

INSPECTION REPORT

QUEEN ELEANOR COMMUNITY SCHOOL

STAMFORD

LEA area: LINCOLNSHIRE

Unique reference number: 120657

Headteacher: Mr Alan Large

Reporting inspector: Christopher Christofides
7834

Dates of inspection: 8 - 11 October 2001

Inspection number: 187442

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Modern (non-selective)
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	11-16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Green Lane Stamford Lincolnshire
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Peter Heyes
Date of previous inspection:	18 March 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
7834	Mr C. Christofides	Registered inspector	Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? (a) The school's results and students' achievements How well are students taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9504	Ms S. Gurney	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its students? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
31129	Mr J. Pickering	Team inspector	Art	
4372	Mr. R. Fordham	Team inspector	Religious Education	
23188	Ms. V. Maunder	Team inspector	Science	
11300	Mr B. Smith	Team inspector	Geography	
12630	Mr D. Naylor	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are the curricular and other opportunities?
8786	Mr M. Whalley	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages	How high are standards? (b) Student's attitudes, values and personal development
12121	Mr J. Mallinson	Team inspector	English	
24127	Mr J. Kidd	Team inspector	History	
23880	Ms O. Hall	Team inspector	Physical education Special educational needs	
12276	Mr T. Payne	Team inspector	Music	
2183	Mr P. Thomson	Team inspector	Design technology Information and communication technology	

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7 - 10
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	
 PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11 - 13
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?	13 - 14
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?	15 - 18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	18 - 20
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	20
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	20 - 22
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	22
 PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	23 - 26
 PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27 - 43

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Queen Eleanor Community School is an 11-16 mixed secondary modern (non-selective) school situated in the town of Stamford in the County of Lincolnshire. It is a non-selective school in a highly selective area. There is also an 11+ selective system in place locally. There are currently 405 pupils on roll. This figure has dropped gradually from a figure of 505 in 1996, but has picked up recently. Eleven per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals which is below the national average. There are 130 students on the special needs register, well above the national average. Of these 22 have statements, also well above the national average. The school has a designated SEN department. There are five pupils from ethnic minorities and these are fluent speakers of English. Attainment on entry to the school is well below the national average. The socio-economic circumstances of the area are less favourable than nationally.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a much improved school that provides an acceptable standard of education to its students. They are given a good start to their education in Years 7 to 9 and make good progress. As they move through the school the majority achieve standards in line with their prior attainment but below those expected nationally. They achieve particularly well in English and literacy. The quality of teaching is good. The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher and key staff have worked hard to raise standards. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities adequately. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher's leadership is very good and is helping to improve students' performance.
- Good teaching. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and manage students well.
- The progress of students with special educational needs is good.
- The curriculum provision for students with special educational need is very good.
- The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good.
- The contribution of the community to the students' learning is very good.
- Relationships with partner institutions are very good.
- The strategic use of resources, specific grants and support staff is good and effective.

What could be improved

- The provision for student's spiritual development in lessons and throughout the school.
- The use of assessment information to guide curricular planning.
- Further raise attainment especially in mathematics and science in Years 10 and 11.
- The leadership and management of art, music and information and communication technology.
- Meet statutory requirements in music in Years 7 to 9, and religious education in Years 10 and 11.

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

The strengths of the school significantly outweigh those that need improvement.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in March 1996. Overall the school has made good improvements since the last inspection and has addressed most of the key issues identified then. Management and leadership have greatly improved with the appointment of the new headteacher. The school now has a clearer educational direction and the governors are also much more effective. Teaching has greatly improved and it is now good. There has been a rise in standards and in students' achievement. The resourcing and use of the library are now very good. Nevertheless statutory requirements for collective worship are still not met and students' spiritual development remains unsatisfactory.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved at the end of Year 11 based on average point scores in GCSE examinations.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar modern schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
GCSE examinations	E	E	D	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E

Standards of attainment are well below average when students join the school. These standards were reflected in many of the lessons seen, for students of all ages. Overall performance in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science has improved since the last inspection. In Years 7 to 9, students achieve more highly than their prior attainment might suggest and their progress is good. They achieve particularly well in English, modern foreign languages, humanities, physical education, and design and technology. Achievement in music is poor, as there is no teaching of music at present. Overall achievement by the end of Year 9 is good and students have made good progress in most subjects. In 2001 GCSE results improved significantly and whilst they were still below the national average the trend over the last three years has been upwards. Attainment of five or more passes at grades A* to C has risen from an average of 16 per cent in the last three years to 31 per cent in 2001. Results for one or more passes at A* to G have also risen to over 96 per cent which is at the national average. The school has made good progress in improving GCSE results since the last inspection. The school managed to reach its targets for GCSE performance in 2001. The targets set were challenging. Overall since the last inspection, standards of attainment have improved at a faster rate than schools nationally.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Students like coming to school and are keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good in class and around the school. Students respond well to school rules and appreciate that teachers are there to help them.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Students care about each other and show respect towards teachers, other adults and their fellow students. They are willing to consider the needs of others.
Attendance	Attendance overall is satisfactory. It has improved over the last few years and since the last inspection. The rates of authorised and unauthorised absence are close to the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 7 – 9	Years 10 – 11
Quality of teaching	good	satisfactory

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.

Overall the quality of teaching is good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. The best teaching is in Years 7 to 9 where much of it is good. Teaching is good in English, modern foreign languages, humanities and physical education. It is satisfactory in mathematics, science, design and technology, art and information and communication technology. Literacy across the curriculum is effectively taught. Numeracy across the curriculum is weaker. In nearly all subjects,

with the exception of design and technology and religious education, teachers' subject knowledge and understanding are good. Teachers' planning is very good in modern foreign languages and good in all other subjects with the exception of science and art where it is satisfactory. Their teaching methods and their management of students are generally satisfactory. Teacher expectations are satisfactory for meeting the needs of most students, but in some lessons teachers do not always challenge the more able effectively. Students respond well to their teachers and work well, making satisfactory progress in their learning. Many students do not, though, always fully understand what they are doing, how well they have done and how they can improve. Students concentrate on their work and remain on task in most lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. The quality and range are good in Years 10 and 11 but there are significant gaps, such as music and religious education that require urgent action.
Provision for students with special educational needs	Very good and a strength of the school. Individual education plans are good, and learning is effectively supported to ensure these students make good progress throughout the school.
Provision for students' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall, with good provision for moral and social development, but unsatisfactory for spiritual. Though provision for cultural development is satisfactory, there is no planned approach to an understanding of life in a multi-cultural and multi-faith society.
How well the school cares for its students	Good overall. This is a caring school that offers its students a pleasant environment in which to learn. Students' personal support is well provided and the school follows up attendance well. There are shortcomings in how well the school plans assessment of students' work which at present is unsatisfactory.

The school's partnership with parents is good. The shortcomings, including some areas where the curriculum does not meet statutory requirements, are balanced by some strong features, for example the alternative curriculum on offer to some students in Years 10 and 11. There are particular strengths with partner institutions, both primary and further education and links with the community are strong.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher gives very good leadership and the school has improved rapidly under his guidance. Leadership by other senior staff is good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are well led and their role in directing and monitoring the work of the school is satisfactory. Some statutory responsibilities are not met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Monitoring of the schools development plan is good. The monitoring of teaching is satisfactory. The school is taking effective action to raise standards.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Learning resources are well used throughout the school. The accommodation is good and enhances learning. Very good use of support staff. The adequacy of staffing to the demands of the curriculum is satisfactory.

The greatest strength in the school's management is the contribution of the headteacher in shaping the ethos and aims of the school. This has given rise to good teaching and a rise in standards. The school applies the principles of best value satisfactorily.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major improvements lately and since the new headteacher arrived. • Improving standards. • Teachers very caring and helpful. • Strong values and support given to pupils, especially those with SEN. • Good prefect system. • Information to parents was good. • The school dealt with their complaints effectively. • A caring school. • Much improved facilities since moving onto one site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some minor incidents of bad behaviour in class. • Homework was good from some teachers and some subjects but not from others. • Large staff turnover in last two years.

Inspectors agree with the positive views of parents. They found very few incidents of bad behaviour in class and overall the behaviour of students in class and around the school was good. During the inspection, they found that homework was generally satisfactory. The large turnover of staff in the last two years, whilst it could have unsettled the school and the students, has resulted in an improvement in the quality of teaching and the standards achieved by the students.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards of attainment are well below average when students join the school. On average over the last three years, 30 per cent of Year 7 on entry to the school had not reached the expected standard. Furthermore a similar number have reading, writing and mathematics competence two years behind the average. These standards are reflected in many of the lessons seen, for all ages, in six out of ten lessons where attainment was below average.
2. Overall performance in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science has improved since the last inspection. The results in 2001 were particularly good. The school is now performing in line with all secondary modern schools nationally, even though it is still performing well below the national average.
3. At Key Stage 3, results in the national tests in English have moved from well below the national average to the average for modern schools. Girls achieve better than the boys at level 5 and above. Trends were similar in previous years but in 2000 girls did not perform in line with national trends. This gave rise to a slight dip in results in 2000. Teacher assessment was much higher than test results in 2000 but was closer to test results in 2001. Results in mathematics moved from well below the national average to the average for modern schools at level 5 and above. At level 6 and above the results remain below the average. Results in science have moved up from well below average to above average at level 5 and above and at the average at level 6 and above. There were no significant difference between boys' and girls' standards in both mathematics and science. Science results have been the most consistent of the core subjects. Overall in the core subjects at Key Stage 3 there has been good improvement since the last inspection.
4. In lessons during the inspection, standards for students in Key Stage 3 were below the expected levels in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, humanities, art, physical education and information and communication technology (ICT). In the three years to the age of 14, students achieve more highly than their attainment might suggest and their progress over this stage is good. They achieve particularly well in English, modern foreign languages, humanities, physical education, and design and technology. Achievement in music is poor, as there is no teaching of music at present. Overall achievement by the age of fourteen is good and students make good progress in knowledge, skills and understanding in most subjects.
5. GCSE results in recent years have been well below the national average. In 2001 results improved significantly and whilst results are still below the national average the trend over the last three years has been upwards. Attainment of five or more passes at grades A* to C has risen from an average of 16 per cent in the last three years to 31 per cent in 2001. Performance in English and science has improved more than that in mathematics. Performance in other subjects has also improved with the introduction of new vocational courses. Results for one or more passes at A* to G have also risen to over 96 per cent which is at the national average. The total average points scored have also improved significantly since the last inspection. The school has made good progress in improving results since the last inspection and the good rise in the average points score and the proportion of students achieving one or more GCSE passes confirm the school's inclusive policy of raising standards for all.
6. In subjects at the end of Key Stage 4 at the age of 16, attainment is below the expected levels in English, humanities, design and technology, physical education and modern foreign languages. It is well below in mathematics, science, information and communication technology and music. At Key Stage 4 students do not make the same gains, and progress at a slower rate than in Key Stage 3. Nevertheless the achievement of students in Key Stage 4 is satisfactory overall. Progress is good in English, modern foreign languages and humanities.
7. The school managed to reach its targets for GCSE performance in 2001. These figures were calculated on firm predictions and based on baseline figures and progress forecast data. The targets set were challenging. The target of 30 per cent passes at five A* to C was exceeded by three per cent. The target of 96 per cent of one or more passes at A* to G was met. This has

- led to a more challenging target to be set for 2002.
8. In all subjects students with special education needs make good progress overall in relation to their prior attainment. In Years 7 and 8, students with lower level reading and comprehension skills achieve well in the paired reading. The achievement of students with statements is good because they are well supported by teacher assistants who have very good relationships with them. Achievement at Key Stage 4 for students taking the ASDAN bronze and silver accreditation is good because of the very good balance of independent learning and teacher direction in the planned activities. Students are better motivated to succeed because they research first hand, for example, when Year 10 have the opportunity to participate in rock-climbing and horse riding as a starting point to a leisure project. Curriculum provision is very good overall and significant improvements have been made since the last inspection. The development of vocational programmes at Key Stage 4 is a strength and plays a key role in raising achievement for all special needs students. Students receive specialist teaching in small groups for English, humanities and mathematics in lower ability groups. Gifted and talented students are not yet identified on a register and development is still at an early phase across curriculum areas.
 9. Standards in literacy are satisfactory and sufficient for the students to access the curriculum. Though below the national average, standards improve as students go through the school. Good standards were seen in humanities, modern foreign languages and physical education. Standards in numeracy and ICT are not as secure and are below expected levels. The lack of a school policy for the systematic improvement of students' ICT skills across the curriculum are the main reasons for these patchy standards in ICT.
 10. Overall since the last inspection, standards of attainment have improved above national trends and those then reported. Progress in raising attainment since 1996 has also been good.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Student's attitudes to school are good overall. The last inspection report noted that the students had a positive attitude to learning. The position has improved. The school has worked hard to create an orderly community, and older students acknowledge the improving climate that has been achieved during their time at the school. The quality of student responses is good or very good in just over half the lessons seen. There is however a small minority of students, particularly in Key Stage 4, whose attitudes to learning are poor, even on occasion when the teaching is sound, and who disrupt the learning of others.
12. Many students react enthusiastically to the opportunities the school offers. In lessons they take pride in their work, for example by drafting and re-drafting their writing in English and in the humanities to achieve the best result possible. Beyond lessons, students participate in a wide range of charity work, raising funds for causes such as the NSPCC and a local hospital in Peterborough. They help on the Year 6 introductory visit to the school and are keen to volunteer as student librarians. Although the range of extra-curricular activities is currently limited, as there is no drama or music, there is a good level of participation in sporting activities.
13. Student behaviour overall is good, both in lessons and around the school at break and at lunchtimes. There is some boisterous behaviour in corridors at the change of lessons, but in general students show concern and consideration for one another. They act sensibly when eating in the canteen and they are open and friendly with their peers, non-teaching staff and visitors.
14. The school has been successful in developing an ethos of inclusion; it has integrated very well its large number of students with special educational needs (SEN) and catered successfully for students excluded from other schools. It has achieved its target of avoiding the permanent exclusion of any student and its overall rate of fixed term exclusion is below the national average. When students, who have been excluded for a fixed term, return to school, they are carefully re-integrated using the in-school education centre. Overall this is an improvement since the last inspection.
15. Some students display very challenging behaviour and an on-call system operated by experienced staff is effectively used to settle such students and counsel them over their behaviour. The school has an anti-bullying policy, which includes a leaflet made available to

parents, students and staff. Many of the incidences of bullying that occur are dealt with effectively by staff. Evidence from discussion and interviews with pupils indicates however that awareness of the policy needs to be raised. This is particularly so at a time of significant staffing change, in order that students are confident that there will be a consistent approach to the investigation of any alleged bullying.

16. There are many opportunities provided both within lessons and in school generally for students to take initiative and personal responsibility. When students are trusted to work without direct supervision, they respond well to the trust placed in them. For example they undertake tasks in the library or individually on computer sensibly. In two assemblies during inspection week students played a leading role; they produce "QE Life", a newsletter for parents and student representatives are able to express their views through the school council.
17. Relationships amongst students and between students and teachers are generally good. Students relate very strongly to those many teachers whose teaching is effective and who show them respect. There is a supportive culture in the school for students with SEN and these students are readily accepted by their peers. Year 9 and 10 students spend part of three lunchtimes each week helping younger students who have difficulty with their reading. Students also develop a wider awareness. For example a "Green" group helps to increase their knowledge of environmental and conservation issues, whilst Key Stage 3 students explored sensibly and maturely elements of Islam such as the concept of pilgrimage during a religious education lesson.
18. The school has made substantial efforts to improve its attendance rate so that it is now in line with the national average. In 1998 and 1999, figures dropped below the national average and below 90 per cent but now they are at 91.8 per cent and much improved since the last inspection. The provision of a viable and appropriate alternative curriculum to the National Curriculum for a number of Key Stage 4 pupils has been an important element in this improvement. In addition, a policy of ringing parents on the first day of a student's absence has helped to enlist parental support in improving both attendance and punctuality. There is however a small number of students who are persistently late and not all of these sign in at the office. The school has recognised the need for continued work in this area and has made attendance and punctuality one of its priorities in its current school development plan.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

19. Overall the quality of teaching is good. In 95 per cent of lessons seen the teaching was satisfactory or better. Six out of ten lessons were good or very good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection where 15 per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory and only three out of ten were good or better. The best teaching is in Key Stage 3 with over 62 per cent good or better. In Key Stage 4 the teaching is nearly all satisfactory or better with over five in ten of the lessons good or better. Teaching is good in English, modern foreign languages, humanities and physical education. It is satisfactory in mathematics, science, design and technology, art and information and communication technology.
20. Overall teaching is effective, allowing students to make good progress in their learning. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Some of the best teaching was seen in English, humanities, modern foreign languages and physical education. Literacy across the curriculum is effectively taught. Numeracy across the curriculum is weaker. In nearly all subjects, with the exception of design and technology and religious education, teachers' subject knowledge and understanding is good. Teachers' planning is very good in modern foreign languages and good in all other subjects with the exception of science and art where it is satisfactory. Their teaching methods and their management of pupils are generally satisfactory. Their use of support staff and resources is good. Their use of homework is satisfactory. Teachers' assessment and feedback are satisfactory. Teacher expectations are satisfactory for meeting the needs of most pupils, but in some lessons teachers do not always challenge the more able effectively. Pupils respond well to their teachers and work well, making satisfactory progress in their learning. They do not yet fully understand what they are doing, how well they have done and how they can improve. They concentrate on their work and remain on task in most lessons.
21. The quality of teaching in English in both key stages is good, and some very good or excellent. Teachers are enthusiastic about English, and communicate this to students. They prepare

well, and give their lessons variety. Those with SEN are particularly well supported, given sensitive help by highly committed assistants in a room that is a joy to enter. All teachers mark students' work diligently and use the marks to indicate where further improvement needs to be made. The classrooms and the library contain a bank of computers that are used occasionally for research and frequently for word-processing. Teachers use assessment data well to set challenging targets, which are beginning to be negotiated in meetings with students and their parents. Overall high standards of teaching help the students to make good progress and achieve well.

22. The quality of teaching in mathematics in both key stages is satisfactory. Teachers show appropriate subject knowledge and there is a well-planned teaching programme. Where teaching is good students make appropriate progress in class. For example, in a Year 10 lesson the students responded well to an investigation task, they worked collaboratively and showed appropriate independent learning skills. Where lessons are satisfactory the teachers are not challenging the students sufficiently. In one lesson the expectations of the teacher of both the behaviour and application to work of the students was unsatisfactory. In general the attitudes of students is variable for example in one class approximately half the students had not completed their homework and in another class a significant number of students did not have the appropriate equipment such as rulers with them. Those with SEN are well supported. Overall the teaching is not sufficiently differentiated to ensure that all students in each class make progress appropriate to their abilities. Where appropriate the department uses the material, published as part of the National Numeracy Framework, which is specifically for lower achieving students.
23. The quality of teaching in science is satisfactory overall. In the most effective lessons, teachers' good knowledge and expertise is combined with high expectations, enthusiasm and effective planning. These give students confidence so that they respond positively and try hard. In the better lessons, teachers challenge the students with carefully constructed questions to make them reflect carefully. This happened in a lesson where students were investigating the relationship between work, force and distance. Students made good progress in understanding that doing work is using a force to move an object. Teachers' expectations for students' achievements in a significant number of classes are focused on the middle and lower levels of attainment. Some of the high attaining students are not always challenged. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, time was wasted in trying to control the class, the pace was slow, and insufficient learning of any depth took place.
24. The teaching of literacy in English is good. In most other subjects teachers develop understanding of literacy skills by the use of technical terms, aided by a display of key words at the front of the room. Good teaching of literacy was seen in history and geography, where teachers use writing frames, provide opportunities for discussion, get students to read aloud, and encourage them to use standard English. Very effective support is given to students who enter the school with low standards of reading and writing, and these make good progress.
25. The teaching of numeracy skills in mathematics and other subjects is satisfactory. The mathematics department has produced a numeracy booklet for other staff in the school. In science, teachers ensure that graphical work is accurate and appropriate to the age and ability of the students. Science teachers include a review and consolidation of the necessary numerical skills as appropriate to the science programme. In humanities, students are able to use tally charts and population tables. The school is planning a numeracy across the curriculum day in January 2002.
26. The quality of teaching and learning for students with special educational needs is good overall. Some very good teaching was observed in a Year 9 humanities lesson where students used ICT to research Italian industry and in Year 10 where teachers use an effective range of resources and questioning to stimulate and motivate students extend their writing skills. Teachers and assistants know their students well and their very good relationships helps them feel confident. Of particular note is the contribution of learning support staff and older students to the organisation and effectiveness of the paired reading programme. Support in mainstream lessons is very good with examples of impressive practice in English and humanities where students have the opportunity to work independently and at their own pace. Planning for special education needs students in subject areas is generally good.
27. Since the last inspection the quality of teaching has improved significantly. The focus on teaching and learning, better planning and secure subject knowledge has enabled students to make good progress, which has impacted, on improved standards.

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

28. Overall, the range of learning opportunities provided by the school is satisfactory. There are, however, shortcomings in meeting statutory requirements both at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4.
29. The school is much smaller than many other secondary schools and this presents particular problems for delivering a full range of learning opportunities. The number of staff available to teach each subject is relatively small when compared to other secondary schools so that there is little flexibility in some areas. In addition, the school has problems in staffing particular areas, and there are a number of very inexperienced staff, some unqualified, working in the school. The school has been unable to appoint a music teacher.
30. The school arranges special activity days. Recently a drumming group came to the school to work with students from Years 7 and 8. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities. These include theatre and museum visits, a full range of sporting activities and inter-school competitions and residential courses. Students publish a school newspaper regularly. Older pupils are involved in paired reading with younger pupils. In English students in Year 7 took part in a "Meet the Poet" event in the town hall and students have contributed to poetry anthologies. One pupil has won a regional prize as young writer of the year. There are regular clubs and activities in school and there is a homework club after school each day in the library.
31. The school's inclusion policy is fully implemented. In Key Stage 4 and the school provides a curriculum that is particularly responsive to the needs of the students, the quality and range of the curriculum in Key Stage 4 is good. It includes vocational programmes, followed by all students, which provide good opportunities for work related learning. All students, for example, are entered for GCSE in physical education. Photography and drama are offered as subjects within the options available to students in Key Stage 4. Curriculum provision for SEN students is very good.
32. The school does not meet statutory requirements in either Key Stage 3 or Key Stage 4. There is no music being taught in the school. There is no daily collective worship and religious education is not taught across Key Stage 4.
33. The school is phasing out the teaching of a second language, and currently there are large mixed ability groups studying French in Years 10 and 11. The ICT curriculum is delivered by a number of staff in Key Stage 3 and through other subjects, such as the vocational courses, in Key Stage 4. The recently created humanities faculty delivers the Key Stage 3 Geography, History and RE curriculum in termly modules on a rotation basis. There are 31 students in Key Stage 4 who are disapplied from the National Curriculum in modern foreign languages. For some students aspects of design and technology are taught as part of the alternative curriculum.
34. The number of students in each year group varies. There are four forms on entry to the school in the present Years 7, 9 and 10, and three forms of entry in the present Years 8 and 11. This creates difficulties on the timetable. There are large mixed ability groups in some subjects such as in Year 10. In Year 7 there are two bands for mathematics and English and therefore any transfer between the two bands requires negotiation between the two departments. At the time of the last inspection the taught week was below recommended guidelines. The taught week is now twenty-five hours. This represents an improvement since the last inspection and is within the guidelines.
35. There is a clear statement of equal opportunities, which is embedded in the working of the school. Prejudice relating to gender is the most common issue. Race, ethnic origin, religion and related matters have not raised concerns. A non-sexist attitude prevails, though in subject choice for options there is still division on traditional gender lines.
36. Boys' under-achievement has led to some thoughtful approaches to counter this tendency, including selection of texts. Analysis of examination results shows boys' underachievement continues to be an issue to address and the school has appropriate plans for this. The school makes good use of inclusion methods when dealing with boys and a zero permanent exclusion rate suggests these are successful.

37. Arrangements for the teaching of literacy across the curriculum are good. In most subjects students can understand the technical terms being used, aided by the display of key words at the front of the room. Good practice was seen in history and geography, where teachers use writing frames, provide opportunities for discussion, get students to read aloud, and encourage them to use standard English. In many lessons the standard of listening was good, and students were able to understand and remember instructions clearly. Arrangements for teaching numeracy and ICT across the curriculum are not yet as effective. The mathematics department has produced a numeracy booklet for other staff in the school. Although the booklet provides a framework for a whole school approach to numeracy currently there is no coherent whole school strategy to develop numeracy across the curriculum. Similarly, whilst there is good practice in individual subject areas in the use of ICT, such as in English and French, the school's ICT strategy is not yet fully effective.
38. The alternative curriculum strategy is a strength of the school and ensures that students experiencing difficulty are identified early and are placed into programmes more suited to their needs and aspirations. There is full discussion with teachers and parents before the individual student is accepted into the initiative and students can still follow GCSE courses. The arrangements fully support the school's fundamental education philosophy of inclusion for all, are supported fully by Connexions staff and ensure that each individual receives strong and sensitive support during the entirety of their school career. Students follow GNVQ courses and also take part in the ASDAN youth award. Moreover, the scheme is flexible and also provides students with stepping-stones back into the mainstream classroom.
39. The provision for careers education and guidance is good and the school has applied for the prestigious Career Mark award. Careers advice is delivered from Year 9 during the personal and social development (PASE) programme. Students are introduced to the careers library and they use a variety of computer programmes to research career paths open to them. Students are invited to an options evening, designed to ease the transition into Year 10, and they benefit from discussions with Connexions staff from the local careers service. Careers advisers from the Connexions service visit the school every week in order to interview students about career possibilities. There is a two-week work experience programme in Year 10 and all teaching staff, including classroom assistants, visit youngsters at their placements.
40. The school's links with the community are very good; the school is open seven days per week and almost every day of the year for a wide variety of community groups. The school is the headquarters of the Workers' Education Association (WEA) and also the YMCA, which meets twice per week and which organises foreign holidays for students. The community church meets weekly in the school and a local football club plays all its games on the school playing fields. Several local and national charities benefit from the generosity of the students and the Peterborough Hospital children's ward receives regular donations from the school.
41. The school has very effective links with partner institutions and has developed joint activities with local colleges and also local secondary schools. Primary-secondary liaison is a particular strength and, in addition to hosting the primary schools' cross-country and athletics events, the school organises a variety of days for Year 5 and Year 6 pupils. In October each year, all Year 6 pupils visit the school and Queen Eleanor students are pleased to make them welcome into a new, larger environment. There is also a Year 6 induction day, when pupils take part in lessons delivered by heads of department. There are regular meetings, twice per term, with local primary headteachers and members of staff, including classroom assistants, visit the feeder schools to take part in lessons, literacy and numeracy hours for example. There are close links with local FE colleges and the links with local businesses and industry are impressive. Links with another secondary school in the town are being developed to allow more able students to continue their studies in a school sixth form.
42. Overall, the school makes satisfactory provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. Provision for moral development is good. Provision for social development is good, provision for cultural development is satisfactory, and provision for spiritual development is unsatisfactory.
43. There are several references to these aspects of students' personal development in the school's documentation, especially with regard to behaviour, equal opportunities and bullying. The personal and social education (PSE) programme is an important part of the school's delivery of SMSC opportunities. It is co-ordinated, and delivered by form tutors in Years 7 and 8, and by a team of specialist staffing in Years 9 to 11. The religious education syllabus

provides good opportunities in these areas. There is no co-ordination of SMSC but there are plans for the production of an audit of this aspect across the curriculum focused on departments and the PSE programme. This should provide a valuable starting point for a planned and co-ordinated approach to SMSC development across the school in terms of a shared policy for the planning, delivery and monitoring of this aspect of the curriculum. There are also plans for the development of a programme of assembly themes for the year and this should make a significant contribution to these aspects of student development.

44. Provision for students' spiritual development is unsatisfactory overall. Assemblies take place twice each week, once for the whole school and once for each year group. Assemblies rarely constitute worship although one assembly did include prayer and some opportunity for reflection was evident. The statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship is not met. There is little evidence of planning in departments for spiritual development. The PSE programme does not make a significant contribution in this area. In religious education students are encouraged to consider and respond to questions about the meaning and purpose of life. There were some examples where students demonstrated an understanding and tolerance of the beliefs and practices of other when studying the dietary laws in Islam. However, most subjects do not make any contribution in this important aspect of the curriculum.
45. Provision for moral development is good. Opportunities are targeted largely through the PSE programme. Topics such as attitudes to bullying, sex education, drugs awareness, alcohol abuse, vandalism and ethical issues such as human rights provide a sound curriculum for discussion and the development of attitudes and values. The school has clear expectations of students knowing right from wrong and students respond well when they are corrected. The headteacher and staff are good role models for students. Assemblies make a contribution to this area. Students also give regularly and voluntarily to charities. Several subjects contribute well in providing opportunities for moral development. In religious education, students are able to respond to aspects of morality using their knowledge of religious and ethical issues. In geography students were able to make judgements on the rights and wrongs of exploitation and conservation in the rainforests. In history topics such as ageism assist pupils to develop an awareness of the ethical issues behind the topic studied. In English, moral issues arise and are discussed in literature.
46. Provision for social development is good. The school provides opportunities for students to take responsibility and develop social understanding. The PSE programme provides many opportunities in this area, in terms of specific curriculum provision such as rights and responsibilities, healthy environment, sex and love, citizenship, lifestyle and leisure and decision making skills all provide a valuable contribution to developing attitudes and fostering independent thinking. Students participated well in year and school assemblies. This gave them confidence in public speaking. The paired reading scheme is also a success. There is a prefect system and school council and these provide good opportunities for students to exercise social responsibility and develop communication skills. The contribution of sporting activities enables students to work as a team and value the contributions of others. There are also opportunities for students to have mock interviews thus assisting them to develop confidence with job applications. Some subjects contribute towards social development. For example, in geography, students are encouraged to exercise leadership responsibilities using group work. In English, students were encouraged to share ideas and co-operate with each other.
47. Provision for students' cultural development is satisfactory. There are several opportunities for students to be involved in activities that extend their cultural awareness. The school's curriculum in PSE provides few planned opportunities for students to develop an awareness of the rich variety of different cultures and traditions that exist in this country. There are aspects of religious education that provide useful opportunities for students, especially in terms of the study of different religions and the cultures that support them. Some subjects make a contribution to the cultural development of students. For example, the use of multi-cultural texts and the works of Shakespeare in English make a significant contribution. In art, there are opportunities to study European and other artists, but these are limited. However, visits to the national gallery and the Stamford Arts Centre, together with student visits from Leicester University all make a good contribution to students' cultural development. The production and display of plaques on the façade of the school provide a powerful image in this aspect. In history, work on Japan, Italy and Kenya provide curriculum opportunities for students to gain knowledge and understanding of different cultures. Trips to the Good Food Show and the Clothes Show, together with theatre trips to London and cultural trips to Euro-Disney all make

significant contributions to the cultural development of students. However, there is no planned approach to the development of an awareness that students live in a multi-cultural and multi-faith society. This is an area for development.

48. Since the last inspection, the provision for the moral and social development of students has continued to improve. However, spiritual development continues to be an area of concern, and cultural development has made some progress, the focus being Western European culture. In addition, the statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship for all students is still not met. Also an appropriate statutory curriculum is still not in place with no music at Key Stage 3 and no religious education at Key Stage 4.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

49. Overall, procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety are good. The school has retained the good standards of care reported in the last inspection. The hard-working site manager regularly carries out risk assessments of the premises and carries out all minor repairs. Good procedures are in place to ensure all equipment is regularly tested. Legal requirements are met with fire regulations and all electrical testing. Good procedures are in place to attend to pupils' medical conditions and all first aid incidents are dealt with appropriately. Pupils are well supervised at all times by a very committed and caring staff. The school liaises regularly with outside agencies to ensure appropriate support is available to pupils. All staff have received guidance on child protection awareness.
50. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good and meet legal requirements. The school works closely with parents to bring about improvements in pupils' attendance. Though the behaviour of a small minority of students can be both challenging and disruptive, staff manage behaviour very well. Known bullying is sensitively dealt with. The number of fixed period exclusions has been reduced and the present headteacher has never permanently excluded a student, despite the fact that there are a few students on roll who have been excluded from other schools. The social inclusion unit is very effective. It has contributed significantly to the reduction in exclusions and to improving the attendance of disaffected students and of those experiencing attendance difficulties. Much time and effort is spent trying to adapt the curriculum and make it more appropriate for certain students in Key Stage 4. Attendance is very well monitored. This has led to an improvement in attendance since the last inspection. Procedures for monitoring punctuality and dealing with lateness, however, are not as effective.
51. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. The policy, which emphasises the promotion of self discipline, is reinforced by a system of rewards and sanctions, which is understood by pupils and used very effectively by all staff. Prizes are given to pupils who have made a significant contribution to the life of the school and academic awards are presented at the end of year assembly. Sanctions include incident slips that have to be signed by parents, detentions and pupils put on report.
52. Procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good. The school's anti-bullying policy is clear and comprehensive. Scrutiny of records show that procedures are followed and recorded incidents of bullying are dealt with effectively. Form tutors are available if students are worried. This provides another route for students to voice any fears they may have. The school records all incidents of bullying and the information is placed in the student's file.
53. Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are satisfactory. Teachers share information at staff briefings. Established teachers know their pupils well and new teachers were observed fostering good relationships. The learning support assistants are briefed regularly to ensure effective support and monitoring of pupils' personal development. The pastoral support system is very effective in monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. The personal development of pupils with special needs is also effectively monitored and the progress they make is included on their individual education plans. The school makes very good use of a range of outside agencies to support pupils.
54. Considerable attention is paid to health issues. The school was one of the first to gain the new Healthy Schools Award. The school nurse has played a very positive role in this and students

value being able to “drop in” to her weekly clinic. First aid provision is very good. There are three qualified members of staff and a designated medical room. A detailed health and safety policy is in place. Health and safety precautions conveyed to students by the design and technology department are very good.

55. The procedures for assessing students' attainment and progress are satisfactory but the use of assessment information to guide curriculum planning is unsatisfactory. Procedures for monitoring pupils' and supporting pupils' academic progress are satisfactory.
56. Assessment is an area that is highlighted for development in the school development plan. A curriculum manager whose role includes oversight of assessment has recently been appointed and he has set an appropriate set of actions and targets to develop and strengthen assessment in the school.
57. There is a school guide to assessment, recording and reporting information and this includes a marking policy. In most subjects students work is marked diligently however the marking mainly provides feedback to the students about what they have achieved. The school's marking policy is not fully implemented in some subjects. There is no consistency across departments about the use of marking and assessment to provide students with information about the progress that they are making in relation to national expectations. Assessment of students with SEN is good.
58. In English, the marking provides a particularly sound basis for the way assessment is used. There are departmental guidelines covering marking, recording and reporting. In mathematics, students are tested regularly and the tests are marked against National Curriculum levels which are included on the test paper. At the present time the head of mathematics department oversees all formal assessments. In English, the head of department monitors and checks assessments and the department has a portfolio of sample work which provides a reference for grade consistency. Assessments in GNVQ programmes are secure and accurate.
59. Marking is less secure in other subjects and the work is not marked with reference to National Curriculum levels. In modern foreign languages, in Key Stage 3, assessments are inaccurate and over generous. In humanities, there is no levelling of work in Key Stage 3 and in art the assessment grades in this key stage are over generous. Currently it is not clear how assessment procedures in departments are monitored. Most teachers keep records of students' achievements and some departments, such as English, have central records. Other departments, such as mathematics, are developing centralised records.
60. The school has a range of data on students. This includes data from the local education authority and information from commercially available age-related tests. Currently this information exists in the school in various formats and is not stored centrally. Nevertheless the school is aware and is responding to some issues. The underachievement of boys, for example, is widely recognised within the school and there are strategies in place to raise boys' achievement. However there is currently no systematic analysis of data. All heads of department have recently had to present an analysis of GCSE results to a full staff meeting and the school is in the process of installing a management of information system. Nevertheless the use of assessment data to monitor students' progress, to review the effectiveness of the curriculum, and to guide curriculum planning is not yet securely in place.
61. The school is developing opportunities for setting agreed student targets. Students in Year 7 and their parents attended a review day earlier this year. Tutors collated information from subject teachers and agreed targets with the students during the review day. Review days for all years are to be phased in during the next few years. Students in Year 10 in mathematics have their projected grades written into the front of their exercise books. Senior staff mentor students in Year 11.
62. However there is little evidence that students, particularly in Key Stage 3, are consistently given targets that relate directly to the National Curriculum levels of attainment. There is not much evidence of targeting to indicate how students can raise their achievement in relation to the National Curriculum levels of attainment, other than when GCSE examinations are approaching.
63. Reports are comprehensive and meet statutory requirements. Students are given a grade for attainment and a grade for effort. However, the reports themselves do not include an explanation of the criteria on which these grades are awarded. The reports include a student's comment. Each subject page has a course description, a comment reflecting on achievement and a subject target. The targets are general, few relate specifically to the curriculum or provide subject-related objectives which will guide the students towards achieving the next level. All students in Year 11 receive a National Record of Achievement.

64. Since the last inspection the school has made good progress in the care of its students and this has contributed to rising standards. In order to further raise standards some of the shortcomings in its assessment systems must be addressed.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

65. Overall, the effectiveness of the schools' links with parents and the parents' views of the school are good. The impact of parents' involvement in the work of the school is satisfactory. The majority of parents are happy with what the school provides and achieves. The quality of information supplied to parents on students' progress and attainment is good. The governors' annual report to parents and the school prospectus are well presented, informative and carry all the required information. There are regular newsletters, which provide parents with up-to-date information on what is happening in the school. Students' annual progress reports to parents are good.
66. Less than eight per cent of the parents responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire and only five attended the parents' meeting. Of this relatively small sample a large majority felt that their children liked school and were expected to work hard and achieve their best. They felt that the teaching was good and the students made good progress. They praised the improvements made by the new headteacher and were pleased with his leadership and management. They were well informed about their children's progress and all said the teachers were very approachable when questions or problems arose.
67. The school tries hard to strengthen its links with parents and it is having considerable success in several areas. For example the new initiative of a review day for Year 7 parents, in addition to the traditional consultation evening, resulted in 96 per cent attendance. Parents of students with special educational needs are very thoroughly informed and involved. Efforts are made to meet all parents on a regular basis. Good quality information about the school and about individual students is given to parents. End-of-year reports are detailed and show good knowledge of the students but some comments and targets are very general and must be more specific. A very informative booklet about all aspects of the school is up-dated annually and regular newsletters are sent to parents and to members of the local community.
68. The contribution of parents to students' learning at school and at home is good. The home-school agreement was introduced this year and has been signed by almost all parents. Parents report that the school fully involves them if there are concerns about a student's behaviour or attendance and they work in partnership with the school to bring about improvements. Parents attend all events that involve their children. Parents are involved with their children's learning through homework, although they and students report that homework is not always set in accordance with the school's homework timetable and policy.
69. A small committed group runs the Queen Eleanor Association. Response to events varies. Quizzes and dances are popular and are supported by members of the local community. Funds raised at these events help to provide "extras" for the students. For example, the association helped to provide the school minibus.
70. Since the last inspection the school's links with parents have improved. Attendance at parents' meetings has improved and parents are more supportive of the leadership and management of the school. More send their children to the school now and the numbers in Year 7 have risen above expectations.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

71. Overall, the leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and key staff are very good. Taking up his position in September 1999, after the school had an acting headteacher for a year, the head has been able to steer the school by taking positive action to bring about many improvements. The headteacher leads effectively and is able to communicate a clear sense of purpose and educational direction to all members of staff who work effectively together. Senior staff now have clear roles and responsibilities and the creation of the new role of curriculum manager is effective. By making good teaching and learning a main priority the headteacher has focused staff on the need for constant improvement. There is good delegation. Subject leadership is excellent in mathematics and

modern foreign languages, very good in English, design and technology, humanities including religious education and physical education. Leadership is satisfactory in science and unsatisfactory in art, and information and communication technology. The school has made good improvements in addressing many of the issues from the last inspection report. For example, by improving the quality of teaching and a more strategic school development plan.

72. The school has a clear set of aims and values, which have helped to raise standards above those achieved since the last inspection. These are reflected in its work; especially in the rise of expectations amongst the staff and students. Standards at Key Stage 3 have risen and GCSE results are the best ever. The commitment given to the school by the governing body, headteacher, all members of staff and parents has improved since the last inspection.
73. The management of the special needs department is good. Teamwork between the co-ordinator and learning support assistants is effective in promoting a caring and positive environment where students feel secure. Staffing expertise and training is very good and all share a high commitment to integrating special needs students into mainstream groups with considerable success. Learning support assistants have insufficient formal meeting time with the co-ordinator and day-to-day progress of students is inconsistently monitored. Accommodation and resources are good and additional funding is well used to support special needs development in the school. Overall good improvements have been made since the last inspection, both in the provision and the standards achieved by the students with special educational needs.
74. The governors fulfil many of their statutory responsibilities well, but not those in relation to music at Key Stage 3, religious education at Key Stage 4 and in the daily act of collective worship. The leadership of the governing body is much improved now and governors are more effective. They now have an increasing grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are beginning to become more accountable for its performance. The governors' annual report to parents contains all the information required by law. Termly governors' meetings take place, in addition to these various working parties and committees also meet. The governors receive information from the headteacher at these meetings on a range of issues, including the school development plan. Governors make regular visits to the school and are beginning to contribute to the formulation of the school development plan. Through their work on the finance, curriculum and personnel committees governors are able to be more effective in the management of the school but their role in monitoring, evaluating and challenging the school's performance is underdeveloped. They satisfactorily apply the principles of best value.
75. The school development plan is now an effective working document put together by the headteacher and the staff and focuses on curriculum issues for development and improvement. It is fully costed and identifies the schools weaknesses and lays out positive ways to address these. At the time of the last inspection the school development plan was ineffective and unsatisfactory. This issue has now been addressed and the school is now able to carry out a thorough analysis of its performance in order to further raise standards. There is a useful monitoring programme through which this information is gathered. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching is mainly carried out by the senior management team and some subject leaders and as such it is only satisfactory. To make this more effective all senior and middle managers must be involved. The school's evaluation of its own performance is good and effective action is taken in setting challenging targets and in meeting them.
76. Overall the match of teachers to the needs of the curriculum is unsatisfactory. The school has failed to recruit a music teacher to replace the one who left last term. There are also two temporary teachers employed, one of whom is not qualified. There is a mix of experienced and new colleagues, with a good range of curriculum expertise with the exception of music. There is a high level of commitment from both full and part-time members of staff. The learning support assistants are very effective in their role and give good support to pupils with special educational needs. Teachers know their pupils well. The school secretary and other administrative staff enhance the smooth running of the school. The midday and kitchen staff support the school ethos along with the caretaking and cleaning staff who maintain the building to a very good standard.
77. Arrangements for the professional development of staff are good. Provision from the local education authority is used well, but opportunities are also sought from other providers. The induction of new members of staff and newly qualified teachers is good. Overall the school's strategy for appraisal and performance management is good.

78. The accommodation is generally well looked after and much improved since the last inspection when the school was on two sites. Overall, the accommodation is very good, enhances learning and allows the curriculum to be taught effectively. The school has an adequate range of resources to support the curriculum. Classrooms are well managed and organised, with resources for students easily accessible. Library provision, which was unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection, is now an excellent resource centre serving the whole school. The school's use of new technology, including information technology, to access the curriculum has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory.
79. The school's administration systems are good, overall. The budget is managed efficiently by the governors, who are well supported by the headteacher and his staff. Financial planning is very good, especially in supporting educational priorities. The finance committee works effectively and reports regularly to the full governing body meetings. Specific grants made to the school for special educational needs have been used effectively. The raising achievement grant has been appropriately allocated and it is impacting positively on teaching and learning and on standards.
80. Overall, taking into account the full range of criteria, the standards achieved by the students, the quality of provision, the leadership and its ethos, the school is judged to be giving good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

81. The governors, headteacher and staff should build on the improvements the school has made since the last inspection and develop the school's strengths in order to raise standards further by:
- (1) Improving the provision of students' spiritual development in lessons and throughout the school;
(Paragraphs: 42, 44)
 - (2) Improve the use of assessment information to guide curricular planning;
(Paragraphs: 55, 57, 59, 60, 64, 101)
 - (3) Further raise attainment especially in mathematics and science at Key Stage 4;
(Paragraphs: 3, 5, 6, 92, 95, 105, 106, 107)
 - (4) Improve the leadership and management of art, music and information and communication technology;
(Paragraphs: 123, 146, 155, 160)
 - (5) Meet statutory requirements in music at Key Stage 3 and religious education at Key Stage 4;
(Paragraphs: 28, 32, 48, 74, 138, 170, 175)

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

- (6) Ensure that sure that statutory requirements in a daily act of collective worship are fully met.
(Paragraphs: 44, 48, 74)
- (7) Improve the arrangements and teaching of numeracy and information and communication technology across the curriculum.
(Paragraphs: 9, 37, 103, 145, 146)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	99
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	57

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	19	37	37	5	0	0
Percentage	1	20	37.5	37.5	5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y7 – Y11
Number of pupils on the school's roll	405
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	45

Special educational needs	Y7 – Y11
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	22
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	130

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.2
National comparative data	7.7

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.5
National comparative data	1.1

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3(Year 9)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	33	53	86

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	5	16	19
	Girls	43	31	32
	Total	48	47	51
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	54 (34)	55 (38)	60 (46)
	National	63 (63)	65 (62)	59 (55)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	18 (0)	21 (18)	15 (19)
	National	28 (28)	42 (38)	30 (23)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	11	12	9
	Girls	39	25	30
	Total	50	37	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	55 (56)	43 (37)	48 (48)
	National	64 (64)	66 (64)	62 (60)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	6 (23)	15 (11)	8 (17)
	National	31 (31)	39 (37)	29 (28)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 (Year 11)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 4 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	39	52	91

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	4	34	38
	Girls	24	47	48
	Total	28	81	86
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	31 (16)	89 (83)	95 (96)
	National	47.4 (46.6)	90.6 (90.9)	95.6 (95.8)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	29.4 (23.2)
	National	38.4 (38)

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	45	82
	National		n/a

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	400
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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	1	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	9	0
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)	20.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.6

Education support staff: Y7 – Y11

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	175

Deployment of teachers: Y7– Y11

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	72
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Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y11

Key Stage 3	19.6
Key Stage 4	22

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-01
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	£
Total income	1332077
Total expenditure	1223479
Expenditure per pupil	2701
Balance brought forward from previous year	108598
Balance carried forward to next year	85256

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	14
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	16

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	3
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	405
Number of questionnaires returned	30

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	33	60	7	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	30	53	7	0	10
Behaviour in the school is good.	13	47	10	10	20
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	13	63	7	13	3
The teaching is good.	20	70	0	0	10
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	13	57	13	0	17
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	53	43	0	0	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	40	57	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	17	63	10	0	10
The school is well led and managed.	33	47	3	0	17
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	17	73	3	0	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	17	47	17	3	17

Other issues raised by parents

Three parents were concerned about the large turnover of teaching staff in the last two years. Two parents were concerned about minor incidents of bad behaviour in class. Several wrote that homework was good from some teachers and departments but not from others.

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

ENGLISH

Overall, the quality of provision for English is **good**.

Strengths

- Teaching.
- Assessment.
- Use of library and information and communication technology.
- The support for special educational needs (summer school, paired reading, homework club, and use of learning support assistants).
- Leadership and management, leading to strong mutual support.

Areas for development

- Independence for students.
- Speaking.

82. Attainment on entry is well below nationally expected levels. Results of tests at the end of Year 9 have fluctuated, but in 2001 were close to the national average for girls, but well below for boys. Results in GCSE have been well below the average of all schools for most of the last five years, but, improved markedly in 2001, when results were not far below those for similar schools. The performance of boys was again worse than that of girls. Overall English results within the school are similar to those for mathematics and science in Key Stage 3. Results are better than mathematics and science in GCSE.
83. Standards observed in lessons are in line with these results. By the end of Year 9 the ablest students can write accurately, knowing how to structure a paragraph, and set out dialogue on the page. However, their vocabulary is limited, and few students use words imaginatively. All students re-draft their work, a practice that does much to raise standards. The second draft is often word-processed, resulting in further improvement. All write at considerable length. Weaker students - the majority - make many errors in spelling and punctuation, but standards of handwriting, neatness and presentation are high.
84. By the end of Year 11 students can write knowledgeably about scenes in Shakespeare indicating that they have understood the different ways in which characters and their motivation can be interpreted. Similarly, they can compare the way schools are described in *Jane Eyre* and *Kestrel for a Knave*, and how the principal characters respond. Students can write persuasive speeches about such topics as crime or the preservation of wild life. There is rather less attention given to poetry. Moreover, literature essays tend to lack analysis, concentrating instead on a re-telling of the plot.
85. Reading is given prominence and standards are close to national expectation. The library is an excellent resource, providing a welcoming and secure place in which students can work productively. Those who find reading difficult can find books labelled to suit their needs, encouraging them to move from easier books to more demanding ones. Time is devoted to silent reading, and those with poor skills are given much extra help, both by the support assistants and by such devices as paired reading, a large number of Year 10 students working with Year 7.
86. Speaking needs more attention. Some boys in Year 8 reached high standards in preparing a radio broadcast, which they then recorded. The class listened attentively. In Year 10 some students tried out different interpretations of a scene from *Othello*. But there is little discussion in small groups, or reporting back with a presentation to the whole class. Many students are shy of speaking or reading aloud, so need all the more practice to gain this skill.
87. Teaching in both key stages is good, and some very good or excellent. Teachers are enthusiastic about English, and communicate this to students. They prepare well, and give their lessons variety. They succeed in winning the confidence and trust of students who are not naturally inclined to study. Those with SEN are particularly well supported, given sensitive help by highly committed assistants in a room that is a joy to enter. All teachers mark students' work diligently, with many comments on how to improve, and use the marks to

indicate where further improvement needs to be made. The classrooms and the library contain a bank of computers that are used occasionally for research and frequently for word-processing. Teachers use assessment data well to set challenging targets, which are beginning to be negotiated in meetings with students and their parents. It is possible that even greater progress would occur if teachers gave students more opportunity to learn from each other and encouraged them to become more independent as learners. In general, though, high standards of teaching help the students to make good progress and achieve well.

88. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. The department has benefited from good leadership and a core of experienced and long-serving staff, who give students much care and encouragement, make their classrooms attractive places to work in, and organise a good range of visits out of school. They have made a success of integrating the National Literacy Strategy into their schemes of work. They have expanded the use of information and communication technology. The library, severely criticised in the last report, is now an excellent resource, very well used by the whole school. It is hard to see how it could be better. Above all, test and exam results have improved in the last four years, and there is capacity to improve further.

Literacy across the curriculum

89. Standards of literacy, though modest, are sufficient for students to gain access to the curriculum. Though below those expected nationally, standards improve as students go through the school. In most subjects students can understand the technical terms being used, aided by the display of key words at the front of the room. Good practice was seen in history and geography, where teachers use writing frames, provide opportunities for discussion, get students to read aloud, and encourage them to use standard English. In many lessons the standard of listening was good, and students were able to understand and remember instructions clearly. The library is very well used by younger students, both boys and girls, but much less so in Years 10 and 11. Very effective support is given to students who enter the school with low standards of reading and writing, and these make good progress.

Drama

Overall, the quality of provision for drama is **poor**.

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently good GCSE results over many years. <p>Areas for development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment of a qualified teacher to replace the experienced teacher who retired over two years ago. Provision of a well-equipped drama studio. Encouragement of activities that would include music and other subjects to enhance the cultural life of the school.
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90. Standards in drama have been very high for many years, with GCSE results that are the best in the school, and above the average for all schools. However, the teacher responsible for this consistent success retired over two years ago, and the school has been unable to find a qualified teacher to replace him. He has returned, part-time, to teach some GCSE classes, and to help in other classes where he can. He has not had the time to organise any extra-curricular activities, or liaise with other departments to develop richness in the performing arts. There are no visits or drama clubs. Furthermore most lessons take place in the hall, which has the one advantage of space. In all other respects it is unsuitable both for lessons and for school productions, having no stage or adequate lights. Such storage as there is has to be shared with physical education. There is a room known as the performing arts centre, but this is little more than a shell, with no blackout or lights, and shelving on the walls that would obstruct movement. Overall drama provision has deteriorated since the last inspection.
91. In lessons observed the standard of teaching and learning was good, the teacher providing a range of challenging tasks, and giving opportunities for students to work together, learn from each other, and develop their own ideas. In Year 9, students read and then improvised a scene from *Hobson's Choice*, collaborating well, and discussing how the character of Maggie infuriates her father. In Year 11 students investigated through drama the generation gap, and

the misunderstandings that result, observing and commenting perceptively on each other's brief realisations.

MATHEMATICS

Overall, the quality of provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- Excellent leadership and management.
- Effective use of the National Numeracy Strategy.
- Effective mental and oral starters to lessons.
- New modular GCSE syllabus better meets the needs of the students.

Areas for improvement

- Assessment does not effectively inform curriculum planning.
- Target setting, particularly at Key Stage 3, is underdeveloped.
- Strategies for raising the achievement of boys in mathematics are not yet in place.
- Numeracy across the curriculum is underdeveloped.

92. Standards in the classroom are overall below national expectations. Students are taught in sets. In top sets the majority of students' work is in line with national expectations. However, standards in Year 11 of the more able students are below expectations. These students can solve quadratic equations by trial and error and can factorise and manipulate algebraic formula. They can enlarge shapes by a fractional scale factor. In class, the achievements of some students in Year 11 are affected by the behaviour and attitudes of a small number of students mainly boys. The standards achieved by the more able pupils in Year 9 are in line with national expectations. They can describe the rule for the next term in a linear sequence and can calculate using ratios in appropriate situations.
93. Overall the standards of achievement of students on entry to Year 7 are well below national expectations. Students of all levels of attainment develop numerical skills and these are constantly being consolidated particularly during the first part of each mathematics lesson. In Year 7, students need constant support and consolidation to develop their numerical skills to a level which can provide a secure base for their mathematical studies. Many students in Year 8 are insecure in their knowledge of adding and subtracting fractions. In Year 7, students had been investigating the number of paving slabs needed to pave the area round ponds of different shapes. In Year 10, students had undertaken an Internet research activity to discover information about car emissions and fuel consumption which they were using to prepare statistical reports and draw conclusions. The progress of students with special educational needs is good.
94. Results at Key Stage 3 in 2001 as measured by those achieving level 5 and above were below national expectations, nevertheless they showed a good increase on the results of the previous year. The difference in results between boys and girls is not as significant as in Key Stage 4 and reflects the national statistics for this age group. Standards of attainment on entry are well below national expectations.
95. GCSE results were well below the national average in 2001 and were below those achieved in 2000. These results were affected by the change of policy in the department to bring it in line with the school's inclusion policy which meant that, unlike previous years, all students were entered for the GCSE examination. The present Year 11 are experiencing a more stable staffing situation in mathematics and with targeted mentoring results should hold at present levels or improve. Overall boys' results were below those of girls in 2001.
96. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers show appropriate subject knowledge and there is a well-planned teaching programme that includes planning for developing basic skills. Where teaching is good students make appropriate progress in class; they work on-task and show positive attitudes. In a Year 7 lesson the teacher used part of the lesson to review those questions in a test which the majority of students had found difficult. The students listened carefully to the teacher and they answered the teacher's questions with interest. In a Year 10 lesson the students responded well to an investigation task, they worked collaboratively and showed appropriate independent learning skills.
97. Where lessons are weaker, albeit still satisfactory, the teachers are not challenging the students sufficiently. The use of questioning to develop learning and engage the students in

dialogue about their learning is underdeveloped. In one lesson the expectations of the teacher of both the behaviour and application to work of the students was unsatisfactory. In general the attitudes of students is variable; for example, in one class, approximately half the students had not completed their homework and in another class a significant number of students did not have the appropriate equipment, such as rulers, with them.

98. Overall the teaching is not sufficiently differentiated to ensure that all students in each class make progress appropriate to their abilities. In a Year 8 class a few students were confidently able to subtract fractions whilst other students in the same class had little understanding of equivalence and the need to work out the common denominator.
99. Teachers are aware of those students having particular needs and who have an individual education plan; these students are supported appropriately and make good progress in mathematics. In a lesson where teaching was good, the teacher engaged a group of students, all of whom have special education needs, by introducing probability through an investigation into the number of variations of "mix and match" outfits it would be possible to wear. The learning support assistants who work with students during their mathematics lessons provide good support. The department is introducing a commercial computer-based programme and this will provide a basis for enhancing the specific planning for developing more numeracy-related targets for students with special educational needs. Where appropriate the department uses the material, published as part of the National Numeracy Framework, which is specifically for lower achieving students.
100. The head of department provides excellent leadership and what has been achieved, particularly given the staffing circumstances, in the twelve months she has been in post, is impressive. The scheme of work is very detailed and provides inexperienced teachers with a clear framework for both individual lessons and for modules of work. The scheme includes detailed reference to how ICT should be used to enhance learning in mathematics. Resources are adequate except for the lack of graphic calculators.
101. Termly tests and investigation activities have been introduced and these are assessed against National Curriculum levels. A portfolio of mathematics work on each student in the school has also been created. At the present time the information is not retained in a way that it can be properly analysed. Targets for the more able students in Year 10 have been agreed. However individual targets for students are not systematically used. Marking of students' work is thorough, however some teachers must give more feedback and diagnostic commentary to help students understand how they can overcome their difficulties.
102. Since the last inspection there has been a complete change of staff in the department and progress has been good. In lessons the students continue to achieve in line with their abilities and there is a new scheme of work that is effective. The head of department monitors, supports and guides the inexperienced staff in the department closely.

Numeracy across the curriculum

103. The mathematics department has produced a numeracy booklet for other staff in the school. It provides a guide for teachers about numeracy skills and the strategies used for teaching numeracy within the department. In science, students' graphical work is accurate and appropriate to their age and ability. Science teachers include a review and consolidation of the necessary numerical skills as appropriate to the science programme. In humanities, students are able to use tally charts and population tables. Although the booklet provides a framework for a whole school approach to numeracy, currently there is no coherent whole school strategy to develop numeracy across the curriculum.

SCIENCE

Overall, the quality of provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- Improving standards of achievement, especially at Key Stage 3.
- The teaching, provision, support and achievement of pupils with special educational needs.
- Teachers' subject knowledge.

Areas for improvement

- Set more challenging work for the more able.
- Improve the use of ICT in science lessons.
- Better monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, especially at Key Stage 4 to further raise standards.

104. Attainment on entry is well below the national average. Results in the tests at the end of Key Stage 3 in 2001 were above the national average for all schools and for similar schools. In the past few years, results have been similar for boys and girls at this stage. Results in science are not as good as those in English, but are better than those in mathematics.
105. GCSE results in 2001 were below the national average. The proportion of students gaining the higher A* - C grades was significantly below the national average. When compared to similar schools, these results are low. Girls' performance was much better than that of the boys overall. The 2001 results show an improvement from those of 2000. Students do less well in double science than they do in most of their other subjects.
106. In the work seen at Key Stage 3 there has been a good improvement in standards since the last inspection, most of which has been in the past year. Standards are consequently now close to national expectations. Students' practical and investigative skills are not as strong as their science knowledge. This is because there are too few opportunities for them to make their own predictions, or to define problems based on scientific knowledge and understanding. They seldom plan their own investigations and evaluate their own results. Students are generally good at carrying out experiments planned by the teacher.
107. The standard of students' work, however, is held back in a small, but significant, number of classes, because the tasks do not sufficiently incorporate application to everyday life or to unfamiliar situations. This is particularly so in 'Life Processes and Living Things'. However, in other areas of science there have been improvements since the past inspection. For example, in a Year 9 lesson on 'Forces in Action', students saw the quantitative relationship between force, pressure and area through their own investigation to measure the pressure they exerted when standing on the floor. They were able to manipulate formulae to solve everyday problems, such as the best position to store a heavy rectangular crate, or the pressure exerted by each tyre of a car. Higher attaining students used their knowledge to explain why 4x4 off road vehicles have wide tyres, why woodpeckers have strong pointed beaks and drawing pins are pointed.
108. Many students lack confidence when using basic scientific terminology. Although teachers help students to develop their literacy skills appropriately, this is not done rigorously enough. Students' numeracy skills are below average. Graphical skills, though satisfactory, are improving. Their ICT skills are also improving, but are not well developed because there are insufficient opportunities to use computers. Nevertheless, by the end of Year 9, students' achievements are good in relation to their prior attainment.
109. Standards of work seen at Key Stage 4 are well below those expected nationally and for similar schools, although slightly better than those suggested by the results in recent examinations. By the end of Key Stage 4 students achieve standards that are unsatisfactory compared to their prior attainment. There is insufficient depth to their knowledge and understanding of the topics being studied. Many students in Year 10 know how crude oil is formed, but they cannot explain with any confidence, how fractional distillation is carried out, or what the fractions were used for. Overall students' attainment is better in materials and their properties, and physical processes. However, attainment is weak experimental and investigative science, and in life processes and living things.
110. In many lessons, students do not express themselves clearly when answering spoken or written questions. Weak numeracy and graphical skills often hinder their progress in analysing and interpreting data. Practical skills are weak overall, but more so in boys than girls. In spite of the setting arrangements, there is a broad range of ability in most groups and in most lessons expectations of achievement tends to be set at the middle and lower levels. In many lessons there are students whose achievements are restricted because of lack of pace. Students with special educational needs make good progress because of the good support they receive.

111. Students' attitudes and response to science and their behaviour is satisfactory overall. However, in a few classes, some students behave poorly and in a disruptive manner. Where teachers provide challenging tasks and have positive relationships, students respond well, act on their own initiative and show commitment. For example, a Year 7 class used their knowledge of the colour changes of universal indicator to work out the strength of a range of acid and alkali solutions. Good relationships led to effective collaboration in their practical groups.
112. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, ranging from very good to unsatisfactory. Nine out of ten lessons seen were satisfactory or better, with one in three good or better. In the most effective lessons, teachers' good knowledge and expertise is combined with high expectations, enthusiasm and effective planning. These give students confidence so that they respond positively and try hard. In the better lessons, teachers challenge the students with carefully constructed questions to make them reflect and think carefully. Through such questioning teachers check how well students understand the work. This happened in a lesson where students were investigating the relationship between work, force and distance. Students made good progress in understanding that doing work is using a force to move an object. They learned that when using pulleys or other machines to lift heavy objects the amount of work done was exactly the same as if a human did the same job, and they understood the reasons why. Teachers' expectations for students' achievements in a significant number of classes are focused on the middle and lower levels of attainment. Some of the high attaining students are not always challenged. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, time was wasted in trying to control the class, the pace was slow, and insufficient learning of any depth took place.
113. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The head of department has a good understanding of the department's strengths and weaknesses, and is working hard in very difficult circumstances. The department has experienced severe staffing instability in recent years in biology, so there has been no one to share responsibilities with and assist in development work. Both the head of department and his deputy have significant management responsibilities outside the department giving insufficient time for high quality medium and long-term management within science. There has been, and still is, insufficient rigorous emphasis given to the development, and implementation, of departmental planning, monitoring and evaluation of the subjects' performance, which would result in significant improvements in standards, particularly at Key Stage 4.
114. The day-to-day management of the department is satisfactory. Whilst the technician works hard to support science teaching, the number of hours of support for a school of this size is low. There are insufficient information and communication technology resources, and a lack of textbook provision in Years 9, 10 and 11 which adversely affects standards for many students. The quality and amount of work on display is variable, but where it is good, it enhances the students learning.
115. Overall, there have been good improvements since the last inspection. Year 9 test results have improved. The quality of teaching is better than it was. Assessment and recording procedures have improved, but there needs to be more rigorous monitoring and evaluation of these to raise attainment standards, particularly at Key Stage 4. New schemes of work have been introduced for both key stages. Attention needs to be focused on bringing the Key Stage 3 scheme into line with the new National Curriculum. Also to ensure that both schemes make specific reference to assessment opportunities, provision for higher attainers and sufficient opportunities for the use of ICT.

ART AND DESIGN

Overall, the quality of provision in art and design is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- Good GCSE results, amongst the best in the school.
- Improving standards since the last inspection.
- Good photography course.
- Relationships between students and teachers are good.

Areas for improvement

- Leadership and management of the department.

- Increase personal response through observational drawing.
- Increase the use of sketchbooks.
- Use of ICT in art.
- Provide a broad and balanced curriculum.

116. Standards of attainment in art are well below national expectations. GCSE results last summer show an improvement since the last inspection. Half of those entered for the examination were awarded an A* to C pass, below the average for similar schools and well below the national average for all schools. The girls were significantly more successful than the boys. The number of students awarded an A* to G pass was close to the national average. Those who opted to follow the photography course were more successful than those who followed the traditional art and design course. The art department provides a satisfactory education for its students who leave school with GCSE results that are amongst the best in the school.
117. The work seen in school during inspection week suggests that while standards continue to improve, they remain well below expectations. At Key Stage 3 students are engaged producing work in response to the surrealist paintings of the Belgian artist René Magritte. Other students have made a series of portraits starting with a general view of the face, then zooming-in on a particular facial feature. Often these drawings are transferred onto larger sheets of sugar paper in pastel or charcoal. This work demonstrates that their skills of observing, analysing and recording information through drawing are undeveloped. Students also fail to make sufficient use of sketchbooks to experiment with materials, investigate methods or respond to the world around them.
118. Some students in Years 10 and 11 take advantage of the department's photographic facilities to record images for use as starting points for paintings and drawings. Further information is then sought in the work of famous artists such as Monet and Picasso. Often students fail to develop a personal view of the artists' work, preferring instead to copy images directly from paintings rather than using information gained to influence their own work. Small numbers of these older students are developing good skills by using a computer to capture and modify images. One student, using traditional pencil and paper, made an original composition of butterflies with pastoral scenes on their wings, flying across a heavily industrialised landscape with chimneys belching smoke and grime. Occasionally these landscape drawings are then converted into innovative collages.
119. Allowing for the varied and often limited experiences the students have had when they arrive in school, their achievement from entering the school, until they leave, is satisfactory. Students who have special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Their teachers know their students and recognise their needs; and this relationship, together with the number and quality of the classroom support assistants, makes a positive contribution to their learning. Those students who have special talents do well in art and above average numbers gained top grades at GCSE.
120. Teaching in art is satisfactory. Teaching in Key Stage 3 is often good. Good lessons start with a clear demonstration and the teacher making his expectations clear. Appropriate challenges are set and management and control are good. In a good, well-structured lesson in Year 7, students were given clear guidance on looking into a mirror and making a drawing of their mouths with pastel. They were keen to learn and the practical session began with some urgency. The teacher's methods of circulating and assessing were positive aids to learning and the class made good progress. The engaging, demanding nature of the activity, and the creative atmosphere, gave students good insight into analysing visual information and the ability to recognise how well they were doing and how they might improve.
121. Teaching in Key Stage 4 is satisfactory and occasionally good. In a drawing lesson in Year 10 students were required to make the objects in a still life appear to rest firmly on a flat surface. Once again the teacher gave a clear demonstration of methods used to show space, tone and texture. Few of the students recognised the need to work from observation and some actively resisted. Unlike the Year 7 class, these older students were incapable of evaluating their work with any accuracy and few were able to judge how they might improve. By way of contrast, in a Year 11 photography class students were seen enjoying a good lesson with gains in both technical and aesthetic skills. The teacher, who was adept at keeping a range of activities in balance, advocated an experimental approach, and his enthusiasm matched that of his students. Lessons lack a summary when students might evaluate what they have learned. Homework does not challenge the more able students. In the only unsatisfactory lesson seen, there was too much time wasting and the pace of the lesson was uneven. Productivity was

slow and many students did little other than sit and gossip. None of the students were working from research in their sketchbooks.

122. The curriculum is unsatisfactory. There is insufficient use of sketchbooks for students to research, investigate, experiment and make a personal response to the world around them. The department offers painting and drawing, sculpture in clay and a range of other materials, photography and basic printmaking. The critical studies element of the curriculum is narrow and limits the occasions when students can gain a better understanding of both European and world art and artists. There is insufficient time allowed for students to study art in Key Stage 3. Occasional visits from artists-in-residence have had a positive impact. The school hall is enhanced by paintings made by students visiting from de Montford University, and the front of the school is strikingly enhanced by a frieze of ceramic tiles made by students working with Marie Prett, a ceramic artist. The data gathered from assessment is not used for target-setting or to identify weaknesses in the curriculum.
123. The leadership of the department is unsatisfactory. The head of department provides clear leadership, which has led to improvements since the last inspection, but strategic planning requires details of time, resources and cost necessary to continue improvements. Schemes of work for Key Stage 3 do not include sufficient detail for the delivery of ICT. The accommodation is good and enhances learning. Resources for learning are good but, as at the last inspection, the facilities for printmaking are not fully used. The books in the department and the school library support the students in their studies.
124. There have been satisfactory improvements made since the last inspection. Standards have improved and a greater proportion of students are gaining grades A* to C in the GCSE examination. The standards in photography have been raised even higher. The use of ICT to generate and manipulate imagery has improved. Teacher expectations have also improved since the last inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Overall, the quality of provision in design and technology is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- Effective subject leadership and management.
- Commitment to students with special educational needs.
- Effective lesson planning.

Areas for improvement

- The performance of boys.
- Expectations of teachers in some aspects of the subject are low.
- The curriculum in Key Stage 4 is unsatisfactory.

125. Standards are well below the national average but broadly in line with the standards reached by the students when they entered the school. The overall standard at the end of Key Stage 3 is well below the national average. There is a significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. Only one in five boys reached the expected national standard this year compared to well over half of the girls. The standards attained in lessons during the inspection were satisfactory overall but sometimes progress was unsatisfactory. Lack of progress was partly due to the shortage of appropriate learning resources, low expectations and unsatisfactory teaching. Students with special educational needs are well integrated in lessons and their learning is supported by effective teaching assistants. The standards reached by these students are satisfactory in relation to their prior attainment.
126. The overall standard at the end of Key Stage 3 is below the national average with slightly more girls taking this optional subject than boys. Standards achieved by girls are a little below the national average but the standards achieved by boys are well below. This year the majority of the girls took GCSE courses in food technology and textile technology and the majority of boys the GCSE in resistant materials. Over half of the girls achieved A* to C grades in the GCSE examinations compared to one in five of the boys. This represents good achievement for the girls. The standard of achievement in the lessons observed during the inspection was always satisfactory.

127. Students at Key Stage 3 learn to design and make using a good range of wood, plastic, metal, food and textile materials. In addition they are taught graphics, basic electronics and mechanisms. The quality of teaching is variable and sometimes unsatisfactory. In one good lesson observed in Year 7, students were learning to work safely in the kitchen and to make scones. In a less successful lesson in Year 8 students were seen rendering and shading 3-D drawings. The lesson was unsatisfactory because of poor class control, weak teaching methods and low expectations.
128. Students at Key Stage 4 learn product design and food technology and to design and make using resistant materials and textile technology. The choice and restriction in the number of options this year has been made to reflect the expertise of the recently appointed teachers and because of a shortage of specialist teachers. In a good lesson in Year 10 students were learning to draw-up a specification of a product and were effectively considering the effects of colour, texture, size and finish on product requirements. The subject makes some contribution to the learning of English through written work in students' assignments. Students regularly use dimensions, quantities and undertake surveys, the results of which are frequently displayed using graphs and charts.
129. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but varies from very good to unsatisfactory. All teachers have a good knowledge of their subject, plan lessons well and adopt effective strategies. Good teachers use textbooks and well prepared handouts in lessons. They introduce topics well, engage students in question and answer sessions and have high expectations. In some lessons teaching strategies are adversely affected by the lack of appropriate learning resources. For example, students in the kitchen are regularly divided into two groups because of the restriction in the number of ovens and the work in graphics is always based on hand-drawn sketches because either the computer terminals are not set up or the appropriate graphic software is not available. Teachers find the lack of resources frustrating. In the one lesson where the teaching was unsatisfactory not enough emphasis was placed on the need for accuracy and neatness in students' work, and students' interest and attention was neither gained nor retained.
130. The leadership of the department is good and strong. The head of department and the two other teachers have a strong commitment to improve standards. All the teachers have contributed to the planning of the schemes of work for Key Stage 3 and regularly meet to discuss issues affecting standards and learning. The department has effective assessment, marking and reporting arrangements and a satisfactory departmental handbook. The learning resources in the department are generally inadequate and there are too few teachers to support a full range of options in Key Stage 4.
131. Improvements in the subject since the last inspection are just adequate. The relative performance of boys compared to girls has declined.

HUMANITIES

Overall, the provision for the history and geography elements of the new humanities scheme is **satisfactory**. However, because the school does not meet statutory requirements for the delivery of religious education in Key Stage 4, the provision for religious education is **unsatisfactory**.

Strengths

- Good leadership and management.
- High quality teaching that ensures that the learning needs of all students are addressed effectively.
- Good accommodation and learning environment enhances students learning.
- Marking is of high quality, is completed regularly and offers students good advice on how they may improve further.

Areas for improvement

- Statutory requirements for the delivery of religious education at Key Stage 4 are not being met.
- Assessment procedures do not yet involve the moderation of assignments; there are no formal arrangements by which assessment information can be used to inform future planning.

- There are no specialist religious education staff and no in-service training has been delivered to those currently teaching the subject.
- Students are not required to follow a humanities course in Key Stage 4.

132. Since the start of the current academic year, the school no longer teaches history, geography and religious education as separate subjects, and there have been no religious education external examination entries for some years. GCSE results in both history and geography have been well below the national average over the past two years.
133. However, in work seen during the inspection, standards are higher than examination results indicate and students in both key stages, including those with learning difficulties, achieve well. In all three areas at Key Stage 3, students have good background knowledge of the topics under consideration. In religious education lessons, they show a good understanding of Islamic customs and worship. In geography lessons they use a range of local and national maps and are able to construct and interpret them. In the lessons with a more historical content, they are becoming aware of the nature of evidence and their skills of chronology are good. In humanities as a whole, students are beginning to use the technical vocabulary accurately and in context.
134. At Key Stage 4 there is a similar picture and students are, for example, gaining knowledge of geographical processes and patterns. This understanding is demonstrated by their work on the location of industry and also on the creation of a reservoir. Moreover, they can comprehend quite complex terminology, national self-determination for example, and make convincing comments about how nations viewed each other in the lead-in to the First World War. In addition, they can compare and contrast a wide range of propaganda leaflets from a variety of countries, making well-thought-out judgements on their usefulness.
135. Overall, students' attitudes to learning are good and they are happy to involve themselves in class activities. They collaborate very well with each other and work at a productive pace. They are sometimes desperate to answer questions and are not afraid to present work to their classmates. Relationships are good and students speak highly of, and have the utmost confidence in, their teachers. Students are always willing to ask for help when it is needed. Students' very good behaviour makes a significant contribution to achievement and progress.
136. The quality of teaching is a major strength of the department, and is characterised by high expectation, challenge and the use of a wide range of methods to meet the learning needs of all students. In lessons seen, it was never less than satisfactory and good overall. In almost 70 per cent of lessons it was good or very good. Lessons are well planned and are able to engage students immediately in the work. A Year 10 lesson on trench warfare, for example, was delivered in such a sensitive fashion that students were visibly moved when the teacher explained, and used artefacts to reinforce, the process whereby soldiers removed lice from their faces.
137. Teachers maintain levels of interest by the use of a variety of activities and also by encouraging students to take an active part in lessons. A good example of this student involvement was a Year 7 lesson when, after only 25 minutes, every student in the group had either answered a question or had played an active part in a role play in front of classmates. A key feature of the teaching is the expectation that students will think for themselves and that teachers build in opportunities for reflection. This leads to increased confidence amongst the pupils, and they are not afraid to challenge the teachers if, for example, a member of staff uses an anachronism unwittingly in a lower-school lesson! Without doubt, teachers treat their pupils with dignity and with respect; the very effective learning assistants, who play a vital role in ensuring that students have every opportunity to make progress, augment this.
138. The marking of assignments is of high quality and students in both key stages benefit from the advice of their teachers on how they may make further gains in skills and knowledge. Long-term assessment to inform future planning is, however, under developed and the department is now looking at ways to involve students themselves in gauging their own progress and is also considering how best to include student-friendly level descriptors as a way of encouraging higher levels of achievement. Both geography and history modules within the humanities course are linked to National Curriculum programmes of study and the unit "A Taste of Italy", when students sample a range of Italian foods, is a particularly impressive element. The Key Stage 3 religious education scheme meets the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus but, because it is taught in blocks of time, there are significant gaps before the next module is

studied. Furthermore, the statutory requirement for the teaching of religious education at Key Stage 4 is not being met.

139. The head of department has recently taken over the new humanities grouping. She leads the area with skills, high levels of industry, determination and yet great sensitivity. The department is assembling good documentation and this ensures that the use of non-specialist teachers has no adverse affect on students' progress. Accommodation is very good and each classroom contains computers, all of which are used regularly. Resources are adequate but are augmented by the impressive library stock and also by the industry of teachers who work hard to produce materials, which are motivating, thought-provoking and challenging.
140. The department has made sound progress since the last inspection. Teaching is now better and the needs of higher-attaining students are being met. All staff in the area share a vision for the teaching of humanities and care deeply for the welfare, both academic and social of the students in their charge. There is a definite will and capacity to improve and the department is, therefore, well placed for future development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Overall, the quality of provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- Teacher's increasing subject knowledge.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Adequacy of learning resources.

Areas for improvement

- Leadership and management.
- Co-ordination of ICT across the curriculum.
- Strategic use of ICT resources.

141. Standards at Key Stage 3 are well below the national average. The school has now introduced lessons for all students at Key Stage 3, which are beginning to raise standards. Because of a shortage of computer terminals in the main teaching room students have to work mainly in pairs slowing pace and progress. The standard reached by girls is higher than that reached by the boys. Standards attained in lessons at Key Stage 3, during the inspection were satisfactory overall but considerable variation occurred. Students with special educational needs are well integrated in lessons and their learning is supported by effective learning assistants. The standards reached by these students are satisfactory in relation to their prior attainment. There is no special provision for gifted and talented students.
142. Standards at the end of Key Stage 4 are generally below the national average but for those who take part in one of the GNVQ in business studies at intermediate level they are much better and broadly in line with the national average. Other students make satisfactory progress in the part- one GNVQ in health and social care and in the regionally devised employability graduation award. The later award has yet to be examined but contains a satisfactory key skills course in information and communication. The standard of the work examined from the part one GNVQ in health and social care is below the national average and there are many missed opportunities to apply computing. Girls generally perform better than boys. Students with special educational needs achieve satisfactory standards in relation to their prior attainment.
143. Students at Key Stage 3 satisfactorily learn to use word processors, databases, spreadsheets, graphic programmes, publishing programmes, the Internet and e-mail. The quality of learning is generally satisfactory but some variation occurred due mainly to poor teaching and low expectations. In one good lesson in Year 7 students were observed using a word processor to write a business letter to confirm a booking to stay in a hotel. In a satisfactory lesson, students were observed preparing a "flyer" to advertise a hotel in an overseas location. In Year 9, students were seen less successfully exploring different search engines on the Internet. Satisfactory opportunities are provided for students to apply computing in English, food technology, mathematics, modern foreign languages and science. Students were observed using the Internet well to learn about the weather in France as part of a good lesson in Year 8 French. The subject contributes to the learning in English by requiring students to produce written work addressed to general, specialist and technical audiences and making students

numerate through the use of databases, spreadsheets and computer generated graphs and charts. The computing facilities are well used by students outside normal school hours.

144. Students at Key Stage 4 learn satisfactorily or better in courses in other subjects. In the GNVQ in business studies course the quality of learning is good. Students' portfolios from this course show that they apply databases to store and retrieve information about local businesses in Stamford well and use word processing well to write about businesses such as the George Inn in Stamford. In the GNVQ in health and social care students apply computing satisfactorily to combine text and images in published work and use the Internet sites, such as childline to satisfactorily research aspects of care. In the sports and leisure module in the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN), part of the employability graduation award, students illustrate their word-processed work well using clip art. Further satisfactory opportunities are provided for students to learn computing in GCSE courses in art, English, food technology, humanities, mathematics, modern foreign languages, physical education and science. Examples of good applications include the manipulation of images in art, the study of movement in physical education and the use of the Internet to research authors in English. Students publish "QE Life" a news leaflet, twice a term. About one in four students become proficient and independent users of information and communication technology.
145. The overall standard of teaching is sound but varies from very good to unsatisfactory. All teachers plan lessons well and give appropriate help and encouragement to students. Where the teaching is good, students are motivated through clear introductions to lessons, effective demonstrations and the use of question and answer sessions. They also maintain a good pace and balance between time spent in whole class discussions and individual computer practice. In a good lesson observed in Year 7 the teacher gave a full explanation of how to prepare a formal letter using word processing, motivated and involved students by asking them questions and gave ample support to individuals during the practical work. Where the lessons are just satisfactory, teachers launch too quickly into practical work without preparing students adequately and have weak class control, low expectations and slow pace. In an unsatisfactory lessons in Year 9 the teacher began the use of the Internet from the onset and had low expectations by doing work students had done many times before.
146. The leadership and co-ordination of the subject is unsatisfactory. The ICT co-ordinator is also the head of the department of science, and whilst he has been instrumental in developing and planning the good specialist lessons at Key Stage 3 he has not had time to develop and co-ordinate other aspects of the subject. The computer group has not met for the last fifteen months but all teachers have a shared commitment to improve delivery and standards. Many teachers lack training. The school has very good facilities overall and the ratio of students to computer terminals is well below the national average. However, many of the terminals and personal computers are distributed in small numbers across the school and there are insufficient in the main classrooms to teach the many large classes properly. The school has recently appointed a technician who is making a good contribution in overhauling and managing the network.
147. Since the last inspection the school has made good progress by introducing a formal taught course at Key Stage 3 which now meets National Curriculum requirements. GNVQ and other courses have also been introduced at Key Stage 4 that make extensive use of computing. An effective technician has been appointed and there is a commitment to continuous investment in the network and increased access to the Internet.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Overall, the quality of provision in modern languages is **good**.

Strengths

- Excellent leadership and management.
- Good teaching.
- The attitudes and behaviour of the pupils towards modern foreign languages.
- The department is hard working and committed to all its learners.

Areas for improvement

- Assessment strategies and procedures.
- Raise boys' achievement.

148. Standards in modern foreign languages are below the national average, reflecting the intake of the school, but most students are currently achieving in line with their abilities. Standards overall at Key Stage 3 are in line with expectations. At Key Stage 4, current standards, whilst rising, are not yet at the expected level. Recent results at GCSE have however shown an upward trend despite frequent changes of staff, which in a small team of three teachers have a significant adverse impact. The department is led with vigour and enthusiasm, with the head of department providing an excellent role model.
149. Teacher assessment of student performance at Key Stage 3 places students in line with national averages for all schools but this is not confirmed by inspection evidence from lesson observation and scrutiny of work. The department plans to create a portfolio of student work at various National Curriculum levels in order to gain a more accurate picture of student attainment. At Key Stage 3 students are used to hearing instructions in the foreign language and accept the routine of trying to express their everyday needs using set phrases they know. This promotes good listening and speaking skills. The alphabet is well known and underpins these standards. A few above average students can interpret longer instructions given by the teacher when explaining, for example, a task or a game. Average and below average students can copy phrases correctly, use a simple model pattern to produce similar examples and cope with simple gap-filling tasks and the matching of text to pictures. Most students have difficulty applying basic rules of the language to new or more open-ended situations. Individual students with special educational needs are very well supported by learning support assistants and make good progress in those lessons.
150. In 2001 French GCSE results were by far the best achieved in the past five years with 35 per cent A*-C passes and an average points score that is expected to be in line with the, as yet unconfirmed, national averages for secondary modern schools. A*-C passes in German declined from a four year high of 30.8 per cent in 2000 to 20.8 per cent in 2001. These results are below those found in secondary modern schools nationally. The percentage of A*-G passes is however high with all but one of the 76 entries in French and German in 2001 gaining a grade. Girls' performance overall in modern languages is significantly better than that of boys and by a margin greater than that found nationally.
151. At Key Stage 4 students can convey basic information through their writing but knowledge of how the language works is weak. For example, adjectival endings in German are often used randomly and without understanding. There are a few instances of students able to write a short paragraph about, for example, themselves or their family. Similarly, in speaking many students are able to respond adequately and in some instances quite fluently and with confidence to questions about themselves and family but cannot extend the conversation because their knowledge of the past tense is insecure. Most students are able to tackle the type of reading task appropriate to GCSE Foundation level.
152. The quality of teaching overall is good. There were no unsatisfactory lessons observed and almost two out of three were good or very good. Lessons are well planned with an appropriate range of activities, and usually cater for different modes of learning. For example, students used the Internet to research information on the weather in France and consulted wall displays to learn more about the location of French towns. Only in a few lessons was the approach too teacher directed. Teachers have created an impressive range of teaching resources; in a German lesson, for example students enjoyed re-assembling the fragments of a dialogue between a doctor and patient into the correct sequence. Teachers manage students very well, using a calm, measured approach. They use the foreign language widely and often have high expectation of students in terms of listening skills. On occasion they do not exploit fully the linguistic potential of a task before passing to the next activity. In general however time is effectively used with lesson objectives shared at the beginning of a lesson and reviewed at the end.
153. Attitudes and behaviour in language lessons are good overall. Many classes are well motivated with students eager to volunteer oral responses. They take listening and vocabulary tests seriously and attempt to do their best. They respond well to the encouragement they receive and, particularly at Key Stage 3, like gaining credits for good work. They often show impressive concentration during the hour-long lessons. In a few classes, especially amongst older boys, there is some disaffection and a lack of application, which holds back their progress. Overall, however relationships amongst students and between students and teachers are very good.

154. The curriculum is varied and interesting with good use of information and communication technology. It is enriched by short visits abroad to both France and Germany. Since the last inspection the department has made good improvement in standards. Good progress has also been made in sharing effective practice and using a wide range of resources to further enhance learning. There is frequent formal and informal contact to discuss methods. Learning objectives are now a feature of lesson plans and delivery, whilst a new scheme of work, built around recently introduced materials has tests at the end of each unit. A good start has been made on target setting, although there is still some way to go to develop a consistent assessment scheme. In particular attention needs to be given to regular formative marking of pupils' work.

MUSIC

Overall, the quality of provision in music is **very poor**.

Strengths

- Facilities for music are good.
- Purpose built music accommodation with good practice cells and adequate storage.

Areas for improvement

- Music is not taught and therefore the school is not meeting the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum at Key Stage 3.
- Standards are well below national expectations.
- There is no instrumental tuition given by visiting teachers.
- There are no extra-curricular activities in music.

155. There has been no music teaching this term following the resignation of the previous teacher who had been in post for six years. The school has tried to fill the vacancy for a teacher of music (with some drama teaching) but without success. The school's attempts to provide an interim solution in conjunction with the local authority have not yet been successful. The school is now planning to re-advertise the post pursuing different strategies and hopes to make an appointment for January or Easter next year. Overall as there is no music taught, the school is not meeting the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum at Key Stage 3.
156. Students enter the school with very variable musical experience related to the quality of their musical education in their previous schools, interests and level of home support. Some enter with above average experience but most students enter with below average attainment in music. By the end of Year 9, as seen in the work of last year's students and from discussions with them, standards are well below expectations. Students did not sing and instrumental experience has been mainly limited to playing keyboards. Students' composing skills are underdeveloped and they lack understanding of how devices, structures and ideas can be used to create music. Students have listened to a very limited repertoire; their general musical knowledge of instruments, composers, forms, structures, styles and artists is very limited.
157. Overall, achievement in music has been very poor, which is related to poor teaching and an academic approach that has resulted in poor behaviour. Achievement was further affected by the low curriculum time allocated to music.
158. Facilities for music are good but have been badly treated. There is a purpose built suite comprising a main room, three practice cells and adequate storage. There is a large stock of keyboards and many orchestral instruments but most of these need repair. The department lacks adequate tuned percussion instruments for creative work, computers and up-to-date music for singing and playing.
159. There is no programme of instrumental tuition given by visiting teachers because of the lack of uptake of these lessons. There are no extra-curricular music groups taken by any other teachers from the school, other schools or parents.
160. The school recognises the importance of music and recently organised an African drumming workshop for students in Years 7, 8 and 11. The headteacher is keen to restore and develop it as soon as the appointment of a dynamic teacher in charge of the subject can be made. All indications are that the students will respond very positively to an energetic, practical approach where skills are developed through music-making. Much time, effort and enthusiasm will be required to reinstate music to its rightful position. This will be a challenging opportunity but the full support and commitment of the school community and local authority is now very evident. Overall, the provision for music is worse now than at the time of the previous inspection.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Overall, the quality of provision in physical education is **good**.

Strengths

- Attainment at GCSE in A*-C grades.
- Boys' attainment.

Areas for improvement

- Girls' attainment at GCSE Grade D.
- The quality of planning and teaching resources for the lower attaining students studying games theory.
- Students' knowledge and understanding of safe footwear and the benefits of good hygiene through showering.

161. GCSE examination results in 2000 were below national expectations for similar and all maintained schools, with 33 percent achieving A*-C, 10 per cent below the national average. The number of entries were low, however, all students attained A*-E grades which is above national expectations for GCSE A*-G achievement. Unconfirmed results for 2001 show an improvement with over half of the students attaining A*-C grades which match national expectations and in line with those of similar schools. Boys' A*-C results show above average attainment while girls' attainment is well below average compared to national averages. The number of students entered for GCSE has increased in the last three years with a three-fold increase in the current Year 11 as a result of the school's decision to make physical education a core subject. Attainment trends have significantly improved since the last inspection.
162. Attainment of students at the end of Year 9 broadly meets expectations. Teacher assessments in 2001 show that just over half of the year group are achieving or working beyond expectations across all areas of activity in physical education, which is below the national trend. At the time of the inspection, games and gymnastic activities were observed with girls and boys taught separately. Standards are variable on entry with girls displaying low-level skills in controlling and passing a ball. In a Year 7 girls' soccer lesson, skills are at an elementary stage, particularly in finding and using space during a small game, however, they show good levels of physical effort and achievement when they work independently to increase footwork control.
163. Lower attaining and special needs pupils show good application in reinforcing skills and are achieving increasingly improved techniques of control in basketball. Boys in Year 9 show well co-ordinated levels of anticipation in a game situation with the majority displaying competent skills in using a basic instep-pass and applying the rules in a five-a-side football lesson. The majority of students across the key stage understand the effects of exercise on the body by the end of the key stage. Students' knowledge and understanding of their own safety and personal well-being are limited, in that they do not tie their footwear. This is also having a detrimental effect on the quality of movement seen in some lessons.
164. Attainment in lessons and in work seen in Key Stage 4 meets expectations. All students are taking GCSE or a Certificate of Achievement course in games at Year 11 and consequently, the standard of work seen in the scrutiny of students' folders shows a wider spread of attainment than in the previous year when students opted to take physical education. Year 11 lessons were not on timetable during the inspection. Physical education games theory, badminton and netball were observed at Year 10 and a range of written work for Year 11. Students show increasing awareness of selecting and applying skills. In a Year 10 netball lesson, girls choose positions and take turns at umpiring to develop leadership skills, however, there is inconsistent evaluation of skills through well-focused group discussion because a significant minority of girls lack concentration, perseverance and the willingness to listen. Achievement for different attainment levels is variable in Year 10. Where girls are taught separately, the group exceeds thirty with a correspondingly lower number of boys engaged on another activity, resulting in the average and lower attaining girls having less opportunity to benefit from individual and small group teacher support. This is having a detrimental effect on girls' attainment.
165. Students, generally are able to sustain good rates of exercise, for example, in sprinting between markers and a few can name the key muscles in the body as part of their training plan. Achievement of students, including those with special needs, is good in the practical

aspects of the course, because teachers demonstrate and explain tasks clearly and share very good relationships with their students to help them succeed. Students' involvement in extra-curricular activities has a favourable impact on progression across the key stages. Lower attaining and special needs students make good progress and many 'D' and 'E' grades at GCSE reflect a higher than expected result for these students.

166. The quality of teaching and learning overall is predominantly good. Teaching at Key Stage 3 is better than at Key Stage 4 where four in five lessons were good or very good. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Strengths lie in teachers' expertise and relationships with students. Tasks set are interesting and work is challenging and competitive. Students are managed effectively to encourage them to make progress. However, in a minority of lessons, where learning is slower than expected, girls lack confidence and self-esteem because they are insufficiently challenged and encouraged. In the best lessons, pupils are given time to practice new techniques and teachers' good use of questioning helps them improve, reinforce and extend learning. Where lessons are less inspiring, the quality of planning for lower attaining groups is low and teaching insufficiently focuses on students' safety. Day-to-day assessment is inconsistent because evaluation sessions at the conclusion of lessons insufficiently engage students, particularly non-participants and constructive feedback to individuals and groups on written tasks is limited.
167. The department is managed effectively and the teamwork commitment of staff to provide opportunities for students to take part in competitive sport is commendable. Clear guidelines on assessment and schemes of work are developing with the introduction of student targets, new assessment levels and certificates of achievement for lower attaining students.
168. Good progress has been made in addressing the issues raised at the last inspection in raising attainment overall. Teaching has improved, and the provision for extra-curricular activities remains a strength. Accommodation has been refurbished to a good standard though there is a lack of a dedicated classroom base to strengthen subject identity and provide potential for storing class materials and pupils' records. Shower facilities are excellent, however, students do not use them, except after cross-country activities, which impacts unfavourably on their personal hygiene. Swimming remains an area not on offer to students. The lack of information and communication technology, sufficient physical education textbooks and up-to-date library resources for games theory impacts on the quality of students' independent research and written work at Key Stage 4.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Overall, the quality of provision in religious education is **unsatisfactory**. However provision in Key Stage 3 is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- Teaching is always at least satisfactory and mostly good.
- Pupil management is good.
- Contributions towards the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils are satisfactory.

Areas for improvement

- The statutory requirement at Key Stage 4 is not met.
- The use of assessment data to inform the planning of new work.
- Target setting is underdeveloped.
- The assessment of attitudes, values and the spiritual dimension.

169. Overall attainment in Key Stage 3 is significantly lower than national expectations. In lessons and work seen during the inspection, attainment in Year 8 is consistent with expected levels. There are some good examples of pupils developing their knowledge and understanding of religious language, principles and concepts such as the importance of pilgrimage customs and symbols. Pupils generally make sense of what they study and can relate it to their experiences of life. They were able to demonstrate a good knowledge of Islamic customs and worship and their importance. They were able to provide useful links with everyday experiences. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Their use of keywords, technical language and good discussion work were useful aids to improve literacy and oral competency.

One lesson looked at the concept of pilgrimage and this was well related to the notion of commitment. Overall, learning is satisfactory.

170. At Key Stage 4, the statutory requirement for religious education in accordance with the Lincolnshire Agreed Syllabus is not met.
171. There are no significant differences in the standards achieved by boys or girls. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are gifted or talented make significant progress.
172. Overall, students' attitudes to learning are good. They behave very well, are generally well motivated and apply themselves to the work. They collaborate very well with each other and work at a productive pace. The relationships between teachers and students are good, and teachers support individuals both academically and personally.
173. Teaching is always at least satisfactory and in some cases good in spite of the fact that there are no specialist staff. At times the teaching tends to be rather didactic, but some opportunities for reflection were observed. Planning is good. Lesson aims were shared with pupils in most cases. Teachers make good use of questioning to consolidate current learning and to review previous work. This assists pupils to maintain their interest and develop understanding of religious principles and concepts. Resources are well used. Teachers manage pupil behaviour very well, contributing to a good climate for learning. Extension work and homework are used to good effect in allowing pupils to reflect on the information they have gained in class. Teachers had clear expectations of pupils and these contributed to pupil achievement. Assessment of pupils' work is generally satisfactory and helpful comments are made in exercise books. However, assessment does not inform the teaching and learning cycle and the planning of new work. The department does not set detailed targets against which it can assess pupils' progress. Consequently, pupils are unclear about the standards they are reaching and what they need to do to improve.
174. The curriculum at Key Stage 3 is broad, balanced and meets the needs of the pupils and the requirements of the Lincolnshire locally Agreed Syllabus. Religious education is taught as part of the humanities department and consists of blocks of time with significant gaps before the next topic is studied. This raises important questions about how the department ensures continuity throughout the year and across the key stages. The schemes of work are appropriate and are linked to the fundamental aims of the syllabus designed to assist pupils both to learn about and learn from religion. Religious education makes some contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, so providing opportunities for pupils to explore world issues of justice, relationships and personal beliefs.
175. In lessons, the teaching encourages pupils to explore their personal views about religious and moral issues, and work on the major world religions necessitates discussion about the cultures that support them, so preparing pupils for life in a multi-faith and multi-cultural society. In view of the fact that statutory requirements are not met at Key Stage 4, pupils do not receive their full entitlement to religious education. This was also the case at the last inspection and is a cause of very serious concern. Whilst there are plans for the introduction of a humanities programme for all pupils in Years 10 and 11, the curriculum content is wholly inadequate to meet the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus.
176. A humanities specialist manages the department. The head of the department approaches the task with commitment. There is good support from other departmental staff. Departmental planning is good. Support and in-service training for all departmental staff are part of departmental planning for the future. This will further enhance both teacher confidence and impact upon pupil attainment. The departmental development plan does address some priorities but does not take account of all of the current issues. Documentation is satisfactory. There are regular and effective departmental meetings. Accommodation is good. Curriculum resources are generally good.
177. Since the last inspection, attainment at Key Stage 3 has improved. Improvements have been made in planning and in the schemes of work. The assessment procedures have improved, although the use of assessment to inform curriculum planning and the provision of targets for pupils need to be tackled. There has been significant improvement in the contribution religious education now makes to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. Overall, the improvements since the last inspection have had a satisfactory impact on standards, pupil achievement and progress, although the lack of progress in addressing the statutory requirements at Key Stage 4 is a matter of very serious concern.

