels.
59. Pupils are confident that they can approach staff with any problems and feel that they are well supported. Heads of year and departments work closely together to monitor academic and personal development. They provide good personal and academic support and guidance that helps pupils to benefit from the educational opportunities offered. Individual targets set by staff, together with those set by pupils are recorded and closely monitored. They are reviewed to ensure that they are realistic and attainable and guide planning. The monitoring of pupils' academic progress and personal development is used effectively to improve standards and learning.
60. The school's ethos and the high expectations of all adults working within the school are usually successful in promoting pupils' good standards of behaviour in and around the school and during lessons. The school has an effective discipline policy, which is consistently applied by staff and well understood by pupils. However, a minority of pupils, particularly in Key Stage 3 may be disruptive and affect the learning of others where the pace or challenge of lessons is inappropriate or where inappropriate management strategies are used. Pupils value the rewards that they may earn, such as merits and commendations, and recognise that teachers apply sanctions fairly. The effectiveness of the strategies employed and the close monitoring ensure that standards of behaviour are generally good. Good personal relationships are promoted well through engaging pupils in their learning and providing good opportunities for collaboration. The standards of behaviour and relationships together have a positive effect on both attainment and progress.
61. The school has good procedures to monitor and promote good attendance and punctuality. Pupils with good attendance are recognised and rewarded. Teachers use computerised attendance records to analyse attendance patterns to identify any concerns. Parents are contacted promptly in the event of any unexplained absences. In those cases where concerns are identified, staff seek to work with parents and outside agencies to address them.
62. Child protection arrangements are satisfactory; the school follows the local child protection procedures, which comply with legal requirements. A senior member of staff is responsible for child protection and has received appropriate training. There are well-established liaison

arrangements with outside agencies. Staff are aware of the procedures to be followed in the case of any concerns. Staff understand the child protection policy and the school is vigilant and sensitive in exercising its responsibilities and acting in the best interests of pupils. Outside agencies, including education specialists, the education welfare officer, social services, the health authority and the educational psychologist provide good support and advice for pupils.

63. The school has a satisfactory health and safety policy and safe practices are promoted by teachers in lessons, such as in a Year 11 science lesson in which pupils were investigating energy transfer and the teacher's emphasis on safe practice contributed to the establishment of a safe working environment. Although equipment and appliances are regularly tested and throughout the school, there is a good awareness of safety, the practice between departments in conducting and recording formal risk assessments is inconsistent. For example, in the design technology department procedures are very good whereas in physical education there is no evidence of risk assessments being documented. Whole school risk assessments are completed appropriately and have involved external consultants in appropriate cases, such as when assessing the risks of dust from pottery work. Pupils' health however, is put at risk by local residents who exercise their dogs on the playing fields.
64. The arrangements for providing first aid during the day are very good. A qualified nurse is based in a very well equipped medical room and is readily accessible throughout the working day. Three other non-teaching staff hold current first aid qualifications and a number of staff have lapsed qualifications. The arrangements for first aid out of school hours are unsatisfactory. After the end of the school day, whilst many physical extra curricular activities are taking place, there are often no qualified first aid staff on the site, although supervision is good and staff have access to a telephone in the event of an emergency. First aid boxes are readily accessible throughout the school and meet requirements. Accidents are properly recorded and reviewed to identify any risks.
65. Pupils with special educational needs are carefully monitored for regular attendance, punctuality and behaviour through behaviour targets in their individual education plans (IEPs) and the department mentoring scheme. The assessment of pupils with special educational needs is thorough, regular and of a good standard. IEPs are well written, with specific, measurable targets, which are reviewed each term. Literacy and numeracy are assessed using standardised testing procedures and commercial schemes. The school makes good use of this information to set targets and plan individual programmes. The monitoring and recording for pupils with a statement of special educational needs are good and annual reviews meet the requirements of the Code of Practice. Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are put on a staged behaviour plan, with behavioural targets in their IEPs. These targets are reviewed at least once each term and short term targets are reviewed far more frequently.
66. There are particularly high levels of support and guidance for pupils with hearing impairment and those on the higher levels of the special needs register where experienced well qualified staff have a very good knowledge of these pupils. Staff know pupils' personal and special educational needs and pupils' academic progress is well monitored. Combined with target setting and targeted support, the general consistency in monitoring in subject areas, through the link teacher, contribute to the good progress that pupils make.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

67. The partnership with parents is satisfactory and the school seeks to involve them in the work and life of the school for the benefit of pupils. The home/school agreement has been drafted but distribution is delayed whilst the school council are reviewing its content to make it more 'pupil friendly'. The partnership between school and home is promoted through the provision of satisfactory information on pupils' learning and on personal aspects such as organisation, attitudes and response to homework and through good communications about the life and work of the school.
68. Parents generally express positive views of the school. They recognise the school's expectation that pupils will work hard and achieve their best and they feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. They also make positive comments about the good

teaching, the progress which pupils make at school and the good leadership and management of the school. The inspection supported these positive views. A significant minority of parents, however, expressed concerns about the amount of homework given to pupils, the information with which they are provided about pupils' progress and the closeness with which the school works with parents. The inspection team found that the school has satisfactory links with parents and seeks to work in close partnership with them, particularly in the event of any concerns, providing satisfactory information on the progress of all pupils. However, parents are not made aware of the annual timetable for parents' evenings and the provision of subject reviews and reports. Good information is provided about events and the life of the school. Appropriate homework, to extend pupils learning and raise standards, is set regularly and details of the amounts of homework that can be expected are included in the homework planners which parents sign regularly.

69. Parents are generally supportive of pupils' learning at school and at home and their wider activities. The Home School Association provides very good practical assistance, by providing refreshments at events and performances, and through organising activities such as a termly disco for pupils in Years 7 and 8 and the annual lower school 'top of the form' quiz as well as other social events which raise funds to provide equipment and resources. Recently, the Home School Association has supported the running of the mini-bus and bought a computer to support the work of the careers department. The support of parents is appreciated by pupils and staff and makes a positive contribution to resources and facilities available to pupils.
70. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in their formal reviews and are kept well informed about their progress. The school makes particular efforts to encourage parents to become involved in their children's learning and runs workshops and review meetings on a regular basis. The special needs policy and procedures have been rewritten in a 'user friendly' question and answer form to enable information to be easily shared. Generally, parents feel their children's needs are well supported.
71. The information provided for parents is satisfactory overall. Prior to pupils joining the school, parents are invited to attend an induction presentation evening and about 50 per cent attend. Parental attendance at consultation evenings is about 80 per cent but that at the annual meeting with governors fell to below 10 parents at the last meeting. Each year, parents are provided with the opportunity to attend one consultation evening with teachers and they receive one 'annual review', which grades aspects such as attainment, effort, homework and behaviour, and a full annual report. Parents are not provided with an annual timetable for these progress reports and, until this year, they have been requested to return the 'annual review' sheet to the school. The annual reports are written with great care and value pupils' work and pupils as individuals, providing good encouragement. They do not, however, consistently provide targets for improvement to inform how further progress can be made. Staff want to ensure that parents are involved in their children's learning and make strenuous efforts to encourage all parents to attend consultation evenings. Staff seek to involve parents at an early stage in the event of any concerns being identified and are readily accessible to parents. Information provided to parents about activities is good. For example letters to parents about school visits, outline the curriculum area that is being studied. Other information about the life of the school is good and seeks to involve parents in the community of the school, for example in the planting of the 'Millennium Hedge'.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

### **Management**

72. The school benefits from good management. The headteacher provides excellent leadership with a clear focus on raising standards. He is ably supported by a well-informed senior management team and strong heads of department and heads of year. They have a clear vision of school improvement that directs all that they do; they work very well together as a leadership team and have realistic evaluations of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The governing body is well informed and committed to school improvement. Managers at all levels ensure that their work reflects the strong aims and values of the school. Since the previous

inspection report, governors and senior staff have implemented a range of quality initiatives, which have brought about good improvement overall with the capacity for much more in the future.

73. The governing body offers good support and monitors the work of the school through observation, presentations and regular reports, for example on curriculum changes or budget planning. Governors have appropriate committees and meet regularly so that they can develop expertise and make informed contributions to discussion. The chairman of governors knows the strengths and weaknesses of the school very well and this reflects the regular evaluation undertaken on standards and provision. The governors receive regular reports on action taken to improve issues from the last inspection. The rapid rise in standards in information technology (IT) for example is a consequence of the governing body priority to improve resources and appoint a new subject leader. They have set realistic targets for improvements in attainment and performance targets for senior staff. Governors have regularly reviewed their statutory responsibilities for policies and provision. They are however, not completely fulfilling legal requirements. The school does not provide a daily act of collective worship for all pupils because of difficulties in accommodation and staffing. Governors approved a curriculum organisation which offers breadth of option choices but it does not require all pupils in Key Stage 4 to follow a course in design and technology, which is a statutory requirement. There are omissions from the governors' annual report to parents concerning facilities for disabled pupils.
74. Senior staff have devised good systems to collect and distribute assessment data from standardised tests and they have regular discussions with heads of department to consider what this means for teaching and learning. The school development plan is well devised and presents a very clear picture of how the school can improve and what it needs to do, based on the information gathered from assessment. The school has appropriate priorities to raise attainment overall and to ensure more even attainment between subjects.
75. The management of departments or pastoral responsibilities is good. Senior staff have ensured that there is a clear understanding of what needs to be done, through job descriptions, policies and guidance. Heads of department meet regularly with senior staff to review progress. There are regular team meetings for departments and pastoral teams in addition to departmental meetings and this ensures that all staff can contribute effectively to school policies and developments. There are good procedures to monitor teaching by observation or scrutiny of planning and pupils' work. Senior staff take prompt action if weaknesses are identified.
76. The leader of learning resources has built a strong team to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs, which is over a third of the pupils on roll. He has a clear vision for the department and is committed to continuing improvement. He works in close collaboration with the head of the hearing impaired resource unit to improve the achievement of pupils with special educational needs.

## **Financial management**

77. The efficiency with which the school's finances are organised and administered is good, as in the last inspection report. The governors and the headteacher are planning effectively both for the short and medium term and they are also managing their resources prudently in the face of very substantial financial difficulties following reductions in their budget allocation. The governors, head and the financial management team, are committed to seeing that the school's resources are used to deliver the objectives enshrined in the school's development planning. The situation is being very well managed. Governors are fully informed about this as about all finance and efficiency matters. The financial difficulties identified in the last report regarding costs related to long serving and redeployed teaching staff have now been rationalised. It is confidently predicted that all deficits will be paid off and the school will be operating without debt potential within two years.
78. The very recent auditors' report was favourable. It contained some suggestions for improvement that have all been adopted and recorded as such in the governors' finance committee minutes..

In general, financial control is stringent. All heads of department and budget holders are kept abreast of their current spending commitment and do not overspend without permission. Teachers are not unduly burdened with administrative and financial matters.

79. The school receives substantial additional funding because of the number of pupils with special educational needs and the incorporation of the unit for pupils with hearing impairment. This funding is very effectively managed and administered so that its use is appropriately targeted. Funds from the National Grid for Learning have also been spent on a computer networked room for whole curriculum use, and monies raised through corporate partnerships have been used to provide a first class new sound system for dramatic and other performance use in the school hall
80. The governors are focussed on subscribing to the principles of best value. Comparisons are made of school performance with other schools in the county and nationwide. Governors revisit and challenge their assumptions. For instance they considered again this year the work related component in the Key Stage 4 curriculum before deciding that it was providing value for money. All major contracts are subject to competitive tendering arrangements. Views from parents, pupils and all concerned are welcomed and asked for when any major item of expenditure is under consideration.

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

81. There are sufficient teachers for the size of the school. Teachers' knowledge and expertise are generally good but there is some lack of expertise in music and design technology because of staffing changes. Support staff are well qualified for their work, but there is no network technician for information technology, which is a weakness the school plans to remedy in the current year. Administrative staff provide good support for the daily routines of the school and provide a warm welcome for parents and other visitors.
82. Procedures for staff development are good overall and are having a positive effect, particularly on whole school issues such as the development of information technology. Senior staff monitor teaching regularly and professional development needs are recognised early. Procedures for appraisal are good and this has had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning; the school is making sound arrangement for the implementation of performance management. Induction arrangements for newly qualified and new staff are broadly satisfactory and appropriate arrangements are made for their professional development over the year. However, newly qualified staff do not have the recommended additional weekly non-contact time to enable them to prepare and evaluate their work.
83. The school is sited in attractive, landscaped and well-maintained grounds and accommodation is good overall. The premises both inside and out are in very good condition due to a four year rolling programme of improvements and by the very good management and commitment of the site manager and two assistants. There are sufficient teaching spaces including specialist accommodation to meet the demands of the National Curriculum. The majority of rooms are suited and of an adequate size with office space for heads of department and heads of year, however religious education still lacks a staff office and storage space as identified in the last inspection. The classrooms and corridors are in good decorative order and along with the grounds, provide a visually attractive learning environment. The school library is particularly well organised and attractive so that pupils want to work there. The school does not have sufficient large spaces. The school hall has staged seating and is used for assembly and some drama lessons; the staging has to be removed for larger groups such as examination candidates, and this leads to inefficiencies in time or the space available. Access for the disabled is limited. Displays around the school are good and celebrate pupils' achievements in a range of curriculum areas especially in art, mathematics, geography and physical education. The school is used extensively by the community and good liaison and links have been forged between the school and the community through regular site meetings.
84. Considerable improvements have been made since the last inspection. Two science laboratories, a spacious, well furnished library, the dining area and the sports hall entrance have been refurbished and a new designated hearing-impaired unit has been developed. The grounds



improvement scheme has made good use of charitable trust funding to enhance the environment with avenues of trees, picnic and seating areas, additional lawns and the planting of the millennium hedge around the school. The site is litter free and the school takes great pride in maintaining high standards.

85. Learning resources in the school are adequate for the planned curriculum. Textbooks are sufficient in quality and number in most departments and good in history, geography and English. Some departments, for example science and modern foreign languages, do not have enough to issue to pupils in examination classes. Other materials for use in specialist areas are generally adequate but variable in quality. Art, music, physical education resources are satisfactory but provision for use of information technology in these areas is unsatisfactory. Equipment used for gymnastics needs replacement. The central provision of networked computers is good although access for some departments is sometimes a problem. The library is large and well provided with books to support the departments and provide additional research material. Good links are arranged with the school library service. The level of spending and the number of books per pupil is, however, below the national average. Facilities for the use of IT in the library are minimal with only two modern computers. Additional computers are scheduled for installation in the school later this year.
86. In view of the good standards of pupil achievement, teaching and learning, leadership, management and effectiveness together with its good level of improvement since the last inspection, the school gives good value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

87. The headteacher, governors and senior staff have already identified the weaknesses in the school. Items already included in the school development plan are marked \* and those partially covered are marked +. Numbers in brackets refer to paragraphs in the report. In order to further improve standards of attainment, the governing body and senior staff should continue with their strategies to:

- (1) Improve the consistency of teaching in religious education by;
  - continuing to set clear expectations of the quality required;
  - regularly monitoring the quality of teaching;
  - providing support and guidance;
  - ensuring that all teachers of religious education are confident and capable of teaching the full ability range.  
(12, 24, 184-191)
  
- (2) + Improve the overall quality of provision for pupils' personal, social and health education by;
  - ensuring that there is a coherence and consistency between the contributory features, including specific lessons and tutor time;
  - ensuring that the time allocation is appropriate and consistent for all pupils;
  - ensure that all staff are appropriately trained and confident in the contribution they will make;
  - ensure that senior staff are able to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of provision by observation as well as by reviewing outcomes.  
(44, 45, 54)
  
- (3) \* Improve the standards of behaviour of pupils in Key Stage 3 so that teaching and learning are not disrupted by;
  - using the full range of rewards and sanctions available;
  - reviewing behaviour management strategies across the curriculum and year groups;
  - ensuring that all staff are appropriately trained and supported in enforcing the school's code of conduct.  
(18, 30, 60, 97, 121, 145, 165, 173, 187, 189, 190)
  
- (4) + Review the curriculum and other provision to ensure that all statutory requirements are met by:
  - ensuring that pupils follow a course in design and technology in Key Stage 4 unless they are formally disapplied.  
(35, 38/9)

88. In addition, the governing body should ensure that it fulfils all statutory requirements including the provision of a daily act of collective worship and including full details of the provision for disabled pupils in the annual report of governors to parents.  
(73)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	157
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	49

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	22	45	20	6	2	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Y7 – Y11
Number of pupils on the school's roll	941
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	91

#### Special educational needs

	Y7 – Y11
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	26
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	337

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	33
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	29

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.7
National comparative data	8.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.9
National comparative data	1.2

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	78	99	171

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	34	54	55
	Girls	65	64	54
	Total	99	118	109
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	56 (78)	67 (68)	62 (62)
	National	63 (65)	62 (60)	55 (56)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	31 (47)	40 (36)	27 (29)
	National	28 (35)	38 (36)	23 (27)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	36	56	53
	Girls	75	72	67
	Total	111	128	120
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	61(71)	71 (74)	67 (70)
	National	64 (61)	64(64)	60 (61)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	25 (41)	37 (41)	24 (43)
	National	31 (30)	37 (37)	28 (30)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4

Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	96	74	170

GCSE results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A*-G	1 or more grades A*-G
Numbers of pupils achieving the standard specified	Boys	38	94	96
	Girls	38	72	74
	Total	76	166	170
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	45 (45)	99 (95)	99 (97)
	National	46.3 (44.6)	90.8 ( 89.8 )	95.7 (93.4)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	38 (37)
	National	37.8 (36.8)

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

Vocational qualifications	Number	% success rate

Number studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all those they studied	School	8	38
	National		NA

#### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	0
White	932
Any other minority ethnic group	3

#### **Exclusions in the last school year**

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	1	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	19	2
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

#### **Teachers and classes**

##### **Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y11**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	51.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.3

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

##### **Education support staff: Y7 – Y11**

Total number of education support staff	23
Total aggregate hours worked per week	524

##### **Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y11**

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	76
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##### **Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y11**

Key Stage 3	25
Key Stage 4	18.7

#### **Financial information**

Financial year	1998/9
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	£
Total income	2151672
Total expenditure	2178846
Expenditure per pupil	2457
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	-27174

#### **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out

941

Number of questionnaires returned

226

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	26	60	9	4	1
My child is making good progress in school.	31	57	7	1	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	23	54	10	3	10
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	14	61	19	4	2
The teaching is good.	19	67	5	1	8
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	18	56	16	6	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	35	56	5	3	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	40	57	1	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	12	55	20	6	7
The school is well led and managed.	25	61	4	1	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	21	64	8	2	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	49	8	3	15

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

## ENGLISH

89. Pupils' standards in English on entry to the school are broadly average, albeit a low average according to data provided by the school. Pupils achieve as well as expected by the end of Key Stage 3 but do better than expected at Key Stage 4 because of better control of spelling, punctuation and expression and more detailed and perceptive responses to reading. The school has well above average numbers of pupils with special educational needs and the high success rate in tests and examinations indicates good achievement by these pupils.
90. Overall attainment in the 1999 end of Key Stage 3 national tests was in line with the national average but below average for schools deemed to be similar, based on the eligibility for free school meals. The proportion reaching Level 5 or higher was below the national average and well below the average for similar schools. Teacher assessments judged the proportion achieving Level 5 to be in line with the national average. Scrutiny of these pupils' work during the inspection confirms the accuracy of the teacher assessments. The proportion reaching Level 6 or higher was above the national average and above the average for similar schools. Pupils did not do as well in their English tests as in mathematics and science. For the period 1996-99 attainment was close to the national average, improving from 1996-98 before falling in 1999. Girls do better than boys but not significantly more so than the national average.
91. The proportion of pupils gaining A\*-C grades in the 1999 GCSE English examinations was in line with the national average and higher than anticipated by their prior attainment in their end of Key Stage 3 tests. The proportion was below average for similar schools, however. More girls achieved higher grades than girls nationally. The proportion of pupils passing at G or higher was in line with the national average as was the overall attainment based on calculation of the average points score. The proportion reaching the higher grades of A\*/A was slightly below the national average but represented good achievement. Pupils overall did as well as they should have given their prior achievement. Pupils did slightly better in English than in most of their other subjects. The results in 1999 and 1998 represent improvement on the results in 1997.
92. In the 1999 GCSE English literature examination, the proportion of pass grades, higher grades and the average point scores was in line with national averages. This represents good achievement given that the school enters a far higher proportion of its pupils for GCSE literature than most schools. Both boys and girls did better in literature than in most other subjects that they take.
93. From lessons and other work seen during the inspection, attainment is in line with expectation by the end of Key Stage 3 and above it by the end of Key Stage 4. Standards of speaking and listening are in line with expectation at Key stage 3. Most pupils communicate their ideas clearly. Higher attainers are very articulate such as those directing other pupils in scenes from 'Romeo and Juliet' and are well above expectation. The listening skills of a very small number of pupils in Years 7 and 8 are below expectation although Year 7 middle attainers showed very good listening skills when listening to a reading of 'The Indian in the Cupboard'. Reading skills meet expectations with the highest attainers well above expectation. Middle attainers understand the main features of events and characters in their Shakespeare texts and also the structure of the plays' narratives. Lower attainers are more limited and below expectation. They tend to be more literal and needed support to make deductions when answering questions. Standards of writing are as expected for pupils aged 14. Most write at the expected level and the best are writing at very high levels in a range of genres such as poetry, discursive, persuasive and narrative. Middle attainers are mainly in line with expectation. Those who do not reach the expected standard are less confident, formal and varied in expression and also lack consistent accuracy. Hardly any pupils in Year 9, including those with special educational needs are well below expectation, although a few pupils in Year 7 have well below expected standards in handwriting and spelling.
94. By the end of Key Stage 4, standards of speaking and listening are above expectation. Higher attainers are very articulate and confident in expression but middle and lower attainers also expressed themselves clearly and logically when discussing 'A Kestrel for a Knave'. Reading standards are above expectation. The highest attainers communicated deep insight and understanding when discussing Susan Hill's 'I'm the King of the Castle' and writing about the

extent of Macbeth's culpability for his own fall. Lower and middle attainers understand points such as character, cause and effect in the plot, and features of language. A group of lower and middle attainers recalled that 'bubbling' was an example of onomatopoeia. Writing standards are above expectation because most pupils write with the expected standards of accuracy in spelling, punctuation, expression and grammar. The highest attainers produce writing that is technically flawless. The pupils who do not consistently reach expectation fail to do so because of weaknesses in expression as well as accuracy, in particular using spoken expressions in contexts that require more formal constructions. Lower attainers, including those with special educational needs, are below expectation but are doing well given their prior attainment. They benefit from the good support and methods used by their teachers to help them plan and write their wider reading comparisons and Shakespeare assignments. The high and successful entry rate of pupils with special educational needs in GCSE English and English literature is evidence of the good progress they make.

95. The teaching of English makes a satisfactory contribution to the development of pupils' information technology and numeracy skills at both key stages. Pupils use word processing to redraft and improve the presentation of their work at both key stages but especially for GCSE course work. A number of units require pupils to interpret and evaluate statistical information such as bar charts on viewing figures in a Year 8 topic on the media.
96. Teaching is good at both key stages and achieves good learning in lessons. Pupils do a lot of work that is of good quality. Teachers' knowledge and understanding are very good, so they plan lessons that ensure pupils are well informed about texts and examination requirements, and that are lively enough to stimulate and sustain interest. Consequently, in most lessons, pupils demonstrate good positive attitudes to their work and behave very well. Teachers have good but realistic expectations and successfully provide appropriate work for pupils of varying levels of attainment. One teacher taught the most challenging whole class lesson on 'I'm the King of the Castle' to a Year 11 top set; her thoughtful and incisive questions deepening and extending the pupils' understanding of some complex issues in the text. The same teacher, with a lower attaining Year 8 group, adopted a very different approach, with lots of support such as story boarding and examples that led to the pupils' successful descriptive writing based on Ray Bradbury's 'The Foghorn'. In contrast, another teacher used a more open-ended approach with her higher attaining Year 9, their 'Director's Workshop' activity on 'Romeo and Juliet' helping them to explore deeply the text's nuances of meaning and language. Imaginative use of video helped another Year 9 group extend their knowledge and understanding of the main techniques used in television advertising.
97. A significant strength of teaching is that pupils of all attainments study good quality literature. The best lessons have pace, purpose and frequent activity changes, such as the Year 7 class that developed their understanding of how to adapt the text of 'Frankenstein' into a dramatic script. Teachers set meaningful homework frequently and mark books constructively. There is however, not enough use of National Curriculum levels in routine marking at Key Stage 3 so many pupils do not have clear enough understanding of their standards against national expectations. Overall good quality teaching leads to good learning, with pupils making good efforts and working at a good pace in their lessons. There was no unsatisfactory teaching during the inspection but a small number of lessons did not have sufficient pace and expectation. These lessons were with lower attaining groups at Key Stage 3 that included a disproportionate number of difficult boys. The imbalance between boys and girls in these groups was in marked contrast with most classes seen and challenged the control of skilled and experienced teachers. Determined teaching ensured that pupils made satisfactory progress.
98. This is a good department with good leadership and management. There are good procedures to monitor and evaluate the work of the department. Teachers keep their work under review, are open-minded and receptive to new thinking. There is a very good team spirit and the head of department receives good assistance from a very effective second in department. The department is making a good contribution to the development of the school's literacy initiative. The curriculum provides good coverage of texts and writing genres, although some aspects of curriculum planning such as differentiation are not consistently explicit. Formal assessment does not occur often enough at Key Stage 3 and there is no central record of assessments to help monitor progress towards targets and potential. At the moment, not enough use is made



examples of levels of attainment as targets to aspire to in day-to-day teaching. Since the last inspection progress has been good particularly in the range of writing required and the increase in texts from other cultures. The capacity for further improvement is good.

## **Literacy**

99. Pupils have good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills in lessons across the curriculum. In physical education, a consistently observed strength was the pupils' willingness to listen, ask and answer questions. Year 7 pupils made good use of technical vocabulary when evaluating gymnastic movements. In history and geography pupils participated well in group and discussion work, such as a Year 11 lower set that discussed the validity of Hollywood depictions of the Vietnam War. Pupils are articulate and confident in their drama lessons.
100. Pupils have reading skills which match the standards expected nationally. A few pupils are below the standards expected but their fluency is well supported through the reading workshop that takes place each morning and is led by learning support assistants and appropriately trained Year 11 reading tutors. A particularly effective example of good development of reading skills was in a Year 9 lower set history lesson in which the pupils evaluated Wilfred Owen's poetry in its original draft as a source of information about World War 1. Pupils in science read subject specific vocabulary with understanding.
101. Writing skills are as expected. Pupils in science have high standards of written descriptions with some good presentation and frequent use of technical vocabulary and clear expression. There are few opportunities for extended writing in mathematics. In religious education however, pupils have frequent opportunities for extended writing at Key Stage 3 and produce clearly expressed course work at Key Stage 4. Individual studies in GCSE geography are also strengths at Key Stage 4. Here teachers supported writing well with the use of writing frames to structure a study on the effect of flooding in Mozambique. In history, pupils write effectively in a range of formats such as persuasive, reflective and empathetic.

## **Drama**

102. In the 1999 GCSE drama examinations, standards were in line with national averages for those attaining pass grades, higher grades and for the average point scores. Pupils did better in drama than in most of their other subjects. In work seen during the inspection, standards are in line with expectation at both key stages. Teaching and learning are good at both key stages. Specialist teachers and a well planned curriculum ensure that pupils not only develop performance skills but make good gains in their knowledge and understanding about the development of the theatre and of different genres. This lays a good foundation for good achievement at Key Stage 4 where the subject is a popular option. Again specialist teaching leads to good progress with pupils not only able to develop convincing characterisation, using costume and sets to add to the conviction, but also to evaluate their work and each other's objectively. They respond to these evaluations with maturity. The main accommodation is good, although there is no sound proofing. A secondary room provides an adequate space for practical work. Drama makes a good contribution to the pupils' personal development in terms of the subject matter covered and the requirement to work independently and co-operatively. The school also has a very good tradition of performance and productions.

## **MATHEMATICS**

103. Pupils enter the school with attainment that is broadly in line with national standards, although there are relatively few pupils who are very high attainers. By the end of Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, achievements are satisfactory; pupils are attaining in line with national averages overall, with a few pupils attaining well above national figures.
104. Pupils' attainment in the National Curriculum tests, taken at the end of Year 9, was in line with the national average for 1999 both for pupils achieving the benchmark Level 5 or better and for

the average scores achieved. When compared with the results obtained by pupils from similar schools, results were average overall. Results for mathematics in 1999 were better than those achieved in English but less good than those in science. Over the years 1996 to 1999 the Key Stage 3 results have been in line with the national average. There is no significant difference in tests or teacher assessment between the performance of girls or boys during this period.

105. Results in the 1999 GCSE examinations were in line with the national average for pass grades, higher grades and the average point scores. Mathematics results compare favourably with their achievement in other subjects in the school. In relative terms pupils scored better at GCSE in mathematics in 1999 than in most other subjects including English and science. Mathematics results have been improving more quickly than national averages since 1997. As at Key Stage 3, there are no significant differences between the performance of girls and boys and pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their differing abilities.
106. In terms of the work seen during the inspection, pupils make good progress at both key stages. Their work is in line with national expectations both at Key Stage 3 and at Key Stage 4. Pupils with special educational needs, well supported by experienced and well qualified learning support staff also progress well. Gifted and talented pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 3 and good progress at Key Stage 4. Literacy and number skills are good overall. From work in the pupils' books it is evident that they can use computer skills to good effect.
107. By the age of 14 higher achieving pupils can solve linear equations and inequalities. They can find probabilities for mutually exclusive events. Average attainers, for the most part, are confident when using a protractor to measure or draw the angles necessary for constructing a pie chart. They can also work how big these angles should be. Lower attaining pupils understand place value for decimals between 0.1 and 0.001 and can multiply a two digit number by a three digit number. They recognise Pythagoras' theorem but are not fully secure in how to employ it. Pupils with special needs attain well in relation to their varying abilities.
108. The highest achieving pupils are entered for GCSE in Year 10, a year earlier than usual. In Year 11, they study the first year of an A-level course and demonstrate secure knowledge of basic differential and integral calculus and of binomial expansion. They can also readily apply trigonometry to the solution of problems. They do however find it difficult to visualise problems in three-dimensional geometry. Other higher attaining pupils in Year 11 can deal competently with the trigonometry of a right-angled triangle, solve algebraic inequalities and understand direct and inverse proportion. They are confident with the concept of upper and lower bounds but find difficulty in giving an answer to the appropriate degree of accuracy for such examples. Average attaining pupils can use calculators appropriately and well. They use estimates to check that answers are sensible. They can calculate the volume of common shapes such as a cylinder and a prism but not of a sphere. Most lower attaining pupils and all of those with special educational needs, who were seen during the inspection in mathematics lessons, were doing well in relation to their previous attainment.
109. The standard of teaching in mathematics is good at both key stages, ensuring that the pupils learn well. Teaching was satisfactory or better in every lesson seen during the inspection and good or very good in three quarters. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and understanding and lessons have a very good pace which lead to pupils feeling motivated to make a real effort to improve. An example of this was seen in a Year 11 revision lesson in which the pupils were working through questions from past examination papers. It is easy for such lessons to be slow and stereotyped. This was not the case here due to the speed and precision with which the teacher met each pupil's needs. Another good feature was seen in the marking of some of the pupils' books. The pupils were asked at the end of each lesson or unit of work, to review what they have learned and make a brief note of what they are confident with and what they are finding more difficult. The teacher then responds individually to each pupil's comments. He also incorporates what he has learned from what the pupils say into his subsequent lesson planning. This is a substantial motivator for pupils, encouraging them to take more responsibility for their learning.
110. A major factor in the department's success stems from the good attitude and behaviour of the pupils which results from good teaching. In almost all lessons, and especially in those taught

well, the pupils showed good learning, they worked hard, showed interest and often the ability to think for themselves.

111. The department consists of a cohesive team of well qualified teachers with good leadership. There are good monitoring and support procedures in place to develop and maintain good quality teaching. Lessons are observed regularly and pupils' work is reviewed to ensure consistency. Regular testing of pupils' work informs setting arrangements and serves as a motivator for pupils to improve. There are units of information technology work built into the departmental schemes of work for each year, although there is not yet enough regular access to computers to maximise this learning opportunity. The "Success Maker" package is, for instance only used with a few lower attaining pupils when it is very successful at motivating and improving the numeracy performance of pupils with all levels of attainment.
112. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in the mathematics department. No substantial areas of weakness were identified in the last inspection. The standards attained by the pupils continue in line with national norms, number skills are sound and teaching and learning are good in the majority of lessons. Progress of all pupils, including those with special educational needs continues to be good.

### **Numeracy**

113. The pupils display good numerical skills in their work across the school curriculum. In science at Key Stage three, for example, there is good development in the use of bar charts, pie charts and line graphs. There are dedicated lessons to the interpretation of data both continuous and discontinuous and higher attaining pupils are expected to draw lines of best fit on a scatter graph. In Year 7, lower attaining pupils showed that they could cope with four figure grid references in geography, and at Key Stage 4, there are examples of the use of rank correlation in Year 11 coursework. In food technology, the pupils weigh ingredients with accuracy and use correct units. They make good use of geometric skill in graphical communication, measuring angles accurately for orthographic representation. When working at electronics in systems technology, the pupils show the facility to manipulate numbers with correct use of decimal notation with resistors calculated in units of  $\times 10$ ,  $\times 100$ , and  $\times 1,000$ .

### **SCIENCE**

114. Attainment in science overall is in line with national expectations, although at the end of Key Stage 3 a significant number of pupils reach above average levels. There is a considerable range of attainment within both key stages. When pupils enter the school from Key Stage 2, their knowledge and understanding of science is variable but, overall, broadly in line with expectation. Progress throughout the school is satisfactory and for many pupils in Key Stage 3, it is good.
115. At the end of Key Stage 3, in the 1999 national tests, results are above average for those achieving the benchmark Level 5 and above, and for the average point scores. In comparison with similar schools, the benchmark figure for Level 5 is average, but it is above the median using pupils' average point scores. Over the past three years, the performance of pupils has exceeded the national average and the differential in point score has steadily increased. Boys have consistently achieved somewhat above girls. Higher attaining pupils have performed well due to the careful setting, including an "accelerated" group, and through teachers' high expectations. Attainment in science at Key Stage 3 has exceeded that in the other core subjects.
116. At the end of Key Stage 4, in the 1999 GCSE examinations, the average point score for science is close to the national average. The percentage of pupils gaining grades A\*-C in science overall is broadly average for all maintained schools but lower than this when compared with similar schools. The percentage of pupils gaining A\*-C in double award combined science is above the national average. For pupils entered for single award combined science, and the group selected to enter biology, chemistry and physics separately, the attainment is below national average. Boys achieved higher average grades than girls. Over the past three years, the performance in double science has remained steady, apart from the expected drop in 1999 as the first cohort of separate science candidates was examined. In single science, the percentage of A\*-C has

declined considerably over the three year period. From a comparison of the average point score at Key Stage 3 in 1997, and the average point score at GCSE in 1999 for the same cohort, the school has added value in line with national expectations.

117. Observation of work in lessons and analysis of pupils' writing, confirms that the standards are above expectations by the end of Key Stage 3 and broadly as expected by the end of Key Stage 4. For example, pupils in Year 9 studying experimental and investigative science, carry out an investigation of the effect of temperature on enzyme action in digestion. Pupils are clear about the objectives and approach the experiment with care. The majority understand the need for a fair test, record observations methodically and draw conclusions based on the evidence. A significant minority working at a higher level, use their knowledge of the effect of amylase on substrates to evaluate the reliability of the findings and recognise anomalies. By the end of Key Stage 4, most pupils in Year 11 have a sound knowledge of concepts, such as chemical reactions, refraction of light, or photosynthesis, but only a small number have the depth of understanding to apply it securely to more complex situations such as electrolysis of copper sulphate or total internal reflection in optical fibres. In particular, only a small proportion of higher attaining pupils, studying separate sciences, show clear understanding of electrolysis calculations or, for example, of quantitative use of relative atomic mass in chemical equations, needed for higher grades.
118. Numeracy is practised frequently and the majority of pupils record measurements well, plot bar and line graphs and carry out basic calculations regularly. The extent of use of information technology is small, but data logging equipment has been used for temperature recording and pupils use the computer based encyclopaedia in the central resource area for research projects. Literacy standards are satisfactory, with clear descriptions and diagrams in books, and pupils describe their work with confidence.
119. In both key stages, lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs achieve in line with other pupils when sufficient provision is made through appropriately matched work, or where learning support assistance is deployed. However, in a number of lessons, the work is not matched well to the range of attainment and progress is more limited. Higher attaining pupils progress relatively well, especially where expectations are realised in challenging material.
120. Pupils have good attitudes to learning in science. Most are diligent and carry out tasks with determination. They are careful with written work, diagrams and experiment records. Behaviour is mainly good, with pupils showing due regard for safety and for property. Collaborative working is effective in developing teamwork and mutual support. Pupils are polite and courteous to staff. They are confident in discussion although some pupils are inclined to dominate and prevent others from participating. Some are reluctant to seek help to resolve difficulties with any sense of urgency, and this impacts on progress.
121. The quality of teaching in science is good in Key Stage 3 and leads to good learning. Teaching is more variable in Key Stage 4, ranging from very good to unsatisfactory. Overall, from observation, an analysis of pupils' work and examination results, teaching is satisfactory over time. Pupils in Key Stage 4 achieve well when teaching is at a good standard. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, explanations were unclear and confusing, planning took insufficient account of the range and level of attainment and the pace of teaching and learning was slow. The management of some pupils was insufficient to control disruptive behaviour, resulting in other pupils being unable to make progress with their work and learning was unsatisfactory.
122. Teachers know their subject well and most have high expectations of pupils' attainment and behaviour. This was seen very well in a Year 9 lesson on genetics, where the teacher's enthusiasm and skilled questioning led to good gains in understanding on how genetic characteristics are determined. Teachers use resources efficiently and provide a range of interesting and demanding activities for pupils with different attainments. This means that most pupils have a clear knowledge of lesson objectives and areas of their own uncertainty. Typically, a good lesson is organised so that pupils acquire an appropriate gain in knowledge of, for example, components of a balanced diet, and move on to develop the observation and analytical skills, for example, in experimental food tests. Pupils approach the work with purpose and aim to complete tasks carefully. Learning support assistants are effectively used to help, not only those

pupils with special educational needs, but also others in the group. The lesson time is used generously to allow pupils to work at a moderate pace and homework is set regularly to help pupils to consolidate their learning. The quality of marking gives feedback on general progress but is not sufficient to indicate to pupils how to improve further.

123. Teachers make good use of exemplar material in displays and key word lists to help develop technical literacy. They provide opportunities to extend numeracy, especially in graph work or simple calculation. However, information technology is used relatively infrequently to support learning.
124. The curriculum in science is broad and balanced. The time allocation is generally satisfactory, but insufficient for the increased work-load in the study of separate sciences at Key Stage 4. Good provision has been made for higher attaining pupils in creating an accelerated group in Key Stage 3. Pupils are placed in teaching sets after careful analysis of detailed assessments in each year. Some consideration has been given to address the imbalance of performance of boys and girls in Key Stage 4 with the trial of a boys only group in Year 11. Assessments are carried out regularly and used increasingly to track the progress of individuals, identify underachievement and to evaluate the curriculum schemes of work. Extra curricular activities are provided by visits, involvement with Neighbourhood Engineers and the British Association of Young Scientists. Accommodation is good, with recent refurbishment giving a pleasant environment in which to work. Learning resources are adequate, although some older equipment needs replacement and more up to date textbooks are needed for issue to pupils. There is a mixture of different computers in the laboratories and this resource requires upgrading to enable greater use in teaching programmes.
125. The department is well managed, with a good development plan in place. All staff contribute regularly to team meetings and there is close collaboration on all aspects. Some areas of teaching are monitored, with classroom observation and assessment records analysed. However, further, more rigorous monitoring of teaching skills is needed to identify the strengths and areas for improvement and ensure greater consistency of teaching quality in Key Stage 4. Further evaluation of curriculum decisions and setting are needed to determine the most appropriate arrangements for all pupils.
126. Standards at Key Stage 3 have improved since the previous inspection. In both key stages, pupils have developed higher levels of investigative skill, analysis and evaluation. Teachers' high expectations are now a significant feature of the good teaching. There is still insufficient emphasis on the use of resources appropriate to match the different levels of attainment in classes. There are still not enough textbook resources to provide pupils with a copy to use at home.

## **ART**

127. In the 1999 end of Key Stage 3 teacher assessments, the proportion of pupils attaining or exceeding the national expectation was above the national average. In the 1999 GCSE, the proportion gaining A\*-C grades was well above the national average overall, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Over the last three years, grades have been broadly above the national average. However, whilst the results of girls in 1999 were well above those of girls nationally, the results of boys were below those of boys nationally. The department is aware of this and is keeping a careful eye on the progress of boys to ensure they match their potential. In the 1999 GCSE, girls obtained better results in art than in the other subjects they took. It is not possible to compare boys' attainment against other subjects because too few took the course to provide statistically reliable data.
128. From inspection evidence, standards are above expectations by the end of Key Stage 3 and well above expectations by the end of Key Stage 4. Work seen corroborates the results of teacher assessments and GCSE results. By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils have well-developed skills in a range of two and three-dimensional media. Pupils in Year 8, for instance, have made impressive, large scale bird sculptures that are decorated with symbolic emblems based on

Hindu, Muslim and Chinese motifs. In the process, pupils imaginatively used a range of cartons, wire, wood and found materials to make a sturdy frame before applying papier maché to create the finished shape. By Year 9, pupils have created imaginative masks based on characters in 'A Midsummer Nights Dream', which they will use later for work in drama. These are thoughtfully embellished and painted to 'catch' the individual characters they represent. All pupils research practical projects well so that they are influenced by well-known artists' interpretation of the subject matter.

129. By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils in Year 11 develop greater discrimination. They produce detailed accounts of art visits, for instance to Normandy to see the Bayeux Tapestry. Their practical work is often meticulously prepared and finished with a close eye to details of shape, colour, proportion and visual impact. Pupils make effective use of new technology in both key stages. For instance they have produced preliminary designs based on Aboriginal motifs using a computer 'painting' application, and there is regular research using home computers. Pupils' literacy skills are satisfactorily developed through regular use of subject specific vocabulary and through written commentaries about their work. This is particularly evident in Key Stage 4, where GCSE pupils prepare analytical notes to support contextual research. Whilst art does not explicitly develop pupils' numeracy skills, studies related to perspective and some three-dimensional work involves accurate measurement.
130. Teaching is good at both key stages. Teachers' good subject knowledge enables them to communicate key concepts and skills in an engaging manner. Consequently, pupils take interest in lessons and make good progress. Teachers plan well, ensuring that the full range of ability is usefully occupied with work that stretches them. In a Year 9 project on mask making, for instance, teachers have planned the project well so that all pupils feel successful, irrespective of their prior understanding or skill. Consequently, all pupils, including lower attainers, complete work that they feel proud of. Teachers use a range of methods; there is a good balance of full class teaching with group work and individual work. This helps pupils to stay on task and work at a productive rate. Teachers manage pupils well; they have good relationships that ensure a good working ethos in lessons. Consequently, pupils enjoy lessons, trust the teachers and generally finish their work to a high standard. Day to day assessment accurately identifies what pupils have to do to improve and effectively supports teachers' monitoring of pupils' progress over time. Homework is well used to support work in class and develop pupils' research skills.
131. This good quality teaching means that pupils' learning is good. Well-planned lessons help pupils to work productively and develop ideas and skills in a progressive way. Opportunities to write reflectively about their work enables pupils to develop intellectual as well as creative skills. Regular opportunities for pupils to complete homework and to work independently successfully encourages them to think for themselves and be responsible for their own learning. This is particularly noticeable in GCSE groups. Good quality assessment, that includes self-assessment, helps pupils to understand what they are doing and how they can improve their standards. Pupils have good attitudes to work and behave well in lessons. They settle quietly to practical work and collaborate effectively in pairs and small groups when required to. Positive attitudes are shown in pupils' sustained concentration in lessons. Pupils enjoy seeing their work displayed and are generally proud of what they do. Positive attitudes and behaviour have a beneficial effect on pupils' learning.
132. The management of the department is very good. The quality of teaching and the curriculum are regularly appraised to identify aspects for improvement. There are regular meetings for teachers to share their views, and there is a good sense of teamwork and co-operation. The accommodation and resources for learning are satisfactory, although there are insufficient computers within the department to enable research work to be integrated successfully within practical sessions. The timetable blocking arrangements for art, music and drama in Year 9 do not work well and cause some interruption to pupils' learning, causing some not to opt for the subject at GCSE level. The department had no criticisms in the previous inspection and has continued to promote the same high standards of work.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

133. In GCSE examinations in 1999, pupils achieved standards that were below the national average in all the separate subjects of food technology, graphics, resistant materials, systems and textiles. The proportion of pupils passing design and technology subjects in the range A\* - C was well below the national average. However all pupils passed in the range A\*-G, which is higher than the national norm. Within these grades, pupils have achieved better results in food technology and textiles. Boys achieve slightly better than girls. There is evidence of improvement in the consistent upward trend in GCSE results over the last four years. In teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 3, pupils achieve standards in the combined subject of design and technology which are below national expectations.
134. From the evidence of the inspection, pupils are achieving standards of work that are above national expectations by the end of Key Stage 3. This is because their capabilities include systems and control technology that they understand to a high standard and they have a wide experience of resistant materials, food technology and textiles. By the end of Key Stage 4, many pupils achieve a standard of work that is in line with national expectations. Examination results are lower than the general standard of work seen because the department has experienced staffing difficulties during the past three years.
135. Pupils in Year 9 successfully design and make a small cabinet, having first studied joining techniques used in industry. They know various methods of joining wood and composite materials including dowel, biscuit, dovetail and mortice and tenon joints. They relate these techniques to those chosen for one off, batch and mass production. Some pupils in Year 11 achieve very good standards of work. For example, in textiles a girl has designed and made a co-ordinated dress, drape and bag inspired by the patterns, styles and culture of India. The product and the portfolio of recorded work are of a very high quality because of thorough research into fibres, fashions, embellishments and assembly techniques.
136. Overall the quality of teaching is good at both key stages. Consequently the quality of learning is good and pupils make good progress with their studies throughout the school. The teachers have a very good knowledge of their subjects. They plan work well and they organise their pupils and manage practical work to a good standard, with good use of time and resources. Teachers set high expectations for learning to which their pupils readily respond, for example in a Year 11 class where the teacher's high expectations and excellent support has enabled the pupils to successfully tackle a wide range of ambitious projects for GCSE assessment in resistant materials. Procedures for assessing pupils' work are very good. Their attainment is carefully monitored and recorded as they progress from year to year. There are standard assessment sheets that teachers use in all aspects of the subject. This ensures consistency and helps pupils to fully understand how they are being assessed. Regular assessment enables pupils to be appropriately challenged according to previous levels of attainment. Homework is set regularly and the assignments are often discussed with the class in advance. Work is marked to a good standard and comments are often sufficiently detailed to help pupils to learn from their mistakes and make progress.
137. The teachers know their pupils very well and they work well as a team to ensure continuity in teaching and learning. They support and encourage pupils of all abilities enabling them to experience success. In most lessons pupils have a very positive attitude to their work. Many are enthusiastic and they clearly enjoy their studies. They take pride in the quality of their practical and written work. In all classes pupils co-operate, sharing and using equipment sensibly and safely. They are keen to demonstrate and explain the things they have made.
138. Pupils work hard and their creative effort is good. All pupils make good progress when developing their skills in using tools and equipment with increasing precision. They successfully advance their skills in designing and evaluating the things they have made taking into consideration the views and preferences of the users of their products. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress. This is because they receive good support and individual attention from their teachers when engaged on individual tasks.
139. The curriculum at Key Stage 3 is planned and co-ordinated to a very good standard. This ensures continuity in the pupils' learning in all aspects of this subject. Study guides support pupils' learning and enables higher attaining pupils to be sufficiently challenged. A good range of GCSE

options is provided at Key Stage 4. However not all pupils in this key stage are required to study design and technology which is a failure to meet legal requirements.

140. The pupils' standards of literacy are developed through the use of appropriate technical language. Information technology (IT) is used effectively for the presentation of pupils' graphical and written work. IT is also used successfully when the pupils learn about control technology in Year 8. Teachers are available to enable pupils to carry on with practical assignments during lunch times and after school. Many pupils take advantage of this opportunity. It has a very positive effect on their standards of work. A young engineers club meets regularly where pupils design and make solutions to more demanding problems. Older pupils successfully meet more challenging tasks when they organise and prepare food for a Christmas party for over one hundred senior citizens. This stimulates further interest and enhances learning.
141. An experienced, knowledgeable and enthusiastic leader manages the subject very well. There are good arrangements for monitoring the work of the department. The workshops and food technology areas are managed to a very high standard. Technicians contribute very well to the smooth running of the department. The craft technician gives very good support for the pupils when they are engaged in practical work. The department has continued to set high standards for the quality of education provided whilst continuing to struggle against staffing difficulties. There has been sound improvement in the quality of learning since the last inspection.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

142. Attainment is in line with national expectations by the end of both key stages, as seen in teachers' assessments, national examinations and from inspection evidence. In 1999, GCSE results were very close to national averages and above the average of other subjects in the school. The percentage of pupils gaining grades A\* to C has nearly doubled since the last inspection. Currently the attainment of girls is a little higher than that of boys at the end of Key Stage 3 and this difference increases through the GCSE. In each of the last 3 years, pupils have achieved slightly higher than their target grades.
143. Pupils in Year 7 have a good grasp of basic geographical skills. In particular they sort, organise and present data well graphically. The written work of Year 8 pupils is largely well organised and higher attaining pupils are starting to make independent value judgements and to write fluently. These skills are further developed in Year 9 and nearly all pupils access and interpret quite detailed information from a range of sources. This was well illustrated by a class who used a number of sources in atlases to compare and contrast their home region with South West Wales. By Year 9, pupils apply simple enquiry skills developed through field studies. These skills are well developed within the GCSE course and enable average and higher attaining pupils to produce high quality, well organised and presented course work. Many pupils following the GCSE course make effective use of information technology. This was demonstrated by a Year 10 class who used computers for data and images to produce story boards on a recent flood disaster.
144. Pupils show good attitudes and behaviour to their work. Although some younger pupils particularly lose concentration quickly if not effectively motivated by the work provided, overall the concentration, application and effort of pupils are good, resulting in a good pace to pupils' learning. They work well together, for example a low ability Year 11 class who worked very well in groups completing a series of short research tasks as part of revision for their GCSE. Overall the standards of independent learning are good and this is reflected in the quality of individual studies generated from fieldwork. Pupils' knowledge of their learning is good overall in Key Stage 3 and very good in Key Stage 4. This is aided by self assessments at the end of each unit of work through Key Stage 3 and for pupils taking GCSE there are individual targets which are regularly reviewed. Teachers provide extension activities for most topics to extend the learning of the most able pupils and ensure they make good progress. Activities and materials to support the learning of the least able pupils are used less systematically in Key Stage 3 and the progress of these pupils is just satisfactory. Less able pupils taking the GCSE make good progress as do pupils of other abilities.



145. The standard of teaching is good overall and this leads to good learning. Pupils make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of geography because lesson planning is very good and learning objectives are communicated clearly. Teachers display good subject knowledge, other than in some Year 7 lessons where this is satisfactory. Overall, a very good range of teaching and learning styles are employed, these are largely well matched to learning objectives and teachers make good use of the resources available to stimulate and support learning. Very good teaching and learning was seen in a Year 8 lesson on the cause and effects of avalanches, because the pupils were provided with imaginative and challenging tasks to be undertaken in carefully selected groups and they were given skilful guidance to keep them on track. Where teaching was unsatisfactory in a Year 7 lesson, the tasks set were unclear and inappropriate for less able pupils and there were periods of inactivity resulted in a loss of concentration and motivation. There is good support for the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy and these are given careful attention in the marking of work, which is systematic and often informative. There has been rapid progress recently in the application of information technology to learning and currently support for the development of these skills is now satisfactory. Teachers set homework regularly and this helps pupils to consolidate their learning.
146. The curriculum includes a good quality and range of learning experiences and is enriched by good fieldwork opportunities. Assessment practices are very good and judgements are carefully standardised. The department is well managed and effective monitoring arrangements are in place. The development plan includes all significant issues requiring attention but does not provide specific targets and time scales to work to.
147. The department has made very good progress since the last inspection. Standards of attainment in the GCSE examinations have improved greatly. The standard of teaching is higher and the quality and range of teaching and learning styles has improved significantly. Independent and collaborative learning are now well established and these are aided through increased and more systematic use of fieldwork. Satisfactory progress has been made in improving the support for less able pupils and good progress has been made in improving the support and challenge in learning for the most able pupils.

## **HISTORY**

148. Attainment in history is broadly in line with national expectations for the end of both key stages, as judged from work seen and examination results. Attainment according to teachers' assessments in 1999 was average by the end of Key Stage 3. In the 1999 GCSE examinations, results were below the national average for those achieving grade C or higher. However, individual pupils achieve good results and eight pupils were awarded an A or A\* grade - higher than in 1997 or 1998. Results over the last three years, and predicted grades for this year, show that the trend is for results to be in line with national figures and for there to be an upward trend both in the pass rate and in the number of higher grades. With the exception of last year, there has been a general trend for improvement in the results of both boys and girls. This was reflected during the inspection where standards were found to be as expected nationally.
149. From lesson observations and other inspection evidence, by the last year of Key Stage 3 pupils talk effectively about the topics that they have studied and show an understanding of the major developments of the early twentieth century. However their knowledge of facts is often limited and for many weaker pupils the pattern of cause and effect is sometimes difficult to understand. They show awareness of the impact of key developments in the late nineteenth century such as the changes in the effectiveness of weapons, the development of an arms race and competing alliances. Higher attaining pupils have a clear understanding of the longer term cause of war in 1914. All pupils appreciated the significance of the impact of war on civilians and pupils of below average attainment and those with special educational needs were able to use poetry as evidence of attitudes to the war. In another Year 9 class pupils were able to discuss why France was angry with, and vindictive towards, Germany and how this influenced the making of the Treaty of Versailles. Written work is well presented, although there are some errors in punctuation. Reading comprehension is poor for some pupils but oral comprehension is often good and pupils express their ideas very well. The highest attaining pupils are able to fit their studies into a wider context and to show how events link together. The majority of pupils are able

to show skills in managing information and the work of all year groups showed skills in using source materials to establish understanding of the motivation of individuals and nations.

150. By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils have a good knowledge of the topics that they have studied and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, understand about the major developments in twentieth century history. However, not all use this knowledge to answer GCSE questions at an appropriate level. The highest attainers are skilled in the use of documents and extracts and some of them have produced very good course work on the Battle of the Somme or on the USA in the 1920s. Individuals, including some who will be entered for the Certificate of Achievement rather than GCSE, speak with confidence about such issues as the conflicts in Vietnam. The highest attainers fit this into the context of the Cold War and the policies of the USA. For example, they are able to explain why the USA did not intervene in the crises of 1956 or 1968 but responded forcefully to the decision of the USSR to place missiles on Cuba. However, some weaker pupils are impeded by lack of knowledge about key personalities and developments and find document questions difficult. Written work is often good and some pupils are skilled in answering questions based on extracts or using statistic and illustrations. Others, however, have real weaknesses in knowledge and understanding and in literacy skills.
151. Teaching in history is good; the majority of lessons are well paced and interesting and lead to good learning. Teachers use a variety of approaches to teaching and learning. They are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the subject and the majority of lessons observed were well planned, managed and resourced. All lessons had clear objectives which pupils understood and in GCSE classes, pupils understood what they had to do in order to succeed. They work at a good pace and make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of history. Teachers mark work frequently and assessment is used effectively - teachers also ensure that the assessment procedures are understood by pupils in GCSE classes. Pupils know what they have to do to improve. Teachers make good use of the resources available. Books for the examination course are well chosen and suitable texts for the ability range are available. These resources are effectively supplemented by resources produced by the department and artefacts and models made by the pupils themselves. Teachers set homework regularly and this contributes well to learning in history. However, during the inspection pupils had few opportunities to work in pairs and groups for independent research. At present, there is insufficient use of information technology to help pupils progress in developing the ability to take responsibility for their own learning by independent research.
152. Learning is well managed and the majority of pupils achieve well, particularly in GCSE groups where pupils make good progress in the development of the skills that help them to answer complex source based questions. Pupils go on visits to museums and historic sites, for example to the battlefields of Belgium and France. These visits help them progress in their understanding of the impact of war and all aspects of work in history make a valuable contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. While studying the horrors of trench warfare, pupils in Year 9 were also made aware of the quality of poetry that was created as a result of that experience. Good progress is made by pupils with special educational needs because of the support available. However in some classes, pupils made limited progress because all pupils were using the same material and attempting the same tasks whatever their level of ability.
153. Most pupils behave well and work hard in history lessons. Written work at all levels is often well presented because many pupils take real pride in their work. The majority of pupils enjoy their work and more pupils now choose to take history at GCSE. History makes a valuable contribution to the establishment of skills in all aspects of literacy by encouraging reading comprehension and allowing pupils to write in a variety of formats. Skills in numeracy are developed by the use of graphs and statistics.
154. The management of history is good and the department has made good progress since the last inspection. It is particularly good at supporting pupils of lower attainment and pupils in examination classes. It has developed resources and assessment procedures well. The policy of tracking pupils, target setting and monitoring of teaching is raising standards in history. The department has responded to the needs of lower attaining pupils in Key Stage 4 by introducing the Certificate of Achievement. There has been improvement in the quality of teaching and the

availability of resources. However, the last inspection also expressed concern about the lack of opportunities for pupils to involve themselves in independent research, which remains much the same.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT)**

155. In teacher assessments in 1999, pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 was below national expectations. Pupils in Key Stage 4 were not entered for any formal qualification in IT and their attainment was not assessed. This situation has now changed very significantly. From the evidence of the inspection, pupils are achieving above expectations by the end of Key Stage 3, and broadly in line by the end of Key Stage 4. Boys and girls achieve equally well.
156. By the end of Year 9, pupils have made good progress across all the attainment targets. They can use a fully featured spreadsheet application to design a spreadsheet to work as an electronic mark book to record pupils' grades. They understand the concepts of cell referencing and they can use replication techniques. Higher attaining pupils confidently enter formulas to interpret the data.. By Year 11 they can set out text and graphics creatively and then add a section of a spreadsheet they have previously prepared to display additional information. They have a clear sense of the intended purpose and audience for this information.
157. Pupils are attaining as expected in their use of information technology (IT) across the curriculum. In science, pupils learn how a computer can be used to directly collect and plot information from experiments through sensors. Using temperature sensors, they investigate the way penguins conserve heat by huddling together. IT is used appropriately to teach music but the ageing computers and software limit possibilities. IT is used very effectively at Key Stage 4 as part of the business studies course and pupils develop above expected skills in communicating information and data handling. Pupils with special educational need benefit from using a computer based independent learning application to improve their skills in numeracy and literacy. IT is used productively in other subjects of the curriculum despite the limited resources: for example, pupils in a religious education lesson recorded the differences in the Gospel stories of the Resurrection in tabular format. In mathematics, pupils are able to write and edit control procedures to instruct a computer to draw repeated geometrical shapes on the screen. (Logo). Some pupils have produced very advanced examples of this work.
158. The quality of teaching is very good, particularly during practical sessions when technical skills are explained very well. The teachers have good subject knowledge relevant to the age range of their pupils. The pupils are given a clear understanding of what they are to do and what is expected of them. Appropriate and challenging work is set. The pupils are well supported when they require help and the pace of the lessons is good. Knowledgeable learning support assistants work very effectively with the teachers to support the pupils. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from their support during times when they use the "Success Maker" application specifically designed to develop skills in numeracy and literacy.
159. Many pupils enjoy this subject and work for long periods of time sustaining their concentration on the tasks set for them. These pupils are highly motivated and they can work on their own when required to do so. They are confident in their skills and they are prepared to explore new ideas and work creatively. Consequently the quality of learning is very good and all pupils have made outstanding progress with their studies over the last six months. This is a result of the rapid improvements made in the teaching of this subject. Outstanding learning was seen in Year 9. A teacher with exceptional skills set a lively pace and high expectations. The teacher's knowledge and enthusiasm coupled to the pupils' eagerness and enjoyment led to very good learning, even though the lesson contained some difficult concepts.
160. The curriculum is very well planned to ensure continuity as the pupils progress from year to year. All pupils have equal opportunity to study this subject throughout the school. The scheme of work is very good at Key Stage 3. It is well thought out and delivered in an imaginative way, effectively using the available time and resources. At Key Stage 4, all pupils gain recognition for their achievements in IT as part of their GNVQ key skills course. Teachers enable the computer rooms to be available out of lesson times. Many pupils take the opportunity to extend their skills

during these times. Good attention is paid to the pupils' correct use of key words and the accuracy of technical explanations.

161. The quality of leadership of this subject is outstanding. The school has a strong commitment to the provision of a high quality learning experience in IT. The rapid rise in standards is a consequence of the recent appointment of a subject leader, dedicated time given to teaching of IT, new schemes of work and effective assessment. The governing body has introduced a successful initiative by updating outmoded equipment as part of a well thought out long term strategy to improve standards. The advisory service of the Local Education Authority has also contributed to this story of success. Good planning, good monitoring and evaluation and high expectations have ensured that the low standards detailed in the last report have been overcome. The school development plan supports further expansion to cope with future demands as the curriculum is developed. Improvement since the last inspection is outstanding but further developed is hindered by the lack of a network technician to support the enhanced provision.

### **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

162. Standards in modern languages are in line with the national expectation overall. The pupils achieve well at Key Stage 3, and very well at Key Stage 4 given their prior attainment. The department has made much progress over the last year and standards are clearly improving. This can be seen in the discrepancy between the very low GCSE results in French over the last 3 years, and the levels of attainment in work seen during the inspection, which are at least in line with expected levels. The teachers' own assessments in French in 1999 and 1998 show a greater proportion of pupils attaining Level 4 and above than is the case nationally. There was no formal standardisation process of the teachers' assessments to support these judgements, and the reliability of the figures is unclear. The 1999 GCSE examination results in French are well below average, with pupils doing worse in French than in their other subjects. The girls did particularly poorly, achieving much less well than the boys, which is against the national trend. Results in French were similarly well below average in 1998. Although slightly better in 1997, they were still below average. Spanish has recently become the second foreign language, and the first cohort which sat GCSE in 1999 achieved a proportion of A\* to C grades which is in line with the national figure, with girls doing significantly better than boys.
163. At the end of Key Stage 3, standards in work seen during the inspection are in line with the expected level for 14 year olds. The pupils understand their teacher's spoken French or Spanish, as well as short passages of recorded language on tape. They respond appropriately, and can take part in simple spoken exchanges. Speaking skills are often underdeveloped because pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to converse with each other, or to take part in structured dialogues. By the end of the key stage, high and average attainers write accurately, usually in answer to questions, or to practise a grammar point, but most are not yet attempting the more extended writing which is a feature of the higher National Curriculum levels.
164. At the end of Key Stage 4, standards are in line with the expectation. Skills of listening comprehension are average overall, but higher attainers can work with, and eventually understand, quite challenging passages of spoken language. By the end of the key stage, higher attainers are reasonably confident speakers of simple French or Spanish; their accents are satisfactory, although their delivery is sometimes halting, especially when they read. They have not yet developed an ability to speak at length – a weakness at the time of the last inspection which has still to be addressed. High and average attainers write quite confidently, sometimes at length, using a range of vocabulary and structure, and making few errors in basic grammar. Pupils cope well with reading short texts, but few pupils have satisfactorily developed the skill of independent reading. Low attainers and those with special educational needs make good progress as they move through the key stages. They understand the gist of simple passages of spoken French after a number of repetitions; and they repeat phrases and respond to questions effectively, although they make some errors. They write simply, often copying a model, and can substitute words and phrases, given thorough support.
165. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good at both key stages. Most are well-behaved and attentive, working conscientiously and with a good level of commitment. At

both key stages there is a small minority of lessons in which the boys particularly are noisy and inattentive, so that effective learning cannot take place. In such lessons, pupils have unsatisfactory attitudes to learning languages. In all other lessons, attitudes are generally very good: pupils try hard to do well, and, in a Year 10 group of lower attainers, for example, the pupils continued to practise the new expressions without being asked when their teacher was briefly out of the room.

166. The quality of teaching at both key stages is good. There is a substantial proportion of very good teaching, but also a very small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. The teachers have very good subject knowledge, and the majority use the foreign language consistently and effectively in lessons. However, not all teachers do this, even with high attainers at Key Stage 4, and in some lessons observed the teacher missed opportunities to allow the pupils to hear and use the foreign language to the maximum. Teachers give very clear explanations so that pupils understand the work, and know exactly what they have to do. Most teachers manage the pupils well, and foster positive and productive relationships, with a judicious balance of encouragement, deserved praise and guidance which genuinely helps pupils to improve. In a very few cases, classroom management is weak: for example, tasks are set up in an unspecific way so that the pupils do not know what they have to do, and hence do not work productively. In isolated cases, where the teacher cannot manage the boys, the girls are left largely to their own devices, and are therefore not encouraged to make progress. Planning is good, and teachers usually ensure that there is equitable coverage of the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing; pupils are given limited opportunities, however, to do extended speaking, or to conduct conversations in pairs or in groups. Some teachers devise imaginative tasks designed to enable pupils to make real progress in the language, as in a Year 11 French lesson where pupils took part in a 'walking dictation' in groups which involved everyone, and required all the language skills to be used.
167. A particularly successful feature of all teaching is the sharing of learning objectives with pupils at the beginning of the lesson, and the review of what has been learned at the end; this makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning. Teachers check on key points of learning, correcting the pupils' performance supportively. They also use assessment effectively as a guide to lesson planning, as for example, in a Year 11 Spanish lesson, where the teacher recognised that a section of the class would need more structured practice on a particular point next lesson. Time is well used, and the pace of lessons is usually brisk. There is a range of resources in use, including video and computers. Homework which is a planned development of the lesson is set on a regular basis, and good use was seen of a task to foster extended writing with a group of high attainers in Year 10. Marking is variable: some of it is cursory; some is done by pupils and does not identify basic mistakes; but at best it is thorough and supportive, with indications about what pupils need to do to improve their work. The teaching of basic skills, particularly French and Spanish spelling, grammatical concepts and structure, is satisfactory.
168. As a result of the good teaching and the pupils' good attitudes, the quality of the pupils' learning is good overall at both key stages. Particularly good learning takes place where teachers give positive feedback, so that the pupils are motivated and fully engaged. Lower attainers, and those with special educational needs are enabled to make good progress because they are well supported by the teacher, and sometimes by learning support assistants, and are well managed through an effective blend of quiet, good-humoured assertiveness and very clear, patient explanations. High attainers, particularly at Key Stage 4, are often appropriately challenged, in class or in their homework, and make very good progress.
169. The curriculum meets National Curriculum requirements. Breadth is provided in Year 9 through the addition of Spanish for those pupils who have already shown an aptitude for French, but one contact per week means that progress and continuity are difficult to ensure. Schemes of work are being revised. The present documents provide broadly satisfactory guidance, but are not detailed enough to support the range of skills mentioned in the National Curriculum Programme of Study, including the use of computers. There is a good programme of study visits to France, which provides opportunities for social, cultural and linguistic development. Pupils are assessed regularly, and assessment data is well used to track pupils' progress and to guide curriculum planning. The leadership of the department is very good and informed by very clear educational vision for raising standards, and this is beginning to have a positive impact on achievement. The monitoring of the curriculum is sound, but the department does not have the fullest picture of its

performance because the monitoring of teaching and learning through observation in the classroom has been allowed to lapse. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory overall, but there has been much staffing turbulence, and substantial progress has been made only recently as the situation has begun to be resolved.

## MUSIC

170. In the 1999 end of Key Stage 3 teacher assessments, the proportion attaining or exceeding the national expectation was in line with the national average. However, there was a considerable gap between the achievements of boys and girls, with girls attaining far higher results than boys. In the 1999 GCSE examinations, the proportion of pupils gaining A\*-C grades was a slightly below the national average. However, over the last three years attainment has been broadly above the national average with differences between years resulting from the varying levels of prior attainment within the different cohorts. Whilst boys attained more high-grade passes than girls in 1999, the overall small number of entries makes statistical comparison between boys and girls, or with other subjects, unreliable. Pupils studying instruments have been successful in grade examinations; around thirty pupils each year are awarded certificates for their achievement, with a sizeable minority receiving accreditation to an advanced level.
171. By the end of Key Stage 3, standards in work seen in most classes are above national expectations and show good achievement. Pupils develop rounded skills in composing, performing and listening to music. When using electronic keyboards, pupils play simple melodies confidently, with higher attainers using accompanying chords to provide an attractive backing sound. Pupils frequently collaborate effectively in groups. In one Year 8 lesson, for instance, individual pupils played a melody, bass or chord part in the group and one or two pupils sang lead or backing vocals. In the process, pupils successfully balanced the various parts to produce well-rehearsed group performances. Pupils make effective use of simple structures when composing. For instance, Year 7 pupils successfully sang a song in boogie-woogie style and discussed its particular characteristics before writing their own compositions using this new knowledge. There is good challenge for higher and lower attainers. Pupils have regular opportunities to write reflectively about music they have heard and this supports the development of their literacy skills. Pupils use available computers and sequencing software well to record compositions and to produce scores. However, a lack of modern computers in the department limits pupils' potential development in using new technology. Despite generally high standards, weak teaching in some lessons prevents pupils making satisfactory progress.
172. By the end of Key Stage 4, most pupils perform confidently with the majority on course to gain an A\*-C grade in the summer examination. Compositions show a good understanding of basic structures such as theme and variation and sequence. Pupils use the vocabulary of music with discrimination, referring to instrumentation, style and period with growing confidence when comparing and contrasting different pieces of music. Pupils who take instrumental lessons, or who participate in performances, do so with musical conviction, attaining well above expected standards. During the inspection, the school hosted a delightful show in which pupils from local primary schools joined pupils from the school to present a variety of very well rehearsed items. Performances by the school choir and steel band were of an excellent quality and were a credit to the hard work of staff and pupils.
173. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. However, there is a wide variation between the quality of teaching of permanent staff, and of temporary staff who have been taken on whilst the school recruits a second music teacher. The quality of teaching of permanent staff is never less than good and is regularly very good or excellent. The quality of teaching of temporary staff is unsatisfactory overall and is sometimes poor. All teachers have secure subject knowledge. This is often communicated in a clear way that is understood by pupils. However, in weaker lessons, teachers fail to explain principles clearly, there is weak time management and the pace of learning is very slow. Lesson planning is very good, with a variety of well-integrated activities that keep most pupils fully involved. In most lessons, pupils' behaviour is very well managed, although in a minority of lessons there is weak management. In weaker lessons, pupils fail to show enough interest in their work and quickly go off task. Where teachers provide plenty of opportunities for practical music making, learning is rapid. In one lesson, however, pupils had to

wait for 45 minutes before being allowed to sing or play instruments. By this time they had lost heart and were misbehaving. In most lessons, day to day verbal assessment is very helpful in pointing out ways that pupils can improve. In other lessons, teachers tell pupils off rather than explain patiently how they can improve. As a result pupils become sullen and unresponsive. There is effective use of available space and resources. Visiting specialist instrumental teachers provide a high quality service, which adds considerably to the musical skills of pupils involved.

174. The quality of learning is satisfactory overall, but is very dependent on the quality of teaching. In most lessons, pupils consolidate and extend their knowledge. They apply intellectual and creative effort and work at a productive pace. Most pupils enjoy music lessons. They sustain their concentration and can be trusted to work away from the teacher in a sensible way, so that they develop good independent learning skills. In lessons where the teaching is unsatisfactory, pupils shout out answers and play instruments when they should be listening. In one Year 7 lesson, for instance, the teacher's weak control of behaviour resulted in pupils playing inaccurately and out of turn. Little purposeful new learning took place and pupils' progress suffered.
175. The management of the department is very good. Regular monitoring of teaching and the curriculum accurately identifies factors that will improve provision. The head of department and senior management fully realise the problems of unsatisfactory teaching and are working to improve this. The accommodation and resources are sufficient to ensure that lessons are successfully taught. The head of department is to be commended for the intensive programme of extra-curricular activity that successfully engages the attention of so many pupils. Timetable blocks in Year 9 interfere with the otherwise smooth patterns of learning and cause some pupils to opt for other subjects at GCSE level. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. There is a better quality of singing in lessons, pupils now listen attentively to music and the amount of time for music in Key Stage 3 is above the national average overall. Teachers' planning has improved and there is a beneficial emphasis on composing. However, further improvements are hindered by the weaknesses in teaching.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

176. Attainment in lessons observed by the end of Key Stage 3 is in line with national expectations and confirms teacher assessments. Pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 4 is also in line with national expectations. GCSE results in physical education in 1999 are below national average. Although the results are not as high as in the last inspection, they are improving.
177. By the end of Year 9, pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of the rules and positional play in games and are able to perform sending and receiving skills with increasing confidence and apply them into competitive play. Pupils' planning and evaluating skills are underdeveloped. In gymnastics, pupils in Year 7 are able to plan, perform and evaluate a simple sequence, however the movements lack control, fluency and body tension and their movement vocabulary is limited.
178. By the end of Year 11, pupils increase their knowledge and understanding and performance skills in the major games. Pupils in a Year 11 basketball lesson demonstrated a range of sending and receiving skills with increased control, accuracy and success and were beginning to change pace and direction to win the ball. As the pupils move through the school, they know how to prepare the body for exercise and pupils in Key Stage 4 are beginning to take responsibility for their own warming up activities. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into the physical education curriculum and make satisfactory progress.
179. The majority of pupil have positive attitudes to their work, are well behaved, willing to participate and be physically active. Most pupils enjoy their lessons. They come to the lessons well prepared, although the boys take longer to change. In all years all pupils are aware of their own and others safety and use the facilities with due care and attention. As pupils progress through the school they develop good social and co-operative skills with a partner, in group work and teams supporting each other's strengths and weaknesses. In competitive team play they

demonstrate fair play and good sporting behaviour. For example in a Year 10 football lesson pupils were willing to accept the referees decision at all times.

180. Teaching and learning overall is good. All teachers are experienced knowledgeable specialists, especially in games activities. The management of pupils is generally good and all staff expect pupils to change appropriately, participate, behave and work safely. Teachers develop positive relationships with the pupils and give praise and encouragement, which increases their confidence to practice and acquire new skills. Pupils increase their knowledge and understanding, improve their performance skills and know how well they are doing because teachers give good evaluative feedback. The teaching of the basic skills are satisfactory and is especially good in the teaching of GCSE physical education and in the planning and evaluating in girls gymnastics. Lessons are well planned and organised with a balance of activities, although the lessons do not always conclude with a cool down. In Year 8 netball and Year 9 rugby where the lessons had good pace, pupils were motivated, their interest was maintained and they kept on task. In the lessons where pupils were grouped according to ability, the more able pupils were physically challenged.
181. The curriculum is good overall, as the many strengths outweigh weaknesses. Extra curricular provision is a strength in the department and staff give generously of their time. Pupils have access to a wide range of sporting and recreational activities, participation rate is high and pupils have extensive opportunities to play in inter school leagues and represent the school in competitive team games. The department provides well for the moral, social and cultural aspects in physical education. The curriculum at Key Stage 3 is broad but there is an emphasis on games and insufficient time is allocated to outdoor and adventurous activities. Girls and boys do not have access to the same curriculum. Options in the Key Stage 4 curriculum are limited.
182. Leadership and management overall is sound and teachers work well as a team and give freely of their time to support school teams. The departmental policy is good and relates well to the aims and objectives of the school. Day to day procedures are effective and efficient. There is systematic monitoring and evaluation of teaching and careful financial management. The short term development plan is good but the long-term development plan lacks strategic planning and vision and documentation needs updating, including schemes and units of work. Job descriptions are not clearly defined and do not identify delegated responsibilities. The department provide a safe learning environment but risk assessment is not carried out formally. The provision of specialist accommodation is good, however the changing areas are small for the numbers of pupils using the facility at any one time and the communal showering facilities are not sensitive to the needs of growing adolescents. Gymnastic equipment is old and tired and the storage in the gymnasium is inadequate and unsafe. Displays around the school are good and celebrate pupils' achievements in physical education and sport in all areas of activity.
183. Standards in teaching and learning and pupils' attitudes have been maintained since the last inspection. Assessment procedures have been reviewed and extra curricular provision continues to be a strength. However overall improvements since the last inspection are unsatisfactory. There are still some inconsistencies in teaching and learning. In games in both key stages there is an emphasis on performance with insufficient opportunities to plan and evaluate their work and that of others and the more able pupil still lacks challenge in curriculum time. Although GCSE results are improving, they are not as high as in the last inspection and roles and responsibilities within the department are still not clearly defined.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

184. Standards of attainment in GCSE examinations in 1999 are above average and much the same as in the last inspection report. There are no national assessments of attainment at the end of Key Stage 3. Although only a relatively small number of pupils opt to study a full GCSE course, the school's results are above the national average for those achieving grades A\*-C. Pupils achieve better in religious education than they do in their other subjects.
185. From lessons seen and other inspection evidence, standards of attainment are below expectations by the end of Key Stage 3, but better than expected by the end of Key Stage 4.



The difference between key stages is clearly linked to some unsatisfactory teaching and achievement in Key Stage 3. Where teaching is satisfactory or better, pupils have a secure knowledge of the main features in the life of Jesus, they can make a reasonable interpretation of parables and higher attainers can identify some religious implications of the Holocaust. Where teaching is less than satisfactory, few pupils recall accurately the major features of the religions they have studied or are aware of the similarities and differences in belief, places of worship and customs. By the end of Key Stage 3, higher attainers write well on, for example, symbols of Buddhism or the Sikh naming ceremony. In some groups however, oral attainment is noticeably better than written work, for example middle attaining pupils make mature perceptive oral answers about the work of Martin Luther King.

186. From lessons and other inspection evidence, there is good achievement, both in the full GCSE course and the short course for all pupils at the end of Key Stage 4. Pupils have a secure understanding of the religions they have studied. Higher attaining pupils can explain complex theological terms such as revelation and pupils of all levels of attainment show some understanding of how religious belief affects daily life. Pupils listen to the views of others and engage in mature discussion about the subject and moral issues. Pupils following the full GCSE course are equally secure in oral or written work but pupils following the short course do not have the same standards of written expression.
187. Pupils develop their attitudes, values and personal development in response to the quality of teaching. By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils have satisfactory self discipline and behaviour. However, in Key Stage 3, attitudes, values and personal development are often unsatisfactory or poor. Some pupils in Years 7 and 8 are immature and show poor behaviour, manifest in passive refusal to obey requests, shouting out or simply not working. The quality of learning of all pupils in the group is affected when this poor behaviour is not dealt with by satisfactory teaching strategies.
188. Teaching is good in Key Stage 4 but unsatisfactory at Key Stage 3. Other variations throughout the report are consequences of this basic difference. At both key stages, teachers have good subject knowledge and confidently use examples from a range of religions and experiences. Lessons are well planned to include a wide variety of activities, including whole group instruction, small group discussion, problem solving activities or the review of video materials. The difference in teaching quality lies in matching tasks to pupils' differing levels of attainment, ensuring they are all engaged and able to achieve.
189. In the best lessons at Key Stage 3, class discipline is good because of the good rapport between teacher and pupils; there are clear expectations of what pupils have to do and teachers provide interesting activities. Literacy is well taught in some groups where pupils are encouraged to write freely on, for example, the rites of passage in various faiths. Homework is set regularly and enables pupils to consolidate or extend their learning. Teaching is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 3 where activities are not well matched to pupils' understanding and some teachers do not control the misbehaviour of some pupils. In these lessons, the teacher has to spend too much time disciplining pupils and the pace of learning is slow for everyone. A particular strength in Key Stage 4 is how teachers help pupils to deepen their understanding by skilful questioning and drawing out of meaning and inference. This was seen very well with a group of lower attaining pupils in Year 10 who made good progress in their understanding of how faith affects people's lives by reviewing the beliefs of famous athletes. Teachers plan work carefully so that pupils gain confidence and experience in examination questions and learn how to extend their knowledge from basic facts to show understanding and evaluation.
190. The variations in teaching between key stages leads to similar differences in the quality of learning. Learning is good in Key Stage 4 where pupils develop their knowledge and skills because they concentrate well, work hard and want to succeed. In Key Stage 3 however, learning is unsatisfactory because of the impact of badly behaved pupils who make little effort to work and spend too much time disturbing others.
191. The curriculum in Key Stage 3 follows and meets the Hampshire Agreed Syllabus 'Vision and Insight' and sufficient time is given to deliver the syllabus. All pupils in Key Stage 4 now study a short GCSE course but the time allocation is too little to cover the syllabus thoroughly. This

means that learning opportunities are inevitably limited. The small proportion of pupils who opt for the full GCSE course have more than sufficient curriculum time. The subject offers good learning opportunities for pupils of all abilities. The curriculum is enhanced by departmental visits beyond school including visits to the Holocaust museum in London, the Buddhist temple at Chithurst or the synagogue in Bournemouth.

192. The subject makes a very good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural education within the whole school. Pupils are encouraged to learn about the spiritual experiences of leaders of world faiths and the worship of believers. They are invited to share awe and wonder at creation and purpose of life. They consider the mystery of death and what others believe about life after death. The moral codes of all world faiths are considered along with individual conscience and freedom of choice. Issues of morality such as abortion and euthanasia are discussed. The pupils gain insight into social aspects of faith, studying the life of faith communities in rites of passage and their charity work. The cultural and multicultural development of pupils is achieved through a study of the customs of world faith, through those such as Martin Luther King who have worked for racial justice, the witness of contemporary Christians and through visitors to school such as a survivor of the holocaust.
193. The department benefits from good leadership, which contributes to pupils' achievements. The head of department and senior staff are aware of the weaknesses in teaching and they have worked hard to bring about improvements. Teaching and learning is monitored regularly and strategies for improvement have been identified. Guidance on teaching is found in the detailed departmental handbook and schemes of work, especially the new section on Buddhism. Textbook, worksheets, and artefacts are all to hand, despite the lack of office or storage facilities. Resources have improved since the last report but the new core GCSE course has insufficient resources.
194. Since the last inspection the school has maintained its good quality examination results but not increased the numbers being entered. Good teaching and learning has continued in Key Stage 4 but not in Key Stage 3 where there are weaknesses in teaching, learning and behaviour. The quality of provision has improved in Key Stage 4 by the introduction of the short course GCSE for all pupils. However the time allocation for this course remains below recommendations and as a consequence, teaching and learning is not as effective as it could be.