

INSPECTION REPORT

BELLE VUE GIRLS' SCHOOL

Bradford

LEA area: Bradford

Unique reference number: 107368

Headteacher: Mr Alan Hall

Reporting inspector: Mr Roy Hedge
2932

Dates of inspection: 22 – 26 January 2001

Inspection number: 187886

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Comprehensive

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 11 to 20

Gender of pupils: Girls

School address: Thorn Lane
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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Dr Brenda Thomson

Date of previous inspection: 22 April 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2932	Roy Hedge	Registered inspector		What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievement; How well are students taught? How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to students? How well is the school led and managed?
9424	Jim Cassidy	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school care for its students? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
30702	Paul Bowyer	Team inspector	Mathematics	
11044	Jean Hedge	Team inspector	English; Equal opportunities;	
23498	Jennifer Martin	Team inspector	Science	
11969	John Hardy		Information technology (ICT); Design and technology (DT);	
31129	Jeffrey Pickering	Team inspector	Art	
7399	Paul Roberts	Team inspector	History	
20287	Desmond Harris	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages; Sixth form; English as an additional language (EAL);	
18846	Philip Priest	Team inspector	Music	
12137	Maureen Potter	Team inspector	Physical education	
10167	George Harris	Team inspector	Religious education (RE)	

29972	John Webster	Team inspector	Geography	
1210	Bill Walton	Team inspector	Special educational needs (SEN)	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Belle Vue Girls' School is a girls' comprehensive school with 993 pupils on roll, including 199 in the sixth form. More than nine out of ten girls are of ethnic minority background, mostly Pakistani. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language (EAL) is very high. There are 176 pupils on the register of pupils with special educational needs (SEN), of whom 19 have statements of SEN. Their needs mostly concern moderate learning difficulties, with a small number of pupils having emotional and behavioural or physical difficulties. Pupils have entered the school in Year 9 in the past but from this school year the school has admitted pupils from Year 7. These pupils represent a wide range of attainment on entry but overall standards at the beginning of Year 7 are very low in comparison with the national picture.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Belle Vue Girls' School is a good school whose strengths outweigh its weaknesses. Girls make good progress in a well-managed and caring environment. Teaching is good and pupils respond by trying hard and working well. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- There is very good provision and teaching in the English and English as an additional language departments
- There is excellent provision for pupils' social and cultural development
- Levels of care for pupils are very good
- The school is very well managed
- Teaching is good and pupils respond with good attitudes to their work
- Standards are well above average by the end of Year 11 in comparison with similar schools

What could be improved

- Standards in Information Communications Technology (ICT) through better planning, resourcing and curriculum design
- Standards in music through better teaching, management and curriculum planning
- The quantity of support for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language
- Planning and provision for raising literacy skills across the whole school
- The quality of facilities for physical education

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress since the last inspection in April 1996. GCSE results have improved faster than the national trend. The quality of teaching is higher. Issues raised by the last inspection have been dealt with well. The time allocated to Design Technology (DT) and ICT has been increased though not by enough. The use of test and examination results to identify strengths and weaknesses is much improved. There has been considerable expenditure on computer hardware, though much does not yet work effectively and there needs still to be better planning of the ICT curriculum. The school now admits pupils at Year 7 and in consequence there has been a major building programme.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 16 and 18 year olds based on average point scores in GCSE and A-level/AS-level examinations.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
GCSE examinations	D	C	D	A
A-levels/AS-levels	E	C	D	

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

The standards reached by pupils at the end of Year 9 as measured by national tests have been very low for the past four years, placing the school in the lowest five per cent nationally at this stage. In comparison with other schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, results have been below average. English results are slightly better than those for mathematics and science. Pupils have produced these results after only two terms in the school.

Pupils make good progress in Years 10 and 11. Even so, GCSE results are below average. In comparison with similar schools, though, results are well above average and represent a good achievement in a short space of time. Standards in English are better than in science or mathematics and pupils also do relatively well in French, drama, sociology and Religious Education. Recent GCSE results in science have been adversely affected by the extensive building programme, which took science laboratories out of commission for eight months. Standards in ICT are low because of shortcomings in the planning of the curriculum and because there is a shortage of modern, working computers. In music standards are barely satisfactory because there is some weaknesses in teaching and some poor organisation. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make rapid progress and do well. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress. Although many girls continue to have some difficulty with aspects of written English, the progress they make is very impressive. By the end of Year 11 standards of literacy and numeracy are still below average in spite of considerable improvement from a very low base in Year 9.

Results in GCE A level examinations and vocational courses are below average but represent good progress from GCSE.

The standard of work seen in the school during the inspection generally reflected the results of tests and examinations.

In 2000 the school exceeded its realistic target set for the proportion of pupils achieving at least five GCSE passes at grades A* to C.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are enthusiastic about the school and lessons and respond well to their teachers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. There is some immature behaviour in a few lessons and some unruly movement about the school, but in general pupils behave well.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Girls mostly get on very well together, are supportive and collaborate well with one another.

Attendance	Below average, mostly because of the practice of taking extended leave in order to visit the Indian sub-continent.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged 11-14 years	aged 14-16 years	aged over 16 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good and plays a major part in the effective learning and good progress that pupils make. English and EAL teaching are very good and result in impressive gains in literacy skills. In some other subjects opportunities to improve literacy skills are sometimes missed because of the lack of a whole-school approach. Mathematics teaching is good and numeracy is taught well in the department; science teaching is satisfactory in Years 7 to 11 and good in the sixth form. There is no subject in which teaching is unsatisfactory, though some improvement in music is necessary. Teaching was at least satisfactory in ninety-six per cent of the lessons seen during the inspection: it was good or better in over six lessons out of ten and very good or excellent in about a quarter. Pupils with EAL or SEN are well taught but there is not enough support for them. Gifted and talented pupils are pushed to make the best of their abilities in most lessons, though more could still be done in some subjects. Most teaching is sufficiently intellectually challenging to pupils at different levels of ability, though, occasionally, pupils at the extremes of attainment need work that is better suited to their levels of attainment.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Generally broad and balanced and meets the needs of pupils well. Vocational courses in the sixth form are a particular strength. There is no study of RE for post 16 pupils and the ICT curriculum is not well enough planned to ensure that pupils' needs are met.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The quality of provision is very good but there are too few special needs assistants to help all those who require support.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very successful and of high quality, though the need for skilled support far exceeds the capacity of the EAL department to respond.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good. Social and cultural education are particularly impressive. The RE department and the programme for personal and social education and careers make a strong and valuable contribution.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. There are high levels of care and concern for pupils, their progress, personal development and safety.

Almost all parents live some miles from the school, which makes the development of a close relationship with parents difficult for the school. The school does what it can in trying to foster a close relationship, holding some meetings away from school in the area of Bradford from which most pupils come, and making good use of local newspapers and broadcast media.

There is very good analysis of test and examination results in order to monitor pupils' progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. Recent reorganisation has been managed with determination and sensitivity. There is a deep concern to raise standards and improve provision. Relationships are very good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Well. Governors are well informed and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are very supportive and play their full part in financial planning and setting an overall direction for the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Senior staff are well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and test and examination results are skilfully analysed in order to inform planning and development.
The strategic use of resources	Excellent. Principles of best value are applied consistently.

The school is appropriately staffed, in the main with experienced and well qualified teachers, though there is too little provision for EAL and SEN pupils to satisfy needs. There are shortages of books and other resources in some areas but generally the school is well resourced. Accommodation is good and some of the new buildings are very attractive. Facilities for Physical Education however are seriously inadequate.

The school is generally very well managed. The headteacher has been very successful in establishing a common vision and direction for the school, and relationships between staff are good. Senior staff work together well. The system of faculties mostly works well, though there is a lack of clarity in the respective responsibilities of the humanities faculty head and heads of department. Systems to ensure pupils' care, safety and welfare are very well managed.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school • The school has high expectations of pupils • Teaching is good • Pupils make good progress • Behaviour is good 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports about pupils' progress • The range of activities outside lessons • The partnership between parents and the school

Parents are very supportive of the school and think highly of it. The inspection team agrees with parents' positive comments. Reports on pupils' progress are satisfactory though some lack detail about what pupils can do to improve. The school tries very hard to work in partnership with parents but progress is slow, largely because the school serves a community based some miles away.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Until this year, pupils entered the school at the beginning of Year 9. Results of national tests taken towards the end of Year 9 reflect standards pupils reached after only two terms in the school. In 2000, results in these tests were very low in mathematics and science and well below the national average in English. Overall results place the school in the bottom five per cent of schools nationally. Results were well below the average of other schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals and have improved over the last five years in line with improvement nationally. This year, the school admitted pupils to Years 7, 8 and 9. The results these Year 7 pupils achieved in national tests taken in their previous schools at the end of Year 6 were very low and inspectors judged standards of Year 8 and 9 pupils to be similarly low.
2. In other subjects standards are low at the end of Year 9, often reflecting very low standards on entry to the school. In geography, for example, pupils start with very poor general geographical knowledge and never really catch up. Standards in ICT remain well below average because of difficulties in accessing modern, working computers and a lack of clear planning to ensure that all subjects make their proper contribution to pupils' progress. Standards in ICT remain unsatisfactory through to Year 11. Achievement in other subjects is good, though standards by the end of Year 9 are still low. In music, standards are depressed by a lack of clear planning.
3. From this very low base, pupils make good progress during Years 10 and 11. In GCSE examinations taken in 2000, the proportion of pupils gaining at least 5 GCSE passes at the higher grades A* to C was well below the national average but above average for similar schools. Overall, GCSE results were below average, but well above the results obtained in similar schools. Results were well below the national average for girls. Nevertheless, these results indicate considerable pupil progress. Analysis of pupils' achievements undertaken by the school on the basis of standardised tests confirms that judgement. By the time they reach GCSE, pupils have made good progress and achieve well, considering the standards they had reached on entry to the school. GCSE results are improving at a faster rate than nationally.
4. Standards observed in Year 11 were still generally below average across the curriculum but represent good progress. In the 2000 GCSE examinations girls did best in French, English literature, drama, sociology and RE. Girls do much better in English than they do in science and mathematics because of consistently challenging teaching and good planning. Science and mathematics results have been significantly below those in English. Recent results in science have been affected by the decommissioning of laboratories for eight months during the building programme. Standards in DT and PE remain below average. In music progress is less good because of some unsatisfactory teaching and poor planning.
5. Although girls make further progress in the sixth form, their average GCE A level points score was below average in 2000. Results in vocational courses were also below average. These post 16 results nevertheless represent a further good achievement.
6. Results need to be set in the context of standards on entry to the school. Many girls have English as an additional language. Standards of literacy are low when girls first

come to the school and this hinders their progress. Many girls continue to experience some difficulty with idiomatic use of English throughout their time in the school, though they do make impressive progress. Most pupils are very careful listeners. They enjoy expressing opinions, are keen to participate in discussion and to extend and use new vocabulary. They are able to express themselves effectively. Higher-attaining girls are very fluent and capable of sophisticated language usage. They have quite a broad range of vocabulary, including technical terms, although they make errors with the idiomatic use of English. Many pupils, however, do not read fluently and have a poor grasp of grammar, spelling and punctuation that hinders writing. Steady progress is made with basic skills but at the end of Year 9 they are still well below average. By the end of Year 11, pupils have made very good progress across the range of English language skills and GCSE results are impressive, given standards on entry to the school.

7. Standards of numeracy on entry to the school are also well below average but pupils make good progress through to Year 11.
8. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in all subjects. In the 2000 GCSE examinations pupils at Stage 2 or above on the register averaged better than seven GCSE passes at grades A* to G. The good progress in many areas is facilitated by progress in English. The great majority of SEN pupils attain standards in English that allow them full access to the curriculum, though more could be achieved if there were more support assistants to work with all pupils who need extra help.
9. Pupils with EAL also make good progress as a result of carefully targeted and skilful teaching. At any one time, about forty girls are at an early stage of language acquisition. As their skills improve they integrate well into the mainstream teaching and become less dependent on specific support. More could be achieved, though, if more EAL teachers were available. The school analyses GCSE results in terms of the ethnic background of candidates and there are no significant differences between the ethnic groups in the school. The school set reasonable targets for GCSE in 2000 and achieved them.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. On the whole, girls have very good attitudes to school. They like the school, are generally keen to attend and have positive views of their experiences and learning opportunities. They take part enthusiastically in a full range of activities, including a programme of events offered as extra to the normal curriculum. Many girls reported that despite being in such a large community, they valued being identified and treated as individuals by staff. The willingness of girls to help their peers, particularly the less able or disadvantaged, is a feature of this school. In lessons, girls are generally attentive and co-operate well.
11. Behaviour in and around the school is generally good and is a positive feature. Movement around the site is generally good, though there is some unruly behaviour on narrow corridors and staircases. Although staff are deployed around the school, it is a large site and relies heavily on self-discipline to maintain orderly movement. A number of younger girls expressed concern for their safety when on stairways at times of lesson changes, when traffic is very heavy. The emphasis on a caring approach to dealing with behavioural issues has resulted in no permanent exclusions during the last two years, and only 19 temporary exclusions in the last year. The school uniform code is universally complied with, amplifying the visible sense of identity and creating a positive image of the school.

12. Pupils are courteous towards staff and visitors, are willing to help each other and readily engage in conversation about their experiences. In just under one lesson in ten of the lessons observed during the inspection, behaviour in class was not good enough to allow for effective learning. Many of these lessons were in Year 10, and often when teaching lacked impact and interest. Staff and girls enjoy positive relationships that benefit both. Girls display a high degree of respect for each other and relate very well to teachers and other girls. Many Year 11 and post 16 students approach their work in a mature fashion. Some new girls arrive mid-term, often with English as an additional language, and receive willing support from their peers.
13. Pupils with SEN gain significantly in self-confidence and take pride in their own achievements. Year 12 pupils with SEN speak confidently about their work, their strengths and weaknesses and aspirations. They are mature young people who are taking responsibility for the organisation of their work. They have well-developed social skills which come through in group work and their interaction with adults. There are a few pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties who find it difficult to maintain concentration throughout lessons, but the majority of pupils with SEN are well motivated, concentrate on their work and work productively.
14. Girls are encouraged to take on a range of responsibilities in their tutor groups and lessons. There has been a "Big Sister" scheme intended to support younger girls and provide opportunities for senior girls to take on additional responsibilities, though it is not much used at present. There are prefects, though they have few duties and were not very visible during the inspection.
15. Overall rates of attendance are below national average: unauthorised absence rates are high compared to the national average, whilst authorised absence is very high. A particular problem arises from the very high number of girls on roll whose families visit the Indian sub-continent during term time. Over 120 girls have taken extended leave in the last two years, which accounts for much of the recorded absence. The school makes consistent efforts to minimise the educational impact of such protracted leave and the LEA policy is carefully followed to ensure that parents are aware of the effects and implications of extended absence. Great care is taken to ensure the pupils concerned are not lost to the educational system.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

16. The overall quality of teaching is good and has improved since the last inspection. Parents and pupils recognise and appreciate the contribution that the quality of teaching makes to pupils' learning and the progress they make. Teaching was judged to be at least satisfactory in ninety six per cent of the lessons observed during the inspection, so just four per cent were unsatisfactory. Teaching was at least good in more than six lessons out of ten and very good in about a quarter. This good teaching is the most important reason why learning and progress are good and pupils reach standards which are much better than those found in similar schools by the end of Year 11. Post 16 teaching is rather better than that found in the rest of the school: it was good or better in more than eight lessons out of ten.
17. The quality of English teaching is very good and this is reflected in the quality of learning in English lessons. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils might achieve and language is used in a demanding and uncompromising way to extend pupils' skills and offer an example of sophisticated use of English. Lessons are planned to be demanding and interesting and teachers are very skilful in ensuring that all pupils are

presented with appropriate work whatever their levels of attainment. Pupils respond well and learning is very good. Year 9 pupils were particularly closely involved in an emotionally charged poem called "Stillbirth". The teacher skilfully led the class to a good understanding of the poem, though pupils' language skills were below those usually expected in Year 9.

18. The school has as yet no whole school policy relating to the development of literacy. There is very good practice in the English department where teachers reinforce basic skills using a range of strategies such as word banks, writing frames and very focused questions. Pupils are given excellent support with reading. Other subject areas employ a range of strategies to support basic literacy. In mathematics, for example, key words are displayed on classroom walls and emphasis is given to specific terms and their spelling. Teachers have a policy to teach using idiomatic language to encourage pupils to develop their language skills. Key words are well used in geography and pupils are constantly encouraged to improve their descriptive vocabulary. Art makes a very positive contribution to literacy through the use of subject specific terms and carefully focused questions to ensure understanding. Pupils are encouraged to describe aspects of their work as, for example in the design of expressive masks, where pupils were also asked to describe the emotions portrayed in the masks. In music, attention is given to extending vocabulary and improving spelling although some opportunities for displaying technical terms are lost. In history pupils have to write in a range of different formats and styles and in DT teachers explain technical terminology when necessary. Overall awareness of the importance of literacy is good but this does not always translate into specific and planned strategies.
19. Mathematics teaching is good. Teaching is calm and patient and promotes numeracy well. Relationships are very good. Most teaching is challenging to pupils at different levels of attainment, though there are occasions when expectations of the highest attainers are not sufficiently high. Science teaching is satisfactory in Years 7 to 11 and good post 16. Science teachers explain their subject well and use questions well to reinforce pupils' understanding. In some science lessons, though, teachers have to work hard to engage pupils' attention and maintain good discipline.
20. EAL teaching is very good. Pupils in the early stages of English language acquisition are given high quality support and as a result make rapid progress. Support is skilful and sensitive and teachers use interesting material and methods. The teaching of Urdu is of a consistently high standard at all levels. In lessons conducted in Urdu pupils are expected at all times to respond in Urdu. The result of this is that pupils have a very good understanding and active use of the language. Teachers plan their lessons thoughtfully, giving pupils the best opportunities, through a skilful deployment of method and resources, of taking an active part in the lesson and practising all four language skills. Pupils learn fast in such conditions.

21. Across the curriculum teachers have good personal command of their subjects, though some RE is taught by non-specialists and inadequate subject knowledge is sometimes a problem. Effective teaching methods are the norm, though in music insufficient attention is given to teaching basic skills and teachers have not spent enough time in preparation of plans, spaces, materials and equipment or in assessing and recording pupils' individual progress. As a result, standards in music are well below average. Teaching in art, DT, history and RE is good overall: in ICT, geography, PE and modern languages it is satisfactory.
22. In most lessons there is good management of pupils, so that discipline is good and pupils are engaged in learning. Occasionally lessons lack interest or pupils are not managed with sufficient skill so attention wanders.
23. Teaching by members of the SEN department is strong. Support assistants use their time effectively in lessons, are familiar with individual learning programmes and provide very good support in individual and small-group situations, as well as in classrooms. Both teachers and support assistants have very good relationships with pupils based on mutual respect. Sessions are well planned in content and organisation so that a variety of approaches is used to maintain motivation. Teaching of SEN pupils across the curriculum is effective. Almost all teachers are properly aware of the individual needs of SEN pupils in their classes. However, mixed ability classes have pupils with a very wide range of attainment and on occasions, without additional support, pupils do not make the progress they are capable of. In some geography and history lessons, higher attainers are not sufficiently challenged. Grouping pupils on the basis of their levels of attainment meets the needs of most pupils in mathematics, science and modern languages, but across the curriculum there is a need for more support to ensure that SEN pupils can make good progress without diverting too much of the teachers' attention from other pupils. Teachers make good arrangements for pupils with specific learning difficulties: there are, for example, very good learning resources for visually impaired pupils and modified equipment and rules in PE. Pupils with SEN make good progress and learn effectively as a result of the quality of provision the school makes.

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

24. The school's curriculum is generally broad and balanced and meets pupils' needs well. All pupils have access to the full National Curriculum and RE. Almost all pupils have English as an additional language. At any one time, there are about 40 girls who are new to English or whose English is such that they can not take full advantage of the subject teaching they receive. Very good support is available to these pupils through the work of the EAL department. Teaching is of high quality and progress is good. Much support of high quality is provided in subject classrooms but there is not enough to support all those who could benefit. Only one EAL teacher supports the humanities and creative faculties.
25. This is the first year in which the school has admitted pupils in Years 7 and 8. Overall, the school has been successful in planning their curriculum, though planning in music, ICT and PE is not yet thorough enough. This is particularly serious in ICT and as a result pupils' progress is adversely affected and the requirements of the National Curriculum are not fully met. ICT is taught as part of design and technology in Years 7 to 9. Too little time is devoted to this programme, and planning and co-ordination do not ensure that other subject departments make their proper contribution. These

problems are exacerbated by the unreliability of much of the school's hardware. There is still too little time for music, as was the case at the time of the last inspection. Curriculum planning in PE does not ensure that pupils have opportunities for the progressive development of knowledge, skills and understanding.

26. The curriculum for Year 10 and 11 pupils is well organised and meets requirements. Girls are able to choose GCSE courses from a sound range of options that include PE, sociology and RE.
27. Pupils with SEN have an appropriate curriculum. Teachers know pupils extremely well, keep performance under continual review and revise targets as necessary. Individual programmes with specific aims are produced for all workshop sessions. In almost all cases, programmes match pupils' specific needs. Support assistants maintain daily records of the performance of individual pupils and concerns are communicated to the SEN co-ordinator. Class teachers and support assistants co-operate well so that support time is well used and pupils make good progress. Overall, though, there are too few assistants to provide the necessary support for the number of girls who would benefit.
28. The school has identified gifted and talented pupils and there is some extra provision, including residential experience, to meet their needs. In art, for example, artists-in-residence work with higher attainers. English lessons are intellectually challenging for the highest attainers. Not all departments, though, are equally successful in this regard. Pupils are mostly taught in mixed ability classes. These arrangements generally work well, though there are some problems. In both history and geography there is too little focus on providing work of sufficient challenge for the highest attainers. ICT planning takes too little account of pupils' prior attainment. In some mathematics lessons, in spite of pupils' being grouped by attainment, too little attention is paid to ensuring that all pupils, whatever their levels of attainment, have challenging work to do at an appropriate level.
29. Provision for pupils' personal and social development is very good. The "Pathways" course, taught by a specialist team of senior staff, is comprehensive and extremely well planned. Health, sex and drugs education are covered well. During the inspection, a police constable was working on drugs education with a Year 9 group. Careers education is well planned and pupils speak highly of it. Considerable effort is made through the Pathways programme to widen pupils' horizons and raise their aspirations. Post 16 pupils have visited university open days and summer schools. Opportunities for residential experience and foreign travel have been carefully negotiated with parents and are a growing feature of school life. Much of the curriculum and classroom experience has a positive effect on pupils' social development. There are many opportunities for pupils to engage with their own and European culture, especially through art, RE, drama and English. As a result, pupils' social and cultural development are excellent.
30. There is good provision for pupils' spiritual development. RE makes a good contribution, particularly in its emphasis on the study of Islam. There is a prayer room, which is regularly used, and there are faith assemblies for Muslim pupils. Provision for moral development is also good. Staff act as good role models and moral issues are raised and discussed in RE, history and English lessons as well as in assemblies. Behavioural expectations are based on civilised and moral precepts.
31. Many girls enter the school with difficulties in basic literacy. The English, SEN and EAL departments provide excellent literacy teaching. Pupils' literacy skills develop well,

including those of pupils at an early stage of English language acquisition and those with special educational needs. Some departments, art and mathematics for example, play a considered part in improving literacy skills but there is no overall policy, or whole-school approach to raising standards of literacy. As a result, opportunities are missed, particularly in humanities subjects, to systematise efforts to raise standards. Departmental curriculum planning takes too little regard of this important area, particularly in the important early years of Key Stage 3.

32. There is no planned, whole-school approach to raising standards of numeracy, though there are links between the mathematics and science departments on this issue and some elements of numeracy teaching appear in ICT, geography and science lessons. Links between the mathematics and SEN department are not strong enough.
33. The school has developed a good post 16 curriculum which meets pupils' needs well through a good combination of GCE A level and vocational work. Business education is well developed: there are vocational courses in art and health and social care. Sixth form provision is well planned and the school is enjoying considerable success in promoting post 16 and higher education for its pupils, though, at present, there is no provision for RE except for those pupils studying 'A' level RE.
34. The range of extra-curricular activities is more limited than in many schools, largely because most girls leave by bus immediately at the end of school. The programme for sport, for example, is limited. Lunchtime classes for extra work, homework and revision, though, are plentiful and well attended, as is the pre-school homework and breakfast club. The English department organises theatre visits and the art department provides opportunities for pupils to visit local and national galleries. The Duke of Edinburgh Award programme gives girls opportunities for outdoor and residential education and community service.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. Pastoral care is good. A range of impressive initiatives is closely integrated to provide consistent and efficient support for the girls. Staff have considerable knowledge and understanding of individual and collective needs. The senior management team considers issues affecting the whole school and monitors individual girls who may be experiencing problems. Form tutors have principal responsibility for pupil care, supported by heads of year. Both stay with the same year group throughout their time in the school. A school council comprised of elected pupil representatives is able to raise and resolve issues and has proved useful in bringing about developments.
36. A community development officer supports girls with particular problems and works with vulnerable pupils and their parents to ensure they are integrated as quickly as possible into school life. Being multi-lingual and of Pakistani origin, she is an invaluable aid to the welfare of the pupils and their parents. She helps in a range of initiatives designed to assist girls who are new to English and to educate parents in the need for regular attendance at school, and she plays an important role in efforts to minimise extended absence.
37. There are four learning mentors working within school who deal with referrals from year heads of girls who have problems with any of a number of issues including attendance or truancy, behaviour, relationships, underachievement and disaffection. Working closely with the Educational Welfare Service the mentors provide a valuable support service to both girls and school.

38. Sound collaborative arrangements with feeder primary schools ensure that the needs of each new year group are well catered for. Parents and girls expressed support for the school in this area.
39. Health and safety issues are addressed systematically and effectively by regular review, which involves governors and staff. Matters requiring attention are carefully considered and appropriate remedies applied. Staff take their responsibilities seriously and are quick to intervene if they detect a potential problem. A designated senior teacher is the named person with overall responsibility for child protection issues, including liaison with external agencies. Guidance is given to staff, including those new to the school, through an appropriate mix of documented policy and training. Heads of year are involved with specific cases where close monitoring is required.
40. Pupils' progress is very carefully monitored and documented. The school uses good computer software to track pupils' progress against benchmark information gleaned from National Curriculum test data and examination results, as well as through a considerable programme of other tests and analysis. The quality of analysis of test data is very high and provides a comprehensive view of strengths and weaknesses in the progress of groups of pupils and individuals. There is scope for better use of this rich analysis by departments, though there is good use to guide curricular planning in the SEN and English departments.
41. There are very good arrangements for monitoring and managing behaviour. There is a five stage incremental approach to inappropriate behaviour, which is dealt with in the first instance by class teachers, who can then involve, where necessary, the head of year, senior managers and other support staff. The use of learning mentors has helped with individuals who have behavioural problems and provides referred girls with appropriate, timely attention. The school takes a very strong stance against bullying, and there are student-generated materials on the subject at several display locations around the site. The governors' anti-bullying policy requires parents, children and staff to work together to eradicate problems.
42. A system of merits and credits is used to recognise and reward effort and achievement by girls. Awards are used fairly and keenly tracked by girls on form-room charts. Sufficient credits result in the award of a series of certificates that are presented in year assemblies.
43. Governors are supportive of the approach to discipline and receive details in regular confidential reports from the headteacher. The governing body complies with statutory requirements relating to exclusions, being fully informed about incidents, aware of their role and involved where necessary in decision making.
44. Procedures for monitoring attendance and discouraging absence are very good. The school complies with legislative requirements on attendance; form registers are taken at the start of morning and afternoon sessions, whilst subject tutors take registers at the start of lessons. Register entries are clear and consistent, utilising sheets that are fed into an optical character reader by administration staff. Technology is used to good effect to provide detailed up to date management information on attendance. A new computerised monitoring system that will greatly simplify and assist in tracking girls' attendance is about to be installed. A member of staff is employed to analyse attendance registers to identify girls who are at risk and who need to be closely monitored and if they are absent, there is a swift follow up after morning registration, usually by means of a telephone call to parent or guardian. The school works in close co-operation with the Educational Welfare Officer. In addition, learning mentors ensure

that contact and support is given to keep girls in school. There have been worthwhile gains at both the individual and school levels, with successful re-integration of some girls who might otherwise have become completely disaffected. To encourage consistency in attendance, there is a range of certificates which are awarded to girls in recognition of good attendance, whilst form groups compete for a weekly trophy for best attendance record. Although attendance is below national average the school works hard to improve attendance rates and has developed a pragmatic integrated approach linked to other pastoral care measures

45. The practice of taking extended leave to visit the Indian sub-continent has a negative impact on learning. Often teachers have to take time out during class to help girls catch up or cover work they have missed.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. In spite of its best efforts, the school has considerable difficulty in establishing a close working relationship with parents. Almost all pupils are drawn from Bradford's Asian community, based some miles away, so personal contact with the school is difficult. Many parents have limited fluency in English and are content to play little part in matters to do with the general life of the school. Only seven per cent of parents returned the inspection team's questionnaire about their views of the school and their meeting with the Registered Inspector was poorly attended. The annual governors' meeting with parents is also poorly attended. Responses to the questionnaire indicate that there is considerable support for and approval of the school. Parents appreciate the progress girls make and that they are expected to work hard. Meetings arranged by the school at which parents can discuss their girls' progress are better attended.
47. Information evenings and other special events are arranged both in school and at a business centre more conveniently located near to where most parents live. The school reports higher attendance at meetings and events held in this satellite location.
48. To keep parents informed of events and information about school life a number of letters are sent out each year in English and community languages. A colourful school magazine is circulated with news and examples of the work being done. Good use is made of the local media, notably community radio and television to bring news of events to the attention of parents. Reports for parents about pupils' progress are well written and informative. Even so, a few parents take the view that reports raise some expectations which are not always subsequently justified by GCSE results.
49. The SEN department tries hard to maintain contact with parents and, where necessary, staff visit homes. Good use is made of learning mentors and the community development officer. There is very good attendance of parents at annual reviews for pupils with SEN.
50. There is only limited direct involvement by parents in their children's learning. The school has no parents' association to assist with fund raising and social activities and only a few parents are members of the governing body. Sponsorship and fund raising activities are limited but do involve girls, staff and parents in raising money for the school and a range of external charities.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. The school is very well led and managed. The headteacher, in particular, provides confident and effective leadership. Relationships between staff are open and

collaborative. The stresses of recent reorganisation, which has included, in the current year, the admission of Year 7 and 8 pupils for the first time, the induction of new staff to provide for the extra teaching and a considerable building programme have been managed extremely well. There has been considerable disruption: the science department, for example, was without laboratory accommodation for some months. Even so, only one term after reorganisation, inspectors found a calm and purposeful school with a high degree of shared purpose among staff.

52. Senior staff are very effective and as a result the day to day administration of the school is very good. There is a regular programme of monitoring the quality of teaching. Assessment data are analysed with considerable skill and care to provide a picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Senior staff are aware of areas which need improvement and pursue higher standards and improvements in provision with vigour. New staff have been welcomed and supported in their new roles with care. There are good procedures in place for performance management.
53. The academic life of the school is managed through heads of faculty, supported by heads of department. There is sound planning in most areas and the quality of teaching is monitored in faculties. Generally the system works well, though some weaknesses are still obvious. Not all areas, including music and ICT, have yet managed to put in place detailed curriculum plans for Years 7 and 8. The humanities faculty is not managed with sufficient clarity. Heads of department in humanities do not understand the division of responsibilities between themselves and the faculty head and there is confusion about the system for deciding departmental income. As a result, some resource problems exist, for example in RE where there are too few textbooks. Across the school in general, there is inadequate provision for ICT and improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. Although there are plenty of new computers, many do not work reliably and there is inadequate planning to ensure that pupils receive their entitlement under the National Curriculum. In the humanities departments, for example, there is serious under-use of ICT and difficult access to working hardware.
54. Pastoral leadership is very effective. Year heads and form tutors work well together under the leadership of the senior management group to ensure high standards of care.
55. Governors work effectively on the school's behalf. They support the school well, are aware of the issues the school faces, monitor activities and maintain close and regular contact. They perform their strategic financial planning role well and are well supported by senior staff. Except for some areas such as ICT, where the National Curriculum is not properly in place, statutory responsibilities are fulfilled, though assemblies do not entirely meet requirements for daily act of collective worship. Overall, governors have a clear view of priorities and the general direction the school should take.
56. All the requirements for provision for pupils with special educational needs are met and arrangements are very well managed. The SEN co-ordinator provides clear and enthusiastic leadership. There are very good communications among SEN staff and with other departments, although there is a need for closer working with the mathematics department to ensure that the needs of pupils with numeracy problems are fully communicated to other departments through individual education plans (IEPs). There are IEPs for all pupils who should have them and copies are lodged with all departments. Documentation, including IEPs and annual reviews are kept fully up to date. There are good arrangements for further training which currently involve all SEN staff but there is some need for ICT training to allow staff to take full advantage of the

ICT hardware and software. The base accommodation is very good and the provision of ICT equipment has improved markedly since the last inspection.

57. Financial planning is good and the school is adept at securing extra funding to meet particular needs. There is excellent day to day financial management and accounting. Development planning is related to appropriate educational priorities. New technology is used extremely well to support data analysis and financial management. Principles of best value are rigorously applied.
58. Teachers are appropriately qualified in their main subjects, though there are some non-specialist teachers of RE who require further training and support. Non-teaching staff make a very good contribution to administration and support, though there are too few special needs assistants and EAL teachers to offer sufficient support to all pupils who would benefit. ICT is hindered by a lack of technical support. Most subjects are appropriately resourced though there are shortages of books for RE, history and mathematics. Access to modern, working computers is a widespread problem that adversely affects almost every department. Securing effective ICT for departmental use is a major priority.
59. Accommodation is largely satisfactory and some of the new building is very good indeed. The humanities faculty is located in a separate temporary block at some distance from the main accommodation. This isolates teachers working in the faculty and involves considerable waste of staff and pupils' time in movement between lessons. Music accommodation is very cold in winter. Accommodation for PE is inadequate. There is only one indoor space available so there is considerable disruption to the PE programme in bad weather.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The school is in a good position to make the improvements identified as necessary in this inspection. As well as continuing to focus on raising standards further, the headteacher and governors should also:

- (1) ensure that standards in information and communications technology are improved through better technical support, so that computers work reliably; better planning of the curriculum; better co-ordination of the contributions of subject departments;
Paragraphs 2,25,53,55,58,91,104,140,142 to 150, 162,194.
- (2) provide better support for music, so that teaching, planning and management of the subject improve;
Paragraphs 2,52,164-169.
- (3) increase the quantity of support for pupils with English as an additional language and special educational needs, without diminishing the high quality of the present provision;
Paragraphs 8,9,23,24,27,58,132.
- (4) extend the high quality of literacy teaching provided by the English and EAL departments to other subjects through a whole-school policy and better subject planning;
Paragraphs 18, 31.
- (5) improve the quality of accommodation for PE in collaboration with the Local Education Authority.
Paragraphs 59, 180.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	181
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	22	42	28	4	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Years 7-11	Sixth form
Number of pupils on the school's roll	798	195
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	556	

Special educational needs	Years 7-11	Sixth form
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	13	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	176	43

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	959

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	33
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	48

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.1
National comparative data	5.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	2.6
National comparative data	0.4

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	0	165	166

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	0	0	0
	Girls	76	53	27
	Total	76	53	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	46 (37)	32 (34)	16 (22)
	National	63 (63)	65 (62)	59 (55)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	16 (13)	13 (9)	3 (4)
	National	28 (28)	42 (38)	30 (23)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	0	0	0
	Girls	64	41	37
	Total	64	41	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	39 (38)	25 (21)	23 (24)
	National	64 (64)	66 (64)	62 (60)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	10 (14)	11 (7)	3 (2)
	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

Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	0	173	173

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	0	0	0
	Girls	50	151	156
	Total	50	151	156
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	29 (29)	87 (90)	90 (95)
	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	32
	National	38.4

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

Attainment at the end of the sixth form

Number of students aged 16, 17 and 18 on roll in January of the latest reporting year who were entered for GCE A-level or AS-level examinations	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	0	44	44

Average A/AS points score per candidate	For candidates entered for 2 or more A-levels or equivalent			For candidates entered for fewer than 2 A-levels or equivalent		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
School	0	13.5	13.5	0	4.2	4.2
National	N/A	18.6	18.2	N/A	2.9	2.7

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

Vocational qualifications	Number	% success rate
Number in their final year of studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all those they studied	School	41.9
	National	73.2

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	14
Pakistani	610
Bangladeshi	46
Chinese	1
White	25
Any other minority ethnic group	6

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	18	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	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: Years 7-13

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	64.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Years 7-13

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	332

Deployment of teachers: Years 7-13

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	75.7
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Average teaching group size: Years 7-13

Key Stage 3	15.8
Key Stage 4	26.0

Financial information

Financial year	2000
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	£
Total income	1,821,841
Total expenditure	1,840,816
Expenditure per pupil	2,615
Balance brought forward from previous year	56,235
Balance carried forward to next year	37,260

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	993
Number of questionnaires returned	69

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	48	46	1	4	0
My child is making good progress in school.	39	51	1	4	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	62	26	3	4	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	48	33	9	4	6
The teaching is good.	51	36	1	4	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	38	16	12	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	35	39	9	4	13
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	30	1	3	9
The school works closely with parents.	28	43	16	7	6
The school is well led and managed.	36	42	9	1	12
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	32	9	1	10
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	33	13	7	16

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

ENGLISH

60. When pupils enter the school attainment in English is well below average. Most pupils speak English as their second language. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests taken at the end of Year 9, and in lessons observed, attainment was well below the national average at both Level 5 and Level 6 but when compared to the standards reached by pupils in similar schools, attainment was well above average. Performance in the National Curriculum tests has been generally improving over the last 4 years. Pupils do much better in English than they do in mathematics and science.
61. Attainment at GCSE in English is improving well. Results have improved by 8% each year for last 4 years. In the 2000 GCSE examination English was below the national average for pupils in the A* to C range although all pupils entered gained a pass in the range A* to G. Fewer pupils than average gain A* and A grades in English. The school enters more pupils than the national average for English Literature. These pupils did well in 2000 matching the national average at grade A although many fewer achieve A* to C grades. All pupils attained a grade in the A* to G range. Pupils do better in English and English Literature than they do in most other subjects.
62. Attainment at A Level in 2000 was disappointing and not as high as in the two previous years. The number of students obtaining a pass in the exam was slightly below the national average. Standards in the lessons observed were broadly average.
63. The percentage of pupils speaking English as an additional language is very high. Many girls speak confidently and are eager to participate in discussion. Many have a good grasp of vocabulary and use it adventurously. They are able to communicate their ideas effectively though they make mistakes with idiomatic usage. They are very good listeners. Overall standards are broadly average.
64. Pupils' writing is not as strong as their command of the spoken language, although many are keen to write and do so at length. Higher-attaining girls write well and express their ideas using a wide range of vocabulary. They are able to use technical terms appropriately. There is some very lively and creative writing, although even high attainers make some idiomatic errors in their written work. Most pupils, however, have significant difficulties with their written English and standards are below average. In spite of the progress they have made in this their second language, many pupils still have difficulty in accurately using idiomatic expression, particularly in the context of the formal writing needed for examination work in Years 10 and 11 and in the sixth form. The range of vocabulary they draw upon is more limited than is usual. Overall standards of spelling are below average.
65. Some girls read fluently, expressively and with understanding. A higher than average proportion of girls has difficulty with reading and this causes them to develop their ideas and understanding more slowly than is usual. Although pupils make very good progress with reading as they move towards GCSE, a smaller than average proportion reach expected standards by the time they reach the end of Year 11.

66. The difficulties pupils encounter with reading and writing persist into the sixth form. Students participate well in class and group discussion and reach sound levels of understanding. The standard of academic writing is below average. Although standards of technical accuracy and fluency have continued to improve, they still fall short of those usually seen in A Level students at the same stage of the course.
67. Although standards are consistently below average they represent very good progress from a low starting point when pupils enter the school. The results achieved by the time pupils take GCSE represent a substantial achievement by both the girls and their teachers. Pupils with SEN and those speaking English as an additional language make very good progress.
68. Pupils are very well motivated and keen to be involved in lessons. They work hard and concentrate well. They work hard together in pairs and groups and support each other very well.
69. The overall quality of teaching is very good. There is a range of teaching in this department but none is unsatisfactory. In nearly all lessons the quality of pupils' learning mirrors the quality of teaching. Teachers are generally confident and secure with the subject. They make the objectives of the lesson very clear so that pupils know what is expected of them. Expectations are high and materials are presented with enthusiasm and with rigour. Teachers explain things and question pupils very skilfully. They use English in such a way as to extend pupils' understanding of complex language and ideas, enabling them to model their use of language. Lessons are very well planned. In particular the strongest teachers are well aware of the wide range of pupils' attainment and grasp of language and make excellent arrangements to cater for the needs of all pupils. In a lesson on 'Of Mice and Men', for example, the teacher organised groups so that all pupils were working at an appropriate level. High attainers took the role of director, whilst weaker pupils and some poor attenders were given the role of observers, which gave them the right level of challenge. The level of participation in the role-play was high and the teacher ensured that all pupils were involved in the plenary feedback. Classroom strategies are well considered, activities are varied and are organised so that pupils are always busy and challenged. In a Year 10 lesson on 'War Photographer', for example, pupils were given high quality materials, including writing frames and vocabulary lists. Relationships in the classroom are very good. Teachers know their pupils as individuals, are well informed about their particular needs and keep good records. Support staff are well integrated into lessons. In some lessons, teaching was not as strong mainly because of some insecurity with the subject as well as the difficulty of coping with a very wide spread of attainment.
70. The department has very good curriculum planning for Years 10 and 11 and is working hard to build on planning at Key Stage 3 to cater for the new Year 7 and 8 pupils. There is a very positive emphasis on speaking and listening activities in lessons, and all Year 7, 8 and 9 pupils have drama, which provides further opportunities for them to enhance their spoken English. Although the school library is small and under-resourced, the department uses it well. Class library lessons typically include a range of interesting activities that promote reading. Pupils are organised into small groups according to their reading level, read to one another and then discuss the books with guidance and extra help from the teacher, librarian and other support assistants. All girls have personal spelling and vocabulary books but now that there are Year 7 and 8 pupils, the department will need to ensure that it focuses more closely on promoting basic literacy skills. Support for girls with EAL and those with special needs is very good, though there is a clear need for more EAL teachers and SEN support assistants in mixed ability classes. There is some use of computers for word processing but there is

inadequate access to hardware to enable pupils' entitlement to ICT under the National Curriculum to be guaranteed. The library is not equipped with computers or Internet access, so that opportunities for pupils to research independently are limited. There is very good use of the assessment data provided by the school to determine strengths and weaknesses, to make predictions and set targets for pupils. Pupils are involved in recording and evaluating the quality of their work. Extra-curricular activities are very strong. There are theatre trips, visiting theatre groups and revision classes.

71. The management of the department is very impressive. There is a clear concern for standards and for ensuring that pupils make good progress. The quality of teaching is monitored. The difficult task of extending provision to Years 7 and 8, which has included the integration of a number of new teachers into the department, has been accomplished well. The leadership and support to teachers new to the school by the head of department and the Key Stage 3 co-ordinator have been highly professional and effective, so that the newcomers have settled well. The head of department inspires commitment and enthusiasm from this strong team of teachers. Much of the department's planning is very good but the new responsibilities for Years 7 and 8 and the influx of new staff suggests a need for a greater level of detail in curriculum planning. On the whole the department is well resourced, although there should be better access to computers and more dictionaries in the classroom.
72. The department has made good headway since the last report: GCSE standards and the quality of teaching have both improved and provision has been successfully extended to Years 7 and 8.

DRAMA

73. All pupils have drama in Years 7 to 9. For Years 10 and 11 drama is offered as an option and in the sixth form students may study performing arts. By the end of Year 11, all pupils taking drama at GCSE in 2000 gained a grade in the A* to G range although the proportion of pupils gaining A* to C grades was below average. Small numbers of students in the sixth form take performing arts at A Level each year. Attainment in drama in the lessons observed at Years 10 and 11 and in the sixth form is broadly in line with national standards. In lessons in Years 10 and 11, pupils work hard and co-operate very well. Pupils were rehearsing 'The Envious Sisters' from the 'Arabian Nights' as their examination presentation. They were generally secure with their lines and most were able to portray character expressively. They were able to work well together and were able to assume a role and work in a disciplined way. Students in Year 13 were enjoying working in pairs to create scenes based on their knowledge of Commedia D'ell Arte. Students have a reasonable grasp of technical terms and are able to evaluate each other's work.
74. The teaching of drama is strong. There is a good focus on developing independence in learning, and skills in critical evaluation. Relationships in the drama studio are very productive. Opportunities for written work are good and good feedback is given to pupils who then respond very well. They enjoy drama and work hard.

75. Drama provides an important opportunity for girls at all ages to develop personal confidence, skills in co-operative group work and oral skills in particular. All pupils can take part in talent shows and there is a termly review involving staff and pupils. There are residential opportunities for high-attaining pupils, theatre trips and visits by theatre in education groups

MATHEMATICS

76. The mathematics department consists of eight members of staff, some of whom teach in other departments in the school. Three of these mathematics teachers are new to Belle Vue, having been appointed in September 2000 to fill the vacancies created by the expansion of the school after reorganisation.
77. The last inspection in 1996 reported a wide range of standards with weak numeracy in lower sets. Progress was assessed as satisfactory although some sets were given repetitive work to do. Pupils' behaviour was good although some pupils were too passive. Day to day marking was reported as being variable with a lack of diagnostic comments. A lack of textbooks hindered learning.
78. Improvements have been made since 1996 on all of these issues. Currently there is still a very wide range of attainment although there is effective numeracy teaching in most lessons. Pupils' progress is good, with less evidence of repetitive tasks. Lessons are broken up effectively by teachers to make good use of the time available. Many pupils are drawn into lessons by skilful question and answer sessions, although the skill with which the technique is used varies across the department. Day to day marking does still lack diagnostic comments but it is thorough with appropriately encouraging or appropriately critical comments written on pupils' work.
79. Pupils arrive in the school in Year 9 with very low attainment and their national test results at the end of Key Stage 3 are well below national averages. At the end Year 11 GCSE results are still below national averages but, nevertheless, pupils make good progress in mathematics through the school. This year, the school has expanded and has an intake of Year 7 and Year 8 pupils as well as the usual Year 9 intake. Test results on entry to the school suggest that these incoming pupils also have very low attainment in mathematics.
80. Post-16 pupils make good progress in the GCE AS level and A level mathematics course, often starting with modest GCSE grades. With a small entry for the examinations comparisons with national averages are meaningless but there was 100% pass rate at A level in 2000.
81. During the course of the inspection almost all teaching proved to be satisfactory or better. At both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 most teaching was good; sometimes it was very good. At post 16 all teaching was satisfactory or good. At all key stages learning was good as well, largely as a result of good teaching. Most teaching is calm and patient, producing a good working and learning environment. Teacher-pupil relationships are usually very good, whether teacher to class or teacher to individual, this usually being the result of well planned lessons and good classroom management. Teachers do challenge higher-attaining pupils with more difficult work, especially at Key Stage 3. However, there are many lessons where work is not always appropriate for pupils at different levels of attainment. Teaching groups, although they are organised on the basis of prior attainment, still contain pupils with a wide range of attainment. Faster working pupils are not always sufficiently challenged with more demanding

work. Homework is set and marked regularly. This homework is generally appropriate for pupils' attainment although, here again, there are occasions where work related more closely to pupils' levels of attainment would be more appropriate.

82. Throughout the school, pupils' responses are almost always very good. However, in a small minority of lessons, especially at Key Stage 4, weaker teaching leads to unsatisfactory pupil behaviour. In the great majority of lessons pupils work hard and try to concentrate for the whole lesson. Hour-long lessons are taxing for some pupils but teachers often help pupils to concentrate by breaking up a lesson into three parts. In such lessons there is a "warm-up" session to start (reinforcing numeracy or previous learning) and a synopsis of the main part of the lesson towards the end. This strategy is effective in two ways: it helps the learning process by reinforcement and it allows pupils to make efficient use of the full 60 minutes. This practice is not universal but where it is used it is very effective.
83. Equipment and textbooks are well respected by pupils. Most exercise books, especially those of Year 7 pupils, are well treated and the work produced makes it clear that pupils take a pride in their work. Pupils show respect for others in terms of values and views. They are polite when asked for information and they respond with maturity.
84. Most pupils tend not to work independently, relying on their class teacher to guide them. Independent working only really takes place with investigation work, which is often in the form of course work. Evidence from this course work shows that pupils gain from this form of assessment; they take care with their work and some of it is of very good quality.
85. Pupils are aware of which group they are in and are regularly assessed through tests, class work and homework. These tests are well analysed and carefully recorded and there are clear targets set for pupils, especially in Years 10 and 11. Gifted and talented pupils are identified. Those talented at mathematics are given extension work in lessons and voluntary lessons in lunchtimes. However, other departments also make use of lunchtime sessions and therefore compete for pupils' time and as a consequence attendance at these lessons is variable.
86. Some pupils with special educational needs are supported in the classroom. Where this support is provided it works very well; there are very good relationships between pupils and the support teacher and pupils make good progress. The provision for pupils with specific needs (for example, poor eyesight) is excellent. Many pupils in the school have English as an additional language. In order to help improve language skills within the subject area, some lessons have an EAL specialist in the classroom acting as a team teacher. At Key Stage 4 (especially in year 11) the emphasis is on the form and language of examination questions; this is an effective way to allow pupils to gain confidence in attempting their mathematics exams.
87. Learning opportunities for all pupils are supplemented with voluntary classes, including homework clubs at lunchtimes. There is also a cycle of mathematics clubs after school that focus on examination skills. These provide support for both main school pupils as well as for Year 12 and Year 13 pupils. Year 9 pupils will also have optional sessions prior to their national tests. The mathematics department runs an engineering club in conjunction with the science department. The response to these opportunities is generally good.
88. Mathematics is taught in a new block, occupied since September 2000. Classrooms are light, airy, reasonably well ventilated, clean and graffiti free. There are appropriate

and pleasing wall displays in the form of posters and pupils' work. Some of these displays demonstrate a multi-cultural approach to mathematics in that they show numeracy in other cultures, for example, Chinese, Urdu and Arabic. There are also keywords of mathematics written on flash cards and displayed on classroom walls. This is a useful tool, as it reinforces the language and terminology of mathematics in lesson time.

89. Textbooks have been updated since the last inspection; in some cases they have been provided from other schools after local school reorganisation. Currently there are sufficient textbooks for every lesson, but not enough to allow pupils to take them home. The department is reviewing textbook provision with the aim of supplementing and replacing the current supply. Further, the department is producing supplementary resources in the form of word-processed worksheets. Members of staff share these resources and discuss their development. This process has just started and needs to be continued.
90. The mathematics department is an effective one, efficiently run by a very well organised and energetic head of department who has a clear set of aims. Despite the recent upheaval caused by reorganisation, the department works together well as a team and, in a short space of time, has moulded itself into a capable unit. Many staff willingly volunteer to provide extra-curricular sessions at lunchtime and after school to help pupils progress. The scheme of work is very clear and detailed and effectively followed by staff. There is a good level of discussion within the mathematics department about teaching methods and practice and there is a clear commitment to achieve success. Currently all staff are qualified to teach to required levels.
91. The subject's use of new technology is unsatisfactory. Although there are detailed plans for all pupils to use computer facilities, making use of a specialist computer classroom within the mathematics area, the machines are currently inoperative. This prevents the department from following their scheme of work and is a situation requiring urgent attention.
92. The recent reorganisation of the school has meant that there are some pressing short-term issues to contend with. Understandably, the departmental development plan focuses on these issues, which include absorbing three new staff into the department, developing new courses for younger pupils and reorganising resources. However, there are some long-term issues that need to be considered. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching in the subject are not well developed. Currently the head of department has seen all staff teach this academic year and regularly collects in sets of exercise books for inspection. However, the monitoring of staff does not at present lead to staff development and the provision of effective in-service training. In most year groups there are two parallel sets of three classes so the setting procedures produce groups with wide ranges of attainment. The department is not yet adequately addressing the issue of providing appropriate intellectual challenge to all pupils, both in class work and homework. Better provision in this area is likely to entail, amongst other things, the development of high quality resources to supplement textbooks.
93. Links with other subject areas, especially science, to provide for raising numeracy skills, are in the early stages. Currently, elements of numeracy teaching appear in other subject areas, for example in science, geography and ICT. Pupils need, and use, a range of skills in these areas of the curriculum but there is no effective policy that links together the teaching of numeracy across the whole school.

SCIENCE

94. Standards in science are well below the national average at the end of Years 9 and 11 but are satisfactory in the sixth form.
95. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected level 5 or above in the national testing at the end of Year 9 was well below the national average in 2000. The trend over previous three years had shown slight improvement. Pupils in this school showed attainment well below that achieved by pupils in similar schools and their standards in English and mathematics were better than in science. Teachers' assessment showed pupils' practical skills and theoretical knowledge were developing at the same rate. In the past, pupils have taken the national tests at the end of Key Stage 3 after only two terms in the school.
96. At the end of Year 11 the majority of pupils are entered for the double award in science. The results in 2000 were well below the national average and there has been only slight improvement over the period 1998-2000. However, these results show achievement in line with that predicted by statistical analysis of the pupils' standards on entry to the school. All pupils entered for the examination have gained a grade over the last three years. A few pupils are entered for the Certificate of Achievement in Science and the majority of them have gained merits for this award over the last three years.
97. In the sixth form small numbers of candidates are entered for GCE A level in biology, chemistry and physics. In 2000 the points scored per pupil for chemistry and physics were close to the national averages and for biology slightly above. In biology half the candidates gained passes at the highest grades. All the candidates entered gained a pass grade. Overall, results in the sixth form have improved slightly over the last three years.
98. The majority of pupils have very poor knowledge of science and poor basic skills when they enter the school and for many English is their second language. Their practical skills are also very weak. During the academic year 1999 - 2000 the science department was relocated for two terms so that refurbishment of the area could take place. For much of the time, the department was without laboratory facilities and lessons were taught in poor accommodation. These difficulties were overcome to some extent due to careful and effective planning by staff, but the disruption adversely affected the academic standards reached.
99. Standards of work seen during the inspection were satisfactory in all key stages. In Key Stage 3 the work seen in Years 7 and 8 was of a better standard than that in Year 9. Now that pupils enter the school at Year 7, teachers have more control over the logical development of topics and can ensure that all aspects are covered in suitable depth. In a Year 9 class, pupils had difficulty in planning an experiment to show that the speed at which jelly dissolves is related to the temperature of the water used. Some had difficulty in making the test fair. A significant number had poor recall of topics taught in their previous school, but they had gained some insight into the particle theory. A significant number of pupils found the language used in examination questions difficult to understand.
100. By the end of Year 11 all pupils have gained knowledge of a wide range of science topics. Some middle and low attainers have gained only superficial understanding and find applying their ideas to new situations difficult. All pupils improve their practical skills over the key stage and some high attainers can analyse data and evaluate experimental procedure effectively. They understand the use of symbols and formulae

in chemistry and can discuss the evidence for the movement of the continents over long periods of time in geology. Opportunities for them to express their own views and use extended writing tasks are limited. In the Certificate of Achievement course pupils have enjoyed using simple distillation to separate a solid from a solution. In Years 10 and 11 pupils are grouped according to their attainment and this enables the tasks set to be carefully matched to their needs. In Years 7, 8 and 9 pupils are taught in mixed ability groups. In the sixth form, most pupils have sound knowledge and understanding of basic concepts and good practical skills with a well-developed awareness of the need for accuracy and the importance of safety. They can explain ideas clearly and have developed good research skills. They have good numeracy skills and can show that the bromination of cyclohexane must be a light dependant reaction using appropriate calculations.

101. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Years 7 to 11 and is good in the sixth form. In half the lessons observed teaching was good and no unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Teachers can explain their ideas clearly and confidently, illustrating their point with examples from everyday life. Question and answer sessions are used effectively to recapitulate work and correct misconceptions. Lessons using a wide variety of short tasks are most effective in reinforcing learning. Short practical tasks, video clips and computer simulations are all used in this way. Pupils in Year 7 enjoyed making models to show the phases of the moon. In the sixth form, pupils found researching topics for presentation to the rest of the class a particularly effective way of learning. Class management is generally effective, but a small number of pupils in both key stages need considerable attention from the teacher to keep them on task. Pupils work at a good pace and cover a wide range of science topics. They gain sound understanding at a basic level, but for many there is insufficient depth in understanding. Teachers are careful to ensure that pupils are accurate in their use of scientific terminology and that they can explain their ideas clearly. Pupils with special educational needs are helped individually by teachers and in some cases by support assistants to make progress in line with others in the group. Word lists, help sheets and simplified diagrams are also provided. In Years 10 and 11 the Certificate of Achievement course is proving especially effective in motivating lower attainers and some pupils with special educational needs. Team teaching is also well used in this course.
102. Teachers use homework effectively in all key stages and almost all work is marked. More detailed marking would help pupils to improve their standard. Pupils identified as gifted or talented are given some extension material and opportunities to extend their learning are provided outside the classroom. However, such opportunities have been limited, especially in Year 9, by the sheer volume of material the pupils must cover between entering the school and the national testing. In Years 10 and 11, investigative work provides challenge for higher attainers. In a minority of lessons, particularly in Years 10 and 11, a lack of variety in the range of tasks results in pupils losing interest and causing some disruption. Lessons are most effective when pupils are actively involved and not entirely dependent on direction by the teacher.
103. The science department is well led and effectively managed. The temporary lack of a deputy has caused difficulties for the head of science, due to the extensive range of responsibilities she has. Changes in the intake of the school, staff changes and the recent lack of laboratory facilities over a six-month period due to refurbishment have had a negative impact on standards. Teachers in the department have minimised the disruption by extensive planning and have worked hard as a team to ensure that revised teaching schemes and the new AS courses were in place at the beginning of the academic year.

104. The senior management team monitor teaching effectively and this is supplemented by departmental monitoring. Staff share good ideas and effective teaching methods in an effort to raise standards further. An action plan shows strengths and weaknesses in the department and a development plan shows how the department intends to implement whole school policies, but more emphasis needs to be placed in both documents on the strategies to be used to raise standards of achievement. Target setting is in place in Year 11 and together with the review of pupils' work, which follows the mock examinations, provides good motivation. The provision of ICT is good, but many machines are not yet working efficiently and this hinders pupils' progress and depresses standards. Teachers' planning shows opportunities for pupils to work with spreadsheets, simulations, data-logging equipment and research and revision packages once the system is working smoothly. Learning resources are barely adequate and a lack of textbooks results in pupils having to rely on their own written record and revision classes for examination preparation. This has adversely affected some pupils' results.
105. Since the last inspection standards have remained well below the national average, but the introduction of the non-GCSE course in Years 10 and 11 has improved motivation of lower attaining pupils. Results at A level have shown some improvement. The refurbishment of the accommodation has resulted in a very pleasant learning environment. Textbook provision is still unsatisfactory.

ART AND DESIGN

106. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 indicate that standards are well below national expectations and reflect the fact that the pupils have been in the school for one year only. Below average numbers of pupils are gaining GCSE grades between A* and C at the end of Year 11, although these results have improved since the last inspection. Every pupil who was entered for the examination gained a grade between A* and G, which is above the national average. The particularly poor results gained by those pupils who followed the textiles course in recent years have disguised much of the good artwork produced by the majority of pupils. All of the students who sat the GCE A level GCE examination at the end of the sixth form were awarded a pass but none of them were awarded the top grade. Nevertheless, these A level results are amongst the very best in the school. The work seen in school during inspection week indicates that standards continue to rise at all key stages.

107. The work of many of the pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 reflects their previous, often limited experiences of art. Some have considerable difficulty with the most basic painting and colour-mixing techniques. By the age of thirteen, they are introduced to clay, many for the first time, and are soon able to make well formed pots which they then convert into heads, carefully moulding features based on drawings of themselves. Gains in knowledge through their working in the style of artists such as Vincent van Gogh or Pablo Picasso are significant. While the quality of their work is below national expectations, it shows how pupils are beginning to acquire those skills and ways of working from observation which are central to the subject. Allowing for their prior experience and the short time they have been in the school, their achievements by the end of Year 9 are good.
108. Although standards by the age of sixteen remain below the national average, these too are improving. There are often strong, individual qualities in the work of these children, the colour and decoration reflecting their culture and heritage in quite personal, innovative ways. At the same time, they are ready to allow the cultures of Europe, Africa, China and Australia to influence their paintings, prints and sculpture. There is also a noticeable rise in the quality of the creative textiles being produced in the department. Here too, pupils skilfully carry an original idea through a variety of processes to a large range of solutions in batik, print and embroidery. Although these pupils have improving skills of drawing, they tend to produce highly finished drawings of plants and objects, rather than using drawing to investigate qualities such as shape, space, tone or texture. Similarly, their sketchbooks are reserved for homework or finished work rather than for research and experimentation. Nevertheless, their open-mindedness, ambition and strong competitive instincts lead to very good achievements by the end of Year 11.
109. Achievement in the sixth form is good. Particular improvement is obvious in the work of less academic sixth form students who are following vocational courses. Their honest, sustained efforts to improve are clearly visible in the way they use their art-work linked to the world of work to produce high quality, original results. Unfortunately their poor grasp of written English prevents some of them gaining the success they deserve. Students following the AS and A level courses rely too much on images taken from books and magazines, rather than personal investigation through observational drawing or experimentation. Their less adventurous, often reticent approach prevents them from developing the personal view so necessary at this level. Their methods are reducing their confidence while keeping standards below the national average.
110. Pupil-teacher relationships are a strength of the department. The teachers know their pupils well and take advantage of these relationships to enable those who have special educational needs to make good progress at every stage. The school provides for the higher attaining children to work with artists-in-residence, helping them develop their abilities in painting, textiles and computer usage. By the age of sixteen, many of these gifted and talented pupils are producing highly technical work which often exceeds expectations. Much of their work reflects an intelligent use of processes and equipment to refine ideas, rather than merely using sophisticated techniques to produce seductive but often ill-considered work.

111. Teaching and learning in the department are good. Teachers use appropriate language to describe aspects of their subject, carefully explaining new words as they occur. The way pupils are taught to use short passages of writing to enhance or describe their work makes a positive contribution to literacy and increases the learning of those pupils who have English as their second language. Teaching and learning in Years 7 to 9 is satisfactory, in part reflecting the short time some of the teachers and all of the pupils have been in the school. There are occasions when teaching in these early years is very good. A class was making significant gains in knowledge and technique when using energetic, expressive gestures to create preparatory drawings for making masks. Their enjoyment of the work and of their learning was clearly visible, as was the link between teaching and learning. The only unsatisfactory lesson seen during the inspection was the result of unacceptable behaviour amongst a small number of younger pupils who interfered with the learning of the rest of the class. There is a need to develop methods for preventing such incidents and for increasing the expectations of teachers and pupils alike.
112. In Years 10 and 11, teaching and learning are very good and occasionally excellent. In a particularly good lesson, the pupils were designing and producing fabric through block printing or batik after working from enlarged photocopies of their drawings of tropical fish. Another class were combining their self-portraits with one of Pablo Picasso's Cubist portraits by using the same colours and methods as the artist himself. These pupils, with a full range of abilities, were enthusiastic, challenged and fully engaged in their learning. Some of these girls were working with an artist-in-residence to manipulate and modify digitised photographs of themselves through sophisticated computer software. The teachers' knowledge and understanding of their subject at this higher level is particularly good, as is their use of both traditional and state-of-the-art resources. Teaching and learning in the sixth form are good but there is considerable scope for the teachers to increase their demands on their students' time and creativity by using more of the adventurous and energetic teaching methods which are so successful with their younger classes.
113. The curriculum in art offers many opportunities for pupils to work in two and three dimensions. The experiences offered to the pupils have improved considerably since the last inspection. The use of ICT, visits to regional and national art galleries and museums, residential weeks at Nellbank Outdoor Education Centre, and Excellence in Cities funding to support artists-in-residence are all increasing the children's knowledge as well as enriching their personal development. As at the time of the previous inspection, there is insufficient teaching of observational drawing, which continues to limit the quality and variety of the pupils' work. The assessment of work is accurate at every stage and a particular strength of the department. The leadership and management of the subject are very good and provide clear guidance for staff and pupils alike. Many recent staff changes have improved the quality of teaching, strengthened the department and visibly raised standards. The accommodation, including new two studios in the recently completed extension to the school, is spacious, comfortable and well furnished and allows stimulating views of the surrounding woodland. The resources for learning are equally good and provide many opportunities to work in both traditional and contemporary ways. The department has improved and is improving.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

114. Standards in design and technology are below the expected level for pupils aged 14 years and for those pupils reaching the age of 16 years. From the work seen, students who take design and technology at AS and A level achieve standards that reflect those seen nationally.
115. The work of pupils throughout Years 7, 8 and 9 seen during the inspection was below the standard expected and reflected the level of attainment on entry to the school only a term ago. Pupils come into the school with very low skills and knowledge which they steadily improve as they pass up the school. Work seen and lessons observed during the inspection indicate that pupils achieve well given their prior levels of attainment, even though overall standards are below average. Pupils follow the design process in all aspects of the subject and understand the need for it. They produce sketches of their ideas that are reflected in the final outcomes. The higher attainers are able to explain the process they have gone through with fluency, identifying where problems have arisen and how they could be overcome. The quality and complexity of the work in the subject matches the level of development that the girls have achieved. Those pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress. Year 8 pupils working on hand held games produced sound designs that they could translate into final products, despite their extremely limited experiences with basic hand tools. In textiles Year 7 pupils demonstrated their understanding of the need to produce a range of designs before deciding which best satisfies the brief.
116. In Years 10 and 11, pupils follow courses in textiles, graphic products or food technology. Pupils' performance at GCSE in graphic products and textiles was well below the national figures for those achieving grades A*-C. In food technology performance was also below with only 4 out of 10 pupils achieving a higher grade. As with pupils further down the school, pupils at the end of Year 11 achieve well considering the level they were at when they came into the school. Year 10 girls observed in textiles were developing design and making skills around the theme of Japanese costume. The designs represented the culture of the country well and higher attainers used a broad range of decorative techniques on their costumes. In Year 11 food technology, most pupils use sound research skills to develop dishes for particular groups, for example diabetics. They are able to describe the research and design stages competently and with confidence. Practical skills are improving, although many have few opportunities outside the lesson to develop their skills further. Girls taking graphic products in Year 11 have followed the design brief closely, developing acceptable examples of packages and point-of-sale material. Some of the higher attainers have developed designs capable of gaining higher grades.
117. Post 16 students, although few in number, are producing some imaginative and worthy responses to the examination requirements. Although the number of students taking the GCE AS and A level courses is increasing, low numbers make comparison with national figures unreliable. Standards of work seen and discussion with students show a quality of work equal to that of students of a similar age elsewhere. Given the starting point for most of these students they have achieved well.
118. The standard of teaching in all years is at least satisfactory and mostly good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and teach with a commitment and enthusiasm that encourages pupils to take an active part in all aspects of the lessons. Where lessons were good, teachers ensured that they used a broad range of teaching strategies within a structure that provided a secure and stimulating learning environment. They identified

and dealt with individual pupils' difficulties quickly and efficiently, taking the opportunities to inform pupils how well they were achieving and how they could improve their work. Lesson organisation and pupil management were such that good learning was possible. Less effective lessons were the result of a lack of both clear learning objectives and a sound overall structure. In these lessons, pupils were not guided effectively and informed of what had to be achieved during and by the end of lessons. Insufficient attention was given to planning for the needs of different groups of pupils, so some had either insufficient time to complete work or too much. In the main, pupils make full use of their knowledge gained in earlier lessons as well as applying new knowledge. They showed in most classes that they were aware of how well they were performing, working with confidence to achieve their targets. Pupils' behaviour and commitment to work in all subjects are positive. They are attentive to teachers, show good levels of concentration and persevere well. Only very occasionally do a small number of pupils allow their attention to drift.

119. The range of subjects provides an appropriate range of experiences for pupils despite the inadequate amount of time in Key Stage 3, particularly Year 9 where time is further restricted. As the design and technology provision includes ICT, the amount of time available is less than usual. Despite restricted time, effective management and a committed staff ensure that pupils make good progress. Procedures for monitoring of teaching and assessment of pupils' work are good, and ensure that staff and pupils are well informed.
120. At the time of the last inspection there appeared to be a distinction between the food area and craft area; this is not so now. Standards have not changed and the arrangement of the curriculum still restricts time allocation. Teaching has improved, as have the specialist rooms, with the faculty housed in very modern accommodation. Overall the subject has made satisfactory progress.

GEOGRAPHY

121. The standards being achieved at the end of Year 9 are little changed from those reported in the previous inspection. In 2000, 28 per cent of GCSE geography candidates gained grades A*-C against a national average for girls of 58 percent. Over a third of the entries were ungraded. Candidates typically did less well in geography than in their other subjects. Standards on entry to the school are very low. Pupils have inadequate experience of geography before entering the school. They struggle with place and location, with descriptive language and specialist terminology. They lack geographical awareness and have no fluency in using geographical skills. These deficiencies are addressed through a progressive syllabus, repetition and the good use of glossaries. From meagre beginnings, some pupils do make good progress and the work of a small minority is promising.
122. A Year 12 group, the first incursion into post 16 geography for some time, enjoys teaching that is uncompromising in its challenge, though only three members of the group have taken geography at GCSE level.
123. At its best in Year 12 where shared experiences of residential field work have fostered especially productive student-teacher relationships, the quality of teaching, whilst never unsatisfactory, does vary. The teaching that has the greatest impact on learning recognises the lowly beginnings, inculcates knowledge by patience and recapitulation, and slowly but surely builds geographical understanding. In such lessons, teachers are aware that geography has a contribution to make to basic skills. A Year 7 group, for example, worked on their numeracy as they filled an island with multiplying rabbits as a

graphic means of discovering the nature of population explosion.

124. Teaching is increasingly recognising the range of ability within classes with new strategies to enhance the curricular provision for gifted and talented pupils especially from Year 9, but some lessons continue to lack pace and offer only modest challenge. A Year 8 lesson was better balanced. The first half of the lesson drew key words relating to the characteristics of river profiles from a video of the River Tay. In the second half a support teacher worked very effectively to reinforce these simple characteristics with half the group whilst the class teacher took the remainder forwards into more abstract ideas of river process.
125. Much use is made of textual resources and worksheets, but occasionally these are a prop rather than a tool, occupying the girls but doing little to enhance their limited experience of the wider world. Case studies and fieldwork make a valuable contribution in relating learning to the real world. A lesson on limestone scenery began promisingly by drawing from recent fieldwork in the Dales, though it relied for too long on recall before using the excellent photographs of limestone scenery taken at the time.
126. With few exceptions, girls are well behaved and attentive. They enjoy their geography, are eager to please, though often hasty in making judgements, show interest in their work and participate in lessons, answering rather than asking questions. The rate at which they acquire skills and knowledge is influenced by their low prior attainment, especially in Years 7, 8 and 9, which results in pedestrian progress. The Year 9 intake follows roughly the same skills and knowledge course as the new Year 7 intake. As reorganisation progresses, girls will quickly become far better prepared for working towards GCSE.
127. Since the previous inspection, the department has been re-housed in spacious and airy accommodation enhanced by high quality display, which pupils treat with respect. Resources have improved, although a score of computers stand idle awaiting commissioning. An experienced and enthusiastic teacher leads the team responsible for teaching geography. Appropriate strategies for raising standards are recognised and accepted but need to be sharpened so as to clarify and shape future development and to access development bid funding. The distinction between the roles of the geography team leader and the humanities faculty head is unclear.

HISTORY

128. In the 2000 GCSE examinations, the proportion of pupils who were awarded grades within the range of A*-C was well below the national average. However, all candidates gained at least a G grade. This was above the national average for grades A*-G. In the GCE A level results for 2000, the proportion of pupils awarded grades within the range of A-B was well below the national average. The trend in performance since the previous inspection in 1996 has fluctuated at both GCSE and A level: at GCSE, results were markedly better in 1996 and 1997 than in the more recent years; in 1999, 25 per cent of entrants gained A-B grades at A level.
129. Attainment at the end of Year 9 is below national expectations. Pupils have a satisfactory level of factual knowledge about each of the study units of the National Curriculum. They achieve a good standard of work presentation in a variety of styles in their notebooks. Their ability to collect information from a range of sources, both primary and secondary, is also satisfactory. However, their understanding of the relationships of cause and effect and of the links between events and personalities is below average. They have some awareness of chronology but are not confident with

the sequencing of historical developments or with their placement in the correct time frame. They develop empathetic skills in Year 7 and Year 8 but there is limited evidence of these being enhanced in Year 9. Their understanding of interpretations of history is weak.

130. Attainment by the end of Year 11 is well below the national average though enquiry skills are further developed in Years 10 and 11. Coursework is generally satisfactory and some of it is good. Pupils have a sound knowledge both of their study of developments over time (Medicine) and of their study of a topic in depth (The American West). Their perception of similarity and difference in history however, and their understanding of relationships of cause and effect are weak: only some of the higher attainers appreciate that changes are brought about by many causes. The marks awarded for one of the pieces of course work indicate that skills of source evaluation are not yet at the required level. Some pupils have difficulty remembering information for examinations.
131. The attainment of post 16 pupils is below the national average though analysis of students' work indicates that they are capable of gathering and collating information from a wide range of sources. They have a detailed knowledge of the political instability of Weimar Germany, suited to the requirements of A level. They have a working knowledge of key terms and concepts such as 'Left Wing' and 'Right Wing' and 'political and economic factors'. Their oral skills are well developed and they make a good contribution to class discussions. However, understanding is not as strong as subject knowledge: their essays requiring analysis and discussion of issues are of a lower standard than those that require only historical narrative or factual description. Their work also shows that structuring of notes and skills of summarisation need greater attention.
132. Although pupils' attainment is below or well below average, when account is taken of the low levels with which they enter the school, their achievement is good in each key stage. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is variable. When they are assisted in lessons by support staff and are able to work with resources which match their level of prior attainment, progress is good: when either of these elements is absent, it is unsatisfactory. Gifted and talented pupils do not make satisfactory progress because of a lack of appropriate extension work.
133. Higher and average-attaining pupils reach satisfactory levels of literacy by the end of Year 11. However, a substantial proportion of what pupils write is copied directly from textbooks and other sources which helps to account for understanding being weak. Speaking skills are satisfactory: pupils at every age level can communicate orally their knowledge and understanding of the subject
134. Pupils' response to the subject is good. They behave very well and sustain concentration to the end of lessons. They relate well to their teachers and to each other and the atmosphere in some classes, particularly in Years 10 and 11, is particularly conducive to learning. Higher-attaining pupils are sometimes to be found, of their own choice, sitting with and helping pupils with special educational needs. Much of the work that pupils do in their notebooks indicates a pleasing level of painstaking care and effort.
135. In Years 7, 8 and 9 teaching is generally satisfactory and some of it is good or very good. It is better in Years 7 and 8 than it is in Year 9. Good teaching in Years 10 and 11 allows pupils to make good progress in lessons even though attainment over the entire GCSE course is below average. Post 16 teaching is good.

136. All teachers, including the non-specialists, have a secure command of their subject. Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives communicated to pupils at the outset. Teachers manage pupils well. They make good use of questioning to assess pupils' prior learning and to promote confidence through the display of knowledge and understanding. They make skilful use of learning resources. In the sixth form, pupils are encouraged to voice their opinions and judgements of important issues, based on their reading and study of the relevant evidence. The marking of pupils' work is a strength of teaching in all years, indicating areas for improvement in addition to praising pupils for good work and effort.
137. There are some weaknesses in teaching. In some lessons, questioning of pupils is not sufficiently extensive to allow for a full consideration of topics and there is no attempt to review learning at the end. Gifted and talented pupils are not given a sufficient level of challenge through the provision of extension work that asks them to work at and think about the subject in different and more advanced ways. Opportunities that the subject affords for the enhancement of numeracy are not identified or exploited. Pupils need to be encouraged to attempt to do more writing about the subject in their own words. There is too little attention paid to teaching differing interpretations of history.
138. Planning of the curriculum is thorough at all stages and fully conforms to statutory and public examination requirements. Pupils' curricular experiences are enhanced through visits to museums and places of historical interest. Schemes of assessment are appropriately linked to the key elements of the National Curriculum and to GCSE and GCE A and A/S level criteria. There is no evidence pointing to the regular and considered use of assessment to inform planning.
139. Leadership and management are generally good. There are regular departmental meetings for which there are written agendas and minutes. Monitoring of the quality of teaching through observing lessons has taken place. The teaching staff is well deployed and shares a commitment to bringing about improvements in the level of pupils' attainment. There is a written statement on the aims and objectives of history teaching, but this does not include an assessment of the contribution that teaching the subject can make to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. The boundaries of responsibility between the head of humanities and the subject leader have not been clearly worked out.
140. Accommodation is good. The three main teaching rooms are close together. They are light and spacious and furniture is in a good condition. Learning resources are inadequate in both quantity and range. There are insufficient topic books in use with Years 7, 8 and 9: where two classes have their lessons at the same time, there are only half sets of books for each class. There are videos but no artefacts. The school library does not have enough books on the topics and periods studied for A level. There are no ICT resources.
141. Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory. The range of resources for pupils at different levels of attainment is still limited. ICT is not used in teaching the subject. However, pupils have a better grasp of historical concepts, especially in Years 10 and 11 and in the sixth form. Lessons are conducted at a suitable pace and there is better balance to the use of worksheets and books in Years 10 and 11. There is also greater depth to the tasks that pupils are set.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

142. Standards in ICT are below average overall. Although the experiences of pupils entering the school are varied, few have reached the level expected by the end of Year 6. They have opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding throughout their time at the school and do show improvement. However standards remain below the levels seen nationally.
143. For the first time the school has pupils in Years 7 and 8, and their prior knowledge, like that of Year 9, is poor. Their experiences of ICT and their understanding of its application within and beyond school are extremely limited. The planned programmes, in ICT lessons and in other subjects, cover some aspects of the National Curriculum but do not meet the requirements fully. Pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 show a basic level of skill in using word processing. Year 8 pupils having composed a piece of writing, on the impact of the inspection week, were able to type in the text, use the grammar and spell checker with some success, and alter font style and size. Activities in Years 7 and 9 were of a similar nature. Higher-attaining pupils demonstrated a better understanding when checking spelling, being able to identify accurate correction, whereas other lower attainers were more likely to select 'ignore', thus removing the prompt but not the error. Very few pupils had the ability to use two hands on the keyboard when inputting text, the consequence of which was ineffective use of time. This time was then unavailable to enable teachers to achieve the planned lesson objectives. Year 7, pupils were able to log-on, and in some cases use Word Art to enhance their chosen topic. Despite the very low level the pupils are at when they arrive in the school they do achieve soundly, developing an understanding of basic software packages and an ability to use the hardware with reasonable competence. Sound progress is made by those pupils with special educational needs and good progress by pupils with English as an additional language.
144. During their time in Years 10 and 11 all pupils work towards a nationally recognised qualification. For Year 10 this is the vocational qualification in information technology and for Year 11 it is, currently, a GCSE short course. The outcomes from previous years show that attainment is below the level seen nationally. Approximately one fifth of the year achieved a higher grade in 2000 compared with over half nationally. The standard of work observed in lessons and that contained in pupils' folders showed attainment to be below that of pupils of a similar age. Although the standards are low, from the time pupils enter the school to taking the final examination they make sound progress. Pupils in year 11 have a reasonable working knowledge of Excel although they have done little by way of inserting formulae in order to carry out 'what if' enquiries. They were able to present data in different forms, either bar or pie charts. Pupils can import images into Word documents and many have at some point carried out research using the Internet. Apart from the experiences in discrete ICT lessons, some subject areas offer further opportunities, as required by National Curriculum orders but not enough to satisfy requirements. During the inspection there was little evidence of the use of ICT across the curriculum. There was good use in art where pupils worked with the digital camera-generated images that were then changed using Adobe PhotoShop. The pupils involved operated with a high degree of confidence and competence.
145. Students in Years 12 and 13 have further opportunities to extend their ICT skills through 'key skills' sessions, where again standards are below those expected nationally. Students taking the Health and Social Care course were able to manipulate and present text using simple features of Word. Other students on vocational course have a working knowledge of Word and Excel. Achievement in post 16 classes is satisfactory.

146. The standard of teaching in ICT classes is all satisfactory and sometimes good. The subject knowledge of the teachers is sound and appropriate to the planned programme of lessons. Some have a greater technical knowledge, which they use to support colleagues when required. In the most effective sessions observed, teachers ensured that pupils had a very clear understanding of what had to be achieved during the time. Pupils were organised to ensure optimum use of the available equipment. This was particularly important as all of the computers were rarely working at one time. In addition, the numbers of pupils in most classes exceeded the number of computers available. Support provided for individual pupils is good; teachers give sound advice to enable pupils to make good progress. Where lessons were less effective there was a lack of clarity about the focus of the session. The objectives set were too broad and therefore achievement was difficult to measure. In some lessons the overemphasis on mechanical tasks reduced the amount of new learning that took place. Pupils were inadequately guided and took too much time deciding on size and nature of font rather than learning and applying their knowledge of a broader range of features. Planning for the needs of all pupils and reinforcing literacy and numeracy skills were given insufficient emphasis.
147. Pupils have a positive attitude towards the subject, behaving well even when the unreliability of the hardware reduces the amount of practical experience they can have. The majority of pupils are enthusiastic users; despite their relatively low skill level they persevere, showing good levels of concentration. They relate well to one another, sharing ideas and providing constructive, critical comment where appropriate.
148. Throughout Years 7, 8 and 9 pupils gain their ICT experience as part of the design and technology provision. The amount of time allocated to the subject is inadequate, particularly in Year 9, which reduces overall progress. Time allocation in Year 10 is also well below the normal allocation for a Part One GNVQ, which, given the low starting point of the pupils, makes it extremely difficult for them to cover all of the course requirements successfully.
149. Co-ordination of the subject within the department is satisfactory. Teaching is monitored and the performance of pupils is assessed and recorded appropriately. Some of the teachers involved in the discrete courses have a number of other roles and therefore, despite considerable commitment, find it hard to be fully effective. The subject does not have the benefit of a full time technician, nor is there a network manager for the school. Cross-curricular ICT is currently inadequate to meet the statutory requirements in national curriculum subjects.

150. Issues at the last inspection centred on standards, allocation of time, planning for the needs of all pupils, insufficient technician support and a lack of clarity surrounding the role of the co-ordinator. Whilst much change has taken place in terms of the quality of accommodation and resources, overall improvements since the last inspection have been unsatisfactory. Building work over the last 18 months and subsequent teething problems with equipment have hindered developments. Future planning indicates that the school and the faculty recognise the main issues and are working hard to address them, with some success.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

151. After a period of instability the modern foreign languages department, consisting of four French and two Urdu specialists, has benefited recently from some good appointments that have strengthened the quality of teaching and brought in new ideas and energy. As a result, the department is already more united in its approach and determined to introduce some of the initiatives which have been laid aside over the past few years. The recent move to excellent new accommodation has helped in this process.
152. Results in GCSE French examinations over the past two years, although well below the national average for girls, have been above the average for the school as a whole. In 2000, for example, the large number of pupils taking French did significantly better than the grades predicted of them. In Urdu, also, GCSE results have been favourable. In 1999 and 2000 an average of more than sixty percent of the students entered gained a grade C or above. Of these a high proportion, over a third in 1999, obtained the top two grades A* and A. In these examinations pupils have customarily done better in speaking and listening than in reading and writing because of the difficulties of learning a new script.
153. Urdu A Level results have been consistently strong with all students achieving A, B or C grades in 1999 and 2000. High standards in the current A Level Urdu classes, promoted by very strong teaching, bear out these good results. Students can speak, read and write on difficult contemporary issues both fluently and with fair accuracy. They show considerable maturity and independence of thought and express their opinions with directness and enthusiasm. Many take the time to attend a weekly topical Urdu reading session during the lunch break. Standards in the beginners Spanish for Business GNVQ class in Year 12 are very high, due mainly to vivid and appropriate teaching and partly to pupils' excellent motivation.
154. Standards in French at the end of Year 11 overall are below average. Although some pupils in top sets are on target to gain higher grades at GCSE, attainment is not as strong as expected among students of this age. Their comprehension is mostly sound, especially when teachers use French in the classroom at every opportunity. However, their capacity to speak and write in French, using past, present and future tenses, is limited in many cases and pupils are not confident in expressing themselves. Teaching of Years 10 and 11 is sound overall and has many strengths, but pupils at all levels of attainment do not receive enough opportunities in class to speak and actively use new language. Written course work has given pupils good opportunities to correct and redraft their assignments with the result that those of lower and middle attainment in particular are improving the quality of their writing.
155. By the end of Year 9 attainment in French is below expectations. However, pupils in Years 7 and 8 have made a promising start in speaking and listening skills and many have a good accent and pronunciation. At this level, teaching is conducted more in

French and pupils are given better opportunities to practise their speaking. In a Year 7 lesson, for example, where the teacher used French a lot and set up situations such as pair work dialogues that allowed them to practise at their own pace, pupils made good progress and were able to talk about their school timetables in confident French.

156. Attainment in Urdu at the end of Years 9 and 11 is consistently good, particularly in the skills of speaking and listening. Teaching is firm and demanding, conducted for the most part in the language and using a good variety of methods and resources to encourage pupils to make active use of the language. In a Year 11 lesson, for example, the teacher made skilful use of colourful flash cards and pictures, a taped Urdu song and the Pakistan national flag to engage attention and invite active response. As a result pupils were keen to speak and gave full answers showing a good general knowledge of Pakistan in quite fluent Urdu. Although reading and writing are some way behind the skills of speaking and listening, teachers are deliberately giving pupils more extended practice in these areas. Also, the recent change to written coursework assignments in Years 10 and 11 is beginning to benefit those who have difficulty in writing at speed.
157. The teaching of French overall is sound with many strong features. All lessons observed were at least satisfactory and some were good or very good. Teachers are all proficient speakers of the language and in some cases use it consistently in the classroom. However, as at the time of the previous inspection, teachers do not use French enough as the principal means of communication, nor do they insist enough that students use French to make simple requests such as asking for more paper or borrowing a book. Most teaching is rigorous and well planned with orderly starts and ends to lessons, which encourages attentiveness and good behaviour.
158. Teachers treat pupils with friendly professionalism, manage them sensitively and expect them to co-operate in return. Generally this works well, but when firmness is relaxed pupils are quick to take advantage and learning is interrupted by chatter and distraction. A good feature of French teaching is the skilful use of methods such as pair and group activities, and of resources such as the overhead projector to encourage involvement. Teachers have been very effective in making pupils aware of their National Curriculum levels. Homework and marking are generally of good quality, but higher-attaining students would benefit at times from being extended by more difficult tasks. Equally, those of lower attainment and with SEN need more specific help in on the learning of vocabulary.
159. The teaching of Urdu is of a consistently high standard at all levels. Lessons are conducted in the language and pupils are expected at all times to respond in Urdu. The result of this is that pupils have a very good understanding and active use of the language. Teachers plan their lessons thoughtfully, giving pupils the best opportunities, through a skilful deployment of method and resources, of taking an active part in the lesson and practising all four language skills. Pupils learn fast in such conditions. Relationships are respectful but friendly and pupils are well supported when they need help. In spite of the lack of good resource materials in Urdu, teachers have successfully produced their own. There is scope for more sharing of resources with teachers of French and for using an overhead projector as a flexible way of practising new language.
160. Pupils in both languages behave sensibly in most lessons and show a positive attitude to their learning. They rise to the challenge of rigorous teaching, co-operating with the teacher and each other, listening attentively when appropriate and working unsupervised without needing to be reminded. When teaching is not firm or engaging

enough, or teachers talk and explain more than is appropriate, pupils are inclined to be restless or to speak out of turn. This also happens in the case of one Year 7 class who receive all of their allocation of French in two lessons on the same day. Standards in this group are not as high as expected.

161. The department enjoys strong, supportive and farsighted leadership, and is efficiently managed. At the heart of the department's planning for the future is the raising of standards, and to this end the head of department monitors the work of colleagues and encourages delegation of roles. Staff work well as a team, willingly sharing ideas and resources and giving up their free time to run lunchtime activities and accompany a school visit to France. There are considerable benefits for many pupils, particularly the most able linguists, from the employment of a French language assistant who makes a very positive contribution to the department's work. The well-appointed classrooms are further enhanced by some excellent displays of pupils' work.
162. Pupils in both stages would benefit from more occasions to improve their reading skills through a planned French and Urdu reading programme. They would also benefit from regular and systematic use of ICT to extend their experience of foreign languages beyond the classroom. Currently the department has no software for this purpose and no computers of its own on which to operate it.
163. Some of the reservations expressed in the previous report have been put right. Development planning is much improved and the allocation of time to languages is now appropriate. Teachers of Urdu are addressing the problems with reading and writing. The main area of weakness that remains is the improving of pupils' spoken and written French. Provided that it tackles this as a matter of priority, the department will be in a strong position to move forward and make further improvements.

MUSIC

164. Standards of attainment in music vary between different age groups: overall they are below average. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard by the end of Year 9 is below the national average, though work in Years 7 and 8 is closer to average. In Year 10, standards of work seen at this early stage of the GCSE course are well below the national average. In the music component of the post 16 performing arts course, standards are broadly average, with some good features. No records of attainment at the end of Year 9 have been kept from previous years. Girls come into the school with less experience of music making than is the case in most schools. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 make satisfactory progress in playing tunes they have learned, some using more than one finger and all using letter names with stave notation. They learn to associate the music they hear with images and feelings and are able to recall some technical terms. They develop knowledge of instruments, styles and contexts of music from three continents.

165. Some pupils with special educational needs achieve as well in music as the more able, but the behaviour of some other girls hinders the progress of all. Those identified by the school as gifted and talented usually work at a faster rate and sometimes follow suggestions for extension tasks. Nevertheless, by the end of Year 9, there is a low level of achievement in every aspect of music. For many Year 9 girls standards are lower than the majority of Year 7. However, the potential for improvement is shown when they become engaged in, for example, a class keyboard exercise, building a non-tonal sound picture, clearly aware of the sensual effect of their effort. GCSE music has not been offered since 1998. At that time results were below the national average.
166. The current Year 10 group of 17 girls, who entered the school only last year, received one block of music tuition during Year 9. They demonstrate little developed skill or serious application in lessons and have produced remarkably little written evidence of learning after a term. They were observed preparing performances in groups. While some progress was evident in drumming, keyboard quartet and raps, it was at a very slow rate, affected as it was by immature behaviour. AS level students of performing arts in Years 12 and 13 are able to engage in both practical and academic work in music, achieving particularly well in essays on some minimalist music.
167. Teaching is just satisfactory overall, with some strengths and a number of important and basic weaknesses. Teachers' subject knowledge is good, particularly expertise in non-European music, in the use of computers and in recording technology. Teachers remain calm, are patient and pleasant, showing courtesy and care for pupils even when provoked. Teaching of music in performing arts in the sixth form is at an appropriately rigorous level. It is an advantage to pupils' learning that teaching, in all years, can approach music study from the aesthetic dimension as well as the merely technical. On the other hand, teaching needs to develop further the consistent use of basic skills and to have higher expectations of behaviour. Schemes of work are incomplete, insufficiently varied and lack guidelines for the clear progression expected of different groups of pupils. Though teaching is sometimes properly effective in developing literacy skills in English, generally more could be done, particularly through the use of technical works, through display and through the increased use of homework. Teachers have not spent enough time in preparation of plans, spaces, materials and equipment or in assessing and recording pupils' individual progress.
168. At the last inspection music was at a low ebb, surviving under "trying conditions". These included staffing problems, weaknesses in teaching and in accommodation, with slow progress and poor results by pupils. Development since then has been slow and music still has to gain a strong base in the curriculum. Although there has been some improvement it cannot yet be described as satisfactory. A permanent specialist teacher has been appointed and there is now the opportunity to teach all pupils throughout Years 7 to 9. Resources are satisfactory and include good quality recording equipment to support the work of gifted and talented pupils, though this has yet to be used.
169. There remain some factors that limit improvement. Year 9 pupils still receive too little curriculum time; this being concentrated in one block of the calendar, which frustrates pupils' recall and progress. The Year 10 options timetable restricts the possibility of music gaining viable groups for GCSE. There is no teacher with head of department status and responsibility. Crucially, while there has been some monitoring of the work of the main music teacher, who is inexperienced in the role, there has been too little support to help this teacher develop and manage the range of tasks that need to be done. Documentation showing music's implementation of school policies, for example,

is not in place. Heating in the music room is ineffective, which has a visible and felt adverse effect on learning and there is no instrumental teaching for individuals. Computers await repair, so that there is currently no computer-aided work in music. However, the teacher in charge of music has a good professional relationship with other faculty staff. There is good communication and some shared work in the faculty. Some extra-curricular work takes place, including African drumming for gifted and talented pupils during a residential course and occasional performances for special events by small groups of pupils and staff. When ideas are eventually carried into practice, support is in place and teaching becomes more effective, the potential of music in the curriculum could be realised.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

170. In 2000, GCSE results were below the national average for A*-C grades and slightly above for A*-G grades. As this is a relatively new course to the school, 2000 being only the second year of entries, it is not yet possible to identify a trend in results. In comparing the latest set of results to the school's overall figures, A*-C grades are below and A*-G grades above those results.
171. By the time they finish Year 9, the standard of work of most pupils is in line with the level expected for this age, with few working beyond this. Pupils are able to practise and refine the basic skills of games and use them in small-sided games. The ability to observe and comment on what they see, and so learn how to improve their own performance, is not well promoted or developed. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language learn and progress satisfactorily at this stage and in Years 10 and 11.
172. Pupils' achievement by the end of Year 9 is particularly good in swimming. The majority enter school with below average skills, most being unable to swim, and by the end of Year 9 many reach average standards. This results from good quality teaching, with the support of a Local Education Authority swimming teacher, enabling pupils progressively to acquire the basic skills of swimming and develop their confidence in water.
173. Standards at the end of Year 11 are around national expectations in games (the only area of activity observed during the inspection) and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The majority of pupils can apply their practical skills and knowledge with increasing control. In badminton lessons in Year 11, most are able to play a doubles game with some degree of success. Some pupils know and observe the rules of the game and can undertake the role of umpire. Their ability to recognise the strengths and weaknesses in a performance remains a relative weakness.
174. The quality of teaching in physical education is variable, ranging from very good to unsatisfactory. Overall, it is sound. It is best in Years 7, 8 and 9 where it is sometimes good or very good.
175. One of the most significant features of all teaching is the very good management and control of pupils. This is achieved in an atmosphere of good, positive relationships. Pupils are expected to behave well and listen carefully to explanations and instructions. They respond very well to this. Their positive attitude and interest in the subject also contributes significantly to learning, particularly in Years 7, 8 and 9.
176. Teachers have good subject knowledge. This is apparent in lessons with younger pupils who are provided with feedback on their performance, based on informed

observations, to enable them to progress.

177. Most lessons begin by teachers explaining the work to be covered; they then set a series of tasks to help pupils build up their skill and understanding. In a Year 7 netball lesson, the teacher used an individual activity to help pupils improve their footwork on catching the ball. This was then coached in a small-sided game. Lessons usually end with a review of the main teaching points.
178. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language progress well in lessons. The department has a range of strategies for successfully supporting the less able such as short-handled racquets for use in badminton.
179. When teaching is less than satisfactory, generally in Years 10 and 11, tasks set and teaching methods used do not always promote learning when, for example, pupils are involved in volleyball and badminton tournaments. Weaknesses in teaching and learning often arise when three classes are accommodated in the one indoor facility, limiting the range of activity possible and the opportunities for teacher and pupil interaction.
180. At the time of the inspection, two outdoor facilities were out of use because of bad weather, leaving only one outdoor and one indoor facility. This is inadequate when 3 classes are working in the department, as it is inappropriate for facilities to be shared. In inclement weather, only one indoor space is available and all classes attempt to operate within it. During the week of the inspection this situation clearly had a negative impact on the quality of teaching and learning.
181. In the majority of lessons, teachers do not give sufficient opportunity for pupils to discuss their own work and to observe the work of others. Consequently, pupils are not always sure of the strengths and weaknesses in their performance and how they can improve.
182. The curriculum for physical education is organised and planned to meet National Curriculum requirements in terms of the areas of activity offered. The long-term plan does not ensure that all pupils have access to a teaching area appropriate to the activity and class size. Schemes of work do not ensure that pupils have opportunities for the progressive development of knowledge, skills and understanding. There is a limited range of extra-curricular activities, although school enjoys success in rounders in local competitions.
183. The progress of GCSE pupils is carefully monitored. Procedures are in place for their assessment and these are used to improve performance. The department would benefit from an established base room for GCSE teaching. Assessment procedures now need to be developed for all pupils from entry into school.

184. The subject leader is well organised and has supported the department well through the difficult period of reorganisation. A departmental office base would now be beneficial. Since the last inspection, the department has introduced a GCSE Games course, has begun to develop links with local professional sports clubs, and has reviewed the programme to ensure that the National Curriculum is met and that there is sufficient time to cover the unit of work. A start has been made in developing an assessment system.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

185. This is a well-led department and good progress has been made since the last inspection. In 2000, GCSE results were below the national average for pupils taking the full GCSE and marginally below for those taking the short course GCSE. The percentage of pupils achieving A* - C grades in the full course was 51.2 per cent and in the short course 63 per cent and this represented the best GCSE achievement in the school. This followed the pattern of results from 1998 and 1999. At A level, results were below the national average in 2000 and slightly lower than in 1998 and 1999. Results still represented good value-added in terms of pupils' progress.
186. Attainment at the end of Year 9 is below the national average although this represents good progress in relation to the very low level of attainment on entry to Year 7. Pupils mainly come from a cultural background that gives them a satisfactory knowledge of Islam but their understanding is below average. They can identify, for instance, the main beliefs of Islam but cannot explain them in great depth. Their knowledge and understanding of Christianity, Judaism and other world faiths is well below average. In Year 8 most pupils find difficulty in evaluating information gleaned from a number of different sources and so tend to come to hasty judgements rather than think their beliefs through carefully and compare them with others.
187. All pupils do a GCSE short course in Years 10 and 11 and their attainment by the end of the key stage is below average although only marginally so. Four groups of pupils have opted for a full GCSE course at this stage and their attainment is below average for their age. Knowledge of Islam is above average but depth of understanding is below average. In Year 10 pupils can outline the main teaching of Islam and the Five Pillars of Wisdom but cannot discuss these with great understanding. They are developing the skills of evaluation and investigation but these remain below average for most pupils.
188. Despite this below-average attainment, pupils make consistent, steady progress through to Year 11 having started from a very low base in Year 7.
189. Attainment in the two sixth form A level courses is broadly in line with the national average and an improvement over the Year 2000 examination results. Students are developing their evaluative and investigative skills well and are beginning to be able to understand Islamic perspectives on religious issues and compare them with the beliefs of other world religions. In a Year 13 class, students were beginning to identify the Islamic beliefs relating to miracles and discuss these alongside the arguments presented by sceptics. Students are generally developing confident oral skills and the ability to listen to and respect the beliefs and values of others.

190. Because of the Islamic culture surrounding most pupils, those with English as an additional language make good progress against their targets, especially when in-class support is given. Pupils with special educational needs are holding their own and making good progress except in one or two isolated cases in Year 10, where individual pupils are not being supported sufficiently.
191. Teaching overall is good with some incidence of very good practice. Good features of teaching include the very good subject knowledge of teachers, especially at GCSE and A level. Teachers' expectations are high and their management of pupils is good. There is good use of support staff and very good use of the meagre resources available to them.
192. There is no specific religious education assessment policy and this needs to be a priority for the future development of teaching. Relationships with pupils are generally very good but, due to the number of teachers from other subjects teaching religious education, there is yet to develop a sense of departmental togetherness. Teaching is monitored by the provision of opportunities to observe others, but there is a need to provide more training for non-specialist teachers in the department. Some weaknesses stem from lack of subject knowledge and lack of understanding of the unique nature of the spiritual development needed to enhance pupils' spiritual experience.
193. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good with the exception of one Year 10 group where pupils' misbehaviour affected the progress and attainment of others. They want to learn, they present their work well and they work very well on collaborative projects. They help each other significantly with any language difficulties that may arise and show great respect for each other.
194. Two serious deficits in religious education are inadequacy of resources and the number of lessons that are taught by non-specialist teachers. There are very few textbooks for the large numbers taking GCSE and especially for A level courses. There is currently no use of information and communication technology, despite there being ample machines within reach which are not connected up or in working condition. There is a lack of fully trained and experienced religious education teachers in the department.
195. The school has made good progress since the last inspection. All pupils are making equally good progress, attainment levels have risen and there are good attitudes and behaviour in evidence in classes. Teaching is good but the use of assessment is still under-developed and basic religious education is not currently provided in the sixth form.

English as an additional language

196. At Belle Vue, almost all pupils speak English as an additional language. There are nearly forty girls who are new to English or whose English is such that they cannot fully take advantage of the subject teaching they receive. These girls have been identified by the school as needing more individual help through withdrawal from class in small groups or support in the classroom. The EAL department consists of four well-qualified and committed professional teachers, each allocated to a particular subject area or cluster of departments, who work closely with subject teachers to provide a very high quality of tutorial support.

197. As the school takes on new pupils at different points in the academic year and at varying levels of proficiency in English, it is not appropriate to evaluate their standards of attainment in relation to other students of a similar age either nationally or within the school itself. Pupils do, though, make good progress.
198. The EAL department offers very good individualised support to pupils at early stages of learning English. Where this support is in the form of withdrawal from the main teaching group, this is done with sensitivity so that pupils do not feel unduly isolated from the rest of their peers. In a Year 9 science lesson, for example, two girls in the earliest phase of learning English were given a demonstration by the EAL support teacher of the reaction of certain metals when they are mixed with dilute acid. Imaginative and careful teaching ensured that the girls were progressively introduced to the key language needed for such an experiment, such as “fizzing, bubbles, cloudy and clear”, at the same time as conducting the experiment themselves and thereby learning about simple chemical processes. The progress made by these pupils was clearly evident, on a linguistic as well as scientific level.
199. Where support is in the subject classroom, this takes different forms according to individual needs. In a Year 11 English class, two girls in the second phase of learning English spent the lesson with the EAL teacher who coached and rehearsed them in a brief presentation they were preparing on characters in Steinbeck’s “Of Mice and Men”. Inspired by the teacher’s patient help and high expectations of them, these pupils were able to give this oral presentation in clear, intelligible English and they benefited from hearing the confident offerings of other pupils at a much higher level. They were at the same time extended and included, making very strong headway in their own linguistic confidence.
200. In some lessons the support teacher shares the teaching with subject staff, explaining the meaning and rehearsing the usage of terms which are essential to an understanding of a subject. In a Year 8 mathematics lesson, for example, the EAL support teacher gave a very clear explanation of the meaning and various synonyms for the four arithmetic signs. By the end of the lesson, EAL pupils had a much clearer recognition of terms such as “take away, share” and “times”. They then joined the other pupils in completing simple calculations where these terms were used. Careful joint planning by both teachers ensured that pupils with very little English were at the same time fully included and productively occupied.
201. Other subjects such as humanities and the creative subjects are covered by only one EAL teacher. Support is therefore much less frequent in this large area of the curriculum, although where it does happen the quality of in-class help is good. In these subjects, EAL support depends heavily on the sensitivity and awareness of subject staff, and in most cases this is of a high standard. In art, for example, pupils are encouraged to combine artistic with linguistic skills by writing brief poems or personal thoughts as part of a project entitled “Fantastic Creatures”. By contrast, in one Year 10 religious education lesson, a small number of pupils found the language needed to discuss people’s rights and responsibilities too difficult for them and the lack of in-class support meant that they had no-one on hand to help them make sense of the textbook.

202. Teaching and support given by the bilingual community development officer to girls new to English is of a very high order, allowing them to use their home language to talk about themselves and their family life, but also encouraging them to give and ask for basic information in English.
203. Pupils at an early stage of learning English are very positive and well motivated towards their learning. They try hard, listen carefully and respond well to teaching that encourages them to be actively involved. They are well behaved and respectful to their teachers and thrive in the comfortable and inclusive atmosphere created for them.
204. Leadership of the EAL department is vigorous and clear sighted, encouraging discussion and the frequent sharing of ideas, and placing firm emphasis on the needs of individual pupils. To this end the department produces good information, frequently updated, to subject staff, and regularly assesses pupils' performance. However, the department has no computer on which to enter students' details and performance information, with the result that keeping records is a more laborious and time-wasting activity than is necessary. Access to a department computer would also bring a new dimension and greater flexibility to EAL teaching. The department is currently under pressure to provide adequate coverage of all curriculum areas and has too little time for development initiatives such as consulting with subject staff, planning and producing materials, and observation of teaching.
205. Much has been accomplished since the last inspection. The department enjoys a more prominent profile within the school as a whole. It is a highly effective department with a vision for the future and is well placed to continue raising standards.