

INSPECTION REPORT

THE HENRY BEAUFORT SCHOOL

Harestock, Winchester

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116438

Headteacher: Mr J de Sausmarez

Reporting inspector: Mrs J Greenfield
7070

Dates of inspection: 14th – 17th May 2001

Inspection number: 191522

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	County
Age range of pupils:	11 - 16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr C Grove
Date of previous inspection:	30 th September – 4 th October 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
7070	Mrs J Greenfield	Registered inspector	English as an additional language	The school's results and students' achievements How well are students taught? How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to students?
14756	Mr J Lovell	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its students? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20709	Mr D MacIldowie	Team inspector	English and Drama	
3643	Mr D Jones	Team inspector	Mathematics	
31685	Mrs V Maunder	Team inspector	Science	
1723	Mr M Milton	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Religious education	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
31685	Ms V Girling	Team inspector	Art	
27351	Mr M Stanton	Team inspector	Design and technology	
3827	Mr J Knight	Team inspector	Geography	
30579	Mr D Mills	Team inspector	History	Students' attitudes, values and personal development
4617	Mrs R Fox	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages	How well is the school led and managed?
20491	Dr D Henshall	Team inspector	Music	
4647	Mrs J Evans	Team inspector	Physical education	
13101	Mr M Kell	Team inspector	Special educational needs Equal opportunities	

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4 - 8
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	
Students' 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?	9 - 12
The school's results and achievements	
Students' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE STUDENTS TAUGHT?	12 - 14
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULUM AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO STUDENTS?	14 - 18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS STUDENTS?	18 - 20
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	20 - 21
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	21 - 23
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	24
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	25 - 29
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	30 - 46

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The Henry Beaufort School is a large 11-16 comprehensive school situated on the northern edge of Winchester. The school has increased in size since the last inspection and now has 1042 students on roll. The number of students joining or leaving the school, other than at the normal points of transfer, is not extensive. The school serves an area that is predominantly socially and economically advantaged, although a considerable proportion of students come from outside the school's main catchment area and from areas of greater economic disadvantage. Just over five per cent of students are eligible for free school meals, which is well below the national average. Students' attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. Two hundred and seventy-five students have special educational needs, which as a proportion of the number of students in the school is well above average. Of these, 1.4 per cent (15 students) has a statement of special educational need, which is lower than the national average. The majority of these students are in the Hearing Impaired Unit based at the school. The proportion of students speaking English as a second language, at 1.24 per cent, is low and none is in the early stage of learning English.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The Henry Beaufort School is a successful and improving school. It has many strengths, with areas of very good practice, and few weaknesses. The school provides a good standard of education for its students, enabling them to attain above average standards in most subjects. In the year since his appointment, the headteacher, with the effective support of his senior team and the governing body, has provided a very clear sense of focus and direction to the school's work, particularly in improving standards further. Most students are keen to learn, work hard and, through the good quality of much of the teaching, make effective progress. The combination of these factors ensures that the school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- GCSE results are well above average, both in relation to schools nationally and when compared with similar schools.
- The good quality of much of the teaching and positive attitudes to work ensure that students make effective progress.
- There are very good systems for monitoring, assessing and supporting students' academic and personal development.
- The headteacher's energetic leadership and vision are giving a clear sense of focus to school improvement.
- It provides a very wide range of extra-curricular activities of high quality for its students.
- It makes very good provision for students' moral and social development.
- It provides good support for students with special educational needs.
- Relationships in the school are open and positive.

What could be improved

- Standards in and provision for information and communication technology (ICT) and its use across the curriculum.
- The breadth and relevance of the curriculum at Key Stage 4 to ensure that it meets the needs of all students at the school.
- Ensuring that statutory requirements are met in the provision for a modern foreign language, design and technology, and religious education for all students at Key Stage 4, and a daily act of collective worship.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION

Since its last inspection in September 1996, the school has maintained its high standards in the National Curriculum tests and GCSE examinations and improved its performance broadly in line with the national trend. The teaching has improved and makes a strong contribution to the good quality and pace of learning. The school has made good and sometimes very good progress in addressing most of the weaknesses identified in the last inspection report. For example: data is used very well to set targets for students and to raise their attainment; longer-term planning has improved; the range and quality of books in the library and around the school have been improved; and a scheme of work for art developed. Good progress has also been made in increasing the provision for ICT (although more remains to be done), clarifying the roles of senior managers, extending the roles and responsibilities of middle managers for overseeing the quality of work in classrooms, improving the marking of homework and refurbishing the accommodation. However, insufficient progress has been made in ensuring that all students are taught a modern foreign language and design and technology at Key Stage 4, a key issue identified in the last inspection.

The school has shown that it has a good capacity to improve what it does. It has a very clear view of its priorities and under the leadership of the headteacher and his senior staff, together with the support of the governing body, it is well placed to bring about further improvements in the school.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
GCSE examinations	A	B	A	A
A-levels/AS-levels	n/a	n/a	n/a	

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

The school's results in the national tests for 14 year olds in 2000 were above average in English and well above average in mathematics and science. Standards have remained fairly constant over the past four years and have improved in line with the national trend. The school's overall performance was below average when compared with similar schools, being below average in English and science, and average in mathematics. By the age of 14, standards are well above average in mathematics; above average in English, science, design and technology, geography, history, music, religious education and French; average in art, physical education, and German; and below average in information and communication technology (ICT). Overall, students are achieving well in relation to their earlier attainment.

The GCSE examination results have been well above the national average in every year since the last inspection other than in 1999 when they were above average. The trend in the school's performance has been broadly in line with the national trend. In 2000, the results were well above average for all maintained schools and when compared with similar schools. The strongest subjects in the GCSE examinations in 2000 were English language and literature, mathematics, science, French, history, humanities, media studies, statistics and electronics. The weakest subjects were resistant materials, ICT, and particularly drama and physical education. On the evidence of their current work, standards by the age of 16 are well above average in mathematics, history, music and French; above average in English, science, design and technology and geography; average in art, physical education and German; and below average in ICT and religious education. Students are achieving well in relation to their earlier attainment and are on course to achieve and possibly exceed the school's targets for GCSE in 2001.

STUDENTS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Most students are keen to work and have very positive attitudes to the school and the opportunities it provides.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The vast majority of students behave responsibly in lessons and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good. Students work well together and there is a good sense of community and shared endeavour. They accept responsibility with alacrity.
Attendance	Attendance is well above average. Levels of attendance have shown a small increase in each of the past three years.

In spite of the school's high expectations, a very small minority of students do not behave as well as they might, which affects the learning of other students in lessons where their behaviour is less well managed. There are isolated examples of intolerance and poor behaviour. The number of exclusions is relatively low.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The teaching is at least satisfactory in 98 per cent of lessons, good in 44 per cent of lessons, and very good and often excellent in 29 per cent of lessons. The teaching was less than satisfactory in two per cent of lessons. The overall good quality of the teaching, which meets the needs of students well, is one of the main reasons why they make good progress. The majority of lessons are well planned and organised, with suitably challenging and interesting tasks and activities to engage the students and enable them to learn effectively. The vast majority of students are keen to learn and work hard in lessons. The teaching of English, mathematics and science is predominantly good, and the skills of literacy and numeracy are taught satisfactorily, although sometimes inconsistently, in most subjects. The teaching in mathematics and music throughout and in history at Key Stage 4 and French in Key Stage 3 is mostly very good. The weaknesses in a small number of lessons stem mainly from unchallenging work, low expectations and weaknesses in managing students' behaviour.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is generally broad and balanced at Key Stage 3 but lacks sufficient breadth and relevance at Key Stage 4 to meet the needs of all students at the school. The school provides an extensive range of extra-curricular activities of good quality.
Provision for students with special educational needs	The provision for students with special educational needs is good at Key Stage 3. It is satisfactory at Key Stage 4, but lacks adequate breadth, for example, through the provision of alternative accredited courses to GCSE or a fully developed vocational or work-related curriculum.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. The small number of students with English as an additional language receive appropriate support to ensure that they make good progress in their learning.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. The school makes very good provision for students' moral and social development; good provision for their cultural development; and satisfactory provision for their spiritual development.
How well the school cares for its students	The school has very good organisational structures and systems for monitoring and supporting students' academic and personal development, which enables staff to know students well and resolve any issues at an early stage.

The curriculum does not meet statutory requirements in ICT at both key stages or in religious education at Key Stage 4. Too many students at Key Stage 4 do not follow a course in modern languages or design and technology and there is a lack of vocational and work-related courses to meet the needs of some of the students. There are weaknesses in the current arrangements for ensuring health and safety in the school and practice is not consistent across departments, especially in undertaking risk assessments. The school's links and partnership with parents are good and the information that is provided for them about their child's progress is also good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides energetic and visible leadership and is effectively supported by his senior staff. Most middle managers undertake their responsibilities well, particularly in raising standards and improving teaching.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors play an effective role in the strategic management of the school and are businesslike, committed and supportive. They fulfil most of their statutory responsibilities well, but not with regard to some curricular issues and the provision of a daily act of collective worship.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There are very good systems for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of its work, including the quality of teaching and the progress and achievements of the students. The outcomes of these activities are used well to inform the school's improvement plan.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning, management and monitoring are strong and expenditure is closely linked to the school's priorities. Considerable improvements are being made to the quality of the accommodation in many areas.

The school has sufficient well-qualified staff to ensure that it runs smoothly, although there is a small number of non-specialist staff in several subjects. The accommodation is broadly satisfactory but, despite the recent programme of refurbishment and improvement, many areas are shabby. Learning

resources are broadly satisfactory, but there are weaknesses in several subjects. Suitable procedures are in place to ensure that the school obtains best value from its expenditure, enabling it to provide good value for money.

PARENTS AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school's high expectations and the good progress their children make at school. • Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. • The wide range of activities provided outside of lessons. • The way the school helps children to become more mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A closer working relationship established between the school and parents. • The homework arrangements. • To be provided with more information about the progress their children are making. • The behaviour of some students.

Inspectors' judgements support the positive views expressed by parents. The school enables most students to make good progress. Inspectors consider that relationships between the school and parents have improved in recent months under the current headteacher, and that the information provided for parents, particularly about their children's performance, is good. Parents' views on homework are mixed. Some feel there is too much, others too little, or that it is inconsistent. The inspection team found that the homework set is generally challenging and appropriate but that not all teachers follow the homework timetable, which makes it difficult for students to manage their workload effectively. Inspectors find that the vast majority of students are well behaved but that there are isolated incidences of unacceptable behaviour from a very small minority of students.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Overall, standards in the school are mostly above those expected nationally by the end of Key Stage 4. Students achieve well above average results in the National Curriculum tests and in the GCSE examinations. Since the last inspection in 1996, the school's results in the Key Stage 3 tests and in GCSE examinations have risen in line with the national trend. Most students are on course to meet and the majority to exceed the expected standards by the ages of 14 and 16.
2. On entry to the school in Year 7, students' attainments vary widely, but their overall level, based on their performance in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2, is broadly average. The standardised scores of the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) Cognitive Abilities Tests (CATs) taken in Year 7 indicate that their attainment is slightly above average, with their quantitative scores higher than their verbal and non-verbal scores. Students make mostly good progress during Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, achieving well in relation to their attainment on entry to the school, to reach above average standards overall by the age of 16, although not consistently in all subjects. In the majority of subjects, students are achieving higher standards than might be expected when account is taken of their attainment on entry to the school in Year 7. The school makes very good use of statistical information to analyse and track students' progress.
3. In the national tests in 2000 at the age of 14, when all students are taken into account, the results were well above average for mathematics and science and were above average in English when compared with all maintained schools. When compared with similar schools, the results were average in mathematics, and below average in English and science, indicating that students are not doing quite as well as those in comparable schools. The school's results in the three core subjects have been above average in all years since 1996, although there was a slight dip in performance in English in 2000. Over the past three years, girls have performed better overall than the boys (when compared with their respective national figures), but these differences were not significant.
4. In mathematics and science, the proportion of students reaching the expected Level 5 or above and Level 6 or above was well above average in both subjects, broadly reflecting the picture in the previous year. In English, the results were average at Level 5 or above, lower than those in 1999, but were above average at Level 6 or above. Teachers' assessments of students' attainments in mathematics and science at Level 5+ and Level 6+ broadly reflect the test results in 2000, but in English they are higher than the test results indicate.
5. On the evidence of their current and past work, students' attainment by the end of Key Stage 3 in English and science is above the standard expected nationally, broadly reflecting the results in the tests in 2000. In mathematics, their attainment is well above average, somewhat higher than the test results in 2000. Their attainment is also above the national expectation in design and technology, geography, history, humanities, French, music and religious education. In these subjects, and in the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science, students are achieving well in relation to their earlier attainment. In art, physical education and German, students' attainment is in line with national expectations and students are achieving appropriately in relation to their earlier attainment. In ICT, their attainment is below the standard expected, mainly because of difficulties in the recent past in ensuring specialist teachers and adequate numbers of modern computers, which has hindered the systematic development of students' skills, knowledge and understanding. However, in recent months, standards have improved and some students' work matches and sometimes exceeds the expected standards.
6. Teachers' assessments in 2000 in many of the foundation subjects, including design and technology, geography, ICT, modern foreign languages and art were too high. They overestimate the level of students' attainment at that time and indicate some lack of rigour in the

- assessments. Senior managers confirm this picture and are addressing it as part of their procedures for monitoring students' progress.
7. In the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examinations in 2000, the school's performance at five or more grades A*-C, five or more grades A*-G and for the average points score was well above the national averages. This picture has been consistent since the last inspection, although there was a slight dip at five or more and one or more grades A*-G in 1999. When compared with similar schools, the results overall were well above average, indicating that students are making well above average progress in relation to their earlier attainment at the end of Key Stage 3.
 8. The GCSE results in 2000 were significantly above the national averages in English language and literature, mathematics, science, French, history, media studies, statistics and electronics; above average in graphics, textiles, geography and humanities; average in art, German and food technology; below average in music (showing a considerable dip in performance from above average results in previous years), resistant materials and ICT; and significantly below average in drama and physical education. The groups entered for resistant materials and physical education contained a higher proportion of lower attaining students and students with weaker literacy skills than in other subjects. A higher proportion than the national average achieved the highest grades of A or A* in English literature, mathematics, science, geography, graphics, textiles, resistant materials, history, humanities, French, German, music and media studies.
 9. In the GCSE examinations in 2000, girls performed better than the boys in most subjects, and in relation to their respective national figures. Over the past three years, however, the differences have been comparatively small. The school has identified the underachievement of boys as a key area for development, including a focus on developing their literacy skills. The action taken by the school so far is beginning to have a positive impact on developing their literacy skills. Current and recent work indicate that students' attainments by the end of Key Stage 4 are well above the standard expected nationally in mathematics, history, French, media studies and music; above average in English, science, design and technology and geography; average in art, physical education and German; but below average in ICT and religious education. There is insufficient teaching time to cover all the requirements of the agreed syllabus in religious education, and students studying ICT have not had sufficient grounding at Key Stage 3 to develop their skills and knowledge to an appropriate level. In both subjects, the school has taken appropriate steps to improve provision for the coming academic year.
 10. Overall, the higher attaining students are making very good progress, both in lessons and over time, in mathematics, design and technology and music, and also in history and French at Key Stage 4. In other subjects, including geography, ICT, German and physical education in both key stages and history, French and religious education at Key Stage 3, their progress is good. However, in science, some average and higher attaining students are not stretched sufficiently and consequently do not attain the standards of which they are capable of achieving. In art, some of the higher attainers are not challenged sufficiently, particularly in attention to detail and quality. In design and technology, higher attaining students are not given opportunities to make informed choices about materials and consumer needs. Average and lower attaining students are generally making good progress in both key stages and are achieving well in relation to their earlier attainment. The small numbers of students having English as an additional language are making at least satisfactory, and often good, progress in their learning, in line with that of their peers.
 11. The school has recently adopted a policy for developing the skills of literacy in all subjects of the curriculum. In English lessons, the teaching of basic skills in language is very good. Many subjects provide opportunities for using spoken language in brainstorming and class discussions. Accurate use of subject-based vocabulary is particularly encouraged in drama, mathematics, media studies, design and technology and art. Although key words used in science are displayed in the laboratories, they are rarely referred to in lessons. Opportunities for reading aloud are limited in most subjects, but a challenging range of textual material is presented in history, geography and English. Both geography and history require written work in a variety of genres, and teachers of these subjects provide writing frames for those students who need additional help. Insufficient emphasis is given to developing students' writing skills in some

subjects, including science, art and geography. The media studies course in Key Stage 4 gives students an opportunity to explore and succeed in a wider range of communication skills. Overall, the students' level of attainment in linguistic skills is above average. Nevertheless, the application of the literacy policy is at an early stage and there is potential for further and more consistent focus on the skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing across the curriculum.

12. Students develop and use their numeracy skills very effectively in a number of subjects. Standards of numeracy are very high in design and technology and are well above expectations in mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 4. Standards are satisfactory in geography and history. Extending the opportunity for the development of numeracy in other subjects is a current focus of staff development. There is insufficient opportunity for data analysis in science at Key Stage 3. The handling of number and measurement, mentally, orally and in writing is very good in design and technology and mathematics, and good in geography and science. Students are able to measure and mark-out with precision to the nearest millimetre. Calculators are used accurately and appropriately in mathematics and science. Spatial concepts are applied well in art, geography, mathematics and science. Students show good spatial awareness in art in their three-dimensional construction of insects made from rolls of newspaper. They make very good sense of information presented numerically and graphically in design and technology and mathematics. In history, geography, ICT and science, students make good sense of graphs and can draw and interpret line graphs, bar charts and pie charts. They handle statistical information in everyday contexts very well in design and technology and mathematics, well in history and geography, and satisfactorily in science.
13. Students with special educational needs achieve well and make good and at times very good progress. Overall, their levels of attainment remain below national expectations by the end of Key Stages 3 and 4, but some achieve well in GCSE examinations. One severely hearing-impaired student obtained five passes at grade C or better in 2000 and all Year 11 students supported by staff in the learning support department and hearing-impaired unit obtained one or more GCSE passes at grade A*-G. These results reflect well on the additional literacy support many students receive when they are withdrawn to the learning support department and the hearing-impaired unit.
14. The evidence from the inspection indicates that the school continues to maintain above average standards. It has set itself appropriately challenging targets for the coming year and is on course to achieve and possibly exceed them as a result of the overall good quality of the teaching, the careful monitoring of the students' progress and their positive attitudes to work.

Students' attitudes, values and personal development

15. Most students come to school keen to work and with very positive attitudes. They are eager to take advantage of the many educational opportunities offered to them in lessons and in the extensive extra-curricular programme. Students understand that they are expected to do their personal best.
16. Except for a very small minority of challenging students, who can have an adverse effect on others' learning when they are not well managed, students behave very well in lessons and around the school. Students can largely be trusted to behave responsibly without direct supervision and most teaching blocks and classrooms have open access throughout the day.
17. Students have very good relationships with one another and with their teachers, who provide good role models. Most are willing to take responsibility for managing their own learning and work collaboratively with each other in lessons. The many examples of good group work in lessons are dependent on self-control and a capacity to listen to the views of others. Most students have the confidence to engage in discussion and are prepared to change their minds as a result of reasoned debate. Many students become independent learners. Students show enthusiasm and good levels of response to effective teaching.
18. Nearly all students have respect for one another and show a mature understanding of different viewpoints. The number of exclusions is relatively low, but there are isolated examples of

intolerance and poor behaviour. These are hugely counter-balanced by numerous daily acts of courtesy and kindness. Bullying is rare but some students express concern about a minority of students and are pleased that procedures for dealing with it are improving. Students are friendly and confident with visitors and are proud to show off their work and their school. There is a clear sense of school community in which all students are included. When given the opportunity, students accept responsibility in the school with alacrity, for example in the Year 10 peer mentoring of Year 7 students and on the school council, where students are involved in making important decisions about the school.

19. Students' attendance and punctuality are good and levels of attendance have shown a small increase over each of the previous three years. In 1999/2000, the attendance level of 93.9 per cent was above the national average of 91.3 per cent, and unauthorised absence at 0.5 per cent was below the national average of 1.1 per cent. Patterns of attendance throughout the school do not show any significant variation between year groups and, in the current year, attendance levels have not fallen below 90 per cent in any year group. Punctuality is generally good at the start of the school day, although if there are problems with the buses, which bring many students to school, this affects a large group of students. During the day, lessons start on time and students move in an orderly manner between classes. The good levels of attendance have a positive effect upon students' achievement and learning.

HOW WELL ARE STUDENTS TAUGHT?

20. The overall good quality of the teaching makes a significant contribution to the progress made by the majority of the students, enabling them to achieve above average standards in their work. Across the school as a whole, the teaching is at least satisfactory in 98 per cent of lessons; good in 44 per cent; and very good and frequently excellent in 29 per cent. Only in four lessons, in Year 9, Year 10 and Year 11, out of the 171 lessons observed was the teaching less than satisfactory. There are no significant differences in the quality of the teaching between Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. All the teaching in Years 7 and 8 is at least satisfactory. In Year 7, the teaching is very good or excellent in nearly two out of five lessons. As a result of the good or better quality of nearly three-quarters of the teaching, students make good gains in acquiring, consolidating and extending their skills, knowledge and understanding.
21. The school has improved the quality and consistency of the teaching since the last inspection, particularly in increasing the proportion of very good or better teaching from 21 per cent to 29 per cent, and decreasing slightly the proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. Improving the quality of teaching and learning has been a key priority for the school since the arrival of the new headteacher in May 2000. An effective teaching and learning policy has been implemented. Many subjects have received additional support in the past few months from the local education authority's advisory service and, together with the school's procedures for regular monitoring and evaluation of classroom performance, are ensuring that the students are given work that is appropriately challenging in most lessons and well matched to meet their individual needs. In addition, the careful monitoring of students' progress is ensuring that the majority of teachers plan and provide stimulating activities for their classes.
22. The teaching overall in design and technology and music is very good at both key stages, and also in history at Key Stage 4 and in French at Key Stage 3. In English, mathematics, science, geography, humanities, physical education, religious education, French, German and media studies, the quality of teaching is good overall. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall in art and ICT. Although there are examples of good teaching in art, some of the work lacks the challenge found in other subjects. In ICT, the teaching ranges from very good to unsatisfactory, but lack of subject expertise at times and unclear learning objectives do not enable students to make the best possible progress in lessons. In personal and social education, the teaching is more variable, ranging from unsatisfactory to very good, but overall it is satisfactory.
23. There are examples of very good and excellent teaching in many subjects, including several lessons in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, geography, history, humanities, French, German, music, physical education and, occasionally, in ICT, religious education and personal and social education. In these lessons, students make particularly good

progress in their learning and achieve high standards because of the demands that teachers make on them. Students respond extremely well to such challenging teaching, remaining fully engaged throughout and showing high levels of concentration and attention. Where learning is most effective, teachers use a number of strategies consistently and well. They plan and provide challenging tasks and activities to meet the range of needs in the class; identify clear learning objectives which they share with students; make intellectual demands on students through the quality of the questioning to encourage them to think more widely and reflect more deeply; and give them opportunities to work independently. These strategies were seen to good effect in many lessons.

24. The weaknesses in the small number of lessons that were less than satisfactory are varied. The teaching was unsatisfactory in two personal and social education lessons in Year 9. In one lesson about goal setting, expectations were insufficiently clear and consequently the amount and quality of work produced were below the standard expected of students of this age. In the other, on being healthy and developing positive attitudes to health, students were insufficiently motivated and did not behave well. The learning objectives in a Year 10 ICT lesson were too general to ensure that students made adequate progress. In a Year 11 games lesson, a lack of planning and limited intervention by the teacher resulted in students making poor progress in their learning.
25. Teachers' subject knowledge is mostly good and in many subjects very good. The majority of teachers use this knowledge effectively to provide challenging tasks and activities to stretch the students and help them learn. The teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is good in nearly all subjects, although less in evidence in science, art and for the lower attaining students in religious education. Insufficient use is made of ICT to support learning in many subjects, mainly because of a lack of resources. Teachers expect the most from their students in the majority of subjects, although expectations are not always high enough for some higher attaining students in science, design and technology, art and for older students in ICT.
26. Most lessons are carefully planned with clear purposes, to ensure that students' learning is developed in a systematic way through the provision of a range of worthwhile tasks and activities. Teachers use a range of approaches, with discussion and group work used effectively to support learning. Students respond well in such circumstances. In the majority of lessons, teachers manage students effectively, ensuring that they remain focused and on task. They praise and encourage, and have high expectations of their behaviour and response. On a few occasions, when the work lacks challenge and interest, or when expectations are not clear enough, some students do not behave as well as they might and can be disruptive, adversely affecting the learning of others in the class. Such instances, however, are not very common, although a number of students in Years 7, 8 and 9 comment that there is considerable disruption in a few lessons.
27. Teachers assess students' work and response well and give constructive feedback on what they need to do to improve. The marking of work is thorough, although in some subjects, for example English and humanities, insufficient guidance is given on what students need to do to improve their work. Homework is used appropriately to reinforce, extend and enhance classwork. However, not all teachers set homework according to the timetable and therefore students find it difficult to manage their workload. Inspectors found no evidence to support parents' concerns that homework was excessive or inappropriate but consider that the erratic way in which it is set affects the efficiency with which students can plan their time.
28. Students are making good progress in developing and consolidating their knowledge, skills and understanding in most subjects, including English, mathematics, science, geography, history, humanities, physical education, religious education and German, and also in French at Key Stage 4. In design and technology and music, they are making very good progress at both key stages and also in history at Key Stage 4 and in French at Key Stage 3. Their progress in art is satisfactory, as is their progress in ICT lessons.
29. Most students apply themselves well to their work, are enthusiastic and keen to learn. They work well on their own and with others, making the best use of the time available in lessons.

Many are willing and able to seek out information on their own and to undertake extension activities without the direct support and guidance from the teacher. Occasionally, as in some ICT lessons in Year 11, a minority of students lack self-discipline and a commitment to doing their best. Consequently, they make unsatisfactory progress in their learning.

30. Students with special educational needs make steady progress and in some cases good progress because teachers are aware of their needs and learning targets, and have good classroom management skills. As a result, they are able to involve these students in the full range of class activities. In addition, learning support assistants provide very effective support that enables them to achieve well. The deployment of learning support assistants is a particular strength of the school's provision and they have a very good awareness of their role in encouraging and developing students as independent learners. General learning support assistants are integrated into particular subject teams so they can develop effective working relationships with a relatively small group of teachers. Their value in supporting students' learning was evident when they were not present for the whole lesson. In these circumstances, students' behaviour and attitudes deteriorated noticeably and they were generally not on task for significant periods of time. Specialist learning support assistants provide very effective support for hearing-impaired students in lessons in a variety of subjects.
31. When they are withdrawn into the learning support department, students with special educational needs learn well, and frequently very well. Highly skilled teachers, with a very good understanding of individual students and excellent knowledge of language development, extend students' learning in small, carefully structured steps. They use strategies and focused activities that are appropriate to students' interests, needs and age and therefore students know what they have to do and experience success. A 13 year-old student made very good progress in developing reading fluency, accuracy and understanding because of the teacher's skill in choosing activities that reinforced and built systematically on his prior learning. Through a highly structured approach and the very good use of time, the teacher introduced a variety of creative resources that consolidated the student's knowledge of sound blends. Relevant tasks were used well to assess the student's understanding and to evaluate his ability to transfer newly acquired skills to new situations.
32. In the hearing-impaired unit, staff communicate very well with students. Good, and occasionally very good, teaching enables students to consolidate work they have covered in mainstream lessons. The unit has a very effective mechanism to record information from mainstream lessons for use in tutorials. These summary sheets record the key concepts and core vocabulary of the lesson and an evaluation of the students' response. A unit teacher made very effective use of this information in a one-to-one lesson that reinforced the content of a recent history lesson. As a result, the student increased his understanding of the reasons why atomic bombs were dropped in 1945. Very effective learning took place as the teacher had high expectations and made appropriate demands of the student. She probed his knowledge of events and interpretation very well as questions were used to test, challenge and extend his understanding. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen in the hearing-impaired unit but occasionally lessons have some unsatisfactory features. These include inadequate lesson preparation that failed to ensure that resources were readily available and the use of mechanical activities that could have been done at another time. In addition, subject knowledge was not always secure.
33. Since the last inspection, the school has addressed most of the weaknesses identified in the report. Assessment is used more effectively to inform planning and the setting of targets, students are given more time to reflect and explore more widely, learning objectives are more explicit and shared with students, and there have been improvements in the use of books and ICT. However, the use of ICT to support learning is insufficiently developed across the curriculum.

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

34. The school provides a relatively broad and balanced curriculum for the majority of students, which meets nearly all statutory requirements at Key Stage 3, but not at Key Stage 4. At Key Stage

- 3, history, geography and religious education are effectively covered within a humanities programme. The curriculum is enhanced by the addition of drama, a second modern language for those with linguistic aptitude, and personal and social education. However, students have not covered all of the strands in ICT, for example data logging and control, and the curriculum does not meet the requirements of the programme of study.
35. At Key Stage 4, the curriculum is relatively narrow and traditional, and does not meet the needs of all students at the school. Most students follow an extended core of seven subjects, including English, mathematics, science, humanities, a modern foreign language, design and technology and physical education and elect two additional subjects from physical and expressive arts, modern foreign languages, media studies and business studies, which is linked to ICT. However, in practice, a large number of students (much larger than usually found in similar schools) do not follow a course in a modern foreign language or in design and technology. Some of the students are appropriately disapplied as a result of their statement of special educational need, but too many have not gone through the formal process of disapplication and the statutory procedures that are required. This has implications for their access and entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum. The school does not offer any short courses in modern foreign languages or any other subject, which would ensure better curricular balance for these students. Consequently, the school has made unsatisfactory progress in addressing one of the key issues identified in the last inspection report of providing for all students to follow a design and technology and modern languages course at Key Stage 4. Worked-related and vocational courses are only in their infancy, with a NVQ course planned for next September.
36. There are also weaknesses in the provision for ICT and religious education at Key Stage 4, which does not currently meet statutory requirements. Subjects make insufficient use of ICT to support learning. In ICT, students have not been taught the necessary skills and knowledge earlier in their school life and the content of the core course taken by all students covers much of the Key Stage 3 programme. The school is planning to change the core course from next September. In religious education, there is insufficient time to cover all the requirements of the agreed syllabus in Year 11, but the school has taken steps to ensure that these will be met from September 2001.
37. Overall, however, the curriculum is taught in a stimulating way to encourage high achievement. The planning of the curriculum is generally good in the majority of subjects, taking account of guidance provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and making good use of specialist staff. Gifted and talented students in each year group have been identified and an appropriate policy for the realisation of their potential has been implemented, although it is in an early stage of development. The time allocated to the curriculum is above the nationally recommended figures and has increased slightly since the last inspection. The time allocated to subjects is generally sufficient.
38. The school has appropriate strategies for developing students' literacy and numeracy skills. A whole-school literacy policy has been implemented and a numeracy policy has been drafted. Adequate preparations are being made for the implementation of the national literacy and numeracy strategies at Key Stage 3 from September 2001.
39. The range and quality of extra-curricular provision are very good. Students have access to a wide range of activities, which enrich and enhance their learning opportunities. The school has gained an "Education Extra" Award for its curriculum extension activities for a number of years, achieving it with distinction for the last two years. These opportunities include a wide range of musical, sporting and dramatic activities, extra study and revision sessions, outdoor activities, theatre and exhibition visits, field trips, foreign visits and exchanges, and community service and personal challenge activities. A large number of students participate in and benefit from these activities.
40. The school also arranges an extensive Activities Week programme each year, which provides students with an opportunity to experience a range of different activities and to develop their personal and social skills outside the confines of the classroom. Both students and staff speak highly of the success of these activities and the way that they contribute to the development of

their self-awareness and self-esteem and provide opportunities for undertaking teamwork activities.

41. The school makes good curricular provision for meeting the overall needs of its students as identified in their statement of special educational need. For example, this includes an identified number of hours of learning support in mainstream classes, or withdrawal on a one-to-one basis or in small groups. As many of these students' special needs relate to poor literacy skills, there is a very strong focus on developing reading and writing skills when students are withdrawn. The school's positive philosophy on including students, and ensuring that those with special educational needs have the same learning opportunities as their peers, is reflected in subject teachers' lesson planning. Teachers provide tasks and activities that enable students with special educational needs to have positive and successful learning experiences. In addition, these students have full access to the range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities that the school offers.
42. The curriculum for students with special educational needs is good at Key Stage 3. All hearing impaired students are very well integrated and have access to all subjects of the National Curriculum provided they have not been disapplied from a modern foreign language prior to entering the school. The curriculum offered to students in Key Stage 4 is insufficiently broad. Some selected students are offered a study skills option when they enter Year 10, which is a well planned and structured scheme of work with a clear focus on developing a range of skills. However, if students follow this option they do not have the opportunity to study a modern foreign language even as a short course. The school does not offer accredited courses as alternatives to a GCSE course, nor does it yet provide a fully developed work-related curriculum that may be more appropriate for some of these students.
43. Provision for students' personal, social and health education is satisfactory. Personal and social education is delivered through the tutorial programme, careers education and in assemblies, and encompasses aspects of health, sex education and drugs education. Under new leadership, the personal and social education programme, including citizenship, is currently being reviewed, supported by a well-structured development plan clearly identifying areas for improvement. The current programme lacks clarity and coherence, and sufficient time to cover all aspects. Work in tutorial sessions is very variable. The tutorial handbooks lack sufficient guidance for staff, especially extension activities for the higher attaining students. The new programme for Year 7 will start in September.
44. Careers advice and education are good and provide impartial advice on opportunities for education and work beyond the age of 16. Students receive good advice on option choices at the end of Year 9 and parents are involved through a consultation evening. The school is well supported by its involvement with Project Trident, which ensures that all Year 10 students are able to undertake two weeks' work experience, for which they are well prepared. After the work experience, students evaluate the various aspects to identify what they have learned. All students in Years 10 and 11 meet with a careers adviser in small groups and have the opportunity to arrange individual interviews. This support addresses the needs of students and actively engages them in taking responsibility for planning and making informed choices. The range of resources is satisfactory, although limited in some areas such as current reference books, CDs and videos. The quality of the resources is good. Resources are well organised and readily accessible to students within the library, although there is no specific careers guidance software available for students with special educational needs. One of the deputy headteachers is currently responsible for careers education and has made some significant improvements to the structure of the programme in the current year and has planned to introduce a new structured programme for all students, starting in Year 7, which integrates fully with personal and social education and citizenship. The new programme will be introduced from September 2001.
45. Links with primary schools and local further education colleges are good and benefit the transfer arrangements for students and their understanding of opportunities available after the age of 16. Familiarisation visits and communication with parents support the transfer of students from contributory primary schools, and curriculum links, such as the 'science pyramid', support the development of the curriculum between phases. The school is currently awaiting the outcome of

a bid for funding which will, in part, support the further development of links with schools and colleges, for the benefit of students.

46. The school provides a base for many activities that benefit the wider community and its links with the community are good. These links make a positive contribution to the learning opportunities available to students and to their progress and attainment, in addition to supporting the work experience programme undertaken by all students in Year 10. Very good links have been developed with organisations, such as the local police, which support and enhance the curriculum.
47. The school council considers which charities the school will support. These have provided students with links to the wider international community when, for example, a 24 hour music marathon raised sufficient money to build a school in Uganda and provide funding for an orphanage for the children of AIDs' victims.
48. The school provides good opportunities for students' personal development, with particularly good opportunities for their moral and social development. The school has a clear framework of values which it actively promotes and which are known to students. These core values of personal best, responsibility, respect and partnership are evident in the school's life. It actively seeks to involve students in promoting these core values and, for example, students have written parts of the new anti-bullying policy. Subject teams and school councils have discussed the moral issues raised by the use of the Internet, and have contributed to the school's Internet access policy. Many subjects provide students with opportunities to consider moral issues, including geography, English, religious education and humanities. For example, in humanities, students consider the morality of war and, in English, they consider good and evil through their study of *Macbeth*, and hypocrisy and social justice through their study of *An Inspector Calls*. Teachers provide good role models for students and, for example, in one lesson the teacher's attitude and comments carried a clear moral message about racist attitudes.
49. Opportunities for students' social development are very good. Students have many opportunities to engage in collaborative work. In physical education, for example, students develop social and co-operative skills in a variety of sporting activities working in pairs, small groups and competitive team play. In competitive team games, students demonstrate fair play, honest competition and good sporting behaviour. Social issues are explored in several subjects. In English, for example, discussions about texts by Dickens and *The Catcher in the Rye* give students insight into prejudice and justice. Gender issues in relation to language are discussed. In humanities, students study a range of cultures including the Amish and a wide variety of social issues concerned with, for example, prejudice, persecution, political ideologies and democracy. Relationships are very good and, for example, teachers carefully explain to students why certain behaviour is inappropriate. Students value the individual tutorials they have with teachers to support their academic progress and personal development. They have good opportunities to take responsibility through the subject teams and school councils, by taking the role of hosts for visitors on various occasions. Year 10 students act as mentors for Year 7 within each subject team. Students from the hearing-impaired unit provide formal 'deaf awareness' training to all incoming Year 7 students. Students also have good opportunities to use their initiative through special projects such as charity fund raising and taking part in competitions such as the Carnegie Award and Girls in Industry. About 20 students in Year 10 are taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. Older students particularly value the school's strong sense of community.
50. Overall, the school provides satisfactory opportunities for students' spiritual development, with some particular strengths in opportunities provided by English and religious education. In English, the power of the supernatural in *Macbeth* and the nature of humanity through the study of Frankenstein are considered in detail as part of the GCSE literature course. The issue of bereavement was sympathetically explored in a Year 9 class studying Seamus Heaney's poem *Mid-term break*. In religious education lessons, students have many opportunities to study beliefs and values. For example, a Year 11 class explored ideas and feelings about death, with sensitive teaching and a valuable input from the local vicar. This lesson provided an excellent opportunity for spiritual development. Students link beliefs to values and ways of life, as in their

study of Martin Luther King. Opportunities for spiritual development, however, are not planned in most subjects. There are whole school and subject team assemblies but the school does not meet the statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship. Assemblies are planned around important themes, and the assemblies make a strong contribution to the school's ethos. On occasions, assemblies include reflection but none was observed during the inspection. Assemblies do not make a sufficient contribution to students' spiritual development.

51. The school makes good provision for students' cultural development. There are annual exchanges with schools in France and Germany, and for the first time this year in the United States of America. All students are encouraged to attend at least one residential experience during activities week when visits are made to a wide range of places including Barcelona, France, Italy, North Wales, Dorset, Devon and the New Forest. Some subjects provide good opportunities for learning about other cultures. The French nationals who teach modern languages provide students with useful information about France and draw out cultural differences well. Students experience music from a wide range of cultures, including black gospel, Indian and Spanish, and these are applied to performance and composition. Although most artwork is drawn from western European cultures, students study African and Aboriginal art. In English, students study a wide range of literature and this gives them insights into other cultures such as the Deep South of the USA in the 1970s. In humanities, a wide range of different cultures is studied including those of the Bushmen and Japanese, together with the world's main religions. In addition, there is practical support for a school and hospital in East Africa. However, there are insufficient explicit, planned opportunities for students to learn about the richness and diversity of non-European cultures across a range of different subjects. Other very good opportunities for cultural development come from the activities week, which includes a visit by Zippo's circus, and the extensive programme of extra-curricular activities.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS STUDENTS?

52. The school has very good organisational structures and systems for assessing students' progress and for monitoring and supporting their academic and personal development. This enables the school to respond effectively to individual students' needs and provide appropriate support. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance and behaviour are also effective. On a day-to-day basis, staff promote safe practice in lessons by drawing students' attention to relevant issues such as those involved in participating in throwing events in athletics. However, there are weaknesses in the overall management of health and safety.
53. Staff know students very well and monitor and support their personal development very effectively, seeking to identify and resolve issues which may affect their learning. They are sensitive to students' needs and feelings and have recently developed the post of a social inclusion officer to seek to ensure that all students are engaged in their learning. The very good relationships between students and staff help students to feel comfortable about sharing concerns with their teachers, to whom they relate positively. As a result, the pastoral support of students is very good. These good relationships are fostered through the school's system of subject teams, assemblies, such as that for Year 11 leavers, and events, such as 'Beaustock', when students and staff both perform their music. Formal systems, such as twice yearly one-to-one discussions with all students, and informal systems seek to mentor students to support them in resolving issues such as organising and planning their studies and activities, to enable them to make progress and attain their potential. Staff give freely of their time to support students who may need to undertake a modified timetable because of ill health and, in such cases, pastoral and educational support are very good. There is a very good range of formal support for students through activities such as clinics to support subjects across the curriculum and the needs of students with particular difficulties, such as dyslexia. There are also opportunities to use facilities after school. Together, these make a very positive contribution to students' attitudes and to their progress.
54. Arrangements for assessing students' attainment and progress are very good. Detailed assessment arrangements are effectively implemented in most departments. Students are kept well informed of their progress against National Curriculum levels. Assessment is thorough and informative in several subjects, including English, ICT, mathematics, modern foreign languages,

science and the humanities subjects. A full range of monitoring procedures is programmed annually, involving a review of all students' performance on a regular basis. A mixture of internally produced data and termly progress grades in students' handbooks ensures that issues are understood quickly, whilst giving a focus to the one-to-one reviews. Senior staff produce quantitative data on students' progress, which teachers are obliged to consider in their planning and teaching. All leaders in the school, including governors, analyse national test results in Year 9 and GCSE examination performance. The newly introduced Henry Beaufort Personal Best folder will allow Year 6 students to bring evidence of their achievements to compare with the school's data. Most teachers use this wealth of information in their planning of the curriculum so that appropriately challenging tasks and targets are set. Procedures are in place for setting targets across all year groups, based on the highest probability from all the testing carried out. These targets are shared with students. The performances of subject teams and individual teachers are examined carefully to identify under-performance and to target additional support.

55. A key issue at the time of the previous inspection concerned the need to make better use of assessment data. This issue has been addressed successfully. Thorough analysis of data now feeds both the strategic and school improvement plans. The emphasis on improving the school's overarching system of assessment and monitoring students' progress represents a considerable improvement on the situation at the time of the last inspection.
56. The school has good procedures for monitoring the academic performance and welfare of students with special educational needs. Annual reviews are carried out and individual education plans produced in line with statutory requirements; the school involves parents well in these processes. Staff in the learning support department and the hearing-impaired unit have a very good understanding of students' diverse needs, including their educational, audiological and communication needs. Very detailed assessments are carried out upon entry to the school and the data from these tests is used very well to focus sharply and precisely on individual learning needs. Continuous assessment and formal assessment and review are used very well to monitor progress and both departments use staff expertise very effectively in this respect.
57. Individual education plans produced by the learning support department and hearing-impaired unit are satisfactory although their format is different. Whilst both have some strengths, there are areas that need development. The annual review of a student's statement of special educational need evaluates the progress made against the previous year's objectives very well, and clear objectives are set for the forthcoming year. However, in the hearing-impaired unit these general objectives are not always translated into clear unambiguous targets in individual education plans that can be measured accurately against specified success criteria. In addition, the individual education plans do not provide any form of cross-referencing to show how they cover the annual review objectives over a 12-month period. Individual education plans produced by the learning support staff mirror exactly the objectives that are set at annual reviews. However, these plans do not break down these broad objectives into smaller, sharper targets that cross-refer to them. In addition, individual education plans are not always dated, nor do they show progression in the challenge and nature of targets as students move through Key Stage 3 and from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4.
58. Both the learning support department and hearing-impaired unit have very good procedures for assessing students' achievements and progress. Teachers know their students very well and they use continuous assessment very effectively during withdrawal lessons to check on what students know, do and understand. Individual students' achievements are reflected very well in lesson planning. These plans are extremely precise in identifying the anticipated learning outcomes for individual students in order to assess their progress in developing new skills, knowledge and understanding. Teachers' lesson evaluations are of similar high quality as they make good reference to students' learning.
59. The school has good procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour. Teachers have high expectations of standards of behaviour. These expectations are clearly conveyed to students when they join the school and are reinforced through notices and the inclusion of the behaviour policy within students' planners. The school's rules are well understood by students and applied consistently by staff. The effectiveness of this policy, in which recognition and thanks are

important, ensures that the standards of behaviour of the significant majority of students are good and that the unacceptable behaviour of a very small minority does not detract from other students' learning. The school has recently reviewed its anti-bullying policy and has considered carefully within the policy the impact of modern technology, including text messaging and e-mails, on the ways in which students may be bullied or suffer from other oppressive behaviour. The school has satisfactory procedures to eliminate oppressive behaviour and is rigorous in resolving problems and mediating in the case of difficulties that arise in relationships. The procedures are not, however, completely effective in eliminating the concerns expressed by some students, throughout the school, about verbal bullying which causes them some distress.

60. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance and punctuality are good, and the school works closely with parents, the education welfare officer and external agencies to address any concerns. Parents are contacted on the first day of absence if the student's attendance record is unsatisfactory and, in all cases, by the third day to seek an explanation. The deputy headteachers and subject team leaders carefully review and analyse individual, tutor and year group attendance records, considering the effect of absence on students' learning. Good attendance is recognised and celebrated.
61. The school is vigilant and sensitive in the way in which it exercises its responsibilities for child protection. It uses the Local Area Child Protection Committee procedures, which meet requirements. One of the deputy headteachers co-ordinates child protection matters and is supported by the other deputy headteacher. Both have undertaken appropriate training and all staff are aware of the proper procedures to be followed in the case of any concerns. Clear guidance is included in the induction of staff. The school has an appropriate policy for the use of restraint to protect students from harming themselves or others. There are good liaison arrangements with outside agencies, which provide good support and advice for students.
62. Arrangements for first aid are satisfactory. Although qualified first aiders are not strategically dispersed throughout the school, there are adequate numbers. First aid supplies are readily accessible throughout the school and there is very good control of medication which the school holds for individual students or staff. Records of accidents are satisfactory although they are not regularly reviewed to enable potential risks to be identified and any necessary action to be taken.
63. Although safe practice is promoted in lessons, the management of health and safety has some weaknesses. Some minor health and safety issues were identified at the time of the previous inspection and the school recognises that procedures to ensure that it fully meets all relevant health and safety legislation are only partly in place. The school has an appropriate health and safety policy and one of the deputy headteachers, who is to receive relevant training during the next term, is responsible for its implementation. Formal, documented risk assessments are generally not completed although, within the previous year, there has been an assessment of the risks associated with a fire within the school and an assessment of ventilation and fume extraction equipment in areas such as the science laboratories, art rooms and design and technology workshops. Risk assessment practice varies between departments and, for example, the physical education department does not complete formal, documented risk assessments. Visual safety audits are conducted and identified concerns are recorded and taken up with the local education authority. Fire extinguishers and physical education equipment are regularly tested but although portable electrical appliances are visually checked by users, they have not been regularly tested. The school has taken steps to engage the services of a contractor to test all such appliances. Emergency evacuations are practised each term and an appropriate record maintained. Identified issues are then addressed. The school is aware of the health and safety issues that need to be improved. Staff responded positively to issues brought to their attention during the inspection and the school is taking action to provide training and to address the deficiencies.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

64. The school continues to have good links with parents. It works hard to involve them in its work and life for the benefit of students. This partnership is reinforced by a school/home agreement which is included within students' planners, and meetings with parents to explain areas of the

curriculum, such as numeracy, and to explain issues such as transfer arrangements and option choices. Overall, parents provide good support for their children in their learning at home and at school. Information provided for parents, particularly about students' progress, is good and keeps parents advised of what students need to do to make further progress.

65. Almost one-fifth of parents responded to the parents' questionnaire that was sent out prior to the inspection. Parents are generally satisfied with the school and the education it provides, and are particularly pleased with the progress that students make, the high expectations of the school and the range of activities provided outside lessons. Parents feel comfortable in approaching the school with questions or to discuss problems. Inspectors' judgements support these positive views. However, a significant minority of parents express concerns about standards of behaviour, arrangements for homework, information provided about students' progress and the closeness with which the school works with parents. Inspectors do not support all of these views but recognise that, although behaviour is generally well managed by teachers, the behaviour of a very small minority of students is sometimes unacceptable and, on occasions, oppressive. Homework, however, is not always set according to the timetable.
66. The majority of parents are supportive of students' learning at school and at home and in their wider activities. The school involves parents through consultation surveys that have been used to inform the school improvement plan. Parental involvement is monitored through the use of student planners, which most parents sign regularly, and the school is seeking to increase their attendance at consultation meetings. As a result of the school's work in this area, the level of attendance by parents at consultation evenings during the past three years has increased from 60 per cent to over 80 per cent with the greatest attendance being by parents of students in Year 7.
67. The Henry Beaufort School Association (HSBA) and the Beaufort Education Trust support the work of the school well. The HSBA raises funds, through organising events such as quiz nights, a *Summer Fayre* and discos for students. The money raised has been used to buy curtains for the hall, provide computer hardware and support activities such as the environment club. Parents also provide good practical assistance, by helping at school events and preparing refreshments at school concerts. The support of parents is appreciated by students and staff and makes a positive contribution to the resources and facilities available to students.
68. The information provided for parents is good. Annual reports provide good information about students' progress and identify clear targets to help them move to the next stage of their learning. Team leaders and tutors are readily accessible to parents and the school seeks to keep parents well informed and involve them in any concerns. For example, parents are contacted in the case of specific incidents or to inform them about their child's performance and, in appropriate cases, to draw their attention to the impact that unsatisfactory attendance is having on the student's learning. General information about the life and work of the school through the termly magazine and governors' annual report is very good and extremely well presented, celebrating the life and work of the school as well as providing good information.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

69. The newly appointed headteacher leads the school very effectively. In the year since his appointment, he has set in place a variety of initiatives, which are aimed at raising standards and improving the school's performance. He maintains a high profile around the school, visiting classrooms and undertaking duty in the playground. His open style of management means that he welcomes both teachers and students to discuss concerns. He is effectively supported by his two deputy headteachers and together with them has refocused the work of the school successfully on to its motto 'Achievement with Care'.
70. There is good delegation to staff with management responsibilities. The senior management team has recently been re-organised and each member of the group now has clearly defined responsibilities for particular subject teams. This is working well; they monitor the work of the subject team leaders effectively. They are currently undergoing some management training to help them with their task, as are the subject team leaders themselves, to prepare them for their

wider management role. The standard of management of departments is good overall and very good in mathematics, design and technology, humanities, music and modern foreign languages. It is unsatisfactory in English, as there is currently no subject team leader, and in physical education.

71. The governors are supportive of the school and play an effective role in its strategic management. There has been some re-structuring within the governing body and the chair of governors and the vice chair are new appointments. They meet with the headteacher regularly to discuss future developments and play a very active part in the life of the school. Governors discuss a variety of issues ranging from examination results and target setting to the provision of a new school building. They have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, are fully involved in development planning, and provide very good advice and support to the headteacher. They meet most of their statutory responsibilities but do not yet meet the requirement for a daily act of collective worship, an issue identified in the last report. In addition, statutory requirements are not met in religious education, design and technology and modern foreign languages at Key Stage 4 and ICT at both key stages.
72. The monitoring and development of teaching by subject team leaders are good overall, and are very good in mathematics, design and technology and history. They are satisfactory in the remaining subjects, other than in English and physical education, where they are unsatisfactory. The school has recently agreed a teaching and learning policy, which has been shared with parents and students, and this is used as the basis for classroom observations. The system is working well in most subject areas. Subject team leaders monitor and feedback effectively to their team members and report to their overall line manager. Staff at all levels participate in a number of school development activities, which are clearly focused on the overall aim of raising achievement. They are well supported in this by the school's financial planning.
73. The numbers, qualifications and experience of the teaching staff are good and match the demands of the curriculum. There are a few non-specialist teachers in several subjects. Occasionally, this has a slightly adverse effect on students' progress, for example in ICT. There is an appropriate level of support staff, including those for students with special educational needs. Procedures for the induction of new and newly qualified teachers are good. Overall, staffing is good. They are well managed with their individual needs being appropriately identified and addressed.
74. The learning support department and hearing-impaired unit are staffed by well-qualified teachers and effective support assistants, and both are very well managed and led by highly organised and effective heads of department. The head of the learning support department is also the school's special educational needs co-ordinator and she carries out very effectively the detailed local education authority's annual audit of students with special educational needs each autumn. Students' files are very well maintained and contain clear evidence of assessments and the monitoring and evaluation of their progress. Both the heads of special needs provision have a significant input into the induction of new staff and produce very good information for teachers with students with special educational needs in their classes. This includes general information about special needs, such as practical advice on the use of radio hearing aids and the optimum conditions for lip-reading, and specific details about individual students' learning needs and how they might be met. However, the individual student details produced by the hearing-impaired unit are dispersed over too many information sheets and this has the potential to detract from the efficiency of the information systems it uses to inform staff of students' needs. The school maintains excellent liaison with contributory primary schools in order to ensure a smooth transition for these students, and similarly very good communication within the departments ensures a consistent focus on their needs.
75. The school has established a good system for performance management. Teachers have produced very clearly focused targets as a means of furthering their professional development. Staff contribute to the overall development planning well by identifying issues concerning attainment within their subject areas and suggesting ways of addressing the issues raised. As a result, teachers feel fully involved in the changes taking place, have a very real commitment to improvement and a very good capacity for achieving their goals.

76. The school makes good use of the new technologies for administration purposes, record keeping, financial planning and management, and to support the very good assessment procedures. The bursar monitors the spending of the budget very carefully and provides the chair of the governors' finance committee with a monthly report. A practical example of the careful monitoring currently taking place is the reduction in expenditure recently carried out to avoid a budget deficit, which resulted in the management of the premises becoming one of the bursar's responsibilities. Careful accounting ensures that specific grants are used well for their designated purpose. The recent audit made very few recommendations but these have already been implemented effectively. The school seeks and obtains best value in all of its expenditure.
77. Overall, the accommodation is satisfactory for teaching the curriculum and there have been some improvements since the last inspection, including the space used by administrative staff. Further improvements are planned, which will improve significantly the quality of the accommodation. Currently, many areas are shabby although much has been done to improve the environment around the school. Some classrooms are small and restrict learning and teaching styles, particularly when used by large groups, whilst other accommodation, such as that used for physical education and the suite of rooms used for teaching mathematics, is good. The grouping of rooms for subjects benefits the working of the subject teams. The school is not readily accessible to wheelchair users or those with mobility problems because of the many steps and different levels around the site. The library provides a good focus for independent learning and is readily accessible to students throughout the day and after school. The absence of a dining hall, attached to the kitchen, combined with short lunch breaks, means that some students have very little time to eat their lunch and often do so whilst walking to lessons. These affect the opportunities for students' social interaction and development and on the amount of litter dropped around the site. The school hopes to improve the dining facilities through its buildings development plan. Displays, throughout the school, are satisfactory.
78. The quality and range of learning resources are satisfactory overall. A well-stocked learning resources centre enables students to gain access to a wide range of reference materials of good quality. The school web site provides students with good support for their learning in certain subjects, such as design and technology. There is a good range of specialist provision for students with special educational needs. However, there are some shortcomings in science, geography, modern foreign languages, ICT, religious education, physical education and music.
79. The planning by the school for its future development is good. The headteacher implemented an interim improvement plan on appointment to the school and has since established a good three-year strategic plan, underpinned by a focused annual plan with an appropriate range of targets. This identifies timescales, costs and the person responsible for leading on each task and is accompanied by clear success criteria to enable the school to monitor its progress effectively. Every subject team works within this plan and focuses on the same four targets of raising achievement, improving the learning environment, developing training and developing community links.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

80. The school should:

(1) improve standards in and provision for ICT, by:

- increasing the range of resources available for the teaching of ICT;
- ensuring that all students learn what is required by the National Curriculum;
- developing the expertise of staff in using ICT;
- ensuring that all subject teams make greater use of ICT to support learning in their subject areas.

[Paragraphs: 5; 9; 22; 24; 25; 33; 34; 36; 71; 73; 78; 85; 93; 100; 124; 133-141; 150; 164]

(2) extend the curriculum at Key Stage 4 to meet the needs of all students more effectively, by:

- ensuring that all students have access to a modern foreign language and design and technology to meet statutory requirements;
- providing a wider range of courses, including accredited, vocational and work related courses, to meet the needs of all students, including those with special educational needs;
- ensuring that statutory requirements are met in the disapplication of students from the National Curriculum.

[Paragraphs: 35; 42; 163]

(3) ensure that statutory requirements are also met in the following areas, by:

- increasing the time available for religious education at Key Stage 4;
- providing a daily act of collective worship.

[Paragraphs: 36; 50; 71]

In addition to the key issues identified above, other less important issues should be considered for inclusion in the college's action plan. These include:

- improving the accuracy of teachers' assessments at the end of Key Stage 3 in art, design and technology, geography, ICT and German *[Paras 6; 103; 108; 122; 132; 142]* ;
- increasing the challenge for higher attaining students in science, art and design and technology *[Paras 10; 96; 105; 112]*;
- improving the consistency of staff in adhering to the homework timetable *[Para 27]*;
- addressing more effectively the unsatisfactory standards of behaviour of a very small minority of students *[Paras 16; 18; 26; 29; 59]*;
- planning more explicit opportunities in different subjects for students to learn about the richness and diversity of non-European cultures *[Para 51]*;
- addressing the health and safety issues identified in this report *[Paras 63; 101]*;
- improving the consistency and quality of individual education plans *[Para 57]*.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	171
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and students	68

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
9	20	44	25	2	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	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils on the school's roll	1042	0
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	54	0

Special educational needs	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	15	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	275	0

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	13

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	24
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	37

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.7
National comparative data	7.7

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	1.1

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	2000	83	95	178

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	46	64	62
	Girls	72	78	73
	Total	118	142	135
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	66 (82)	80 (82)	76 (74)
	National	63 (63)	65 (62)	59 (55)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	36 (41)	56 (58)	41 (36)
	National	28 (28)	42 (38)	30 (23)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	55	63	69
	Girls	81	78	80
	Total	136	141	149
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	76 (81)	79 (85)	84 (76)
	National	64 (64)	66 (64)	62 (60)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	42 (45)	44 (60)	46 (43)
	National	31 (31)	39 (37)	29 (28)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4

Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	93	77	170

GCSE results		5 or more grades A*-C	5 or more grades A*-G	1 or more grades A*-G
Numbers of pupils achieving the standard specified	Boys	51	89	93
	Girls	59	76	77
	Total	110	165	170
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	64.7 (60)	97.1 (93)	100 (97)
	National	47.4 (46.6)	90.6 (90.9)	95.6 (95.8)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	48.8
	National	38.4

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

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	4
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	6
White	1035
Any other minority ethnic group	3

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y11

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	58.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y7 – Y11

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	400

Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y11

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	73.1
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Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y11

Key Stage 3	25.6
Key Stage 4	21.8

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	49	3
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	2846624
Total expenditure	2888167
Expenditure per pupil	2771
Balance brought forward from previous year	81609
Balance carried forward to next year	40066

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	1050
Number of questionnaires returned	204

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	27	58	12	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	34	54	7	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	15	50	20	3	12
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	11	61	21	5	1
The teaching is good.	18	66	5	0	10
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	22	52	18	6	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	40	52	4	3	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	42	48	5	1	3
The school works closely with parents.	21	44	27	4	4
The school is well led and managed.	28	50	4	2	15
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	30	55	8	2	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	46	43	7	2	2

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

ENGLISH

81. In the national tests in English at the end of Key Stage 3, the standards attained by both boys and girls were above the national average, but below those for similar schools. Since the last inspection, they have been above the national averages and in some years well above. During the same period, standards in mathematics and science have been consistently well above average. In the GCSE examinations in English in 2000, the proportion of students gaining grades A*-C was above the national average, with girls achieving significantly higher standards than boys. In English literature, standards were similar to English language, and it is to the school's credit that all students are entered for both subjects - nationally, four out of five students take literature at examination level. Over time, standards in both subjects have been above average, and in some years they have been well above.
82. In the work seen during the inspection, standards are above average in every year group at Key Stage 3 and by the end of the key stage they are above the standard expected nationally, reflecting the national test results in 2000. In their spoken English, all students show an above average ability to discuss and negotiate in groups. The great majority of boys and girls are fluent in the spoken language and their ability to listen and learn is above average. Most students respond to a good range of literature in an imaginative way, for example in the vivid accounts of the voyagers' experiences written by a Year 7 class studying *The Tempest*. By Year 9, they are able to write mature responses to demanding texts such as *David Copperfield* and *Jane Eyre* and make comparisons between theme and characterisation with confidence. Their vocabulary is broad and appropriate and they show an above average ability to communicate effectively for a variety of purposes to different audiences. Inaccurate spelling and expression and a lack of structure restrict the written work of a minority of students. Students with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are fully involved in their lessons and make good progress during Key Stage 3.
83. By the end of Key Stage 4, students' attainment is above the standard expected nationally. Most students are above average in their speaking and listening skills. They are able to articulate complex ideas during class discussion. They write perceptive and well-organised analyses of the treatment given to the same stories in different news reports. Many students show a high level of understanding of the political and social context of *Richard III* and *Macbeth*, as well as a thorough knowledge of stagecraft. Students in a lower band in Year 11 show a detailed grasp of the story in their discussion of the final chapter of *Of Mice and Men*. The higher attaining students develop an elegant and balanced style of writing for different purposes, although a small minority continue to have difficulty in expressing themselves clearly and in writing sustained essays. The most talented students achieve very high levels of critical commentary, showing maturity and perception in their responses to poetry, plays and novels. Most students achieve appropriately during Key Stage 4, and both those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress in all aspects of English.
84. The overall quality of teaching in English is good throughout the school. Teachers have good subject knowledge, which gives the students confidence in them. Shared and effective planning ensures that all classes are given a sequence of learning experiences that enables them to build on previous activities and make progress. The use of carefully selected tasks and aids to learning enables those students who find language difficult to succeed. Very effective use is made of varied groupings, enabling students to learn from each other. Teachers share the lesson objectives with their students so that they are aware of the purpose of what they are doing, and are able to measure their own success. Good relationships create a secure climate in which students feel able to take risks and develop their thinking. Regular assessment, both through the marking of written work and feedback during lessons, ensures that they are very aware of the level at which they are working. Teachers' comments are always encouraging but some do not always give specific advice on how to improve. Overall, the students' response in lessons is

good, and very good in Years 10 and 11. They listen well to the teacher and to each other. They enjoy their English and are keen to succeed, working very well together in group tasks such as planning a marketing campaign in Year 8 or preparing a dramatic performance. They show growing independence in developing their own thinking and managing their own studies.

85. The programme of study in English is well balanced and closely related to national requirements. The range of literature studied is broad: from Beowulf to modern poetry, Shakespeare to Priestley. Students are given good opportunities to study the media in a critical way and to have practical experience of language in a variety of contexts. A good range of extra-curricular activities enriches the students' learning. Currently, however, the lack of regular access to computers prevents ICT from being fully integrated into the English programme, although many students use their own computers to enhance the presentation of their work. The department makes a significant contribution to the spiritual, moral and social development of all students. Since the last inspection, the high standards of planning and the effective use of assessment have been maintained, although the regular monitoring of teaching has recently been in abeyance in the absence of a head of department. During this time, the English teachers have worked very well together to maintain the learning of groups taking examinations in 2001 and to plan for future developments in the curriculum. Their shared commitment and effective teamwork mean that the department is well placed to improve standards further in the future.

Drama

86. Drama is taught separately from English but makes a valuable contribution to the development of students' skills in speaking and listening and their reading and appreciation of texts. All students have a fortnightly drama lesson during Key Stage 3. At Key Stage 4, it is a popular option for GCSE. The results in the GCSE examination in 2000 were below the national average, with the boys well below. Over time, standards have been variable but generally below the national average. In the small number of lessons seen during the inspection, however, students' attainment is generally above average, indicating some improvement in standards over the past year. Students are given clear directions and models of performance to work towards. Consequently, they work in their groups with a good sense of purpose, co-operating well and achieving above average performances. A Year 8 class created an entertaining series of silent comedy routines, enhanced with musical sound effects. Students in Year 10 make good progress in learning how mood and atmosphere can be created with movement and gesture, leading to contrasting interpretations of the same opening scene. Scripted texts are carefully chosen to suit the interests and abilities of different groups of students, enabling them all to achieve a satisfying outcome. Extra-curricular drama is popular and well supported by students of all ages.

Media studies

87. The media studies course is an option for GCSE provided by teachers in the humanities department. In 2000, when the subject was taken for the first time, standards were well above the national average for both boys and girls. It is not possible to make firm judgements about students' attainment by the end of Key Stage 4 as only two lessons in media studies were observed. In these lessons, the majority of students show confidence and accuracy in their analysis of marketing techniques and the moving image. They have a sound grasp of technical vocabulary and the importance of defining and targeting an audience or market. Their own artefacts, for example CD covers, are produced to a near-professional standard, making very good use of ICT. Teachers have clear objectives that are shared with the students, giving lessons a good sense of purpose and enabling all students to make good progress.

MATHEMATICS

88. In the national tests at the end of Key Stage 3 in 2000, the results in mathematics were well above the national average and comparable to those found in similar schools. There was no significant difference between boys and girls. The school's results have been well above the national averages over the last four years. Standards in mathematics compare well with other subjects in the school.

89. In 2000, the GCSE examination results at grades A*-C were well above the national average and have been so for the last four years. The performance of the girls was better than that of the boys. The proportion of students achieving grade A was twice that seen nationally. Standards have risen in additional mathematics since the last inspection. Following the achievement of high grades in the GCSE examination in mathematics in Year 10, 23 students gained grades A*-C in additional mathematics, with almost a half gaining the higher grades. A further 24 students completed the GCSE statistics course as well as mathematics and the results were well above those found nationally. Most students gained at least a grade G in the GCSE examinations in mathematics in 2000.
90. From the work seen, students' attainment is well above the standard expected nationally by the end of Key Stage 3, similar to the results of the national tests in 2000. Students are making good progress throughout the key stage and are achieving well in relation to their earlier attainment. Higher attaining students in Year 9 achieve very well, as a result of the excellent teaching and the excellent attitudes they have to their studies. They are learning the notion of proof, applying it to the rules of indices, for example. They are able to evaluate $8^{2/3}$ and are becoming proficient in algebraic skill, solving inequalities such as $x^2 < 4$. Average attainers achieve well, due in part to the good use of over-head projectors and the teachers' enthusiasm. The visual impact in the teaching of straight-line graphs, for example, is a significant feature in enabling students to understand abstract algebra. Lower attaining students also achieve well through the good management of students by teachers and the encouragement they are given to contribute ideas and to think about their work. They know 750 is three-quarters of 1000 and relate the numbers to the measurement of capacity. Students with special educational need and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress and achieve well throughout the key stage.
91. Students' attainment is well above the national expectation by the end of Key Stage 4, reflecting the school's examination performance in 2000. The opportunity to sit GCSE examinations in statistics and additional mathematics provides the higher attainers every opportunity to further their knowledge. Their achievement is very good as a result. Most students have developed very good study habits and enjoy their work. Average attaining students achieve well. They know Pythagoras' theorem and can use it to find one side of a right-angled triangle given the other two. Students with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language also achieve well by the end of the key stage. Their numeracy levels are close to expectations. Students have benefited from the regular number work in lessons and all are expected to achieve a grade in the GCSE examinations.
92. The procedures for assessing students' attainment and progress are excellent and one reason for the rise in standards this year. The outcomes of the assessments have been put to very good use to guide curricular planning and to provide individual students with more appropriate support. The altered teaching arrangements in Year 11 this year are one good example of this. A closer focus on students who are entered for GCSE one year early is needed to eliminate ungraded results in additional mathematics.
93. The teaching overall is good at both key stages, with a few examples of very good and occasionally excellent teaching. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Teachers have a good knowledge of their subject, showing insight into students' learning difficulties. Mathematical problems pose a good challenge to students' thinking skills, for example, in geometry. Their technical competence in teaching the basic skills is very good which is why the standard of numeracy in the mathematics department is well above expectations and above average across the curriculum. The development of a numeracy strategy is a focus of current in-service training, with the expectation of improving standards of numeracy in all subjects. The planning of lessons is good and sometimes the main reason for the good progress that students make. Teaching methods are generally effective but on occasion lack sufficient whole class discussion or oral work. When these techniques are used effectively, teaching is very good or excellent. Resources such as overhead projectors and scientific calculators are used well to enhance students' understanding. The use of homework is good.

The curriculum satisfies the demands of the National Curriculum but opportunities are not available to use computers frequently in lessons.

94. Leadership and management are very good. The monitoring of the work of the subject team is very good, focused as it is on raising standards. The mathematics staff work well as a team and have taken very good action to meet the school's targets after missing targets last year. Aspects of teaching, marking and homework are under review, greatly assisted by the outcomes of the assessments. Leadership gives very good, clear educational direction to the work of the team. Induction within the team is good and supply staff are supported well. The extra time staff give to students outside normal lessons is a significant factor in maintaining well above average standards.

SCIENCE

95. Students' results in the national tests in 2000 at the end of Key Stage 3 were well above the national average for all maintained schools but below the average for similar schools. Over the past few years, there has been no significant difference between the results for boys and those for girls. The proportion of students obtaining A*-C grades in the 2000 GCSE examinations was well above the national average and were in line with those in similar schools. The girls' performance was much better than that of the boys overall, and they achieved many more of the higher grades. Since the last inspection, results declined steadily to a low in 1998 before rising again to the current level. Throughout this time, other than in 1998, the results have been consistently well above average. Results in science were broadly similar to those in mathematics, and above those in English.
96. Inspection evidence confirms that students' attainment is above the standard expected nationally, slightly below the school's results in the national tests for 14 year olds in 2000 but similar to that found at the time of the last inspection. By the end of Year 9, most average and lower attaining students, including those with special educational needs, are achieving well and often very well in relation to their earlier attainment. However, there is a small, but significant, number of middle to higher attaining students who are failing to achieve their full potential, as they are not stretched sufficiently. Students' practical skills and their individual investigative skills are not as developed as their scientific knowledge and understanding, as they have too few opportunities to make their own predictions, define problems or plan their own investigations. Some of the work includes few every-day applications so that students rarely see the relevance of what they are expected to learn. For example, most students know about the process of photosynthesis (glucose production in plants) and the factors that affect its rate. However, many have a very limited understanding of how this knowledge has been used by farmers and horticulturalists to improve the production of plants and crops. The small number of students for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress. The department helps students to develop their literacy skills by giving them confidence in using basic scientific terminology. However, teachers do not place sufficient emphasis on developing students' writing skills. Numeracy skills are generally good overall, and graphical skills are satisfactory. Students' ICT skills are not well developed as they rarely use computers in science.
97. From work seen during the inspection, students' attainment by the age of 16 is above the standard expected nationally, broadly similar to those found in recent examinations. A minority of students are attaining well above average standards. By the end of Key Stage 4, students, including those with special educational needs, are achieving well in relation to their earlier attainment. Most students have a good knowledge of the topics they are studying, for example energy transfer, forces and inheritance and selection, and some have an understanding of science that greatly exceeds that expected from students of their age. For example, many students in Year 10 have a good understanding of what happens in a conventional power station and are able to make comparisons with the production of hydro electricity. Higher attaining students apply algebraic equations to work out the energy required to raise water from the power station back up to the mountain reservoir. In Year 11, most students understand about the formation and distillation of crude oil, whilst higher attaining students can explain correctly in scientific terms the process of catalytic cracking and why this is important in the petrochemical industry. The lack of investigative experience is seen in much of their science, so that students'

practical skills and their individual investigative skills, although improving during Key Stage 4, are below their attainment in other areas of science. As at Key Stage 3, students' literacy skills are well supported in terms of their developing scientific vocabulary and terminology. The standard of presentation is average overall, with a significant number of students keeping records that are not clear or set out effectively for later revision.

98. Students' attitudes and responses to science and their behaviour are mostly good. Students in Key Stage 3 are enthusiastic experimenters, willing to try out new ideas and techniques and keen to ask and to answer questions. Good relationships lead to effective collaboration in practical groups. Older students have less positive attitudes and some lack real enthusiasm, although the will to broaden their knowledge and skills is high. They are good listeners, but their responses frequently lack fluency and ideas about the subject, and few ask questions.
99. The quality of teaching is good overall, and there are a few examples of excellent teaching. About two-thirds of the teaching is good or better and a quarter is very good or excellent. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. Teaching is better amongst the keener 11 to 14 year olds than with the older students. The variation in the quality of teaching means that students do not have an equally good experience of science as they move through the school. The department has been through a period of instability as a result of staff turnover, but this has now stabilised. The difference in teaching quality between lessons produces significant differences in students' responses. In the most effective lessons, the teacher's good knowledge and expertise combine with high expectations, enthusiasm and effective planning. These give the students confidence and they respond positively, trying hard. In the better lessons, teachers challenge the students at an appropriate level, which meets their individual needs. They are encouraged to explore scientific ideas, reflect and think critically and to apply their knowledge and understanding. For example, in a Year 8 lesson, students were enabled to think in the abstract and predict, plan, and carry out an investigation to discover the factors that affect the rate of a chemical reaction. Students were excited, interested and all were absorbed at their own particular level of learning. The good pace of the lesson ensured effective learning and good progress. In some lessons, although satisfactory, the slow pace and passivity of the students meant that they did not learn through experience and applying critical thinking. Progress was, therefore, slower. Students are not helped enough to write well about their scientific experiences.
100. There have been significant changes in staffing over the last two years with six of the eight full-time teachers, including the subject team leader and his deputy, being newly appointed. Leadership and management are satisfactory and although members of the department work well as a team, the pace of development is too slow. Procedures for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are not rigorously applied, with the result that staff do not know where their weaknesses lie and how improvements can be made. The new procedures for monitoring and tracking students' performance to raise standards are appropriate, but are not applied rigorously. New schemes of work for both key stages are under development, but they do not satisfactorily address the needs of higher attaining students or offer enough ICT opportunities. They also show too little emphasis on literacy and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
101. The technical staff give good support to teaching, but the hours available are very low for a school of this size. In general, there is sufficient equipment, but there are some shortages of ICT equipment. Accommodation is satisfactory overall, but there are a number of weaknesses. Whilst there are enough laboratories, most are in need of refurbishment. The preparation room is very small and cramped, providing insufficient storage and preparation surfaces. There are health and safety issues concerning both the preparation room and laboratories requiring urgent and immediate attention and which were drawn to the attention of the school. The department lacks a system for risk assessment. The quality and quantity of students' work on display are good overall, and in several laboratories very good.
102. Overall, there have been some good improvements since the last inspection. The GCSE examination results have improved. The quality of teaching, which was mostly sound, with some good practice is now mostly good with some very good and excellent teaching. Assessment and recording procedures have improved and there is now a centralised computer system to allow for better tracking of students. Students are more aware of the National Curriculum level to which

they are working than they were previously. The department is well placed to move ahead, provided that there is more rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning to raise attainment, and in particular that of higher attaining students.

ART

103. Standards in art are in line with the standard expected nationally by the end of both key stages. Teachers' assessments at the end of Year 9 in 2000 were above the national average but were not supported by work seen during the inspection, indicating an overestimation by teachers of students' attainment. The GCSE results in 2000 at grades A*-C were broadly in line with the national average. Since 1996, the GCSE results have improved steadily up until 2000. Students perform better in art than in many other areas of the curriculum and all students gained at least a grade E. These results are in line with standards observed during the inspection.
104. Students' achievements are satisfactory at both key stages. Standards of drawing are high, reflecting the department's emphasis on the teaching of basic drawing and observational skills. Most students have a satisfactory understanding of form, tone and proportion and their work demonstrates increasing control and depth of understanding as they progress through the course. Sketchbooks are used effectively at both key stages and students are encouraged to research visual ideas in a variety of ways, and then to select, modify and refine them to produce final pieces. However, critical study work is barely average, with little or no extended writing or depth of study even by students in Year 11. Work in other media includes printmaking in Years 7-9, clay, collage, oil and acrylic paint, three-dimensional work in card, and wire and plaster. Some of the three-dimensional work in Year 9 and Year 11 is particularly effective.
105. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at both key stages. Teaching is well managed to ensure that students of all levels of attainment achieve satisfactorily. Although the planning of activities is not matched to meet the needs of different groups, effective teaching ensures that lower attaining students are given more support. Observations in lessons often display the low expectations of teachers towards higher attaining students, resulting in a lack of challenge and attention to detail and quality. Strengths of the teaching include good subject knowledge and skills. The confident way teachers demonstrate by example and refer students to the work of established artists encourages further research and promotes an understanding of context. Re-cap and evaluation are used effectively to consolidate learning by asking students to review what has been achieved in class. Homework is used effectively to extend this learning.
106. Teaching is particularly effective at Key Stage 3. Some boys with challenging behaviour are handled skilfully through the use of a variety of class management techniques. Where teaching has shortcomings, the management of class discussion is sometimes insufficient to draw out salient points and allows discussion to take up a disproportionate amount of the lesson. Generally, students behave well and their attitudes are conducive to learning at both key stages. Good relationships within the art department create a pleasant atmosphere. Most students listen intently and participate enthusiastically in their work.
107. Improvement since the last inspection is good, with exam results having risen steadily and progress now being satisfactory across the key stages. The scheme of work fulfils the requirements of the National Curriculum. Leadership and management of the department are satisfactory and the head of department has worked conscientiously to move the subject forward. Recent changes in the management structure of the school are improving the ability to plan for the future and enabling the department to use its monitoring and evaluating procedures to move forward effectively. Development plans are appropriate and the limited facilities and access to the use of computers are likely to be improved by the opening of the new arts centre. The subject makes a good contribution to the students' social and cultural development and would be further enhanced by more visits to places of interest to inspire and inform artwork. The curriculum has a cultural bias, largely western-European, but the study of African masks and aboriginal art has inspired some lively and interesting work, particularly at Key Stage 3. Areas for further development include the raising of achievement through the provision of more challenging work and broadening the curriculum at Key Stage 4.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

108. Students' attainment in design and technology by the end of both key stages is above the standard expected nationally. They are better in making than in designing. Standards have improved since the last inspection. Statutory assessments of 14 year-olds undertaken by teachers in 2000 indicate that a much higher proportion of students than the national average attained the expected standard. However, work completed earlier this year and in lessons indicates that standards are not quite as high as this. Teachers' assessments of their skills in designing were too lenient. Nevertheless, standards were above average in all the lessons seen.
109. By the age of 14, standards in the work seen are above those expected nationally. By the end of Year 9, most students are able to draw independently upon a wide range of sources of information. They make preliminary models to explore and test their design ideas. However, they are not making enough decisions regarding the choice of materials and construction methods.
110. The GCSE examination results in 2000 were above the national average and similar to most other subjects in the school. The proportion of students gaining grades A*-C in food technology was at the national average, just below the national average in resistant materials, above the national average in graphic products and well above the national average in electronic products. Almost all students gained at least a grade G. Standards are higher than this in the work of the current Year 11 students. Inspection evidence indicates that students' attainment by the end of Key Stage 4 is above the standard expected nationally. Overall, girls attain higher standards than boys.
111. The use of a range of computer applications is having a positive impact on standards. The school's 'Technology' website provides valuable support to GCSE students in Years 10 and 11. However, students' experience of computer-aided design and manufacture in all years is insufficiently developed. Some very good GCSE food technology coursework occurs in Year 11. For example, a project involving the design and manufacture of 'Lunch Box Snacks' shows that students are able to investigate the needs of potential customers and work to a product specification. Students working in resistant materials and graphic products are also producing some very good coursework projects, for example, designing a toy fire engine and a 'Learning game for Kids'. These students show that they are able to work to a plan and make a finished product to a very high standard. One exceptional pupil, studying electronic products, has designed a sophisticated testing system for mountain bike wheels.
112. The quality of teaching is very good. In Key Stage 3, half the lessons were very good or excellent and in Key Stage 4, four-fifths were very good or excellent. The remaining lessons were all good. The very good lessons have very clear learning objectives, are exceptionally well managed and organised, are stimulating and have a brisk pace; for example, in a Year 9 lesson on designing and making electronic timers. In addition, the excellent lessons with some classes in Year 7, Year 8 and Year 11 show evidence of inspirational teaching. In these lessons, the teacher's subject knowledge, combined with high expectations and excellent question and answer sessions, made intellectual demands on the students so that the gains they made in their knowledge and understanding were very high. These features were seen to good effect in a Year 11 lesson with students analysing a range of graphic products in preparation for their GCSE examination. However, some teaching of design skills does not provide higher attaining students with sufficient opportunities to make informed choices about materials and consumer needs. This is because the different aspects of designing do not receive enough in-depth attention with these students.
113. Specialist teachers have excellent subject knowledge and this has a positive impact on learning. Regular marking and assessment of GCSE projects are also having a positive effect on standards because students receive constructive comments from their teachers that help them to improve their work.
114. Homework is used effectively to help students consolidate class work, to prepare for lessons and to develop their technical vocabulary. It has a positive impact on standards. Much has been done to support the development of students' literacy and numeracy skills by way of high quality

classroom displays, containing technical vocabulary, and the provision of well-structured worksheets to support students' designing. Students with special educational needs also make good progress, particularly in the practical aspects of making.

115. Students' attitudes are generally very good and have a positive impact on standards. They enjoy design and technology and take pride in their work. They are willing to participate fully in lessons and readily offer answers to questions from their teachers. They share tools and equipment fairly and handle them safely. They are eager to do well and take responsibility to clear and tidy up working areas at the end of every lesson. Design folders and written work are neat, tidy and properly organised.
116. Leadership and management are very good. The subject leader is particularly enthusiastic and sets a very good example for his colleagues. There are systems in place that enable him to monitor teaching and learning. Regular departmental meetings focus on improving standards by evaluating the design and technology curriculum, teaching and learning and assessment issues. The department makes very good use of assessment data to enable nearly all students to fulfil their potential. The scheme of work is well balanced. It provides students with a broad experience in all aspects of designing and making and in a range of materials to meet statutory requirements. The departmental development plans set out clear directions for the way forward and improvements are being systematically phased in. The accommodation for design and technology is in need of some modernisation. The level and quality of technician support are very good.

HUMANITIES

117. The humanities subject team teaches courses in geography, history, religious education, GCSE media studies and GCSE humanities. At Key Stage 3, there are co-ordinated courses in history and geography, which meet National Curriculum requirements, together with religious education, which meets the requirements of the agreed syllabus. For GCSE, all students in Year 10 follow the humanities course, which incorporates the religious education required by the agreed syllabus. In addition, students may choose an optional GCSE course in geography, history or media studies. Media studies is reported as part of English. The curriculum in Year 10 will move into Year 11 from next September. At present in Year 11, humanities, geography, history and media studies are options. Year 11 students take religious education as part of a separate core course but the time allocated for this is below the recommendations of the agreed syllabus.
118. The results of the GCSE humanities examination in 2000 were above the national average, and were well above the national average in the two preceding years. The students' results for humanities in 2000 were higher than their average results for their other subjects. The standards of the current Year 11 students are well above the national expectation, as in 1998 and 1999, reflecting their higher attainment compared to the students taking the subject in 2000. Students' achievement is good in humanities.
119. Teaching and learning are good in the GCSE humanities course. Teachers have detailed knowledge of the course and use this to devise pertinent activities related to the students' interest and contemporary issues, which sustain their interest in, for example, pressure groups working locally, nationally and internationally. Teachers' good planning leads to a variety of short, focused activities in lessons, which motivates the students and helps them understand the key ideas on which the course is based. Activities are time limited and this results in a good pace of learning. In many classes, teachers' marking helps students understand what they need to do in order to raise their standards. However, these helpful comments are not consistent for all classes and, in some cases, comments are infrequent or unhelpful. Class management is effective and unobtrusive, ensuring students remain on task so that they achieve well, and securing very good attitudes and behaviour. For example, students take discussions seriously and are keen to express their views. They work enthusiastically in small groups, collaborating well and supporting each other. Literacy skills are effectively taught through, for example, consistent use of specialist vocabulary and the use of a variety of interesting writing tasks. However, some lower-attaining students do not receive enough support with their writing and their standards of recorded work are well below average.

120. The humanities and subject team leaders provide very effective leadership and management, which make a significant contribution to the high standards and effective teaching through the good systems of monitoring, support and assessment. The curriculum planning for GCSE humanities is in an outline format, although links have been made between key ideas and teaching activities for some units of work. However, weaknesses in the curriculum planning are that it does not make learning objectives clear or give teachers practical advice on how to match work to students' differing levels of attainment.

GEOGRAPHY

121. On the basis of teachers' assessments in 2000, the proportion of Year 9 students reaching Level 5 or above was well above the national average, with girls outperforming boys by a wider margin than the national gender difference. The results of the GCSE examination in 2000 at grades A*-C were well above the national average, with girls outperforming boys by a much wider margin than nationally. Results have been consistently better than the national average for the last six years, reaching a peak in 1999. Students' examination performance in geography is better than in most of their other subjects.
122. By the end of Year 9, the attainment of most students is above the national expectation. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection. Evidence is drawn from the scrutiny of a sample of students' work and marks achieved in completed assignments, since no geography was being taught to Year 9 during the time of the inspection. This level of attainment is slightly below that suggested by the statutory assessments undertaken by teachers in 2000. Differences can be attributed in part to the incompleteness of the evidence in the current inspection in the absence of direct lesson observation in Year 9. Most students are able to extract relevant information from a range of sources to write clear notes, although a significant minority have weak writing skills and find difficulty in writing at length. Higher attaining students produce fluent passages of writing in their enquiry work, frequently using computers to improve its presentation. All students use atlases confidently and have good map reading skills. Students' attainment by the end of Year 11 is above the national expectation for most students, with about one-fifth well above. A similar situation was reported at the time of the previous inspection. Most students produce good coursework, while that of higher attaining students is very good. They employ hypothesis testing to good effect and use computers to improve the appearance of text and graphs. They have, for example, a good understanding of geographical models and of coastal erosion processes. As with younger students, a minority has poor writing skills, but cope well with the shorter answers required for the lower tier of entry at GCSE. All students have good oral skills, answering questions fluently in lessons. There are no significant differences in the attainment between boys and girls, or students for whom English is not their first language. Students identified by the school as gifted and talented are attaining well above national expectations.
123. The overall standard of teaching is good and is never less than satisfactory. In Years 7 to 9, half is good or very good, while in Years 10 and 11 it is never less than good and one third is very good. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection. In the best lessons, teachers' good subject knowledge is reinforced by brisk pace, challenge and sensible allocation of time to different activities. These qualities were seen in a Year 7 lesson on population distribution when students were challenged to match photographs to descriptions of places and then to locate them accurately on a world map. As in a Year 8 lesson on industrial location, tasks were suitably graded in difficulty to match the needs of all students. Students in Year 11 receive very good guidance in examination technique. They respond to good teaching by settling down quickly to work, behaving well, staying on task and listening respectfully to each other's opinions. Rare instances of poor behaviour are dealt with without confrontation. Lessons start with a clear statement of aims followed by a review of recent work, during which students readily recall and consolidate what they have learned before. Teachers' guidance on the use of textbooks, atlases, well designed worksheets and other resources assist students to make good progress in lessons. Learning is also assisted by frequent opportunities for collaborative learning. In comparatively less successful lessons, tasks are not well matched to the needs of individual students and introductions are too long, leaving insufficient time for students to

complete tasks. Students with special educational needs make good progress, as teachers and support staff know them well and recognise and respond effectively to their needs. Homework, when set, provides useful reinforcement to classroom learning. Work is marked regularly and in most cases is accompanied by comments pointing the way forward for students.

124. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The subject curriculum fully meets statutory requirements. Particularly close attention is given to the monitoring and evaluation of students' progress. This is resulting in precise target setting and improvements in performance. Strategies are in hand to address the wide differential in the examination performance of girls and boys in 2000. All the points for improvement raised in the previous inspection have been addressed successfully. The application of number through the use of statistical analysis of data is less developed than in many schools and there are insufficient opportunities for students to develop their computer skills in lessons. Students in Years 7 to 9 have insufficient opportunities for fieldwork away from the immediate locality.

HISTORY

125. Teachers' assessments undertaken at the end of Key Stage 3 in 2000 indicate that students' attainment in history was above the national average. There were no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls. The proportion of students gaining grades A*-C in the GCSE examinations in 2000 was well above the national average as was the proportion of higher-level grades at A* or A. The attainment of girls was better than boys, although boys themselves attained higher standards than the overall national average in history. The results compare very well with other subjects in the school. Since 1996, the school's results at grades A*-C and at the higher-level grades have been well above the national average each year, although with some variation up and down.
126. Students' attainment by the end of Key Stage 3 is difficult to judge, as it was not possible to observe any history teaching. However, a significant amount of students' work, including assessments, was scrutinised. By the age of fourteen, their attainment is above national expectations. Girls are performing at a slightly higher level than boys. Higher attaining students achieve very well, as do the average attainers. The progress of lower attaining students is satisfactory. In general, students are making good progress with extended writing and in source analysis. They are becoming more adept at evaluating their own performance and reconciling it to levels. They present their work very well, including the use of ICT, as for example in Year 9 work on the First World War.
127. By the end of Key Stage 4, students' attainment is well above the standard expected nationally, although the attainment of girls is higher than that of the boys. Students have acquired a number of writing styles, including extended writing. Course work, for example the local study on Winchester Castle, has allowed students to produce creative and very detailed assignments. Students are adept at analysing GCSE questions and understanding examination techniques. This is particularly true for higher and average attaining students. Year 10 students show good use of ICT skills and in-depth analysis in their Nazi presentation assessment but progress is insufficient and whole class exercises should be incorporated into schemes of work. Students evaluate sources with an understanding of relevance and bias.
128. At both key stages, history teachers lay a great emphasis on developing students' literary skills and the department has made a good start in improving literacy, including the use of key words and writing frames. Opportunities are taken to develop numeracy, for example in the analysis of World War One battlefield statistics and the use and interpretation of graphs. This work now needs to be extended.
129. The high standards of attainment at Key Stage 4 in the last inspection have been maintained and consolidated. At Key Stage 3, a larger proportion of higher attaining students are now achieving beyond the average expectations, with some students going well beyond this. The development in the use of sources has continued and more students are able to evaluate sources effectively. Students continue to organise themselves effectively and many work independently on extended historical assignments. There are far more opportunities to study in depth.

130. The analysis of work and assessments at Key Stage 3 indicates that the teaching is predominantly good. At Key Stage 4, the teaching is very good and occasionally excellent. Good planning, clear targets, the use of key words, excellent resources and the use of a variety of teaching methods typify good lessons. They are consolidated by assiduous and evaluative marking. Excellent subject knowledge and the understanding of GCSE examination requirements mean that students are very well prepared for public examinations. No teaching was judged to be ineffective but in the best lessons, higher expectations and more effective marking lead to higher attainment in some lessons than others. Expectations are usually high and progress by nearly all students is good at Key Stage 3 and very good at Key Stage 4. The use of assessment has been strengthened since the last inspection and students show an ability to evaluate their own performance and to see what improvements need to be made. Teachers are beginning to use assessment data to inform future planning. Teaching materials are varied, well prepared and stimulating, which encourages students' interest and motivation.
131. The humanities subject team is very well led. The humanities team leader delegates considerable responsibility to the head of history for the curriculum and lesson planning and this arrangement works well. They both have a strong interest in the further development of an effective assessment process. They both analyse and evaluate performance data rigorously and set demanding targets. There is an appropriate development plan. Structured departmental meetings are used to moderate students' performance in history, evaluate teaching programmes and develop further the skills of non-specialist teachers at Key Stage 3. There is strong leadership in the department, which has a positive impact upon performance.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

132. Teachers' assessments in 2000 at the end of Year 9 indicate that students' attainment was above the standard expected nationally. Given the current standards of Year 10 students and the shortages of equipment at that time for data logging and control, these assessments are unrealistic and insufficiently accurate. In the GCSE examinations in 2000, the results at grades A*-C were below the national average. The results of boys and girls were similar. On average, students' results in ICT were lower than their results in other subjects.
133. Students' attainment by the end of Year 9 is below national expectations, as they have not had the opportunity to learn all of the required applications because of weaknesses in teaching and access to computers during their time in Years 7 and 8. For example, many students have not had the opportunity to use data logging, and control equipment and software. Consequently, statutory requirements are not met. Students have relatively small amounts of recorded work. However, standards are improving and some of the students' work matches and occasionally exceeds the expected standards. For example, all Year 9 students in one class selected information for a press release that was intended for a specific audience and involved the effective merging of files and integration of text and a variety of graphics. In another Year 9 class, students have started to use computer-aided design software effectively and added dimensions to two-dimensional shapes.
134. In Years 10 and 11, about one-third of the students follow a GCSE course while all students follow a core course in ICT. The attainment of students following the GCSE course is in line with the expected standards by the end of Key Stage 4 and has improved since last summer as a result of improved teaching and better computers and software. Year 11 students have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of input, output and storage devices. Higher attaining students and many average attaining students have a good grasp of the application of ICT to the running of a small business through, for example, the use of spreadsheets to model budgets, control stock and to calculate pay. The work of lower attaining students and some average attaining students lacks the necessary detail and evaluation, and software is not always used effectively.
135. Standards in the core course in ICT at Key Stage 4 are below national expectations by the end of Year 11. Students have not been taught the necessary skills and knowledge in their earlier years at the school, and the course is unsuitable as it covers much of the content taught in

- Years 7 to 9. Consequently, statutory requirements are not met. The school is aware of the weaknesses in the provision for ICT and is taking steps to change this course with effect from next September.
136. The school has only had a stable, specialist team of ICT teachers since last September and a satisfactory number of modern computers since last January. Consequently, the overall achievement of the current Year 9 students during Years 7 to 9 has been unsatisfactory. Similarly, the achievement of the current Year 11 students, who are not taking the GCSE course, has been unsatisfactory overall during Years 10 and 11.
137. In lessons, students are making appropriate progress and their achievements are satisfactory. Students with special educational needs usually achieve well and often reach standards similar to their peers. There are occasional exceptions to this. For example, a student with lower than average literacy skills was required to type the same amount of complex data into a database as the rest of the class. This provided a daunting task and reduced the student's achievement. Because many of the tasks provide students with opportunities for initiative, higher-attaining students often achieve well. The achievements of boys and girls are similar.
138. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, but ranges from very good to unsatisfactory. Strengths of the teaching that promote good learning include the very good subject knowledge of the specialist teachers, which enables them to respond quickly and accurately to students' questions, to help students solve their problems and to take their learning forward. There are very clear demonstrations of particular skills when teachers control all of the screens and show how particular tasks are completed. This helps students learn quickly and start applying the skills to their own work. Teachers work hard to monitor and support students' learning when they are working individually or in pairs at computers. In one lesson, the displays of previously completed work demonstrated the expected standards and helped raise students' expectations. They responded to this by producing imaginative work using a wide range of ICT skills. The best learning occurs in lessons where students are motivated by interesting and challenging tasks, such as creating a presentation or a press release.
139. There are instances when weaknesses in teaching reduce students' learning. For example, weaknesses in the expertise of some non-specialist teachers results in teaching that does not help students achieve the highest possible standards. Occasionally, a lesson's learning objectives are too general so that the teacher is not specific about the skills to be taught, with the result that students do not make the best possible progress. In a few lessons in Years 10 and 11, weaknesses in classroom management do not secure a positive attitude and good behaviour from all students, and a minority lack self-discipline and the commitment to do their best and complete as much work as possible. Because the effectiveness of classroom management varies, students' attitudes and behaviour vary from excellent to unsatisfactory but are good overall.
140. For Years 7 to 9, there is enough time for the taught ICT lessons, but these lessons are taught in short blocks so that, for example, some Year 7 students are not taught ICT until after the summer half term. This means that they are only able to apply the skills they have learnt to other subjects for only a few weeks at the end of the year. This limits their progress. The school is aware of the unsatisfactory nature of the ICT core course for all students in Years 10 and 11, and steps are being taken to introduce a new course next September.
141. The use of ICT to enhance students' learning in other subjects has improved considerably during 2001 but is still unsatisfactory, not least in the core subjects. The school has rightly made the improvement of the use of ICT across the curriculum a priority in its school improvement plan. The use that each subject makes of ICT has been mapped in outline, and a start has been made to planning this in detail. There is scope for all subjects to increase their use of ICT. The provision of computers has improved considerably since last January. There are now three classrooms with networks of computers, together with some smaller clusters in subject areas. One of the three computer suites has old computers, which are unreliable and cannot use some modern software. This limits the use of ICT by other subjects. The leadership and management

of the subject have been unsatisfactory in the past, but the new subject leader is making clear progress, is improving the curriculum and consequently standards are rising.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

142. Students' attainment in modern foreign languages is above the national expectation overall. Students achieve well in relation to their earlier attainment. The assessments undertaken by teachers at the end of Year 9 in 2000, which combined the assessments of both French and German, show that standards were well above the national averages. Inspection evidence indicates, however, that these assessments were inaccurate as they overestimated what students had achieved in German.

French

143. By the end of Year 9, standards in French are above and often well above national expectations. They are strongest in average and higher attaining groups where students write detailed, fluent descriptions of past, future and present events. They are weaker in lower attaining groups. Although some students use present and past tenses with considerable support, others are at the stage of copying phrases and are not yet manipulating the language for themselves.
144. In 2000, the GCSE examination results at grades A*-C were significantly higher than the national average with more than a third of those entering gaining grades A*/A. Students did better in French than in most of their other subjects and girls did particularly well. Results have improved over the past three years although this is not significant since numbers entering for the examination have reduced by a third over the same period. Lessons observed and work seen show that standards in the current Year 11 are similarly high. In the highest attaining group there is some work of a very high calibre. Students write very fluent articles on a variety of issues using a range of tenses and vocabulary well. Most average attaining students are also heading for higher grade passes and have a good grasp of structure and a wide vocabulary. Attainment of the lower attaining groups varies from above national expectations to below, partly because the schemes of work do not take enough account of their differing needs and partly because of staff disruption in recent weeks.
145. When compared with their earlier attainment, students achieve well, with the exception of a small number of lower attaining students, including those with special educational needs, who achieve satisfactorily. Higher and average attaining students make very good progress, particularly at Key Stage 4. Their progress is slightly slower in the latter half of Year 9 because teachers are not moving through the National Curriculum levels as quickly as they might.
146. The quality of teaching is good and is very good in Key Stage 3, ranging from satisfactory to excellent. In the best lessons, teachers establish a secure atmosphere quickly, which encourages students to experiment with structure, to take risks and to manipulate the language for themselves. In so doing, students make excellent progress and attain the very highest standards. Other key features of the good practice include good subject knowledge, well-prepared lessons, established routines, good review of work already taught, very good examination preparation, effective use of homework to extend the learning after school, and clear outcomes shared with students. As a result of this high quality teaching, students learn well and very well at Key Stage 3. Most students have well-developed learning skills, which they use effectively to enhance their language learning. When learning is not quite as focused as it could be, it is because the skills of lower attaining students are not well enough developed to enable them to complete the tasks provided and the teacher has not given enough support. In one group for example, they did not know how to organise themselves to get the best from a listening comprehension or what to listen for. In the books seen, the work of some lower attaining students is untidy and difficult to learn from. Students' attitudes and behaviour are good.

German

147. Students' attainment in German by the end of Key Stage 3 is in line with national expectations; higher attaining students attain levels that are above and often well above the standard expected

- nationally. They use past, present and future tenses accurately when writing to a pen friend about themselves. Average attainers are not quite as strong in German as they are in French. Most understand the teachers' fluent use of German and write short paragraphs about school subjects and opinions of them. They understand past and future tenses and use them with support. Lower attainers have difficulties understanding instructions in German.
148. The GCSE results in 2000 at grades A*-C were broadly in line with national averages (which are higher nationally in German than in French) with a quarter of those entered attaining the highest grades of A and A*. Boys did slightly worse than girls but the percentage of boys gaining A*-C passes was above the national proportion for boys whilst the proportion of girls was below their respective figures. Students did worse in German than in most of their other subjects and the results have declined over the past three years from well above national averages in 1998. These results were borne out by the performance of the current Year 11 cohort, in work and lessons observed, although standards are now slightly higher than national expectations. Students are not as strong in German as they are in French from the start of Year 10, where although higher attaining students write descriptions of their free time and their home town in the present tense, lower attainers have difficulty remembering basic vocabulary and structures. Nevertheless, by the end of Year 11 the highest attainers produce excellent work on past, present and future holidays, with fluent, informative writing that will gain the highest grades. Average attainers also manipulate language well to argue their case about environmental issues. The attainment of lower attaining students varies considerably from in line with national expectations to below. Some students write well about past holidays, whilst others are less focused and produce significantly less work of a lower calibre.
149. When compared to their earlier attainment, achievement in lessons is good but achievement over time is not as strong. Students with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Overall, the teaching is good. As with French, it ranges from satisfactory to excellent. In the best lesson, the teacher provided an extremely challenging revision lesson for a group of very able Year 11 students. There was an atmosphere of mutual support and respect, together with a dedication to learning, normally seen in an A-level lesson. It enabled students to work to their highest potential and to make excellent preparation for their forthcoming examinations. Other features of the good teaching include good subject knowledge, clear identification of learning outcomes, brisk starts to lessons, good planning and challenging activities. As a result of this good teaching, students learn well. They play a full part in the activities provided by teachers and acquire skills and knowledge effectively. Where they learn best, they begin to buzz with enthusiasm for the subject as they come to terms with a new set of vocabulary or an unfamiliar grammar point. There are, however, groups in most years where disrupted provision and the fact that schemes of work do not cater enough for the needs of students' differing attainment, have had a detrimental effect on standards. Attitudes and behaviour are good.
150. The subject team leader for modern foreign languages manages a well-qualified team very effectively. The monitoring of teaching and learning is good. One of the strengths of this department is the very good assessment procedures that are used effectively to identify strengths and weaknesses and to plan the next stage of learning. There is a good set of targets aimed at raising achievement and a shared commitment and good team spirit. There is a strong curriculum at both key stages, which is enhanced by the addition of a second foreign language, including Spanish at Key Stage 3 and the offer of three languages including Latin at Key Stage 4. Reading for pleasure is supported by a number of reading books in the library including Harry Potter in a German translation. Many students use the computer well at home to enhance their learning although they currently have little access to computers in class. The development of literacy and numeracy skills forms part of the modern languages curriculum although it is not a key priority at present. Despite this good overall provision, statutory requirements are not met because the school has disapplied a significant minority of students at Key Stage 4 without following the correct procedures.
151. Resources are abundant for the new Spanish course but in French and German there are not enough textbooks for students to take them home. Similarly, although there is an excellent French speaking classroom support assistant, there are no foreign language assistants. Provision for extra-curricular activities is good, with regular exchange visits and the school is

celebrating its 20th anniversary of the exchange with the French school this year. Provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Since the last inspection, the department has concentrated successfully on raising the standards of the highest attainers. The teaching is good. There is now more variety in teaching styles and the department sets very clear targets, assesses work very well and provides very good feedback.

MUSIC

152. By the end of both key stages, students' attainment in all aspects of music is above the standard expected nationally. By the end of Key Stage 3, nearly all students are working at the expected level. The GCSE examination results in 2000 were below the national average, considerably lower than in previous years when they have been above average. Of the eighteen students entered in 2000, just over a half achieved grades A*-C; in previous years, this proportion was 76 per cent and 75 per cent respectively. Of the cohort, seven students achieved the highest grades of A or A*. A substantial number of students currently at the end of Key Stage 4 are achieving above average standards, especially in composition and performance; all students are achieving standards commensurate with their prior attainment.
153. Standards in Year 9 composition are above average: following revision and refinement, students produce interesting compositions on electronic keyboards. Performance is particularly good throughout this key stage. Year 7 students, for instance, sing sweetly and accurately in 1-, 2-, and even, 3- parts and with evident pleasure. Peripatetic staff play a key role in the development of standards of performance; in voice, for instance, students are encouraged to use warm-up and intonation exercises. This is a marked improvement on the last inspection. Similarly, Year 9 students perform arrangements of popular music on steel pans with verve, ebullience and enthusiasm. Students are familiar with the different types of popular music from the Caribbean and with concepts such as key, scale and intervals. Notwithstanding the dip in the GCSE results in 2000, students currently at the end of Key Stage 4 compose music of well above average quality. Their composition skills are particularly impressive in Year 11 where they make full use of midi technology to process, perform and record their work. Ethnic influences include Japanese "Mai", Irish-folk and black gospel techniques. Students work well in both large and small groups using a variety of percussion instruments and keyboards.
154. While there are no differences in attainment based on gender, at both Key Stages 3 and 4, classes include significant numbers of students with special educational needs working alongside equal numbers of musically gifted students. The degree of co-operation and mutual care evinced by both groups in practical and theoretical activity is very evident.
155. By far the main factor in the maintenance of standards in the department is the very good quality of much of the teaching, by both classroom and peripatetic teachers. The quality of teaching and learning has been maintained since the last inspection. Staff lead by example, both in composition and performance, and teaching is characterised by rigour, passion and a deep empathy for the subject and for the needs of students. There is a concern for the quality of the end product, be it music for a thriller film, steel-pan ensemble performance or exercise in melodic dictation. Preparation is thorough, and detailed records of assessment are used to inform curriculum design and lesson content.
156. Monitoring procedures of all the subject team's work are in place and are of good quality. The quality of peripatetic music tuition is at least equivalent to that of classroom teaching. The school provides financial assistance towards the provision of such lessons. Both school and department benefit considerably from a close association with the music service of the local education authority. Statutory requirements are met in full and there are ample opportunities for students of all ages to participate fully in music-making activities. Indeed, two such high spots include a concert performance involving all Year 7 students and the annual *Beaustock-Battle of the Bands*, proceeds of which are donated to charity.
157. Resources are broadly satisfactory but there are some weaknesses. The quality of classroom instruments, particularly the steel pans, is beginning to deteriorate and there are insufficient tuned percussion instruments, which imposes a limitation on the type of activity offered to

students in performance. The department possesses no CD collection, which is detrimental to the quality of students' learning.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

158. Students' attainment by the end of Year 9 and Year 11 is in line with the standards expected nationally, with a small number of students attaining standards that are better than this. The GCSE examination results in 2000 at grades A*-C were well below average and lower than most other subjects. The group entered for this examination contained a higher proportion of lower attainers and students with weak literacy skills than most other subjects.
159. At Key Stage 3, lessons were observed in summer activities. By the end of Year 9, students have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of rules and positional play, perform sending and receiving skills with increasing confidence, and control and apply them into a recognised game. In tennis, the higher attaining students talk knowledgeably about the game, and serve, return and volley with consistency and accuracy, anticipating moves in order to outwit their opponents.
160. Students in the core physical education programme satisfactorily increase their knowledge, understanding and performance skills in a range of activities and by the end of Year 11, their attainment is in line with national expectations. In competitive play, students demonstrate fair play and good sporting behaviour. In the GCSE examination groups, students' attainment by the end of Year 11 is also in line with the standard expected nationally, although they perform better in the practical sessions than in the theory. However, standards in the current Year 10 groups are higher than in previous years. In athletics and rounders, for example, students are able to analyse their performance and that of others, identifying aspects to improve their style and technique using more advanced technical language. Students with special educational needs are fully included into the physical education programme and make good progress.
161. Students' attitudes to learning are good. They respond well to the high expectations demanded of them in standards of clothing, behaviour and participation. Throughout the school, students use specialist equipment safely, are aware of their own and others' safety and use the facilities with due care and attention. Good positive relationships are fostered between teachers and students, developing students' confidence and self-esteem. As students move through the school, they develop good social and co-operative skills in partner, group work and in competitive team play.
162. The teaching is good overall, although it varies from poor to very good. All staff are knowledgeable specialists and complement each other in teaching a range of activities. Students are well managed and organised and in most lessons the teachers' clear learning objectives ensure students know what is expected of them. In the more effective lessons, activities are well planned to meet the needs of all students, students are challenged and good use of questioning and evaluative feedback improves their performance skills. For example in a Year 9 lesson, students were grouped according to their levels of attainment, enabling them to make good progress and become more expert in their tennis skills and respond more effectively to changing situations in a game. In a GCSE lesson on athletics, the teacher's effective questioning increased students' knowledge and understanding of more advanced skills and techniques in sprinting and in their use of technical language. Where teaching is less than good, tasks are often too teacher directed with insufficient opportunities for students to plan their work and be responsible for their own learning. In one Year 11 football lesson, the lack of planning and the absence of any specific input from the teacher resulted in students making poor progress.
163. Physical education provides a wide range of activities both within the planned curriculum and as part of the extra-curricular programme. There are strengths and weaknesses in the design of the curriculum, but overall it is satisfactory. Health related exercise is taught as a discrete area of activity and as an integral part of the physical education programme. The curriculum in Years 7, 8 and 9 has an overemphasis on games, reducing the amount of time allocated to gymnastics, dance and athletics. In the core curriculum in Years 10 and 11, students do not have the opportunity to opt for and study two areas of activity of their choice in depth. Students are able to follow a GCSE course in physical education as one of their optional subjects. However, there

are no opportunities to study any accredited vocational qualifications. Extra-curricular provision is very good and complements, enhances and extends the curriculum. Students have extensive opportunities to play and represent their school in a range of competitive sports, with a number of talented students selected to play locally and regionally. Staff in the department are committed to the development of the subject and give generously of their time. As a result, the school achieves continuous success and excellence in a number of sports including gymnastics, rugby, football, netball and athletics.

164. Leadership and management overall are unsatisfactory. Day-to-day procedures are effective and efficient. However, the handbook does not fully support the working of the department. There is a lack of vision and long-term strategic planning. Regular monitoring and reviewing of teaching and learning and departmental meetings are inconsistent. Schemes and units of work are incomplete and need updating to meet National Curriculum requirements. The use of ICT is insufficiently developed and regular risk assessments are not fully carried out.
165. Since the last inspection, a GCSE examination course has been introduced, standards in both key stages have been maintained and opportunities for students to analyse and evaluate their performance have been improved in most lessons. The department continues to provide very good extra-curricular sport.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

166. Students' attainment by the end of Year 9 is above the standard expected by the agreed syllabus, as the proportion of students reaching the required standard is relatively high. Standards have risen since the previous inspection. For example, students write an obituary for Martin Luther King, which includes an evaluation of his religious beliefs and their impact on his life and work. In addition, they compare the birth rituals of Sikhs and Hindus, and evaluate the values held by members of different faith communities. During the inspection, Year 9 classes were starting a unit of work on the holocaust. This involved students in applying their knowledge of Judaism and starting to reflect personally on these events and the responses of different groups. Students make good progress during Years 7 to 9.
167. No students take religious education as an optional subject for GCSE. The current Year 11 students follow a core course in religious education but there is insufficient teaching time to cover all that is required by the agreed syllabus so that overall standards are below expectations. Consequently, statutory requirements are not met. Two Year 11 lessons were observed and, in both of these, students achieved well, reaching standards that were above expectations. In one lesson, students discussed a range of issues concerned with death, evaluated religious views and gave well-argued accounts of their own views about, for example, abortion. Students with special educational needs reached the expected standards. Written work for this unit of work shows that higher-attaining students give well-informed accounts of their own and others' views.
168. All students in Year 10 follow a humanities course that includes explicit religious education that meets the needs of the agreed syllabus. This course will extend to Year 11 from next September. Students are able to evaluate the religious beliefs of the Amish and assess their impact on their values and ways of life. They consider the religious arguments for and against capital punishment, and investigate the impact of religious belief on gender roles. The work of higher and average attaining students includes a good level of detail and analysis. Overall standards in Year 10 are above expectations.
169. Students with special educational needs generally achieve well, especially in oral work. However, some have writing skills that are well below average and this limits their achievement as they have insufficient support with written tasks. Higher attaining students achieve well because there are plenty of written tasks that often require initiative, imagination and the application of knowledge. These enable students to reach high standards.
170. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Strengths of the teaching in the Year 9 lessons include excellent resources that provide a wide range of stimulating, relevant information used in a varied sequence of activities. These enable students to develop their knowledge and

understanding of the holocaust quickly and consider the emotions that it evokes. In one class, the persecution of the Jews in Europe in the 1930s was linked to the human experience of knowing that something is wrong but taking no action. The variety of activities held students' interest and motivated them to work hard. In a Year 11 lesson about the human experience of death, where there was good learning, the stimulating resources and varied activities enabled students to learn new ideas and reflect on their own experience. Students were challenged to think for themselves about fundamental questions. The good classroom management secured good behaviour and very positive attitudes to learning from all students.

171. Weaknesses in teaching occur where there are missed opportunities for learning, as when work on the Ten Commandments in a Year 8 class did not include sufficient work on relating these to their own and others' lives. Similarly, work on the pilgrimage to Mecca did not include the wider relevance of pilgrimages to human experience. Occasionally, there are uncorrected errors in students' work.
172. For each unit of work in Years 7 to 9, there is a booklet that gives teachers useful guidance. For the GCSE humanities course, the curriculum planning gives a broad overview of each unit of work. Both sets of planning do not make clear the learning objectives for each lesson or give advice on matching work to students' different levels of attainment. The curriculum planning needs improvement so that good practice in teaching can be shared and the good assessment information used to improve the curriculum. There is a shortage of religious artefacts. Good leadership and management of religious education have created an effective team of teachers who have secured good standards. Action has been taken to ensure that statutory requirements will be met for all students in Key Stage 4 from September 2001.