

INSPECTION REPORT

WETHERBY HIGH SCHOOL

LEA area: LEEDS

Unique reference number: 108088

Headteacher: Mr R Stott

Reporting inspector: Mr Alastair Mathews

Dates of inspection: 2nd to 6th October 2000

Inspection number: 190141

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: 11-18

Gender of pupils: MIXED

School address: HALLFIELD LANE,
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Appropriate authority: THE GOVERNING BODY

Name of chair of governors: MR P JAMESON

Date of previous inspection: 28th October 1996

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Dr Margaret Chadwick, Lay Inspector (OFSTED No: 9278)		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
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Mr Stuart Rawcliffe (OFSTED No: 20420)	Science	
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Mr John Godwood (OFSTED No: 18242)	Mathematics	
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Mr Malcolm McGregor (OFSTED No: 18854)	Information and Communications Technology and Design and Technology	
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Miss Gill Biscomb (OFSTED No: 7527)	Special Educational Needs	
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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	12
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?	16
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	21
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	23
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	24
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	26
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	28
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	33

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Wetherby High School is an 11-18 Community Comprehensive School, with 963 pupils on roll, about average for secondary schools in England. The proportions of boys and girls are broadly equal although there are a few more boys in each of years 8-11. Nine per cent of pupils are of minority ethnic origin and three per cent have English as an additional language. There are 131 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, of whom 24 have statements, which is below the national average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (4.4 per cent) is well below the national average. On entry to the school, pupils are well above average academically in all three core subjects (English, mathematics and in science).

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school, which is still improving further. Standards have been above the national average in recent years and standards at GCSE, which were declining and were below the average level in similar schools, have made a marked improvement in 2000, due to the changes made by the present headteacher. Vigorous action by the headteacher and the governors has restored the school to a balanced budget.

What the school does well

- A high proportion of teaching is good, and a significant proportion is very good or excellent.
- Strong leadership from the headteacher gives clear educational direction to the school.
- The school set high targets for GCSE attainment and has succeeded in meeting them.
- Relationships and behaviour in school are very good.
- Pupils' attitude towards school, their enthusiasm for it and their respect for others are all very good.
- Attendance is very good, and procedures to monitor any non-attendance are also very good.
- Provision for pupils with statements of special educational need is very good.
- Music, both in class and in the school generally; design and technology and art, particularly in Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form.

What could be improved

- The management of health and safety issues.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning and other aspects of quality management by heads of subjects.
- Provision for pupils' personal development, including careers education.
- The contribution of the community and business to pupils' education.
- Provision for a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
- The governors' understanding of the curriculum and implementation of an action plan on standards.
- The accommodation overall and learning resources in some subjects.
- The range of opportunities across the curriculum to develop and use information technology as a tool for learning.
- The full implementation of statutory requirements for collective worship and for information technology.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the last inspection, the high standards referred to in the report have been maintained and have slightly risen in mathematics and science at the age of 14, but they have fluctuated in English. Standards at GCSE fell each year until 1999, but have risen in 2000. Standards at A/AS level have been above national averages but have fallen in 2000.

Progress in implementing the key issues in the last inspection report was very slow until the appointment of a new headteacher in 1999. Religious education is now being taught in Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form and provision for the teaching, assessment and reporting of information technology has been dramatically improved this year. The school still needs to do further work on the co-ordination and management of information technology across the school. A start has been made on monitoring and evaluation of teaching and curriculum to inform development planning. The 1999 school development

plan contains appropriate priorities. Many of the urgent needs for books, equipment and consumable materials have been met, but some deficiencies in learning resources remain. There are a number of health and safety issues outstanding which the school needs to tackle urgently. The assemblies seen during the inspection met the requirements of the law but the school is still not providing a daily act of worship for all pupils.

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
	1997	1998	1999	1999
GCSE examinations	B	B	B	D
A-levels/AS-levels	C	A	A	

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

Standards achieved at Wetherby High School have been generally above or well above the national average in recent years. Standards in information technology are below average, but in all other subjects they are average or above average by the age of 14. Standards at GCSE have been above the national average in recent years but below those for similar schools but a rise of ten percentage points this year make it is likely that the school will now be nearer the average for similar schools. Standards at the age of 16 are well above average in design technology and above average in most other subjects. Standards at A/AS level have been well above the national average in 1998 and 1999, although they have declined in 2000. Standards by the end the end of the sixth form are well above average in art and design and technology and above average in English, mathematics, science, geography, music and drama. They are average in modern foreign languages, information technology, history and business studies. The school nearly met its most challenging target this year for the percentage of pupils gaining 5 grades at A* to C. Targets for 2001 are more modest in comparison to 2000, although the average points score, not met in 2000, still represents a challenge.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils come to the school with very positive attitudes to their work. In lessons they listen well and sustain concentration for long periods. Commitment to hard work and motivation to succeed and improve makes a strong contribution to standards in the school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in lessons and around the school is of a very high standard. Pupils are polite to staff and to visitors and to each other. In class they co-operate, respond and listen well. Good behaviour contributes much to a positive environment for learning in the school.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships in the school are extremely positive and make a strong contribution to teaching and to how well pupils learn.
Attendance	Very good. The attendance rate, which last year was well above national average at 94 per cent, and the low incidence of lateness, reflect pupils' positive attitude to school.

Pupils' very good attitudes and values are a strength of the school and they contribute significantly to the overall quality of teaching and learning and the standards achieved.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 11-14 years	aged 14-16 years	aged over 16 years
196 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 overall; in a significant number of lessons it is very good and in a few excellent, but there is a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching. In the 196 lessons seen the teaching was satisfactory or better in 96 per cent of lessons, good in 45 per cent and very good or excellent in 23 per cent. The quality of teaching in English is good in all Key Stages; in mathematics, it is satisfactory in Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form, and good in Key Stage 3; in science it is good in Key Stage 3 and in the sixth form and satisfactory overall in Key Stage 4. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory, but there is as yet no overall plan for teaching these skills. In general, the school meets the needs of all pupils well. There is some difference in the way that girls and boys achieve in languages. There was no difference in the way that the school meets the needs of pupils from ethnic minority groups. In some classes, there is insufficient challenge for potentially high attaining pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The present curriculum, the result of a recent major overhaul, is satisfactory overall and makes provision for the school to give pupils a broad and balanced education. The amount of time for teaching has been increased so that it now meets national recommendations.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs, meeting the requirements of statements. Individual education plans are well prepared and distributed. The school has started to identify and make provision for gifted and talented pupils.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There is low awareness of the issues surrounding pupils who have English as an additional language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall, although too little time is allocated for pupils' personal, social and health education. The planning for pupils' spiritual development is good, but the delivery barely satisfactory; the provision for pupils' moral and social development is good and provision for pupils' cultural development is just satisfactory overall but needs to include far more on other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are good procedures for caring for students and good resources for pastoral support but there are weaknesses in the management of health and safety.

The school works well in partnership with parents and has recently introduced some new strategies to improve this further. Statutory requirements are met in all areas of the curriculum except for aspects of information and communications technology (ICT). The amount of time allocated to personal and social education is too small to allow good coverage of all aspects of the programme, especially careers education and guidance. Most pupils feel safe in the school and are confident that any incidents reported to staff will be dealt with. There is no evidence of racial tension and there are good guidelines and procedures for child protection, which are properly implemented.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Strong and decisive leadership by the current headteacher and his senior colleagues have provided new vigour for school leadership and improvement, which was much needed. There is now a clear direction for the work and development of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are fulfilling nearly all of their statutory duties and are now taking a much more active role in shaping the direction of the school. They are rapidly developing their understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school although their understanding of the curriculum and the implementation of an action plan for standards needs development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has collected and analysed a good amount of data on its performance. Some monitoring of teaching and learning has been undertaken over the past year, but at present this is insufficiently rigorous and comprehensive at subject level.
The strategic use of resources	Financial management in the school is now good. The school development plan clearly identifies the source of funding for each priority, though the level of funding required is only partially shown and there is scope for strengthening this link between the development plan and the budget setting process. Financial administration day-to-day is very efficient and controls are good.

The strength of the current leadership and management of the school lies in the headteacher's preparedness to face up to issues that had previously been avoided and to persuade staff of the case for and the means of change. The prospects for continued effective leadership and school improvement are good. The headteacher is well supported by his senior management team. The governors have done sound work, supporting the headteacher, to establish a plan to clear the accumulated financial deficit. Although governors have not received training in the principles of best value, these have been applied in some well-researched decisions. Despite several improvements, the standard of accommodation remains unsatisfactory. Provision of learning resources overall has improved but remains poor in information and communication technology.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children settle quickly and are happy at school • The new head is a strength • The good provision for pupils with special educational needs • Pastoral care and support of pupils • The Parent Teacher association which is quite strong • Good policies and practice on bullying and drugs • Some improvements in the fabric of the school • Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality and frequency of information they receive about how their child is getting on • The range of activities outside lessons • The individual worksheet approach to mathematics • Low standards in information technology • The degree to which the most able pupils are stretched and challenged • Facilities for sport and opportunities for boys in sport • Pressure on accommodation because of school expansion

These views are derived from 168 questionnaires that were returned by parents and from the views expressed at the meeting attended by 38 parents before the inspection. The inspection team agrees with all the positive comments parents made. Some improvements are needed in the way that reporting to parents and consultation is carried out. The range of activities outside lessons could be extended to appeal to a wider group of pupils. Improvements are being made to the way that mathematics is taught

in Key Stage 3. Standards in information technology are below average but improvement is now underway. There was evidence in some classes that the highest attainers were not being fully stretched and that their potential is not always recognised. Facilities for sport need improvement. Opportunities for boys have increased but a wider range of activities could be made available. There is pressure on the accommodation because of numbers; improvements need to be made with a priority where health and safety is involved

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The standards achieved at Wetherby High School have been generally above or well above the national average in recent years in National Curriculum tests at 14, in GCSE and in A and AS level. Results for the most recent set of examinations in 2000, where national comparisons are not yet available, have maintained this trend and standards have either been maintained or shown improvement in mathematics and science at 14, and they have shown a marked improvement of 10 per cent more pupils gaining 5 grades A* to C in the GCSE. In English at 14, there was a decline of 7 per cent in the percentage of pupils gaining a level 5 or better, and at A/AS level where the average point score per candidate fell to 19.0, the lowest in recent years, apart from 1997.
2. Taking into account National Curriculum test results and the quality of work seen in lessons and in the pupils' work, standards, compared with national standards at the end of Key Stage 3, are: above average in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, modern foreign languages, history, geography, music, physical education, religious education and drama. They are average in art and below average in information technology.
3. Results in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 3 show that English was well above the national average in 1999 and 1998. The decline again this year at the end of Key Stage 3 appears to be due to a decline in the performance of boys at level 5+. Boys at Wetherby have, up to this year, performed better in English at Key Stage 3 than do boys nationally. Girls attain better than boys in English overall, as is the national pattern, but the difference between them is less than the national average. Results in English at Key Stage 3 were well above the average for similar schools in 1999.
4. Results in mathematics at Key Stage 3 were well above the national average from 1997 to 1999 and showed further improvement this year, especially at the higher levels. Boys perform better than girls overall in mathematics at Key Stage 3, and the boys have exceeded the national average for boys to a greater extent than the girls have exceeded the national average for girls. Results in mathematics at Key Stage 3 were broadly in line with the average for similar schools in 1999, especially for those achieving the higher levels.
5. Results in science at Key Stage 3 were well above the national average in 1997 to 1999 and showed further improvement this year at all levels. Boys perform better than girls overall in science, and the boys have exceeded the national average for boys to a greater extent than girls have exceeded the national average for girls. Results in science at Key Stage 3 were well above the average for similar schools at all levels in 1999.
6. Results in other foundation subjects in 2000, as determined by teacher assessment at the end of Key Stage 3, suggest that performance is well above average in design and technology, history, modern foreign languages and in information technology and closer to the national average in geography.
7. Taking into account examination results and the work shown by students in lessons and their books, standards compared with national standards by the age of 16 are: well above average in design and technology, above average in English, mathematics, science, modern foreign languages, history, geography, art, music, physical education, and drama. They are average in religious education and business studies and below average in information technology.
8. The percentage of pupils gaining 5 grades at A* to C has been above the national average from

1994 to 1999. However, in 1999, the percentage of pupils gaining 5 grades at A* to C and the average total GCSE/GNVQ point score per pupil was below the average for similar schools. This is true whether the similar school comparison is made on eligibility for free school meals (the usual comparator for schools) or on a comparison with prior attainment at Key Stage 3. However, there has been a rise of ten percentage points in this figure in 2000. Although it is too early to be able to make comparison with the national picture, it is likely that the school will now be nearer the average for similar schools. The percentage of pupils gaining 5 grades A* to G has improved in each of the last four years, and in 1999 was above the average for similar schools, compared by either method. The percentage of pupils gaining 1 grade A* to G was above and very high in comparison with the national average in 1998 and 1999, but has fallen in 2000. In 1999, this figure was very high in comparison with similar schools.

9. In the 2000 GCSE examinations, there was a marked improvement in pupils' performance at grades A* to C in: English, German, geography, art and music; some improvement in: science, design technology, French and history and a decline in performance in mathematics, drama, business studies and office practice. In English at GCSE, pupils performed in line with the national average in 1999, although the girls performed less well than girls nationally, whereas boys performed better than boys nationally. In mathematics, pupils performed well above the national average in 1999, and boys' performance was very high in comparison with the national average for boys, whereas girls performance was somewhat lower but still above the national average for girls. In science, pupils performed well above the national average in both the single and the double award in 1999, and boys' performance was very high in comparison with the national average for boys, whereas girls' performance was just below the national average for girls.
10. An analysis of the GCSE results in summer 2000 of the ten pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, undertaken by the school, shows that only three attained results which were in line with or better than what had been predicted for them from their points score at the end of Key Stage 3. Of the six who attained results below their predictions, two were more than 10 points below and one nearly twenty points below prediction.
11. Taking into account examination results and the work shown by students in lessons and their books, standards compared with national standards at the end of the sixth form are: well above average in art and design and technology and above average in English, mathematics, science, geography, music and drama. They are average in modern foreign languages, information technology, history and business studies.
12. The average point score per student entered for 2 or more A levels or AS equivalents improved between 1997 and 1999, and has been well above the national average in 1998 and 1999, although it has declined somewhat in 2000. According to the school's analysis, this cohort had a higher average GCSE score per student than the one in 1999 but they achieved less well at A/AS level. The average points gained by students in 2000 showed an improvement against 1999 in English Language, geography and history and a decline in art and design, design, English Literature, French, mathematics, chemistry, physics, biology, music, politics and general studies. They remained equivalent in German to last year's level.
13. Targets were set for GCSE performance in 2000 and have also been set for 2001. The school nearly met its challenging target for the percentage of pupils gaining 5 grades at A* to C, due to the marked improvement in GCSE results at this level, but did not reach its targets for the percentage of pupils gaining 1 grade A* to G, nor its challenging target for the average points score at GCSE. Targets for 2001 are more modest in comparison to 2000, although the average points score still represents a challenge. The school believes they are realistic and reflect levels of prior attainment in this year group.
14. There is a small but significant number of pupils with high levels of special education need. Their standards of achievement in national tests for eleven year olds are well below the level expected. The school's tests for reading and spelling taken early in the first term at the school support these assessments and identify particular weaknesses. For nineteen pupils across the whole school, difficulties with literacy are highlighted in the local education authority's statement of special

educational need. In this school year a further seventy pupils are identified by the school as needing support with literacy. Most of these can be helped through normal English lessons and some through extra reading sessions. Pupils make less progress with writing than with reading.

15. The majority of pupils on the register of special educational needs meet the targets set for them in spelling and reading whilst they are in Key Stage 3 and make gains of several months to bring them at or nearer to the expected level in English at age fourteen. There are a few pupils who make little progress through Key Stage 4 but alternative programmes of study such as those leading to a Certificate of Achievement, have resulted in success for these pupils.
16. Across the range of attainment, pupils' reading comprehension in English is good. Those whose reading skills are poor, including some with special educational needs, receive special help and make good progress. There is much good, expressive reading aloud and some productive reading for research. Sixth form students, however, do not read widely enough and some of those following the language and literature course are, as yet, rather superficial readers. In English, pupils generally write fluently. Good progress is made in their control of language, though this is slower in the case of lower attaining pupils. By Year 11 some pupils produce accomplished writing, well sustained and well structured. In the sixth form there is much careful writing, securely based on evidence, but some students continue to make errors in syntax and spelling.
17. In other subjects of the curriculum, standards of literacy are generally good. The majority of pupils write accurately and clearly, and written work is often well presented; for example, in modern foreign languages, pupils' writing and presentation are above average and in art, the importance of neat writing and careful spelling is stressed. In history, pupils write well in a range of styles, though formal extended writing by those of average and low attainment is not always of a satisfactory standard. In religious education, standards are above average but there are not enough opportunities to write creatively and empathetically; the situation is similar in geography. In design and technology, mathematics, music and science, some (but not all) teachers make efforts to encourage pupils to acquire and use the specialist language of the subject. Note taking is often clear and well structured across the curriculum.
18. The majority of pupils experience little or no difficulty in meeting the reading demands of subjects. In modern foreign languages, reading is confident, with few errors. Standards are good in history, even among pupils of lower attainment or with special educational needs. In geography, however, the department makes little attempt to grade texts according to readability; this means that some lower attaining pupils have limited access to difficult language and concepts. In science, shortage of texts limits opportunities for reading. In general pupils are confident speakers who are able to sustain discussion in class or in groups. In modern foreign languages, answers to questions show that pupils have the confidence and knowledge to respond, though few higher attaining pupils volunteer responses because they are clearly inhibited by their concern to get the answer right. Listening skills are overall very good: pupils are attentive and courteous listeners. In modern foreign languages, as a result of generally good teaching and much practice, most are developing very well in this respect.
19. In general, the teaching of numeracy skills in mathematics lessons is satisfactory. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 are benefiting from the introduction of a numeracy strategy, although this is at a very early stage. The teaching of the application of number within the Key Skills programme in the sixth form has got off to a good start. Pupils are generally numerate and they cope well with the demands of other subjects. There is no explicit teaching of mathematical skills in science but pupils are competent in doing calculations such as percentages and ratios, substitution in formulas and use of graphs, and they get considerable practice in calculations for homework. In geography lessons, pupils are successfully taught how to analyse statistical data and to think about the effective presentation of data on graphs. They have many opportunities in design and technology, to estimate and measure, and they are expected to think and talk about sizes. In information and communication technology, there are occasional opportunities to use spreadsheets and in Year 7 pupils calculate co-ordinates to create a drawing. In a Year 9 art lesson, most pupils were able to enlarge a design using correct proportions.

20. There are few examples across the curriculum of teachers encouraging pupils to make effective use of information and communication technology to support their learning. In this respect pupils' competence and experience falls below national expectations, as they lack the opportunity to use information and communications technology independently to support their work whilst in school. The achievement of pupils in taught information technology lessons is good. In other areas of the curriculum, for example in design and technology, pupils use a range of information technology equipment to illustrate and develop their work and in music, where resources and teacher competence in information technology are good, pupils make regular use of the technology for notating and performing compositions. In all Key Stages in art, pupils are taught and encouraged to make use of information and communication technology. Year 9 pupils, for example, scanned their collage work and used these images to develop imaginative prints. Elsewhere, opportunities are less available, and although many pupils are familiar with using the Internet and can develop their basic word processing skills because they have computers at home, they are seldom able to use information technology independently to support their learning and solve problems.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

21. Pupils come to the school with very positive attitudes to their work. In lessons they listen well and are able to sustain concentration for long periods. When the teaching is lively and challenging they respond enthusiastically, participating fully in discussions and question and answer sessions. Most pupils want to do well and are willing to work hard to achieve this. Even where lessons are strongly teacher-led and pupils are given less chance to contribute, they still apply themselves diligently and with involvement. Pupils' commitment to hard work and their motivation to succeed and improve make a strong contribution to standards in the school.
22. Year 7 pupils are enthusiastic about the school and many compare it extremely favourably to their primary schools. This enthusiasm is sustained through other year groups, and only a small minority become disaffected. The attendance rate, which last year was well above average at 94 per cent, and the low incidence of lateness reflect pupils' positive attitude to school. Many pupils are involved in extra-curricular activities, particularly in music and drama. The annual school pantomime involves large numbers of pupils of all ages and is enjoyed partly because it allows different year groups to mix socially. However, there is still a significant number of pupils who do not take part in activities outside the classroom (in many cases, because they feel the school does not cater for their interests).
23. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is of a very high standard. Pupils are polite to staff and to adult visitors and, most of the time, to each other. In class they co-operate and listen well; even when unmotivated, most pupils still get on with their work quietly. During assemblies behaviour is excellent. Pupils show particular respect for guest speakers, listening and responding with interest and enjoyment. At breaks and lunchtimes, pupils are trusted in many parts of the school unsupervised and, on the whole, they do not abuse this trust. There are occasional physical scuffles among mainly younger boys, which could be avoided with a higher staff presence. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds mix well. Although bullying does occur, pupils do not see it as a major problem. Staff now use a range of strategies to deal with bullying behaviour, and racial harassment – which is rare – is dealt with swiftly, often with the involvement of parents.
24. Disruptive behaviour occurs only infrequently and is confined to a small number of pupils. Last year there were 49 fixed term exclusions and one permanent exclusion involving 26 pupils, mainly in Years 10 and 11. All exclusions followed serious incidents of physical violence, theft or verbal abuse of staff. More than half of the exclusions involved pupils from ethnic minorities who overall make up only 9 per cent of the school's population. This year the school is attempting to reduce the incidence of exclusions through a new Learning Support Unit and intensive pastoral support programmes for individual pupils with serious behavioural problems. Whilst these initiatives should be helpful, the school also needs specifically to address the issue of the exclusion of ethnic minority pupils, and if necessary, seek external advice on appropriate strategies to be pursued.

25. Relationships in the school are extremely positive and make a strong contribution to the good standard of teaching and to how well pupils learn. The atmosphere in most lessons is relaxed and friendly; teachers have the respect of their pupils and are able to get the best from them. Sixth form students are not reticent about asking for explanations when they do not understand something. Pupils are sensitive about each others' feelings and often help and support each other in and out of the classroom. They listen well and know how to be a good audience. There is a good deal of tolerance of different beliefs and opinions, which is evident, for example, in religious education lessons. Residential trips, such as the outdoor pursuits course for Year 8, make a good contribution to pupils' personal development through improving self-confidence and cementing relationships with staff and their peers.
26. When they are given the opportunity to take responsibility, pupils do so with enthusiasm and confidence. In some, but not all, year groups there are extremely active year councils where pupils are able to voice opinions about school matters and organise social and fund-raising events. Through pupils' efforts, large sums of money have been raised over the last few years for a school in Albania with which the school has a close link. Sixth form students give up their free time to help Year 7 pupils in a paired reading scheme, but do not yet have many other responsibilities around the school. Pupils are capable of working independently when given the chance to do so as, for example, in physical education lessons when they regularly work in small groups without direct supervision. However, in many lessons, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to take the initiative in their own learning through group work and presentation. In the sixth form, students are trusted to use their private study periods to best effect, either in school or at home – a good preparation for further and higher education.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

27. The quality of teaching is good overall. A significant number of lessons seen were very good and a few were excellent, although there were also a small number of unsatisfactory lessons. In the 196 lessons seen the teaching was satisfactory or better in 96 per cent of lessons, good in 45 per cent and very good or excellent in 23 per cent.
28. At Key Stage 3, the quality of teaching is good in English, science, design and technology, information technology, modern foreign languages, history, music, physical education, religious education and drama. It is satisfactory in mathematics, geography and art.
29. At Key Stage 4, the quality of teaching is good, and in some subjects better than in Key Stage 3. It is very good in drama, good in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, modern foreign languages, history, geography, art, music, physical education and business studies. It is satisfactory in religious education.
30. In the sixth form, the quality of teaching is good, and in some subjects even better than it is at Key Stage 4. It was judged to be excellent in drama, very good in design technology and in art and good in English, science, modern foreign languages, music, information technology and business. It is satisfactory in mathematics and history.
31. Teaching and learning at Wetherby High School has many strengths. The quality of teachers' subject knowledge is a feature of virtually all subjects. Good use of the target language and an emphasis upon accuracy helps pupils participate well in modern languages, build their confidence and sustain hard and productive work for the whole hour in lessons. In design and technology, basic skills are well taught, enabling pupils to develop their ideas and to create high quality products. In many subjects, thorough teaching, well matched to examination syllabuses, planned in a logical sequence and communicating high expectations, enables pupils to tackle increasingly demanding work and to make good progress and acquire subject knowledge and understanding. In music, the style of teaching enables pupils to evaluate their own work and to judge their success against criteria and in Business it enables students to develop their skills of organisation and planning.

32. Confident delivery, and clear explanation, instruction or practical demonstration provides pupils in many subjects with a secure base for learning, and enables them to carry out activities and to learn from the results. As a result, pupils make good progress in design and technology, handling tools and equipment well and producing high quality work, for example, in constructing wood joints, and information technology, where pupils make very good progress using design software. Similarly strong teaching allows pupils to develop skills in a lively and enjoyable way in physical education and successfully promotes positive attitudes to learning and good social development in drama. Where teachers provide high expectations and good levels of intellectual challenge, with good probing questioning, for example in mathematics, pupils are encouraged to develop their powers of reasoning and become strongly motivated to learn, as in science, where it allows them to take command of difficult concepts and learn at a high level, and in design technology, where they check their understanding through questioning which results in very good progress with learning.
33. The use of a wide range of activities and teaching methods in many subjects, for example, enabled a lower attaining group in English to deliver complex presentations on film treatments of a short story, encourages pupils to develop their skills of using source work and interpretation in history, helps sustain pupils' interest and concentration in music and enables pupils to respond well and make good progress in producing the diary of a pilgrim to Mecca in religious education. In many subjects, teachers involve pupils in class demonstrations and structured group work, for example in drama, where pupils learn to be supportive of each other's efforts, and provide good individual support and skilful interventions whilst pupils are working, which helps them to learn more productively. Classes are characterised by good relationships and skilful class management in all subjects, which motivates pupils to make good progress and to succeed, and results in good behaviour generally as well creating an appropriate atmosphere and learning environment in nearly all classes in the school.
34. Where teaching and learning has weaknesses, it is as a result of too much information being given at one time, poor use of the target language and of question and answer, unclear instructions being given to pupils, failure to explain theory clearly or the assumption that pupils know more than they do, or lack of focus in the lesson and poor time management. These result in pupils finding the topic difficult and being left behind or limiting their involvement simply to answering questions, and in poor consolidation of learning at the end of the lesson. For example, in science, the opportunity to reinforce scientific practical skills was sometimes missed, which resulted in pupils not being able to describe the method or obtain accurate readings from a measuring cylinder in a practical exercise examining the reaction between sodium thiosulphate and hydrochloric acid. There are some lessons in which there is lack of challenge and expectation, underestimation of the potential of high achievers and a failure to match lesson materials to the different attainment levels of pupils in mixed ability classes, resulting in some underachievement. The best marking is up-to-date, conscientious and careful, and the feedback is discussed with pupils, but there are examples in some subjects of where marking is superficial, and fails to spot errors or to use them for learning, leaving pupils with misunderstandings. Homework is frequently helpful and clear, and sets high expectations, but it can be unsuitable as well.
35. Little explicit teaching of literacy and numeracy occurs, although standards are generally high, and as yet there is no overall plan for literacy teaching through subjects. There are, however, examples of the careful teaching of subject and technical vocabulary, as in mathematics and drama, and of the use of writing frames and drafting in English and in history, which results in good development of the pupils' literacy skills, or of more extended pieces of work, as for example in religious education, where study of the Genesis creation account leads to increased appreciation of sacred text as a form of literature. Numeracy is mainly taught explicitly in mathematics, where activities designed to give quick practice in manipulating numbers create enjoyment but need more development so that all the pupils are involved in the learning.
36. There was no evidence of differences in the way that teachers met the needs of boys and girls, except that in German, girls are generally learning very well and are motivated to achieve but boys

achieve less well. Teachers are often unaware of the reasons for this and there are currently no strategies for improving boys' achievement as such in this subject. There was no evidence of differences in the teaching and learning of pupils from different ethnic groups. In mathematics there was some evidence of lack of challenge of higher attainers due to over-reliance on the textbook and in modern languages there was inadequate identification of the potential of some very high achieving pupils in some classes. In a few modern languages classes, teaching was not making sufficient impact on the language learning needs of pupils with English as an additional language due to low awareness of how resources and methods should be adapted to meet the needs of these pupils.

37. Pupils with special educational needs whose targets include specialist teaching, for example, to help pupils with dyslexia, are withdrawn for individual lessons that are well planned to meet the specific needs of each pupil. Because the teachers are skilled at selecting appropriate resources, focusing on areas of weakness and using questions that help pupils to think for themselves, pupils enjoy success and leave lessons with some new achievements. The hour-long lessons are sometimes problematic for pupils who find concentration difficult but in most lessons there is a variety of activities, including computerised games, to maintain interest in a purposeful way. A younger pupil was able to match words quickly in a computer game designed by a sixth form student, managing the mouse skilfully and increasing his memory and word recognition. Pupils are also happy to attend carefully structured programmes offered before school begins.
38. Pupils with special education needs are well supported in those lessons where there is an assistant who knows what support is needed. Assistants are knowledgeable both about the subjects they support and the pupils; they give pupils an appropriate amount of guidance and help them to understand what to do. In those subjects where no help is available, planning does not take sufficient account of the range of these pupils' attainment. The individual plans which identify the difficulties and targets for improvement are less helpful to subject teachers than they are to the specialist learning support teachers. Teachers are aware of the pupils with special educational needs and are often sensitive to their needs, but rarely provide different resources or approaches to ensure that pupils can progress successfully and independently, at their own pace. An exception is in music where lessons are planned with pupils with special educational needs in mind.
39. There is insufficient liaison between experienced and skilled teachers of pupils with special educational needs and subject teachers. Closer liaison between the learning support department and subject departments is needed, as a result of which subject teachers can draw up detailed targets for use in class, such as spellings and vocabulary, amounts of written work or appropriate levels of text.

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

40. The present curriculum, the result of a recent major overhaul, makes provision for the school to give pupils a broad and balanced education. Statutory requirements are met in all areas except for aspects of information and communications technology (ICT). The adoption of a two-week cycle of lessons has provided curriculum planners with greater flexibility and this has been well used to re-emphasise the school's commitment to breadth and balance without the loss of depth. The amount of time for teaching has been increased so that it now meets national recommendations fully. These important changes, though only a few weeks old at the time of this inspection, respond to criticisms at the time of the last inspection and have bedded in well.
41. The arrangements for grouping pupils are generally unchanged and usually enable the school to meet most pupils' learning requirements. However, the use of data available within departments on pupils' prior attainment is still not having a sufficient impact on matching all learning to pupils' needs in all subjects.

42. The new curriculum model contains all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, but there are few vocational courses, even in the sixth form. As part of the curriculum review, and in response to the last inspection, religious education has been made available in all Key Stages, as required, but the time available in Key Stage 4 (2 per cent of the week) and in the sixth form, where it is taught as a module within general studies, is minimal. The total teaching time in the school week has been increased to bring the school's practice into line with national recommendations. Advanced GNVQs in art and design and business education are available post-16, but in general, pupils opt in Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form for the traditional routes of GCSE, AS and A level. In the sixth form in particular, this does not entirely meet all pupils' needs and some pupils as a result choose courses in local further education colleges to which they are more drawn. The general studies programme in the sixth form provides access to further development of skills and awareness of pupils' own learning needs, and this is valuable.
43. The changes in the curriculum structure have resulted in the breadth of the design and technology curriculum being reduced by the removal of the electronics option in Key Stage 4. However, it is still quite broad, in that pupils can opt for graphics, resistant materials, food or textiles. In Key Stage 3, there is better design and technology coverage than in many schools through a termly rotation of the options within the programme. In Key Stage 4, the introduction of a physical education course at GCSE has been welcomed with 34 pupils opting for it. Changes in timetabling arrangements in Key Stage 4 have resulted in less opportunity for grouping pupils by their prior attainment in languages in Year 10, with a resulting impact on the speed of progress in these first weeks of the term. The time available for music in Key Stage 3 has improved.
44. The programme of personal and social education has been recently reviewed and is now being delivered in a one hour timetabled period every two weeks, except for Year 7, where it is one lesson per week. The content is wide-ranging, including health education as well as issues such as relationships, human rights, prejudice and discrimination, some aspects of the law and the dangers of substance abuse. Teaching in the sample of lessons seen indicates that there is considerable commitment to making this programme, which is taught entirely by form tutors, effective, and there are opportunities for both staff and pupils to evaluate topics throughout the year. The relationships between teachers and pupils in lessons and around the school reinforce important messages about teamwork and the way people treat each other in a learning community. However, the amount of time allocated to personal and social education is too small to allow good coverage of all the aspects of the programme. This impacts particularly on the time available for careers education, and pupils' access to specialist careers education and guidance, particularly in Year 11, where form tutors are responsible for helping pupils with post-16 choices and applications. There are no specialist careers staff teaching careers this year, and the school should ensure that tutors are adequately trained and informed to deliver this curriculum. Year 10 pupils benefit from a well-planned work experience programme, which encompasses a wide choice of placements.
45. Provision for the spiritual, moral and cultural development of pupils is satisfactory overall, and the school makes this the first of its overall aims. The planned provision of spiritual development is good but the actual delivery is barely satisfactory. This year the school has realised its plans for the extension of religious education into Key Stage 4 and the inclusion of religious education modules in the sixth form programme of general studies and key skills. There has not been the same success over the required daily act of collective worship. Whilst the programme of assemblies and 'Thoughts for the Day' are very carefully planned, most tutors are not using the latter during morning registration and there is little spiritual input to the weekly year meetings. A particular strength of the morning assemblies is the involvement of local religious leaders on a regular basis, whose presentations are both entertaining and thought provoking, and make Christian teachings relevant to pupils. The school has plans to map the contribution to spiritual development by the various subjects. Religious education plays its part, as in a lesson in which the spiritual music of the Taize community gave pupils an experience of Christian worship. In art, sixth form students sketching in a wood spent time in silence watching the movement of light and shade amongst the branches and listening to birdsong. Year 8 pupils listening to Handel's fireworks music experienced the elation of people celebrating the end of war. Such moments,

though, are rare in the curriculum as a whole.

46. The school makes good provision for the moral development of the pupils. Its strong moral ethos encourages pupils to respect each other and abide by the code of conduct, which is based on the principle of showing care and consideration for others. There are clear sanctions for those who abuse another person's rights, including immediate exclusion for serious offences. In the personal and social education programme, much is done to prevent bullying by raising pupils' awareness of the many forms it can take and how they can stop it. Across the curriculum, pupils have the opportunity to discuss moral issues, which arise in English literature, in the study of environmental issues and sustainability of resources in geography and science, in human rights in personal and social education and in issues of personal relationships in religious education. Teachers value pupils' contributions in lessons and build up their self-esteem, expecting them to behave responsibly and most pupils respond well to this.
47. The school makes good provision for the social development of pupils, through the social education programme taught by tutors and experience given in a number of subjects. The personal and social education programme helps pupils develop good personal relationships and understand their responsibilities as future citizens. In music pupils take responsibility for rehearsing many groups by themselves. Vocational courses in the sixth form make students responsible for their learning, requiring them to research topics and make presentations. Opportunities for social interaction exist in lessons and group work is a feature in English, mathematics, modern languages, design and technology, music, physical education and drama. Aspects of the history curriculum encourage awareness of the social conditions of the past, for example, social life in Tudor England in Year 8. Opportunities exist in music for pupils to work closely together in concert performances, including overseas tours, as well as in regular ensemble playing. All pupils in Year 8 spend a week together in Scotland, following an activities programme that promotes individual confidence and their ability to work together as a team. Pupils have the opportunity to develop these qualities further through the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme. Year councils give pupils a voice in the running of the school and the opportunity to take the initiative in organising social and charitable events. Pupils show a good measure of social concern through their support for their partner school in Albania and the Jeans for Genes project. Sixth form students provide help for pupils who need to develop their reading, but they could be given more responsibility for school and community service.
48. Provision for the cultural development of pupils is satisfactory overall. The school makes a good contribution to developing pupils' knowledge of Western culture through the curriculum but there is less opportunity for pupils to appreciate the richness of other cultures. Music and drama play an important part, giving pupils opportunities to take part in school productions and concerts. The school's concert band, for example, went on tour to Barcelona this year. English and art and design organise visits to theatres, galleries and the Glasgow design centre and the school has benefited from having a sculptor in residence. The Dome project in art and design gave pupils the opportunity to contribute to a display celebrating the multi-cultural life of Leeds. There is a strong European dimension to the work in modern foreign languages, supported by units of work in the social education programme. The school has a longstanding link with Albania and organises exchange visits to France and Germany. Pupils learn something about other cultures through the study of major religions and different forms of art and music, as well as gaining some appreciation of the food in other cultures. The history curriculum introduces pupils to the study of Islamic culture and covers issues like slavery and the empire. However, the literature of other cultures is not well represented in the curriculum and extra-curricular opportunities for pursuing cultural interests are not as extensive as they were at the time of the last inspection.
49. Departments have not yet received training in the development of reading and writing skills through the medium of their subjects and there is no school-wide agreement on the priorities for developing literacy. The head of English and the coordinator of special educational needs have jointly attended in-service training in order to spearhead this development, and have a planned

programme of visits to primary schools to look at the work being done in the National Literacy Initiative. Several departments give an appropriate focus to the development of technical vocabulary in their subjects, but as yet there is no coordinated plan for the teaching of literacy through subjects.

50. The published programme of extra-curricular activities to enhance what is routinely available through lessons was not yet fully underway at the time of the inspection. There is an impressive programme of music with opportunities in many areas. The programme did not in general justify parents' concern that there were too few opportunities for pupils to learn to play stringed instruments, although brass features extensively. The take up of instrumental tuition continues to be good. The quality and range of music provision overall is very good. Sporting opportunities are more limited, although satisfactory, for boys and girls. They cover the traditional range of activities and, although the school has now appointed two new staff who both take team games with boys, there is still room for more staff participation to develop other activities, particularly for the boys. There is a good programme of visits organised in history, English and drama, and of journeys and exchanges organised by the French and German departments. However, more could be done to encourage pupils' understandings of other religions by visits to places of worship, and of pupils' aesthetic development by visits to galleries and museums. Work experience for Year 12 pupils in France and Germany is particularly beneficial.
51. In general there is equality of access and opportunity for all pupils in the curriculum. The programme of sports, except for netball and rugby, is available equally to boys and girls. The school is currently in a trial period of single sex lessons across the physical education curriculum with the intention of raising standards - in the lessons seen, this is operating quite well at present.
52. There is low awareness of the issues surrounding pupils who have English as an additional language. The head of English believes that some pupils who are known to be bilingual at home are fluent in English in school. Superficially, this seems to be so, but some pupils exhibit errors that have not been corrected, for example, the omission of the article and some restrictions in vocabulary in written and oral communication. Although this may not be a significant problem, as numbers are increasing it will need investigation and higher staff awareness
53. The school makes good provision for the pupils with special educational needs, meeting the requirements of statements by a limited amount of withdrawal from the National Curriculum and providing a variety of opportunities in Key Stage 4. Individual education plans are prepared and distributed. The curriculum in Key Stage 3 is appropriate and tackles specific problems. The provision in Key Stage 4 for some pupils, who have made very slow progress with literacy, is imaginative and carefully planned in co-operation with business and further education colleges. The mixture of work experience, vocational courses and the National Curriculum is proving to be the solution to some pupils' loss of interest in school as they realise that they are making little progress. The Certificates of Achievement, as an alternative to GCSE, provides some pupils with a qualification they might not achieve otherwise.
54. The school has started to identify and make provision for gifted and talented pupils. For example, as part of the national Excellence in Cities initiative, pupils have attended study skills days with partner schools and thinking skills programmes are being introduced into personal and social education in Year 7 and into science and mathematics.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

55. The staff at Wetherby High School make great efforts to get to know their pupils well so that they can meet individual needs and give suitable personal and educational support when it is required. They are largely successful in this aim, particularly with pupils who may be in danger of dropping out of education or of being excluded from school. A well-structured pastoral team is further supplemented by a full-time learning mentor, an educational welfare officer based in the school, and a visiting behaviour support teacher. With this level of pastoral support, the school is able to

offer very effective help to pupils who are struggling because of low attainment, poor attendance or personal family problems, including the appropriate use of individual pastoral support programmes. An additional feature this term is the formation of a Learning Support Unit within the school, which offers one-to-one support to pupils who are becoming disaffected with their work.

56. Good progress has also been made in eliminating bullying. Most pupils feel safe in the school and are confident that any incidents reported to staff will be dealt with. Through the personal and social education programme, pupils are also discussing strategies that allow them to deal individually with bullying if it occurs. Year 7 pupils are well looked after during their first few weeks in the school and appear happy and secure in their new environment. Pupils from different ethnic groups mix well socially and there is no evidence of racial tension. Any incidents that may involve racist behaviour among pupils are carefully logged and investigated.
57. The school's behaviour policy and code of conduct are sensible and well implemented. Through assemblies and the personal and social education programmes values such as respect and consideration for others are constantly reinforced. Pupils know what standard of behaviour is expected of them and what the consequences are if they breach these boundaries. Poor behaviour is rare, but a wide range of strategies is now in place to help these pupils deal with their behaviour problems and minimise disruption in the classroom. Procedures to monitor and improve attendance are very effective. Although the attendance rate is well above average, the school continually monitors individual attendance rates and follows up regular absences at an early stage. The presence of an educational welfare officer on the school site for two days a week is providing good support for pastoral staff in this monitoring role.
58. There are good guidelines and procedures for child protection, which are properly implemented. All staff, including support staff, are alert to signs of abuse and are clear about how to deal with concerns or disclosures. Pupils on the at-risk register or causing concern are closely monitored and receive a high level of personal support from pastoral staff. The school has built effective links with external agencies, which allows it to offer the most appropriate help to pupils in need. Good care is also taken of pupils who have statements of special education needs. However, in the classroom special needs pupils could be more effectively supported by teachers if their individual learning plans were specifically linked to each subject.
59. Programmes are in place throughout the school for health education, including sex and drugs education. There are a number of staff trained in first aid to care for pupils when they are unwell or injured. However, the school has no medical room where pupils can rest or receive treatment. This is unsatisfactory since sick pupils currently have to sit in the reception area outside the main office, which is neither private nor comfortable. There are a number of other health and safety concerns, which the school must address urgently. The school's health and safety policy, which is based on the Leeds LEA guidelines, does not specifically allocate responsibilities for ensuring pupil safety around the school. Most departments do not carry out regular risk assessment as a matter of course, with the result that health and safety procedures are not always tight enough in the classroom and some equipment checks in science and design and technology are not up to date. Accidents to pupils that occur during teaching time are not being adequately investigated or recorded. The nature and age of the buildings also give rise to some concerns, particularly in the tower block, where there is no emergency lighting, and on the bridge where the glass at floor level is not reinforced.
60. Heads of year and form tutors are well informed by subject staff about pupils who may be under-achieving or are struggling with their work. There are good monitoring and support systems in place to help these pupils improve. Targets are now set for all pupils using the central database of assessment information, and in Key Stage 4 each pupil will have a series of one-to-one progress interviews with pastoral staff to ensure that targets are appropriate and are being met. However, the system is still in its early stages and pastoral staff do not yet have easy enough access to the central database to allow them to track every pupil's progress on a regular basis. Information about prior attainment, particularly on entry to the school, is not well enough disseminated to staff

to allow potentially high attaining pupils to be identified at an early stage. Personal development is monitored by form tutors through records of achievement, and pupils are now starting to become involved in their own target setting and in assessing their own progress throughout the year. The progress of sixth form students is effectively monitored, with each student having predicted grades based on GCSE results and their attainment during the sixth form.

61. The school operates an Assessment Recording and Reporting Assessment (ARRA) system that schedules internal and external reporting dates. This is linked to the school calendar of parents' evenings and the requirement for statutory reporting arrangements, which the school meets. Systems are in place to record and report assessments required for examination entry at GCSE level. Some subjects also keep their own assessment and reporting systems. Departments contribute to the compilation of a National Record of Achievement for each pupil and these are further enhanced through personal and social development lessons. The monitoring of the progress of pupils with special educational need takes place by annual review using information supplied by departments and the specialist learning support team.
62. The school is beginning to build up a bank of assessment information on all pupils through the ARRA system and this has been used to set targets for all pupils. However, its widespread use across the school by all staff, the sharing of the data with parents and pupils and its effective translation into strategies to affect the planning of the curriculum and teaching have yet to become really effective. A school marking policy has been established, but at present it is inconsistently applied across subjects, the grading system is not fully understood by all who use it and the outcomes of routine assessments are not yet fully used to influence future teaching and learning. Overall, there are systems in place that would allow for effective assessment, recording and reporting on pupils. There is a need now to implement these consistently across the school, to ensure that all those involved in the process are properly informed about its use and to make effective use of the data to raise standards.
63. The school works with the local education authority's specialist services to support pupils with more acute physical or learning needs. Teachers have also valued and benefited from training opportunities. A range of tests used to assess levels of literacy and, more recently, numeracy enables the school to identify those with special educational needs. Regular reading and spelling tests provide the school and the pupils with measures of progress and the programmes of study which are used in withdrawal lessons, themselves indicate how well pupils are learning. Good use is made of the data to plan for further help or to re-assure pupils that they are now able to manage without additional help.
64. The school is in the early stages of identifying and tracking the progress of gifted and talented pupils. Tests, teacher assessment and parental views are now contributing to the preparation of a register of individual pupils who fall into this category, which all teachers receive. The steps taken are promising but further work on identification, planning of individual or group programmes and data collection is needed to make satisfactory provision for this group of pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

65. Parents are supportive and appreciative of the fact that the school values and promotes good behaviour and helps children to develop into mature, sensible adults. The school recognises the important role parents have to play in pupils' attainment and progress, and is now starting to extend parents' involvement in their children's learning. Parents can keep abreast of their children's homework timetables through their planners, which are carefully monitored by form tutors and year heads, and are encouraged to contact the school with any problems. This year, parents of pupils in Year 11 were able to attend a meeting preparing them for the timetable of GCSE work throughout the year, and discussed with staff how best to help and support their children. Further, similar curriculum meetings for other year groups are planned. Parents are closely involved in the setting up of pastoral support programmes and are an integral part of pupil reviews in the learning support unit and the special educational needs department.

66. There is some dissatisfaction among parents about the level of information they receive on their children's progress. Written reports are sent home once a year and parents also have the opportunity to attend an annual consultation evening with subject staff. Consultation evenings are intentionally held at a different time from when parents receive written reports in order to give a further opportunity to discuss progress. Not all staff are yet familiar enough with the school's assessment procedures to share interim grades with parents at that time. This can leave some parents uncertain about the standard their children are working at for a good part of the academic year. Written reports in Key Stage 3 give a range of grades (A-E) for achievement, which should relate to how well pupils are attaining relative to nationally expected standards for that age group. However, parents are not given national curriculum levels until the end of the Key Stage, and there is not enough monitoring to ensure that the report grades are being consistently awarded across year groups and from year to year. Comments by teachers often focus on pupils' attitudes rather than highlighting what they do well and how they can improve. Reports in Key Stage 4 relate grades to GCSE, and contain comments which are more constructive in pointing out where pupils need to concentrate their efforts to achieve higher grades. Sixth form reports are informative and helpful, focussing on how students can improve their standard of work.
67. There is flourishing Parent Teacher Association, which organises a busy schedule of social and fund-raising activities throughout the year. Through the efforts of parents, the PTA has contributed significantly to building up the school's resources in recent years. Around £8000 is raised annually and last year this was used to purchase audio-visual equipment for drama, modern foreign languages and PE, a piano for the music department, and software for the ICT network.
68. There is a good flow of information between parents and the school about pupils with special educational needs and parents of these pupils confirmed the value of the work being done with their children. There are regular reviews of progress attended by parents and informal meetings when the need arises. A letter to parents, asking for information about pupils who have particular talents or gifts, has revealed some that were not known to the school. This is a promising approach to involving parents about appropriate provision.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

69. Strong and decisive leadership by the current headteacher and his senior colleagues have provided new vigour for school leadership and improvement, which was much needed. There is now a clear direction for the work and development of the school. Promoting high standards and raising levels of achievement have been a first priority in the last year and this has been well supported by changes to the curriculum, to the school day and to the staffing structure, all of which appear to have been well embedded and are now ready to bear fruit. An explicit statement of school aims and values emphasises pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development and a framework for the school of good discipline and of pastoral care. An explicit commitment to equality of opportunity is reflected in most aspects of the life and work of the school. Providing a wider range of extra-curricular activities and continually monitoring the progress and achievement of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and the learning needs of those with English as an additional language are all areas which will need attention if full equality of opportunity is to be achieved. Very good relationships are a feature of school life. Some monitoring of teaching and learning has been undertaken over the past year, but this is currently weak as an area of responsibility for many middle managers and as yet it is insufficiently rigorous and comprehensive. Appraisal and performance management are being developed appropriately in line with the national timescale.
70. The school development plan is a useful document and it contains an appropriate set of priorities, which are due to be reviewed and revised for the next cycle of planning. The current document needs to strengthen accountability for actions and to include success criteria. Target setting is established in the school and has been well used as a tool to spur raised standards in the most recent GCSE examinations. Gender-based targets are not currently being set, which would be helpful, as there has been a complex fluctuation in performance by boys and girls in recent years. Some value-added analysis of performance data has been carried out but this is an area that could be further developed. There is a need to ensure that targets for GCSE continue to be

ambitious. The vast majority of the staff now shares the commitment to further improvement in standards and the school is steadily putting in place structures that will ensure its capacity for success. Delegation of management responsibility is generally effective although heads of subject need to assume a greater responsibility for the quality of the teaching and learning within their subjects.

71. The governors are fulfilling nearly all of their statutory duties and are now taking a much more active role in shaping the direction of the school, following a period when they were given insufficient information and were not involved enough in strategic decisions. They have done sound work, supporting the headteacher, to establish a plan to clear the accumulated financial deficit, which has been reduced from £330,000 to £244,000 by the end of last financial year. They have also recently assumed new responsibilities for cleaning and for grounds maintenance. The governors are rapidly developing their understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school although their understanding of the curriculum for which they are responsible and the implementation of an action plan for standards needs further development.
72. Financial management in the school is now good. The school development plan clearly identifies the source of funding for each priority, though the level of funding required is only partially shown and there is scope for strengthening this link between the development plan and the budget setting process. A process of bidding for development funding in accordance with school priorities by subject heads helps to ensure that expenditure is related to planning, although departmental expenditure is not currently monitored for its effectiveness in raising standards. The current headteacher, following his appointment, took immediate and vigorous action, supported by the governors and LEA, to reduce the inherited budget deficit. A five-year plan has been agreed with the LEA, which will reduce the deficit whilst protecting the education of current pupils. Future reduction and the creation of a balanced budget are dependent on maintaining pupil numbers at current levels which looks feasible at present.
73. Financial administration day-to-day is very efficient and controls are good. Although governors have not received formal training in the principles of best value, these were applied in a well-researched decision prior to taking on the management of cleaning and grounds maintenance. Quotations are obtained before making purchases, in line with audit recommendations. Specific government grant, which this year amounted to £127,000, is administered efficiently but no formal process exists for planning expenditure or for monitoring the effectiveness of the grant.
74. The school has done much to address the issues concerning staffing which were raised in the previous inspection report. There is now a good match of the number, qualifications and experience of the teachers to the demands of the curriculum. A majority of staff are very experienced and staff are also now well deployed; very few currently teach a first subject in which they do not have a qualification and where this occurs it is not having an adverse effects on standards. There has been a particularly good improvement in art, where all four teachers are now qualified specialists. More male teachers have been appointed in physical education. Two co-ordinators have been appointed recently, through the Excellence in Cities programme, to lead work with gifted and talented pupils. Their aims, plans and preparations thus far for the role, are sound.
75. Learning support staff for special educational needs are experienced, well qualified and deployed well in giving much valued help in the classroom. Technician support, which was criticised in the last report, is now adequate in information technology, but barely adequate in science in terms of hours provided. Technician support in food technology is non-existent and is impacting on the quality of practical food lessons, where good quality teaching is being constrained by time spent on maintenance and cleaning.
76. There are good procedures for the induction of newly qualified teachers and students in initial teacher training; the newly qualified staff appointed this year are very satisfied with the support given. The progress of other newly appointed staff is not quite so well monitored with less involvement by the senior management team. Other procedures for the support and professional

development of staff in general are satisfactory. Allocation of teachers to in-service courses is well organised, with training needs linked closely to the school's development plan. Evaluation and dissemination of material from the course to subject colleagues is in place, but no requirement is currently made for a formal response on how the subject intends to use this. Training in information technology, initially for those directly responsible for delivering the taught lessons, will be provided through the New Opportunities Fund.

77. Members of the senior management team observe one lesson a week in order to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning. However, this has only just begun and written feedback is not yet being provided. Heads of subject are being encouraged to observe lessons, with senior managers covering lessons to make this possible. As yet, apart from in art, music and mathematics, few subjects have developed active monitoring systems and more needs to be done. It is intended to use this monitoring to replace the former appraisal system, which is no longer operating after reaching its third cycle. A draft Performance Management Policy, which meets the requirements of the new arrangements, has been prepared and agreed by staff.
78. Despite several improvements since the last inspection, the standard of the accommodation remains unsatisfactory. Full responsibility for the care and maintenance of accommodation has been recently delegated to the school from the local education authority. The increase in pupil numbers over the last five years has put great pressure on space, and almost all departments suffer from cramped teaching rooms. Some classrooms cannot physically seat all the pupils in groups of over 30. This affects pupils' learning where teachers cannot employ an appropriate range of methods, such as role play or group work, due to lack of space. Several departments, for example history, geography and religious education, teach in rooms which are spread out across the school site, making it difficult to share resources such as audio-visual equipment. Sixth form classrooms are also too small for many of the present groups.
79. The school has extensive playing fields, which are well maintained and provide a good resource for a variety of outdoor games. However, the hard court area, which is used for a wide range of activities in physical education, is in poor condition and regularly floods after rain. The two gyms are not sufficient to accommodate planned indoor activities as well as acting as a back up for classes unable to use the hard court.
80. Recent lack of regular maintenance also affects the quality of the classroom environment. Roof leaks are a potential hazard, particularly in the design and technology and music blocks where electrical equipment and computers are stored. Classrooms in the oldest parts of the school are damp, dingy and cold, providing uncomfortable conditions that are not conducive to good learning. The presence of large amounts of waste both inside the classrooms used for geography and behind the design and technology block is unsatisfactory and a potential health hazard. The school has undertaken extensive external redecoration over the last year, but much of the woodwork is in poor condition, resulting in drafty classrooms, particularly in winter. The curtain walling in the tower block has now been partially renewed, improving conditions in some of the classrooms. However, there are some safety concerns in the tower block, such as the lack of emergency lighting in the case of fire and unreinforced glass panes at floor level on the bridge. The raised flagstones in all parts of the grounds still constitute a hazard to both pupils and staff. The school plans to remove these within the next twelve months.
81. The school has nevertheless created some attractive and informative teaching areas through creative use of display. The art department provides a stimulating and exciting environment, and its work is also on display in other parts of the school, such as the reception area and the dining room.
82. The provision of learning resources has improved since the last inspection, and most departments now have sufficient textbooks and other equipment to deliver the curriculum satisfactorily. However, many of the books are old and in need of renewal, and there are still some areas of shortage, which inhibit pupils' progress. For example, in modern foreign languages there are insufficient books for the numbers of pupils and the range of content is very restricted; and in geography there are no sixth form textbooks, leading many students to buy their own. The library has a good range of fiction and is well used by the English department to support the curriculum

and the teaching of literacy. However, the stock of specialist texts and journals for other subjects is thin, and consequently it is not widely used by subject departments other than English. There are only limited information and communications technology resources and no Internet access. This lack of a central, comprehensive resource centre is restricting the development of pupils' independent learning skills and their ability to research topics without close supervision from teachers.

83. The school has invested heavily in computer equipment since the last inspection, but the provision remains insufficient to meet curriculum requirements in computer aided design and control. The ratio of pupils to computers has improved to 10 to 1, but this is still well short of the national average of 7 to 1. Many subjects have no access to the school network, seriously restricting teachers' ability to use information and communications technology to promote and extend learning throughout the curriculum.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

84. In order to raise standards further in the school, governors, the headteacher and staff should:
1. Improve the overall management of health and safety issues and take urgent action on:
 - ensuring that job descriptions contain clear statements of responsibility for health and safety activities;
 - procedures for investigating and reporting accidents on site;
 - undertaking risk assessments where these are needed, for example in science and design and technology;
 - taking action where the accommodation currently in use may be causing a health risk, for example in geography;
 - raised flagstones throughout the site, which are liable to cause an accident;
 - refuse and debris currently being stored on site, which is a health and fire risk.
 2. Ensure that middle managers assume more responsibility for the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - using data more effectively to inform their view of the prior attainment of pupils;
 - undertaking regular monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning within their subjects;
 - using the information thereby produced to develop teaching so that all teaching reaches the standard of the best;
 - developing their view of assessment so that it moves from emphasising 'effort' to focus upon the 'rate and quality of learning and attainment'.
 3. Provide further opportunities for pupils' personal development, by:
 - increasing the overall teaching time available for personal and social education;
 - ensuring that appropriate knowledge and skills in careers education and guidance are available to pupils;
 - developing more links with business and the community which directly focus upon the curriculum;
 - extending the range of extra-curricular activities on offer.
 4. Ensure that governors are more involved, through increased links with the staff, in a strategic approach to:
 - understanding and developing the curriculum of the school;
 - continually assessing the school's strengths and weaknesses; and
 - taking action to improve standards.
 5. Improve the unsatisfactory aspects of the accommodation as rapidly as possible, with a priority

for those areas where health and safety risks are involved;

6. Improve the quality and quantity of learning resources in science, modern languages and in geography, including making information and communication technology more available to all subjects, so that they can meet their statutory requirement for National Curriculum 2000.

85. The school should also work to improve aspects of some teaching of history by reducing lengthy teacher exposition and increasing the pace of lessons, increasing the variety of activities in lessons, especially in the sixth form; and improving the quality of marking. The statutory requirement for daily collective worship and the National Curriculum order for Information and Communications Technology must also be met in full.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	196
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	62

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	42	88	56	7	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

	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	963
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	42

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	21	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	128	3

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	25

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	32
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	25

Attendance

Authorised absence

	per cent
School data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	per cent
School data	0.3

National comparative data	7.9
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National comparative data	1.1
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	70	70	140

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	55	53	53
	Girls	64	56	53
	Total	119	109	106
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	87	78	76
	National	63	62	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	41	47	42
	National	28	38	23

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	46	53	54
	Girls	51	58	59
	Total	97	111	113
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	70	80	82
	National	64	64	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	42	44	46
	National	31	37	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
	1999	71	56	127

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	37	67	71
	Girls	30	56	56
	Total	67	123	127
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	53	97	100
	National	46.6	90.9	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	40
	National	38

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

Vocational qualifications		Number	per cent success rate
Number studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all those they studied	School	0	n/a
	National		n/a

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
	1999	32	16	48

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	20.7	22.0	21.1	4.4	5.3	4.6
National	17.7	18.1	17.9	2.7	2.8	2.8

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

Vocational qualifications		Number	per cent 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	[]	[]
	National		n/a

International Baccalaureate		Number	per cent success rate
Number entered for the International Baccalaureate Diploma and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all they studied	School	0	n/a
	National		82.5

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	25
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	8
Indian	18
Pakistani	18
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	3
White	876
Any other minority ethnic group	13

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	17	1
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	4	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	6	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	22	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: Y[] – Y[]

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	56.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.1
Average class size	20.4

Education support staff: Y[] – Y[]

Total number of education support staff	14.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	356

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	2,345,567
Total expenditure	2,296,098
Expenditure per pupil	2,485
Balance brought forward from previous year	-293,120
Balance carried forward to next year	-243,651

Results of the survey of parents and carer

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	963
Number of questionnaires returned	168

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	38	48	8	2	1
My child is making good progress in school.	32	57	5	1	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	23	51	11	2	11
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	19	59	15	2	3
The teaching is good.	20	64	6	1	8
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	17	50	20	4	6
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	36	51	5	2	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	41	51	3	2	2
The school works closely with parents.	16	56	14	3	9
The school is well led and managed.	27	55	7	1	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	26	60	5	1	8
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	17	44	16	7	14

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

ENGLISH

86. Results in tests at the end of Key Stage 3 over recent years have generally been well above average in comparison with all and with similar schools. There has, however, been some variation from year to year, which may, in part, be accounted for by acknowledged variation in the marking of the tests. In the year 2000 there was a significant drop in results, though these are still above average. Girls have attained better than boys but the difference at Wetherby High School is less than nationally.
87. Over the last four years, results in GCSE English language and English literature have been around the national average, sometimes above it. Since attainment on entry to the school has been above or well above average during this period and before, these results have not represented good progress over time or added value. In 1999, results at GCSE were below average for similar schools, as measured by Key Stage 3 attainment. However, in 2000 results showed a significant improvement in both examinations. A consistently high overall pass rate in GCSE (100 per cent in the last three years) indicates that the lowest attaining pupils, including some with special educational needs, have done well and made progress. Over the period girls have done better than boys but boys have tended to do better in relation to their sex nationally than girls. In 2000, however, boys did not do as well as previously at the highest grades, A* and A. Before 2000 fewer girls gained these highest grades than might have been expected on the basis of their attainment on entry to the school. Over recent years, therefore, the picture of results of tests and examinations at the end of Key Stage 3 and in GCSE has been complex. The department needs to monitor results carefully, to seek reasons for the variations over time – especially if these continue – and to pursue its current objective of seeking consistently better results at the highest grades.
88. A Level results have in recent years been above and sometimes well above the national average, both at grades A to B and across the range of pass grades, A to E. In 2000 a small entry in English literature achieved highly; results in the relatively newly established language and literature syllabus were good, though not as good.
89. Standards of attainment observed during the inspection were above national expectations at the ages of 14 and 16. Pupils are achieving at least satisfactorily and, in many cases, well in relation to their prior attainment. This is broadly the case also with pupils with special educational needs. In the sixth form, students are meeting course requirements and some are exceeding them.
90. In all age groups pupils are articulate speakers with good vocabulary. As they move up the school most acquire confidence in discussion. Pupils of all levels of attainment benefit from the opportunities which many teachers give for structured group discussions and for formal presentations to the class. Those of higher and average attainment in Key Stage 4 show a growing ability to adapt their spoken register to situation. Standards of discussion in the sixth form are variable but the older students often make fluent and perceptive contributions. At all stages, pupils and students are attentive and constructive listeners.
91. Across the range of attainment, pupils' reading comprehension is generally good. Those, including some with special educational needs, whose reading skills are poor receive special help and in consequence make good progress. The majority of pupils in Key Stage 3 know the texts studied in class well and, where the teaching is good - as it often is - they learn to infer underlying meaning and to appreciate the effects created by writers: one Year 9 class, for example, were confident in their understanding of how speech writers use rhetorical devices. There is much good, expressive reading aloud. The department successfully encourages private reading among

the youngest pupils. In Key Stage 4 pupils discuss their set texts, orally and in writing, on the basis of usually comprehensive knowledge. The best teaching helps them to see the importance of substantiating their statements with evidence from the text. There is some productive reading for research. By Year 13 most students have a detailed grasp of set texts and in some cases their analytical reading is impressive. Sixth form students, however, do not read widely enough and some of those following the language and literature course are, as yet, rather superficial readers.

92. Pupils generally write fluently. In most classes in Key Stage 3 they gain experience of an appropriate range of styles. Good progress is made in their control of language, though this is slower in the case of lower attaining pupils. In this key stage, spelling presents problems to many, particularly boys, even among those whose writing is otherwise good. By Year 11, some pupils produce accomplished writing, well sustained and well structured. Even the weaker writers express themselves clearly and intelligibly. These pupils, however, often have an insecure grasp of Standard English. In the sixth form, there is much careful writing, securely based on evidence, but some students continue to make errors in syntax and spelling. At all stages, where the teacher insists on careful planning and re-drafting, accuracy and clarity are both improved. When ICT is used for word processing pupils often produce markedly more accurate work; such opportunities are, however, not consistently available.
93. In other subjects of the curriculum, standards of literacy are generally good. The majority of pupils write accurately and clearly, and written work is often well presented; for example, in modern foreign languages, pupils' writing and presentation are above average and in art the importance of neat writing and careful spelling is stressed. In history, pupils write well in a range of styles, though formal extended writing by those of average and low attainment is not always of a satisfactory standard. In religious education standards are above average but there are not enough opportunities to write creatively and empathetically; the situation is similar in geography. In design and technology, mathematics, music and science some but not all teachers make efforts to encourage pupils to acquire and use the specialist language of the subject. Note-taking is often clear and well structured across the curriculum.
94. The majority of pupils experience little or no difficulty in meeting the reading demands of subjects. In modern foreign languages reading is confident, with few errors. Standards are good in history, even among pupils of lower attainment or with special educational needs. In geography, however, the department makes little attempt to grade texts according to readability; this means that some lower attaining pupils have limited access to difficult language and concepts. In science, shortage of texts limits opportunities for reading. In general, pupils are confident speakers who are able to sustain discussion in class or in groups. Listening skills are overall very good: pupils are attentive and courteous listeners.
95. In English the quality of teaching is good overall. In all lessons seen it was satisfactory or better: in over a quarter it was very good or even excellent; in two-fifths it was good; and in about a third it was satisfactory. Knowledge of the subject is almost always thorough and some teachers convey their enthusiasm and interest to the class, thus gaining attention and respect. Planning is also a strength. In the best lessons, teachers state the learning objectives to the pupils, link work to previous learning and plan activities in a logical sequence. As a result pupils can focus on the topic and move on with confidence to tackle increasingly demanding work. Almost invariably teachers use a range of approaches and they vary these within the lesson to help sustain pupils' interest and concentration. Most choose their methods well to suit the purpose of the lesson: Year 11 pupils in one class were able to consolidate their understanding of poems through group presentations to the class; the learning of a group of Year 10 pupils was more productive because the teacher had prepared clearly focussed questions for groups to address. Relationships are also good. In one lesson a lower band class in Year 10 had worked hard in pairs to prepare material on film treatments of a short story and had the confidence to deliver quite complex presentations to the class in a friendly and supportive atmosphere. Marking of written work is very helpful to pupils when teachers take the trouble, as many do, to explain why work is successful and also to point out how to improve it further. Some marking, however, is bland and superficial.

96. Alongside many strengths, there are a few weaknesses, but these are not widespread. Occasionally teachers talk too much and for too long, thus blunting the impact even of good material or clear exposition; pupils then have no opportunity to show that they understand and so drift into inattentiveness or silly behaviour. In a few Key Stage 3 classes the tasks and texts chosen lack challenge. There are rare instances when teachers tolerate noise and idleness.
97. Since the last inspection good progress has been made. Attainment has improved, as has the quality of teaching. Pupils have better opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills. The department is now well managed. There is now effective departmental planning, schemes of work are in place, where there were none before, and teachers now provide half-termly forecasts. This all makes the monitoring of curriculum coverage more feasible and the department's work more cohesive. Resources, though not abundant, are much more comprehensive than they were. Assessment procedures were not well developed four years ago but are becoming more systematic: the recent introduction of a common assessment framework for Key Stage 3 and target-setting for all pupils should be helpful. Less progress has been made in the integration of information and communications technology into subject work: its use is currently very patchy but there are sensible plans for the future. There is as yet no monitoring of teaching in English, apart from some observation of the lessons of the newly qualified teacher, who is well supported.
98. The accommodation available to English is only barely satisfactory. Some classrooms are small and constrain teaching approaches. A few are scattered and, in three cases, teachers have to teach in up to six different rooms. One classroom is damp and musty and is in surroundings which constitute a hazard to health.

MATHEMATICS

99. The mathematical attainment of pupils on entry to the school is consistently above average and in some years well above average. By the end of Year 9, standards in national tests are well above average and these have improved steadily each year since 1996. In 1999, test results were close to the average for similar schools, while in English and science they were well above average. However, mathematics results improved again in 2000, particularly the proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels. Boys do a little better than girls, particularly at the higher levels, though this difference has significantly reduced since 1996. GCSE results are also well above the national average. In 1999 they were, in addition, well above the average for similar schools, and pupils also did relatively better in mathematics than in many of their other subjects. However GCSE performance in mathematics declined in 2000, unlike most other subjects which improved, and was lower than for several years. There have in recent years been relatively few pupils gaining A* grades in GCSE. There is no consistent factor in the relative performance of girls and boys, though the results of boys have declined more significantly over the last three years than those of girls. Performance in A-level examinations has been above the national average in most recent years. The results in 2000 were an exception to this and were below average, though all students passed.
100. The standard of work seen during the inspection was above average and matched the results. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 make progress which is at least satisfactory and is good when the teaching takes account of all pupils' abilities. Pupils make good progress with algebra, starting with simple algebraic expressions in Year 7 and leading to equations and substitution in formulae in Year 9. They can investigate open-ended situations fairly systematically and higher attaining pupils can make and test hypotheses and explain their methods articulately. Pupils' numeracy skills are improving through regular practice. Lower attainers, for example, can turn percentages into fractions though they still have difficulty simplifying the fractions. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress working with support staff in class. In Year 8, pupils spend much of their time working through booklets on their own. This programme is not well matched to the National Curriculum and gives insufficient opportunity for discussing work. As a result, progress is only satisfactory, and although the scheme is being phased out this year, it accounts for previous underachievement in national tests when compared with English and science.

101. In GCSE classes, pupils generally make good progress, though progress is only satisfactory when teaching lacks stimulation, and some higher attaining pupils could achieve even more with greater challenge. Pupils are able, when required, to think about mathematical relationships and they explain their understanding well. Higher and average attainers reach a good standard of basic algebra, including simultaneous equations, and higher attainers do clear well-organised work. Lower attainers can manipulate simple fractions and have a basic understanding of geometry, but they require much help and reassurance.
102. Standards on the A-level course are above average and students make progress which is at least satisfactory and often good. The highest attainers reach a high standard of algebra and a good understanding of calculus. Their work is confident and quite reliable though in some cases exhibits some carelessness from being rushed. Students can apply their skills in calculus to mechanics but their understanding of the links between all areas of the subject is not secure. Lower attaining students are not fully confident with more difficult fractions and negative numbers and they have difficulty with more complex algebra.
103. In general, the teaching of numeracy skills in mathematics lessons is satisfactory. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 are benefiting from the introduction of a numeracy strategy, though this is at a very early stage. Pupils are generally numerate and cope well with the mathematical demands of other subjects. In science pupils are competent in doing calculations such as percentages and ratios, substitution in formulas and use of graphs and they get considerable practice in calculations in homework tasks. In geography lessons, pupils are successfully taught how to analyse statistical data and to think about the effective presentation of data on graphs. They have many opportunities in design and technology to estimate and measure and they are expected to think and talk about sizes. In information and communication technology there are occasional opportunities to use spreadsheets and, in Year 7, pupils calculate co-ordinates to create a computerised drawing. In a Year 9 art lesson, most pupils were able to enlarge a design correctly using proportions. The teaching of the application of number within the Key Skills programme in the Sixth Form has got off to a good start.
104. Since the last report in 1996, GCSE results have remained well above the national average and results in the Year 9 tests have improved steadily. Pupils' attitudes have remained good and are an important factor in achieving these good results. There have been some developments in teaching – teachers now occasionally organise group work and there are more opportunities for investigating mathematics – but until the very recent appointment of a new head of subject, the other recommendations in the report received little attention. Since then, a sound development plan has been written, and a scheme of work, linked to the National Curriculum and including the systematic use of information and communication technology, is being drafted. There is still no extra curricular activity, though some is planned within a new programme for able pupils.
105. The great majority of teaching seen was satisfactory or good, in roughly equal proportions. The quality of teaching is not, however, consistent across the subject and there was a small proportion of very good teaching and of unsatisfactory teaching. A slightly greater proportion of good teaching was seen in Key Stage 4 than elsewhere. In general, teaching is thorough and, in the GCSE and A-level classes, well matched to the examination syllabuses. Pupils make progress through the good management and care they receive. However too much teaching is heavily reliant on the inflexible use of textbooks, with insufficient opportunities for pupils to be active in developing their thinking. This is why some of the highest attaining pupils underachieve in GCSE. In years 7 and 8, pupils are currently taught in mixed ability classes, and only occasionally are the needs of pupils of all abilities met sufficiently. The individualised teaching in Year 8 causes particular problems of poor motivation and of insecure mastery of concepts but there are plans to regroup year 7 pupils into ability sets and to bring in a new programme for year 8 next year.
106. The best teaching includes the effective use of resources to involve all pupils in activities at the start of the lesson and creates a good pace. Pupils are encouraged to develop their reasoning through very good questioning which probes their understanding and uses their answers for consideration by the whole class. Pupils are strongly motivated because they are managed well

and much is expected of them. Full and careful marking gives pupils clear feedback on their performance and guidance on how to improve. Mathematical vocabulary is taught carefully and every opportunity taken to exercise pupils' memories and reasoning. Occasional use is made in mixed ability classes of varied materials designed to meet the needs of all pupils, and pupils' learning is enhanced by their involvement in managing class activities and demonstrating their understanding to the class.

107. The key weaknesses in teaching are poor planning through over-reliance on textbooks and undeveloped questioning. Some marking and assessment is poor, with errors not spotted and pupils left with misunderstandings. More structure is needed to help slower pupils make progress and more challenge needed for the higher attainers. In the newly introduced numeracy lessons in year 7, pupils enjoy the activities designed to give them quick practice in number manipulation but these need further development to ensure all pupils are involved and learning.
108. The sound development plan incorporates new schemes of work, a numeracy strategy, more ability grouping in Years 7 and 8, more systematic use of computers, a policy for gifted and talented pupils, and greater consistency in teachers' implementation of school policies, which will together help raise standards. There has been some monitoring of teaching in mathematics by the deputy headteacher, but this remains an area for further development.

SCIENCE

109. Attainment in science on entry to the school is well above average. By the end of Key Stage 3 standards in national tests are well above the national average and have improved against national levels in each of the past four years. Boys have performed better than girls overall in science, and have exceeded the national average for boys to a greater extent than girls have exceeded the national average for girls. In 1999, results in science at 14 were well above the average for similar schools. Results in 2000 rose again and just over half of the pupils gained the level above national expectations for their age. The performance of boys and girls in 2000 was similar, overall. GCSE results are also well above that attained nationally for double and single award science. In 1999, they were well above the national average in both double and single science and boys' attainment in double award science in 1999 was very high in comparison to the national average for boys, whereas the girls' performance was just below that for girls nationally. GCSE results in science in 2000 have improved on 1999 and in both the double and the single award, the average points score of girls is now higher than that of boys. Performance at A-level in physics and social biology in 1998 was above the national average, but performance in chemistry was below the national average, although the number of candidates was low. Results in A-level biology in 2000 are below average compared with other subjects in the school and results in physics and chemistry are the lowest of any subject, and are a cause of concern to the school.
110. The attainment of pupils seen in lessons in Key Stage 3 was average or above that expected for their age. The work of pupils generally reflects the above average intake of the school and matches the above average National Curriculum levels achieved at the end of Key Stage 2. Progress is always satisfactory in this Key Stage and often good and pupils achieve well. They were able to contribute usefully to discussions about the physical and chemical properties of materials in the components of a replacement hip joint. There were examples of poor recall due to lack of consolidation of learning or where the work produced in lessons did not sufficiently highlight principles, concepts or significant facts. For example flower parts were stuck into books but insufficient background details had been given to enable pupils to understand the functions of the parts.
111. Attainment seen in lessons in Key Stage 4 was usually average or above average for their age. Progress here was also satisfactory and students achieve well. Pupils could clearly explain the electrical principles behind the workings of a fuel gauge or describe links between photosynthesis and respiration, but where attainment was unsatisfactory this was due, for example, to a failure to grasp the principles of the Kinetic theory of matter, which made progression to rates of reaction difficult. In some lessons pupils found interpretation of graphical data difficult and had made errors in the construction of graphs. In the sixth form, attainment seen in lessons and in

students' work was also generally above average and occasionally well above average. Progress was again generally good and students achieve satisfactorily overall. Higher attaining students in all subjects could clearly explain their work. Some students were not able clearly to express what they were doing by outlining fundamental principles. This was more noticeable in physics and chemistry than in biology, and with lower attaining students.

112. The quality of teaching in science is good overall in Key Stage 3 and in the sixth form. In Key Stage 4, it is satisfactory overall, but sometimes good or even very good. The subject knowledge of teachers is very good overall. Delivery is often confident, well paced and at a level appropriate to pupils. Correct terminology is used and practical skills well demonstrated providing a secure basis for future learning. A range of teaching and learning strategies, such as teacher-led discussion and demonstration, use of overhead transparencies, and small group discussion contribute to a stimulating learning experience. The use of recent and local issues, such as the construction of the Knaresborough bypass, provide lessons with interest and relevance to pupils and help their learning of scientific principles related to the impact of man on the environment. In Key Stage 4, a series of lessons had been well planned, materials were to hand and the sequence of delivery during the lesson was logical affording pupils the chance to learn. Practical aspects of the lesson were demonstrated enabling pupils to carry out activities successfully and obtain a set of results. The work was challenging intellectually, creating opportunity for pupils to learn at a high level. Very good use of logical questions and answers led pupils through the principles of the action of the iris in controlling light entering the eye. The sequencing of presentation and pupil involvement allowed lower attaining pupils to master the learning of a difficult concept. In a sixth form lesson, abstract concepts were explained simply and logically, and formulae applied clearly to Newton's laws of motion.
113. Where teaching was less satisfactory, too much information was given at one time making retention difficult. Insufficient attention was paid to fundamental scientific principles of experimental work. Failure to establish a clear understanding of the kinetic theory of matter made understanding of rates of reaction more difficult or assumptions were made that pupils had a secure grasp of atomic structure. There was inadequate attention given to health and safety in practice and by example and some of ineffective pupil management. Theoretical awareness of safety issues was not always translated into effective action by students or by example from the teacher and there was insufficient discussion of practical results before progressing to detailed academic explanations. Sometimes the opportunity to reinforce scientific practical skills was missed, which resulted in pupils not being able, for example, to describe the method or obtain accurate readings from a measuring cylinder in a practical exercise examining the reaction between sodium thiosulphate and hydrochloric acid.
114. Overall, progress since the last inspection is barely satisfactory. Gifted and talented pupils have been identified and some provision has been made but the effects were not obviously seen during teaching. There is now more data available on pupils and targets are being used to challenge them but there is still room for further work in this area since many pupils are not aware of their target grades. Assessment data is being used. However there is a need to consider how to enrich the curriculum to include stimulating and relevant material appropriate to pupil needs. The use of information and communications technology in the department and provision of hardware is still an issue. There is still a need to review management responsibility for the subject, to monitor the implementation of policies and to monitor teaching. Some monitoring of teaching has been undertaken by the deputy head but this needs to be developed by subject staff. There is a need to evaluate stock and dispose of redundant equipment. The working environment is pleasant and stimulating in some laboratories but poor in others. The monitoring of health and safety across the department is unsatisfactory. Resources overall are poor - replacement apparatus, textbooks for all years and information and communications technology hardware are all needed.

ART

115. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher A*-C grades in GCSE art has remained above the national average for the past 5 years. In 1999, 64 per cent of Wetherby High School's pupils attained levels A*-C in art compared to 60 per cent of pupils nationally. By studying the

performance of pupils in the year 2000 mock examinations teachers were able to offer specific and very effective help to pupils who needed it and raised the percentage of A*-C grades in art for 2000 to 84 per cent. Students entered for art at GCE A level have, in recent years, maintained a 100 per cent pass rate and in general they have attained higher grades in art than in the other subjects they have taken. Students taking GNVQ Advanced art have maintained a 100 per cent record of passes with distinction over the last 4 years.

116. The standard of pupils' work seen in art lessons during the inspection was good overall in all age groups. There is abundant evidence of pictures and sculptures of a very high quality on display throughout the art department and in many other areas of the school. From the age of 11 to 14 years pupils produce pictures and designs, which are of the expected standard for their age. Their progress in Key Stage 3 is satisfactory. They can work with a good variety of media including painting, drawing, printing and collage. A particular strength shown by many pupils by the age of 14 is the ability to combine these various media to create colourful and textural designs based on previous drawings. Pupils study the work of famous artists but by the age of 14 their knowledge of this body of work is still superficial. Pupils choosing to take GCSE art make good progress over the two-year course. By the age of 16 they show greatly increased care and precision in drawing and painting with a strong emphasis on pattern and design. Some 16-year-old pupils showed a very good understanding of an artist's work as they explained the differences in style between Modigliani's public and private portraits. By the age of 18 students on A level GCE and GNVQ Advanced courses are able to demonstrate a vigorous use of materials and techniques in both 2 and 3 dimensions. Some excellent examples of portraiture are on display alongside some adventurous and very high quality sculptural work in ceramics and papier-mache. Students are able to build on the technical skills developed for GCSE and make very good progress in developing an individual style and focus of interest under the close guidance of experienced and knowledgeable teachers. This concentration of technically strong and imaginative teaching, with good knowledge of the examination criteria, is the driving force behind the accelerating progress of pupils on GCSE and advanced courses.
117. The quality of teaching was judged to be good in almost all of the lessons seen with some examples of very good teaching. Particular teaching strengths with 11 to 14 year old pupils included the very good organisation of lessons with tasks well pitched for pupils' abilities, good relationships and a very good knowledge of the subject. On occasions, however, pupils were not clear about exactly what they were being asked to do and these lessons were less successful. A particular strength seen in lessons for pupils on the GCSE course was the teachers' very strong knowledge of the course requirements linked to a very good awareness of pupils' needs and progress. This again was evident in the lessons seen in the sixth form but here it was further enhanced by high quality guidance for students. Teachers help students to organise their projects, show them how to use appropriate techniques and direct them towards relevant sources of information. For example, in a lesson with Year 13 this guidance was delivered in a brisk and businesslike manner and was successful in injecting more pace and urgency into a lengthy project. There have been weaknesses in recent years in the teaching of art to 11 to 14 year old pupils, for example, pupils' work being marked in several different ways and to varying standards. There is a need now to give a sharper focus in Key Stage 3 to what it is that pupils are expected to learn about the work of artists and to increase the opportunities for work in 3 dimensions.
118. The art department has made good progress since the last inspection in raising pupils' attainment in GCSE and Advanced level examinations. Systems for monitoring what is taught are now in place and there is increased stability in the teaching staff and a better match of teachers' skills to the subject. The quality of teaching in art is monitored by the head of subject but the arrangements for this remain informal and lack objectivity. A start has been made on increasing the use of computers in art with some interesting examples of projects seen from all age groups but the limited accessibility of the computers has slowed progress so far. Accommodation is adequate though some rooms are rather small for some classes and a shortage of accessible sinks poses some difficulties but they are enlivened by very good displays, which provide a lively, stimulating working environment.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

119. Standards overall in Design and Technology are above average. They are particularly high in Graphics. Results in the 1999 public examinations were above the national average overall for Design and Technology. The girls' results at 65 per cent for the higher A* to C grades overall were above the national average of 58 per cent for girls in comprehensive schools. The boys results at 61 per cent for A* to C grades overall were well above the national average of 41 per cent for boys. The results for boys and girls in Graphics were excellent with 93 per cent of the girls and 90 per cent of the boys gaining the higher A* to C grades which was an improvement upon the previous year. In Resistant materials girls result were also very high with 93 per cent gaining the higher A* to C grades. The small number of boys who studied Food Technology did very well with 80 per cent gaining grade C or above. Results were weakest in the Electronics examination at 28 per cent for the higher grades but this was also an improvement on the results from the previous year. The year 2000 results overall have improved slightly with 70 per cent of pupils gaining the higher A* to C grades although the results for the boys declined overall particularly in food technology. Girls' results in the areas of food and textiles technology were much improved with 73 per cent gaining the higher grades in textiles and 69 per cent in food. In the 1999 advanced level examination results improved with 50 per cent of pupils gaining A and B grades. The overall pass rate of 87 per cent represents a fall in comparison with 1998. The 2000 results show a similar overall pass rate but a drop in the proportion of higher grades.
120. By the age of 14 pupils' ability to record and modify their ideas with sketches, notes and diagrams is very well developed in the majority of cases, with many pupils demonstrating very high levels of drawing and illustration skills. Practical making skills are well developed alongside knowledge and understanding of materials and processes through a range of clearly structured activities, which are well planned by teachers. For example, pupils design and learn how to make a former to produce a simple torch using vacuum forming methods. They show good understanding of the processes they use and can apply their graphical skills to create original packaging for the product. In a Year 9 lesson, pupils were using a range of collage techniques to create designs for the faces of clocks they were making using acrylic. In practical food technology lessons they can handle equipment confidently and combine ingredients to create good quality products that they can evaluate. In textiles technology pupils were discovering more about fabric products through careful analysis and recording of their component parts. Pupils use a range of hand tools and equipment and they are able to apply their skills to increasingly complex tasks. They can use notes to evaluate their work and suggest ways to improve it. By the end of Key Stage 4, in many cases, pupils have very well developed skills in their chosen design and technology area. Pupils are able to apply the skills and knowledge gained in Key Stage 3 and then build upon these as they investigate increasingly complex and challenging projects. They can research and investigate design problems and develop models to help them understand how to resolve construction problems. They can make use of computers for research and to develop their ideas. In the sixth form the quality of their graphical and practical modelling skills are very good. Progress in all Key Stages is good, and often very good. Pupils achieve well in the subject.
121. The continuing lack of technician support in the food area, highlighted at the last inspection, results in teachers spending some of the lesson time in preparation and clearing up which cuts into teaching time and has an impact upon the quality of lessons. Dust extraction criticised at the previous inspection is now improved but Health and Safety procedures are not on a secure formal footing. As a result there are health and safety issues that need prompt attention to improve health and safety.
122. Teaching in design and technology is good overall and some, particularly in Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form is very good. The high standards of work are a product of the specialist skills of staff and the planning that goes into teaching at all Key Stages. Graphical skills are very well taught, as are practical skills, and this enables pupils to develop their ideas and create high quality products. Teachers give very good verbal support and encouragement to pupils, which helps them to achieve, although sometimes opportunities are missed to check understanding and pupils are over instructed about what to do. The use of question and answer sessions to check and consolidate understanding is a good feature of many lessons. For example, in an introductory

lesson on the topic of disposable products the teacher had provided a very good range of examples for discussion and used these very effectively to develop the key issues of recycling and resources. In another lesson, in year 10 textiles, the teacher gave concise explanations of the symbols and conventions used in commercial patterns, illustrated each one clearly and involved pupils through questioning to check their understanding. As a result, pupils make very good progress with their learning. In another year 10 lesson, pupils were making good progress with their construction of joints in wood as a result of very clear explanation and demonstration of the proper methods by the teacher. Teachers ensure very good pace to lessons, which encourages pupils to develop good organisation skills. Pupils are being appropriately challenged, and their handling of tools and equipment and the quality of their work are high as a result. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are very good, and especially so in the sixth form, and this helps concentration and progress with learning.

123. The new curriculum 2000 requirements have been planned into the scheme of work in all areas apart from food. There is good breadth and balance in the curriculum overall and the link with a local packaging company that provide resources enhances the product design work at Key Stage 3 but the teaching of aspects of systems and control is less well developed. Assessment of pupils work varies across the subject with examples of good practice in textiles. As a result, pupils' knowledge of their own learning is also variable with some unsure about what they have to do to improve. Homework is often well used to support class work. The head of subject has a clear vision of the place of technology and promotes the subject very effectively through displays of work in school and opportunities for involvement beyond the school, for example, the school recently contributed to displays in the Millennium Dome. The head of subject must ensure that the planning of work is shared with the head of food and textiles to develop a more consistent approach to monitoring, particularly at Key Stage 3. Rooms for practical work in food and textiles are cramped and this result in constraints with practical work for some groups.

GEOGRAPHY

124. Standards by the age of 14 are above the national average as indicated by the proportion of pupils reaching level 5 and above in teacher assessments in 1999. Results for 2000 have also remained at these high levels. Results at GCSE in 1999 were below the national average for the subject. The percentage of boys obtaining A* - C grades at GCSE was just above the national average while the results of girls were significantly below the national average for girls. A-level pass rates at grades A - E were above the national average in 1999. A vigorous response to underachievement at GCSE by subject staff, encouraging pupils to produce more tightly focused work, contributed to a significant improvement in 2000. At GCSE, 85 per cent of pupils obtained A* - C grades, with girls performing slightly better than the boys. The percentage of students gaining grades A - E at A-level (89 per cent) continues to be above previous national levels. Attainment in geography as seen in lessons and in pupils' work at the end of each Key Stage is above the national average.
125. From the age of 11 to 14 years, pupils acquire a range of subject skills and key concepts. In spite of considerable variation in the pupils' geographical knowledge and skill on entry, by Year 9 standards are generally above the national average and, for the more able pupils, are well above. By the end of year 9, pupils of all levels of attainment have made good progress and demonstrate confidence in their knowledge and abilities in the subject. Between the ages of 14 and 16, pupils continue to make good progress, demonstrating growing skills in the selection of data using it to create increasingly sophisticated responses. In Year 11 higher attaining pupils are able to explain very clearly the complex relationships between human activity and the environment. The highest attaining produce detailed and well-argued summaries and support their conclusions with carefully selected and well presented evidence from a variety of sources. Many pupils are accomplished users of home-based computers. Pupils in all year groups make good use of the opportunities provided to undertake carefully planned field study. Work undertaken ranges from data collection in local shopping and population centres to increasingly challenging use of sites on the Yorkshire coast, within the Dales and North Yorkshire Moors and in Scotland. There are particular strengths at both GCSE and at 'A' level in the detailed analytical work arising from conscientiously undertaken case studies. By Year 13, students can analyse complex data and have the confidence to plan and lead detailed seminar style presentations. Case studies are

researched in depth, for example, an examination by two students of issues relating to promoting eco-sensitive tourism in Belize.

126. All the teaching inspected was satisfactory or better and the teaching seen in Key Stage 4 was good. The quality of teacher knowledge is very good, which encourages pupils to ask questions and to value the detailed answers received. The teaching styles adopted encourage attentive and co-operative behaviour by pupils who concentrate well on the work they are given. The most effective teaching uses analysis of pupil performance to adjust the focus of lessons and to make the best selection from the resources available. Where the pupils are taught in groups reflecting their ability, there is a more effective match between teaching content and learning needs. At all levels of attainment, pupils are able to describe with confidence the tasks on which they are engaged, and higher attaining pupils can identify and discuss the wider relevance of what they are doing. Homework is set regularly in all years and pupils generally complete it fully, carefully and on time. Marking of all work is systematically undertaken and is characterised by careful corrections of errors in both presentation and content. Helpful prose guidance is given on the less successful pieces but suggestions for further improvement are less commonly offered to higher achieving pupils. Good quality teaching in the sixth form generally compensates for the lack of resources. Students are encouraged to research widely and share their conclusions freely
127. There is an opportunity for 'A' Level students to book access to the Internet-enabled computers in the Library but with availability mostly limited to after-school use. There is no regular subject based information and communications technology provision and no computers are dedicated to geography department use. The damp condition of one teaching room makes it impossible to store or display pupils' work for more than short periods, and the limiting internal layout significantly restricts the opportunities to group pupils or to use visual aids to best effect.
128. There have been a number of improvements since the last inspection. There has been an extension, particularly in Key Stage 3, of the opportunities for pupils to write in varying styles for a range of purposes. Work observed included examples of poetry inspired by the study of rivers, well reasoned letters to the Prime Minister arguing for more effective environmental policies and detailed fact files in differing formats. The cohesion and identity of geography have also improved, with three specialist staff now teaching geography for the majority of their timetables. Some improvement has occurred in the number of textbooks but the range of texts is still limited and homework relies heavily on worksheet materials. In Years 12 and 13 students still need to purchase most of their own books. Provision in the Library is improved, with a number of modern textbooks now available, which are suitable for wider reading in Key Stages 3 and 4. The poor provision of specialist texts for advanced study noted in the previous inspection has not been effectively addressed, and neither has the absence of systematic monitoring of teaching. In consequence there are few opportunities to share examples of particularly effective teaching. Similarly, a regular review of marking would permit the more effective approaches to become uniformly adopted.

HISTORY

129. Standards by the age of 14 are well above the national average as indicated by the proportion of pupils reaching level 5 and above in teacher assessments in 1999. Results for 2000 have also remained at these high levels. Boys do significantly better than their age group nationally and in 2000 achieved as well as the girls. By the age of 16, the proportion of pupils attaining A*-C and A*-G grades at GCSE in 1999 was just above the national average. A*-C grades in 2000 improved, and there has been an upward trend of improvement in the last two years to restore standards to the level seen at the time of the last inspection. However, in 1999, pupils did less well in history than in many of their other subjects, especially girls, who achieved fewer A*-C grades than the boys. There had been a marked trend of improvement in boys' performance since 1997, but it was reversed in 2000 with girls once again scoring better at A*-C grades and above girls nationally. Therefore, there is no clear trend of gender difference at A*-C and A*-G grades. At age 18 in 1999, the proportion of A-B grades at A-level was well below the national average; A-E grades were in line with the national average. The proportion of students attaining the higher grades in 2000 markedly improved, but was still below the national average. There has been a

fluctuating trend in higher grades over the last three years and in that time, history has been one of the lowest performing subjects in the school. Boys have performed much better than girls at all grade levels.

130. Standards in work seen by the age of 14 are above average. Compared with the pupils' attainment on entry to the school, the level of achievement is satisfactory by the time the pupils reach 14. They have a good knowledge and understanding of the key characteristics of the subject and of chronology. Nearly all pupils can effectively select and record information from written and pictorial sources as they have good note-making skills. Pupils with special educational needs are very competent at this with the very effective help of learning support assistants. Pupils have a good understanding of causes. Pupils are given the opportunities to use their writing skills in various forms. Middle and higher attaining pupils in Year 9 produce good extended writing with strong empathy and analysis, for instance, in diaries from the First World War trenches or journals of slaves on the Middle Passage. Higher attaining pupils also have well-developed skills of interpretation and evaluation, as when Year 9 pupils looked at differing accounts of life in nineteenth century cotton mills. Nearly all pupils use sources relevantly and can effectively identify bias and reliability, though middle and lower attaining pupils are less confident about quoting from the sources. Higher attaining pupils produce individual project work of a very high standard, though enquiry work in depth by whole class groups requires further development.
131. In the work seen in lessons and in books, the attainment of pupils by the age of 16 is above the national average. This is in line with the latest GCSE results, which are better than for 1999. Pupils achieve satisfactorily by the end of year 11. However, there is evidence of underachievement of higher attaining pupils, mainly due to insufficiently frequent challenge from more demanding analytical and evaluative work. Nearly all pupils have good historical knowledge and can select and record information well, using a variety of sources. Most pupils have a good understanding of change and continuity, as when they compared developments in medicine in two different historical periods in Year 10. They build on their firm understanding of causation at Key Stage 3, though not all can effectively evaluate and prioritise different causes, including higher attainers. Higher attaining pupils write well at length, making good use of supporting evidence. Writing at length is competently done by middle and lower attaining pupils, but the skills of supporting arguments are less well developed in lower attainers. Often there is a lack of opportunities for higher attaining pupils to be challenged by the analysis of ideas and events through sharp questioning and lively class or group discussion.
132. Attainment in work seen by the age of 18 is in line with the national average, a decline compared with the standards at the time of the last inspection, which were reported as above average. This represents unsatisfactory progress and underachievement compared with the above average level of attainment with which the students begin the A level course. Nearly all students have good note-making skills and have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the main features and concepts of the period. Most can express themselves well, but the students' ability and confidence to engage in rigorous and critical discussion of a more analytical nature is undeveloped. Also, students are not often given opportunities to work analytically on their own or with others in class in developing more intellectually demanding skills.
133. The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in three-quarters of the lessons seen. It is good in half and occasionally very good, but it is unsatisfactory in a quarter. This is worse than at the time of the last inspection when there was no unsatisfactory teaching. It is best at Key Stage 3 and 4. Teachers have good subject knowledge, plan their lessons well and set appropriate learning objectives, which are clearly explained to the pupils. Pupils satisfactorily acquire historical knowledge and understanding; their literacy skills are being well promoted, especially in note-making and in various forms of writing; they are developing skills of using source work and interpretation. The very good behaviour of the pupils and their readiness to listen, concentrate fully and to cooperate with the teacher and with each other, promotes a good atmosphere for learning. Pupils are managed well, relationships, based on mutual respect, are very good, and high standards of behaviour are expected and set. There is good monitoring of pupils' progress through frequent questioning and interventions in class in response to identified problems. Literacy skills are being promoted through writing in various forms and by the use of writing

frames, for example, in preparing for essay work at Key Stage 4. In the best lessons, there is a good pace, time is well used and deadlines are clearly set to focus attention, as when a Year 9 class moved swiftly through the battles of the Somme and Gallipoli, examining reasons for the failure against a challenging hypothesis about the First World War. Pupils of all abilities were actively and enthusiastically involved in both discussion and in recording ideas.

134. However, a number of the concerns about teaching and learning, which were expressed in the last inspection, still exist. Not all teachers set high enough expectations. Progress in learning was unsatisfactory in one-fifth of the lessons seen. This occurs when pupils, especially higher attainers in Key Stage 4 and post-16, are inadequately challenged and involved in learning for themselves and where the slow pace of the lesson hinders good learning. Pupils are not always set adequately challenging tasks which stretch the pupils' thinking, especially their ability to analyse and evaluate sources and causes through their own independent study. In a significant minority of lessons, teaching styles are still too narrow: there is a lack of variety of activities to stimulate interest and to develop history skills, including oral skills through lively discussion. In the Sixth Form, especially, students are talked at too much, they are not left to explore and analyse ideas for themselves and their concentration falters when this does not occur. Marking, although done regularly, is not consistently rigorous. At Key Stage 3 particularly, there is a lack of helpful comments and targets for improvement.
135. A few improvements have taken place since the last inspection. Resources are now satisfactory with each pupil at Key Stage 4 having their own text book and better provision at Key Stage 3; there has been some improvement in assessment procedures at Key Stage 3 with regular testing, though there is no moderation to National Curriculum levels or detailed analysis of results to inform curriculum planning and teaching. Recent targeting and monitoring of the progress of individual pupils at Key Stage 4 is proving effective in raising standards at GCSE. Other issues still have to be addressed. Schemes of work need to be thoroughly revised to include the new curriculum and suggestions for differentiation, and a wider variety of teaching methods. Opportunities for assessment, and the integration of information technology, which is seriously undeveloped, also need to be included. The head of department needs to take a far more active role in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning through classroom observation. The ready sharing of the good practice within the department is also undeveloped. The poor state of the accommodation remains a major concern, as it was in the last report. History teaching is spread between 5 different classrooms, two of which are narrow rooms which are not conducive to group work. This causes considerable inconvenience in the sharing of book resources and video equipment and is having an adverse effect on standards.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

136. Until very recently, the school had made little progress with improving the standards in information and communications technology (ICT) since the previous inspection. At that time standards were low in comparison to national expectations at both Key Stages. Overall, with a few exceptions, standards and use of ICT are still below national expectations across the school. Since the start of this school year, a new ICT co-ordinator working with senior management, has put in place taught ICT lessons for pupils at Key Stage 3 and 4 and introduced ICT as part of the key skills course for the sixth form. These measures are at an early stage of development but have secured ICT provision for all pupils with the potential to raise standards.
137. The work seen in lessons at Key Stage 3 indicates pupils are now being taught the appropriate skills and are achieving in line with the national expectation. In the best lessons teachers use a range of methods and there is a good balance of talking, demonstrating and questioning that challenges the pupils, helps build their confidence and checks knowledge and understanding. Pupils in year 7, for example, as a result of very competent and clear teaching, made very good progress using design software. In year 9, pupils at the early stages of designing 'Web' pages, co-operated well working in groups and pairs and demonstrated good understanding and confidence in using software on the school network. Business Studies teachers are working with the new co-ordinator to widen their own knowledge of a range of specialist software and subject knowledge is such that skills are now being properly taught. There is some lack of familiarity with

the more specialist software, but staff confidence is generally good and they manage pupils well. The same teachers also provide fortnightly ICT lessons for pupils at Key Stage 4. In addition, at Key Stage 4, pupils opting for Business Studies and office related courses are taught the use of spreadsheets and word-processors and have opportunities to make use of ICT to support their work. In the sixth form, after a period of disruption, pupils are now making better progress with their learning as a result of effective specialist teaching that can, for example, explain key concepts of programming and develop understanding at appropriate levels.

138. There are however few examples in other areas of the curriculum of teachers encouraging pupils to make effective use of ICT to support their learning. Standards are below expectations as pupils lack the understanding in many cases to select appropriate software and use ICT independently to support their work. The achievement of pupils in taught ICT lessons is good. In other areas of the curriculum where staff are confident to teach the use of ICT pupils also demonstrate good achievement. In Design and Technology, for example, they use a range of ICT equipment to illustrate and develop their work and in music, where resources and teacher competence in ICT are good, pupils make regular use of the technology for notating and performing compositions. In art, at all Key Stages, pupils are taught and encouraged to make use of ICT. For example, year 9 pupils scanned their collage work and used these images to develop imaginative prints. Opportunities elsewhere are less available and although many pupils are familiar with using the Internet and also develop their basic word processing skills because they have computers at home, they are seldom able at school to use ICT independently to support their learning and solve problems.
139. Leadership and management of the subject have been improved with the recent appointment of the new co-ordinator who has good specialist skills and a shared vision with senior management of how ICT can be developed in the school. The impact of this is already evident in a more systematic approach to ICT. The ICT curriculum does not currently meet statutory requirements because the programme of study on control and measuring is not being taught, due to the lack of appropriate software. Mapping and monitoring of cross-curricular experiences and their assessment with respect to national curriculum levels is not yet on a secure footing. The scheme of work for the taught course at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 is limited at the moment and does not fully meet the requirement of the programme of study. Recent improvements to the school network have improved the provision of computers but there is a need to continue to increase the number of computers and range of software to improve access and provision across the school and ensure that statutory requirements can be fully met.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

140. Standards in French and German in national tests and examinations at the ages of 14 and 16 are above average. In 2000, results in GCSE showed significant improvement on recent previous years and confirmed a three-year trend of slow improvement. However, the five-year trend was slightly downwards, with a high point in the pupils' attainment at GCSE achieved in 1996 and 1998. Standards in the sixth form are in line with course expectations, although the very small numbers recruited on to A Level courses makes comparison against a national picture very unreliable year on year.
141. In both French and German, the good levels of attainment in GCSE mask the fact that the improving trend is largely sustained by the performance of girls this year, with boys falling significantly behind. There is only one boy studying languages in the sixth form and the considerable majority of students who continue language studies in the sixth form have consistently been girls. The differential at GCSE between boys and girls is reflected in the national figures, but at Wetherby, the gap is somewhat wider this year than in previous years. In 1999, for example, there were more boys with D and E grades than boys who achieved a higher grade pass in the A* to C range.
142. In class and in the pupils' work, a good picture emerges overall. Pupils are generally achieving standards, which are above the national expectation for their ages throughout the school. In Year 8, for example, having just begun their second year of French, a number can happily respond to

questions in a range of tenses, using present, perfect and immediate future accurately. Pupils in the top set in Year 11 are already achieving levels that are significantly above the average expected from candidates who gain higher grades in GCSE. They speak fluently, using a good range of vocabulary and can extract meaning from spoken and written material which is in unfamiliar contexts. Group work in most classes is productive, and higher attaining pupils can create original responses to questions or write extended pieces of prose. Lower attaining pupils can respond effectively when questioned, even on an impromptu basis, about themselves, their families and their likes and dislikes. Most pupils' listening skills are good. They respond well to exercises in Year 7, which help them to develop the accuracy they need. The highest attaining pupils are sometimes inhibited from speaking by their desire to be absolutely correct.

143. The main reasons for these good standards in both languages are pupils' good attitudes to language learning and good teaching. There is a notable sense of mutual respect and support in most classes, which teachers ensure is sustained. This enables even shy pupils to participate in question and answer sessions productively, as pupils know that no one will mock their efforts. Teachers' emphasis on achieving accuracy also helps pupils participate well, as they know they are unlikely to go badly wrong. Concentration is generally sustained throughout the full one-hour lessons, and in the highest sets, this ability to work hard throughout is impressive. This results in a quantity of work completed which is greater than that often seen and a rate of progress which is consequently faster for most pupils. The strong encouragement given to lower and average attaining pupils succeeds in keeping them on task almost as well as with pupils in higher sets. Pupils take great pride and care in their written work, and the presentation of written work, especially but not exclusively by girls, helps successful revision and learning at home.
144. At the time of the last inspection, teaching was described as satisfactory to good. It is now more often good than satisfactory and much is very good. There are also examples of excellence in teaching the sixth form. The use of French and German as the teaching medium is a major contributor to the good standards pupils achieve, and where this is consistently done, the pupils' accuracy, fluency and confidence is greater than where it is not. The teachers generally present pupils with at least good models of French and German accents and articulation. In some classrooms, the models are of the best. The occasional tiny error does not impact on standards. The pace of lessons is good in most classrooms, with the teachers expressing high expectations of what can be achieved, offering a range of activities and creating a purposeful, hardworking atmosphere in almost all lessons. In some lessons, the pace and high expectations are particularly challenging and well-judged, as in a Year 12 French lesson where students achieved far more than they expected in dealing with the technical vocabulary associated with a difficult social phenomenon of our times. In a Year 10 role play in German with a lower attaining group of pupils, predominantly boys, the teacher's preparedness to give pupils responsibility resulted in good work being done and progress made. Relationships between teachers and pupils are generally good or very good, motivating pupils to make good progress and succeed, although in marking pupils' written work, teachers do not always give the same level of encouragement. In opportunities for structured group work, in some classes there is more responsibility given to pupils than in others, and this better experience is beneficial, resulting in them being more confident in communicating effectively. Teachers pay a great deal of attention to accuracy in all four skill areas and this pays off in terms of the quality of pupils' learning.
145. The lack of planned opportunities for using information and communications technology (ICT) in languages rooms remains as much a weakness of the school's planning as it was when it was criticised at the time of the last inspection. There has been no progress on this front at all, and little on access to other forms of audio visual aids. The courses are still based very much on text books and reliant on the skills of the individual teachers. In the two smallest and most cramped languages classrooms, there is a serious limitation on the range of activities which pupils can experience.
146. Access to both French and German is good throughout the school, except in Year 10, where the operation of a new timetable structure prevents teachers from setting pupils as they would wish, and the range of attainment in language classes is therefore particularly broad. In the sixth form, despite good curriculum access, few pupils opt for languages, and this remains a matter for the

department to work on. The importance of language competence in many professions has not been adequately conveyed to pupils when making choices for post 16 education. There are strong and useful links with Europe, including an excellent opportunity for work experience in the sixth form in France and Germany. In the sixth form, the languages materials chosen for study make a valuable contribution to pupils moral, social and cultural development, and occasionally to their spiritual development, when for example, a theme such as 'Down and Outs' led a Year 12 group into discussion and musical appreciation. Moral issues are also discussed in Year 12 German classes, for example when texts are selected which give cause for reflection on the moral and social dilemmas of the young today.

147. Teachers assess pupils' progress well and know how much progress individual pupils are making. Routine assessment is highly valued in both languages. However, the data available on long-term progress has not been sufficiently well used and analysed to have led teachers towards strategies for improving the performance of boys. In part, this lack of strategic direction is a result of management being split between the two languages, and developing such strategies is the major challenge facing the two departments.
148. Since the last inspection, in summary, standards have remained above the national average but have not improved beyond the position described in 1996. Teaching is better than it was, with examples of excellent and very good teaching as well as a majority, which is good. Attitudes to learning languages have improved. On the debit side, there are still too few pupils opting to continue language study in the sixth form, and the use of ICT, which could improve the performance of boys and their determination to continue their language work, is still a distant objective. The two heads of subject, whilst personally setting a very good example to their colleagues, have no formal monitoring role to enable them to ensure that all teachers in the department are well supported and prepared.

MUSIC

149. Standards of attainment are above national expectations at the end of each of the three Key Stages. GCSE results are well above the national average with all pupils gaining grades of C or above in 2000. The number of students taking A Level music is too small for valid comparisons with national figures, but over the last three years all students have gained passes at grades A to E, with most gaining passes at grades B and C. By the end of Key Stage 3 the pupils are familiar with keyboards and able to control them and choose appropriate sounds for composition. They can read notation, identifying notes on the keyboard, and can create musical ideas suggesting a mood or an occasion. However their compositions are often restricted to these basic ideas and are lacking in development. When performing as a class they show good rhythmic ability, for example a Year 8 class was observed maintaining a complex vocal pattern over a steady pulse. At Key Stage 4 the pupils show good instrumental performance skills, which they use effectively in their class work, playing well together in ensembles. When composing they demonstrate a feeling for musical style with most pupils showing a good grasp of chord structure and the ability to select appropriate harmony. The use of information technology is a strong feature as the pupils use sophisticated software to notate and record compositions. All these skills are further developed in the sixth form where the students show very good performance skills and play with great sensitivity. They use their instruments with good effect in their composing where they demonstrate a good grasp of musical style. The level of achievement is good at all Key Stages. Pupils are challenged and able to achieve appropriately in relation to their prior attainment.
150. Since the last inspection the school has improved the allocation of time for music at Key Stage 3. The high standards of attainment and teaching have been maintained with a steady improvement in GCSE results over the last three years. There have been significant additions to the resources for learning resulting in a substantial improvement in the use of information technology.
151. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good; no unsatisfactory teaching was seen and practically all lessons seen were good or very good. The teachers, both class and instrumental, have good subject knowledge and lessons are well planned and structured.

Expectations are high and tasks set are challenging although they do not always take account of the pupils differing attainment levels. Good use is made of information technology, especially at Key Stages 4 and in the sixth form. Marking of work is conscientious but is usually confined to a mark and is lacking in diagnostic comment and helpful guidance. The pupils are interested in their work and concentrate well whether working independently or collaborating during group work; however in the practical sessions the pace of working is sometimes slow and this affects productivity. The teaching encourages them to evaluate their own work with clear criteria given by which pupils can judge their success. Behaviour is good and this reflects the good management and control of the pupils by the teachers. The pupils have a good attitude to the subject, take-up for GCSE is above the national average and the take-up for instrumental teaching is double the national average. The wide range of extra-curricular activities is well supported and the groups perform at a high standard.

152. The leadership of the subject is strong and innovative, for example, the department now has its own website providing information to pupils and parents. Financial management is enterprising and increases the resources available to the subject by such means as the use of public-domain music from the Internet to save the cost of sheet music. The head of subject has a clear vision of the educational direction for music in the school. Documentation is excellent and clearly stated aims and objectives reflect a determination to improve standards. Music is a strength of the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

153. Attainment by the age of 14 is at least in line with, and in most cases, exceeds national expectations. Pupils in Key Stage 3 have a good mastery of basic skills and a good knowledge and understanding of the principles of play in basketball, netball, and football. In gymnastics pupils have satisfactory body management skills and show reasonable control in balance work. In dance lessons the girls show poise and fluency and produce some imaginative movement sequences. At the age of 16, pupil attainment in the range of games seen (basketball, netball, hockey and badminton) is at least in line with, and sometimes exceeds, national expectations and they show appropriate development of skills and team play. Levels of general fitness are good and they sustain vigorous activity well. A GCSE examination course has been introduced into Key Stage 4 this term and work seen indicates that the course in year 10 is proceeding well and reaching a satisfactory standard. Pupils of all levels of attainment achieve well, including those with special educational needs, and they are making good progress in Key Stage 3 and at least satisfactory progress in Key Stage 4. Pupils learn new skills and consolidate learned skills well, and are developing a good knowledge and understanding of a wide range of physical activities. The good behaviour and positive attitudes and response of pupils, in both Key Stages, contribute to this learning.
154. Since the last inspection there have been a number of developments and improvements in the subject. Reasonably high standards of performance have been maintained and there has been a continuation of the high quality of the teaching. The organisation of groups has been improved and there are now smaller teaching groups, and a health related exercise course has been started in Key Stage 3. The GCSE course has widened options and enabled some pupils to study the subject further. Liaison with some local primary schools will shortly be developed through the involvement of one of the members of staff in promoting PE and sport in local schools, funded by the School Sports Initiative;
155. The quality of teaching is generally high in both Key Stages. Teachers are secure in their knowledge of the subject, they have a good rapport with pupils and classes are very competently managed. Lessons are well prepared and include appropriately structured practice to develop the work. Much of the teaching is direct, positive and effective, but occasionally restricts the opportunity for pupils to contribute fully to their own learning. However in many lessons opportunities were provided for pupils to take responsibility and use their initiative. Pupils of different levels of attainment are usually grouped appropriately and given individual help, though in some lessons insufficient consideration is given to this aspect. Best practice was exemplified in a netball lesson where the teacher's expertise and confident, stimulating and encouraging

approach, allied with an excellent rapport with pupils, effective class management and structured practices resulted in pupils making good progress in developing their skills in a lively and enjoyable session.

156. Limited curricular provision is made for sixth form students to participate in recreational games and sports. The timetabled curriculum provides equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. However as lessons are taken as single sex groups, there are very limited opportunities for girls and boys to work together. The extra-curricular sports programme augments the curriculum for physical education and helps to raise standards; particularly for the girls, for whom a wider range of opportunities have been available than is the case for the boys. The indoor accommodation is barely adequate for the number of pupils in the school. At times this has an adverse effect on standards, notably in bad weather conditions when the hard court areas, which are poor and deteriorating, flood easily in heavy rain, which means that large groups of pupils have to be taken indoors. The playing fields are quite extensive and make a positive contribution to learning in the subject.
157. A good scheme for assessing the attainment and progress of pupils is being introduced, which should help in monitoring, evaluating and improving performance, when it is fully implemented. Procedures for dealing with the reporting and recording of accidents to pupils in class are totally inadequate; the reported information is minimal and does not include sufficient details of the circumstances of the accidents or any follow-up or investigation, which may have ensued.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

158. The last inspection report highlighted the lack of religious education in the upper school. This year, the school has introduced a GCSE short course for all pupils in Key Stage 4, albeit on half the recommended time, and included modules of religious education in the sixth form general studies programme. Religious education was not being taught in the sixth form during the week of the inspection.
159. Attainment in Key Stage 4 differs between the year groups, as year 11 did not study the subject last year. This makes it difficult for them to achieve national expectations in the limited time they have to cover the course. In lessons on the subject of euthanasia, pupils showed good understanding of the moral dilemma it presents, but limited knowledge of the relevant religious teachings on suffering and the sanctity of life. In Year 10 pupils are able to build on the knowledge they have gained in previous years to attain standards in line with national expectations. For example, they were able to put forward intelligent arguments for and against co-habitation, informed by their Year 9 study of marriage rites in different religions. They adopt a mature attitude to discussion of sensitive issues and a healthy respect for other people's views. At this early stage of the course, written exercises are mainly notes and are not yet giving pupils enough scope to achieve higher levels of understanding.
160. In Key Stage 3 attainment is above national expectations. Pupils have a good knowledge of the main beliefs, festivals and practices of six major faiths, and they can use religious terms accurately. In their work on festivals and pilgrimages, pupils show an understanding of the importance of people's beliefs for influencing the way they live. They are able to compare different religions. For example, year 8 pupils studying Divali saw similarities with Christian and Jewish festivals of light. Year 9 pupils scripted interesting dialogues between pilgrims of different faiths in Jerusalem, which compared their holy places. Pupils achieve well, are well behaved in class and apply themselves diligently to tasks and meet the standards expected of them. They underachieve in applying what they are learning from their study of religions to their own lives, by reflecting on its relevance to their own experience and to the fundamental questions of life. The year 9 syllabus does not allow sufficient time for pupils to consider these issues in any depth. Pupils have a good standard of literacy, which shows itself particularly in imaginative exercises, but they could produce more in the way of reasoned argument on some of the issues.
161. The quality of teaching is good at Key Stage 3 and satisfactory at Key Stage 4 on the new course, and this is reflected in pupils' progress at each Key Stage. Teachers are thorough in the

way they prepare and present their lessons, but need to sharpen their focus with learning objectives, to ensure proper development of themes. They make good use of video excerpts, in conjunction with textbooks, to bring the subject alive. This technique was particularly effective in a Year 9 lesson, recreating something of the spiritual atmosphere at the Taize Christian centre, so that pupils could understand why it attracts people searching for spiritual truth. Teachers establish good relationships with their pupils and organise their work efficiently, using an effective system of summary note sheets in Key Stage 4, which pupils complete to consolidate their progress on the course. Pupils are generally positive about the subject, especially as the GCSE course is dealing with issues that are relevant to their lives. In some lessons didactic methods are overused, limiting pupils' involvement to answering the teacher's questions, when more could be gained through discussion in pairs or small groups. Pupils respond well and make good progress when the work is challenging, as in a lesson on pilgrimage to Mecca, which had good pace and variety of activities, presenting pupils with a lot of material to inform their own diary of a pilgrim. More often the tasks do not challenge the higher attaining pupils and are not adapted for those pupils with learning difficulties in the mixed ability groups. Teachers are developing pupils' literacy by emphasising subject vocabulary and helping pupils appreciate sacred texts, such as the poetry of the Genesis account of creation.

162. Now that the subject has been reorganised, with courses in Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form, and is led by a head of subject who can devote his energies to its development, the prospects for religious education at the school look promising. There has been an improvement in the quality of marking already, with more emphasis placed on comments to guide progress. There is also a better range of written tasks and more discussion work on the new course. A team approach to planning supports non-specialists but they would also benefit from more in-service training. Teaching styles should be further developed to capitalise on the pupils' potential for independent learning and self-expression.

Other subjects

BUSINESS STUDIES

163. Standards by the age of 16 in Business Studies GCSE at grades A*-C in 1999 were in line with the national average and just above at A*-G. Results for 2000 were much the same. This represents a falling trend in standards since 1998 at a time when the school's results generally have been improving. Boys performed better than girls in 1999 achieving A* and A grades at twice the national average. In Office Applications in 1999, the proportion of pupils achieving grades A*-C was above the national average. However, there was a significant fall in standards in 2000 to below the national average, which matches the fluctuating trend in standards over the last four years. There has been no marked difference in the performance of boys and girls in Office Applications. Standards at age 18 in the Advanced GNVQ were in line with the national average in 1999 with 4 distinctions and 3 merits. These standards have been broadly maintained in 2000 and consistently over the last four years.
164. In work seen during the inspection, standards by the age of 16 are in line with the national average. Pupils select and record information competently and come to accurate conclusions. They have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the key terms and concepts in business. Pupils of all attainments have good listening and speaking skills and express ideas well. Skills of writing at length by lower attaining pupils are not so well developed, unless supporting writing frameworks are used. Higher attaining pupils usually receive extension work, but it sometimes lacks the rigour to challenge their thinking and to prompt more intellectual effort. Standards seen by age 18 in both GNVQ and A level are in line with the national average. However, this represents some under-achievement in the higher attaining pupils who enter the courses with above average attainment. Students have a satisfactory knowledge of business terms and concepts and can effectively enquire into various sources. GNVQ students show good planning and organisational skills and can evaluate their work with honesty and thorough criticism, as when year 12 students effectively reviewed their presentations on marketing. They have good basic skills, especially in information technology in the GNVQ course. However, the more intellectual skills of analysing sources and ideas are not so well developed in middle and some

higher attaining students when insufficiently challenging tasks or demands are made on them. Pupils achieve well in their learning overall. They acquire new knowledge and skills of selecting and recording information relevantly. Skills of organisation and planning are particularly well developed in the students on the GNVQ course. Nearly all pupils also have good oral and writing skills. Sixth form students work well with each other on projects and readily take on the responsibility of independent study and research.

165. The quality of teaching overall is nearly all good and never unsatisfactory. It is equally good at both Key Stages. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons well, especially the carefully planned assignments in GNVQ, which stimulate and allow the performance criteria to be reached. Classroom management and the relationships with pupils is good and in the sixth form it is very good. Teachers are generally aware of the different ability groups within the class and respond appropriately. Homework is regularly set and marked to a consistently high standard, with helpful comments to aid improvement. Time could be used more effectively and efficiently in some lessons and teachers' expectations are not always consistently high. Consequently, questioning in class and extension work often lack a rigour to challenge higher attaining pupils to think more critically and analytically. More could be expected of them, for instance, insisting that all do a presentation using PowerPoint rather than making it optional.
166. Assessment procedures in the sixth form are good, especially in GNVQ, with close targeting and monitoring of progress, but analysis of assessment data is less well used at Key Stage 4 to inform curriculum planning, teaching and sharper targeting of pupils. Although some monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning does take place, it is not formalised with the regular classroom observation and written feedback needed in order to disseminate good practice to all staff.

DRAMA

167. Drama is taught to all pupils in Key Stage 3 and is available as an optional GCSE course in Key Stage 4. There is an A Level course in the sixth form.
168. GCSE results have been well above the national average, though in 2000 they were somewhat less good. The first cohort of students to take the A Level course were examined in 2000 and achieved very highly. Work observed during the inspection was of a good and sometimes very good standard. In Key Stage 3 pupils are acquiring a repertoire of basic drama techniques. They work well in groups, learning to plan together and to negotiate solutions to problems. Movement and use of space develop well. Pupils are keen to create characters and often use their voices well and choose appropriate language. Concentration in role is a problem for some but that, too, improves with practice. Both the current examination classes, in Year 11 and Year 13, are making very good progress. An impressive lesson with students from Years 12 and 13 showed how the more experienced students could help the others while consolidating and developing their own skills.
169. Teaching is very good. Expectations of effort and achievement on the part of pupils are consistently high from the teachers, who are confident and skilled and are able to draw good work from pupils, whatever their general level of attainment. The emphasis placed on effective group work benefits pupils, who learn to be very supportive of each other's efforts. Most pupils enjoy their lessons in a subject which successfully promotes good social development and positive attitudes to learning.
170. Drama has a high profile in the school and is well led by a highly competent specialist. Planning of the curriculum is good but the department lacks an effective and manageable assessment scheme for Key Stage 3. Specialists and non-specialists teachers work harmoniously together but creating more opportunities for the structured observation of teaching would be beneficial. The large number of pupils, including a good proportion of boys, attracted to the GCSE course confirms the success of drama in the curriculum, although classes are now large for a practical subject. The teaching of drama takes place either in a well-equipped hall or in a drama studio but the latter cannot currently be used as flexibly as it should because of the lack of blackout, lighting

and rostra.

SOCIOLOGY

171. Sociology has been introduced to the sixth form this year as a new course, leading to AS- and A-level. The syllabus matches the requirements for Curriculum 2000. No assessment or examination results are yet available. In class, students can all complete written assignments at a basic level and take accurate notes. Higher attaining pupils are stimulated by a lively approach to the topic and debate well issues such as the limits of privacy. Many students as yet have only a rudimentary knowledge of the theories of Karl Marx or the sociological composition of a city like Leeds. In the lessons seen, the teaching was satisfactory to good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and make good use of worksheets and other written resources. The pace of lessons is good with lively discussion interspersed with well-managed factual acquisition. Some teaching relies too heavily upon a didactic style, which does not check understanding sufficiently, and some opportunities to explain philosophical concepts and the origins of words such as euthanasia are missed, which inhibits good learning and progress. Most students' interest is actively engaged by the subject matter, and they achieve well and show respect for a range of values and attitudes, but a few students in one group appeared unmotivated at this stage in the course and responded flippantly in class. Accommodation in the sixth form rooms is cramped and learning would be enhanced by the use of other resources, such as video extracts.