

INSPECTION REPORT

HEREFORD TECHNOLOGY SCHOOL

Grimsby

LEA area: North East Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 118066

Headteacher: Mr J Cunningham

Reporting inspector: Mr R Hancock
2715

Dates of inspection: 1 October – 5 October 2001

Inspection number: 194995

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Comprehensive

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 11 to 16 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Westward Ho
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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Malcolm Towle

Date of previous inspection: 19 May 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2715	Richard Hancock	Registered inspector		<p>What sort of school is it?</p> <p>How high are standards?</p> <p>a) The school's results and achievements.</p> <p>How well are pupils taught?</p> <p>How well is the school led and managed?</p> <p>What should the school do to improve further?</p>
11041	Marvyn Moore	Lay inspector		<p>How high are standards?</p> <p>b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.</p> <p>How well does the school care for its pupils?</p> <p>How well does the school work in partnership with parents?</p>
24326	Moira Fitzpatrick	Team inspector	English	
22695	Raymond Cardinal	Team inspector	Religious education Special educational needs	
15163	Eric Deeson	Team inspector	Information and communication technology	
19135	Derek Ebbage	Team inspector	Mathematics	
10209	Vincent Gormally	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology	
27585	Ken Hounslow	Team inspector	Science	
12121	Jack Mallinson	Team inspector	History	
4373	Peter McKenzie	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages English as an additional language	
1994	Helen Olds	Team inspector	Geography Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
14446	Barry Simmons	Team inspector	Physical education	
31660	Marianne Young	Team inspector	Music	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Currently, there are 1,113 pupils on the roll of this secondary school for students aged 11-16, roughly balanced between boys and girls. The percentage of students eligible for a free school meal is higher than average. Many students come from communities where there is considerable deprivation. Attendance is below average. The school has been identified as a challenging school by the Department for Education and Skills. It is one of three secondary schools in an Education Action Zone for this area of Grimsby. The school was over-subscribed at the beginning of September 2001. The attainment of students on entry is well below average. The number of students on the school's special educational needs register is higher than average. The proportion of students with a statement of special educational need is also higher than average. There are very few students from an ethnic minority background.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is providing a satisfactory education for its students. In the majority of lessons the quality of teaching is good and students have appropriate opportunities to learn. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is satisfactory. Students are well cared for. The school is well led and managed and is supported by a caring and responsible governing body. The school enjoys the support of parents. The students' overall attainment when they enter the school is well below average. The majority make satisfactory progress but by the time they leave the school their attainment is still well below average. Although the school has identified the need to raise attainment as a key priority, the issue remains outstanding from the last inspection and there are important initiatives it now needs to take if it is to make significant headway. Despite its lack of success in raising the overall attainment of students by the time they leave the school, the fact that students receive a satisfactory education and are well supported by a caring and committed staff, means that the school is giving satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Provides good levels of care and support for all students
- Gives good leadership which promotes confidence amongst staff and parents
- Provision in physical education, modern foreign languages and geography
- Ensures that students with a statement of special educational need make good progress
- Promotes good relationships

What could be improved

- The overall attainment of students at the end of both key stages
- The development of literacy and numeracy in all subjects of the curriculum
- The quality of teaching and learning
- The use of information and communication technology (ICT) in subjects in Years 7, 8 and 9
- The use of assessment
- The attendance of students

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1997 and the picture of improvement since that time is mixed. The major issue was for the school to raise standards in national examinations and although the school has not been successful in achieving this, it has implemented a number of the recommended strategies. There have also been some improvements in pupils' achievements at Key Stage 3, as in 2001 the percentage of pupils achieving Level 5 or above in the core subjects was above average in comparison with similar schools. Provision for homework has improved and there has been some success in improving the study habits of students. There is also now more support for students taking public examinations. On other fronts, the school has not been markedly successful in encouraging students to read and, despite improvements, the library is still in need of development. The use of ICT in all subjects has improved to some degree. More able students are being well challenged for the most part. The school has successfully adopted vocational courses at Key Stage 4 and those providing alternative accreditation for 16 year olds. It is making more use of data to improve students' attainment. Planning has improved. The school has had some success in target setting and the use of assessment but further developments are needed. Reports have improved but some weaknesses

remain. The allocation of monies to departments is now fair and communication is good at all levels. On the whole, departments have moved further forward. Overall, the school's improvement since the last inspection is just satisfactory.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	All schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
GCSE examinations	E*	E	E*	E	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E

In 2000, standards at the end of Year 11 were amongst the lowest 5 per cent nationally. The proportion of students achieving 5 or more grades at A* - C or 5 or more grades at A* - G over the past three years has been very low. Boys' results have been lower than girls' for the past three years. The trend in the core subjects has been well below the national trend. In 2000, only the results in art and business studies approximated to the national average and English results were especially low. Boys' results were particularly weak. In 2001, the school made some progress in improving attainment because the percentage of students achieving 5 or more grades at A* - C levels increased from 17 per cent to 21 per cent almost reaching the school's target of 22 per cent. Overall, the school is finding it hard to raise the attainment levels of students by the time they leave school because of the fact that they are so far behind when they start in Year 7, a weakness which is then compounded by frequent absence and continuing weaknesses in literacy skills.

In 2000, standards at the end of Year 9 in English, mathematics and science were well below the national average. The trend of improvement was broadly in line with the national trend. In comparison with similar schools, results were average in English and mathematics but were above average in science for students reaching Level 5 or above. In 2001, results improved slightly in English, improved well in mathematics and improved considerably in science. For Level 5 or above in the core subjects pupils' achievements are now above average in comparison with similar schools. In English, the work of younger students shows improvement but generally, standards in speaking are below the expected level and standards of reading and writing are also well below the expected level. Students enter the school with very low mathematical skills but concentrate well in lessons and their achievement is as expected. In subjects as a whole, students with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and where they have a statement of special educational need their progress is good. Higher attaining students make satisfactory and often good progress. The best work was seen in modern foreign languages, physical education and geography.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. The majority enjoy coming to school and respond well in class.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Whilst in a few lessons behaviour is exemplary and in most it is good, in a minority of lessons the behaviour of some students is difficult to handle and presents a challenge to the authority of the teacher.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. Students value the academic and pastoral support they receive from staff and the care and concern staff display to students' welfare enable them to make good progress and develop their social skills and independence.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. The school has devised a variety of strategies to improve attendance but at 85% it is well below national averages.

In lessons where learning objectives are clear, students respond well, enjoy learning and respond readily to challenges. When teaching is less focused they quickly lose interest and, in some cases, present challenging behaviour. Students' behaviour is usually satisfactory but there are significant exceptions. A new behaviour policy is being tried out and is in the early stages of implementation. The school has set up behaviour units to deal with students who are in imminent danger of being excluded and their impact on behaviour has already been positive. Students demonstrate satisfactory respect for other people's feelings, values and beliefs and most have an understanding of the impact of their actions on others. The school is working hard to improve rates of attendance.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

In the school as a whole teaching was good or better in the majority of lessons. It was very good in about one in seven lessons. Excellent teaching was observed in just one lesson. Unsatisfactory teaching was observed in about one in ten lessons. The overall quality of teaching in English and mathematics is satisfactory. In science it is good. In mathematics, the teaching of numeracy is satisfactory, but not enough creative and practical methods are used to retain students' interest and motivation. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is a weakness in most subjects. The main strengths of the teaching lie in the way that teachers give the objectives of the lesson to students at the beginning of lessons so that they are clear about what has to be learnt, set high standards and expect students to reach them. The majority of lessons are also very well planned so that time is well used and learning maximised. The major weaknesses are some low expectations of students at Key Stage 3, weak attention to the development of basic skills in the curriculum as a whole and limited use of ICT. The best teaching was seen in science, modern foreign languages, physical education and geography. For the most part, work is well matched to the different needs of students. The majority of students listen well and sometimes show good powers of recall but their speaking skills are undeveloped and there is little evidence that they have acquired the skills of research or investigation or of reading for pleasure.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum is broad and balanced and fulfils the school's curricular aims.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. The small teaching groups resulting from the school's setting arrangements benefit students with special needs in those groups. Provision for students with statements is good in terms of the quality of support provided by support staff.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. There are few students but the progress they make is not less than that of other students in the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory. The provision for the moral, social and cultural aspects of the curriculum is good. Students have frequent opportunities to consider ethical issues at different points in the curriculum. Although there are some effective spiritual experiences for students, especially in assembly, spirituality rarely features in lessons or schemes of work which makes it unsatisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. This is a major strength of the school.

The school is working well with parents. The strengths of the curriculum are its accessibility and its provision for modern foreign languages. The major weaknesses are the inadequate attention to literacy and numeracy development in subjects as a whole, the lack of spirituality, and the limited application of ICT in most subjects at Key Stage 3 where the school does not meet statutory requirements. The school does not hold a daily act of collective worship. The school is especially strong on its monitoring of attendance, in promoting better behaviour through its use of dedicated units, its PSHE programme and its overall care and concerns for students' welfare, well illustrated through its excellent child protection procedures. The school has not had a recent risk assessment carried out and there are some minor concerns in this area.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The school has a clear sense of direction, and has identified appropriate key priorities for its self-improvement based on sound developmental planning. Monitoring procedures need to be further developed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governing body supports the school well. Its role in helping the school to evaluate its overall performance rigorously has not been developed.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. This process is now underway but needs further development, especially in terms of the use of assessment at classroom level.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Most subjects have enough learning materials but there are some shortages in some subjects.

The leadership of the headteacher is imbued with a deep concern for the welfare of students which underpins the caring philosophy of the school. A major weakness lies in the limited monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning so that weaknesses are not addressed and strengths maximised. Good support is forthcoming from teachers in key positions and the overall management of departments is also satisfactory and sometimes good, despite the school's difficulties in recruiting staff. Administrative and technical staff provide strong support. The principles of the staff development programme are sound. Training for learning support assistants in literacy is an important need. Financial arrangements are good and the school understands, and is beginning to apply, the principles of best value. Accommodation is good in the ICT and design and technology areas but is still unsatisfactory in humanities and in mathematics. Learning resources are mostly adequate but there are some significant shortages of books in English and mathematics. The library stock needs overhauling so that it meets the current learning needs of all subjects. The school is now well equipped with computers but has yet to harness their potential for learning in all subjects.

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 good teaching in the school • That the school expects children to work hard and to give of their best • The approachability of the school • That children make progress in the school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The right amount of homework • The range of activities outside lessons

Parents are positive about the school and its future. Several spoke warmly of the dedication of the headteacher and his commitment to the school. The inspection team endorse the qualities that parents like about the school. They also believe that the school is approachable and that it is making good use of homework. They found that the range of activities for students to take part in outside lessons is varied and good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Students' results in National Curriculum tests taken at the end of Year 9 in 2000 show that their standards in English, mathematics and science were well below the national average. The trend of improvement was broadly in line with the national trend. In comparison with similar schools, results were average in English and mathematics but were above average in science for students reaching Level 5 or above. For students reaching Level 6 or above they were also above average in English and science but were only average in mathematics. On the basis of their average points score, results were average for mathematics but were below average for both English and science. The 2001 results show that the average points score declined in English, and improved slightly in science but remained virtually the same in mathematics. The overall points score remained virtually the same. Results for Level 5 and 6 or above improved slightly in English but improved well in mathematics and considerably improved in science. The overall points score shows an improvement on Key Stage 2 results for all subjects which indicates that some students make progress in these subjects although their standards remain below average by the time they reach the end of Year 9. The school has also improved its performance in terms of the proportion of pupils reaching Level 5 or above in the core subjects as a whole and these results are now above average in comparison with similar schools.
2. The results of students in the GCSE or GNVQ equivalent examinations for the year 2000, the weakest cohort of students in the school based on attainment data on entry, shows that standards were well below average. The proportion of students achieving 5 or more grades at A* - C or 5 or more grades at A* - G over the past three years has been very low. Based on their average points score, boys' results have been lower than girls' for the past three years. The trend in the core subjects has been well below the national trend. The average points score for students in 2000 puts the school within the range of the lowest 5% of schools nationally. In comparison with similar schools, results based on students' average points score are still well below average. Only the results in art and business studies approximated to the national average and English results were especially low. Boys' results were particularly weak. The 2001 results show that students' average points score was virtually the same as for 2000, missing the school target of 25. For 5 or more grades at A* - C results improved from 17% to 21% but the school missing the overall school target of 22%. For 5 or more grades at A* - G the figure was 72.5%, virtually the same as in 2000. Overall, the school is having limited success in raising the overall attainment levels of its students by the time they leave school.
3. Despite its lack of success in improving the overall attainment of students, the school does enable the majority of its students to make progress although this is marred by high rates of absence. While students of average and below average ability have not made satisfactory progress in English in the past, there is evidence in the work of students currently in the lower part of the school that their learning is satisfactory and they are now making the expected progress. Students whose ability is above average make satisfactory progress in English and the learning for students between Years 7 and 9 is improving significantly since the new head of department introduced a full scheme of work to ensure that basic literacy skills are taught progressively across the three year groups. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy progress units for lower attaining learners is also improving learning for younger students. Standards in speaking are below the expected level for the majority of students in all age groups. Higher attaining students reach the expected level. Listening standards are at the expected level for the majority of students and most students pay good attention to teachers' explanations. Students show good factual retention of what they have learned which, again, demonstrates that they listen well. Standards in reading are well below the expected level, with a large minority of students unable to read independently with good understanding. Younger students in Years 7 and 8 are reaching higher standards, as a result of the reading programme which has been operating for the last two years. Higher attaining students read with sound understanding and reach the level expected for their age, although the higher reading skills of inference and deduction are not well developed. Standards in writing are well below the expected level and students show little evidence of being able to write for different purposes.

4. Students enter the school with very low mathematical skills and find mathematical problems difficult, but they concentrate well and in most lessons achievement is as expected between Years 7 and 9. There are also now signs that more significant progress is being made in Years 10 and 11. Overall, students learn well in science although most students have limited literacy and numeracy skills which inhibits their attainment. They cannot apply their knowledge well in science and students also have great difficulty with calculations which are required for both their terminal examination and their coursework. High rates of absence result in students having an incomplete set of notes from which to revise. Gifted and talented students achieve well in science because extension work is matched well to their needs.
5. At the end of Year 9, students' attainment is average in art and design but they make good progress when their level attainment on entry is taken into account. Talented students do well in this subject. By the end of Year 11, the overall standard of students' work is about average in art although examination results were below average in 2001. In design and technology, the attainment of students by the end of Year 9 is below average but when compared with standards on entry and in comparison with other similar schools, students achieve well. Students with special talent do well in this subject. The attainment of students by the time they reach the end of Year 11 is below average. The examination results of girls are better than those of boys.
6. By the time they reach the end of Year 9, students' attainment in geography improves. Girls achieve better results than boys but recent GCSE examination results have been well below the national level and are in the lower quartile for those found nationally. However, students often achieve better results in geography than in their other subjects. In the same year, most students who were entered for the Certificate of Achievement were successful. In 2001, the first year in which students took a new examination, the department increased the number of higher grades by almost a third. Boys' performance improved and their overall results were also better than girls'. Standards at the end of Year 9 are well below national expectation in history. Girls' perform markedly better than boys'. GCSE examination results have been consistently well below the national average. Just under a third of candidates achieve high grades compared with a national average of over half. Standards observed in lessons were in line with these results.
7. The standards of students' work in ICT are below national levels in Years 7, 8 and 9 and in the school as a whole students do not achieve as much as they could. Attainment in French in the GCSE examination at grades A* - C in 2000 was low and although it improved in 1999 it fell back again in 2001. Attainment at grades A* - C in German in 2000 was very low. It had fallen back from the two previous years but improved significantly in 2001. In both languages in 2001, the gap between girls' and boys' attainment has narrowed and standards are now similar. Attainment at the end of Year 9 in the first modern foreign language was low in 2000. In 2001 it recovered to the 1999 level. Students' levels of attainment in the work inspected is better than that suggested by the results at the end of Year 11 and is in line with the results of teacher assessments at the end of Year 9. Boys and girls make equal progress.
8. There were only a small number of students who took music in the GCSE examination in 2000. All students achieved better than their predicted grade. No students took the examination in 2001. Standards in music by the end of Year 9 are below the expected standard. Overall, girls' achievement is higher than that for boys. Observations based on lessons and students' notebooks reinforce the overall picture of standards. However, there are examples of students achieving well. In the 1999 and 2000 examinations the number of students gaining A* - C grade passes in physical education was well below the national average. However, in the 2001 examination, although the number of students gaining the higher grades significantly increased, overall results were still below the national average. Nonetheless, these results compare very favourably with the results the same students gained in their other subjects. By the time they reach the end of Year 9 in physical education students have progressed to the point where the vast majority are achieving levels that are in line with national expectations, with a small majority doing even better, and a few less. The levels of attainment of most students by the time they reach the end of Year 11 is also in line with the national expectations, with a significant number doing even better. Higher attaining students do well in this subject. A number of students do well in the practical parts of the course, but find it difficult to get success in the theoretical aspects. In religious education standards are below average in comparison with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus by the end of Year 9 but achievement is satisfactory. Standards are also below average by the end of Year 11 but students' achievements are satisfactory.

9. Students with special needs make satisfactory progress. Those with statements make good progress. Students at different stages of the Code of Practice make good progress in science, art, and physical education. They make satisfactory progress in all other subjects except in English and music, where progress is unsatisfactory. Relationships between pupils and support staff are good and they work productively together. Gifted and talented students often do well in the school and there is no evidence that their interests are being badly served in the school as a whole. Overall, boys are doing less well than girls and the gap needs to be reduced. The few students for whom English is an additional language are making appropriate progress. The key characteristic is that the attainment of students is too low in most subjects and the majority of students are capable of reaching higher levels of achievement. This picture has changed little since the last inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Students' attitudes to school are mostly satisfactory. The majority of students enjoy coming to school and display satisfactory attitudes and behaviour. In lessons where teaching focuses on clear learning objectives students respond well and in many cases enjoy learning and respond readily to challenges presented to them. For example, in a personal, social, health and education [PSHE] lesson in Year 8, students were able to discuss in a mature and sensible way, inter-personal relationships and their perception of how other people view them. When teaching is less focused however, students quickly lose interest and, in some cases, present challenging behaviour.
11. Students' behaviour inside classrooms and around the school is usually satisfactory but there are significant exceptions. Whilst in a few lessons behaviour is exemplary and in most it is good, in a minority of lessons the behaviour of some students is difficult and presents a challenge to the authority of the teacher. A new behaviour policy is being tried out and is in the early stages of implementation. The effectiveness of this policy has yet to be evaluated by the school. The school has simultaneously set up an internal behaviour unit staffed by a support teacher to deal with students who are in imminent danger of permanent exclusion. In addition, a "Time Out Unit" has been established to remove students for a short time from their classroom situation during lessons. Although these units have only been in operation for a relatively short time, their impact on behaviour has already been positive. The rate of exclusions is quite high and the school is doing well to address this concern through the development of the units.
12. Students demonstrate satisfactory respect for other people's feelings, values and beliefs and most have an understanding of the impact of their actions on others. Students with special education needs are well integrated and accepted by other students. The school's anti-bullying policy is taken very seriously by staff. Instances of bullying and oppressive behaviour are vigorously and effectively dealt with and as a result students feel safe and well cared for.
13. The school is free of graffiti and the appointment of a full-time toilet attendant to supervise the toilet provision ensures that students keep the toilets clean. Students are given a wide range of responsibilities, including: membership of a citizenship conference, a children's parliament, a school council, and the new initiative group. Some also help in the school library. The school does not operate a prefect system as a matter of policy but the other responsibilities given to students encourages them to use their initiative and give to them a valuable insight into responsible citizenship. In some instances, however, students are given insufficient responsibility in lessons to research, conduct investigations, address other students, or to show other forms of initiative.
14. The very well developed PSHE programme is now taught on a regular basis throughout the school and each year has regular timetabled lessons. The programme contains modules such as sex education, drug awareness, citizenship and self- esteem. External speakers include the local health authority nurse, prison staff and councillors and contribute to the success of the programme and students' awareness of social matters. Their self-esteem is raised as a result.
15. Relationships between staff and students are good. Students value the academic and pastoral support they receive from staff and the care and concern staff display to students' welfare enable them to make good progress and develop their social skills and independence.

16. Attendance is poor. The school has devised a variety of strategies to improve it but at 85% it is well below national averages.
17. The positive comments contained in the previous report have been maintained and the key issue for action to devise strategies to encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own actions has been addressed to a satisfactory degree.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

18. In the school as a whole teaching was good or better in 59% of lessons. It was very good in 15%. Excellent teaching was observed in just one lesson. Unsatisfactory teaching was observed in just over one in ten lessons. The overall quality of teaching is very similar to that described at the time of the last inspection.
19. In English lessons the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, with some of the best teaching observed in lessons for younger students where a strong focus on the use of language and how to use it to best advantage was effectively addressing weaknesses in literacy skills. The quality of teaching in mathematics is satisfactory and in science it is good. In mathematics, the teaching of the basic skill of numeracy is satisfactory, but not enough creative and practical methods are used to retain students' interest and motivation. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is a weakness in most other subjects. A key feature of a good science lesson was the way the teacher stressed the need for students to use the correct technical language but in subjects as a whole significant opportunities are being lost to address students' weaknesses in basic skills. In religious education lessons, for instance, the development of literacy skills is a weaker aspect of the teaching, with lost opportunities during and following class discussion to challenge students to give reasoned opinions in writing. In a number of subjects written work is too often confined to consolidating basic factual knowledge without providing opportunities for extended writing. This overall weakness in teaching was identified at the time of the last inspection.
20. The major strengths of the teaching lie in the way that teachers present clear objectives to students at the beginning of each lesson so that know what has to be learnt, set high standards and expect students to reach them. The majority of lessons are also very well planned so that time is well used and learning maximised. This characteristic was an especially distinctive feature of teaching in modern foreign languages, and physical education where lessons begin in an orderly manner with objectives being clearly stated that help students understand what is expected of them and how they can improve. Activities are chosen that sustain students' interest and involvement. There is an expectancy by teachers that their students will work hard and behave well, and usually these expectations are met. Teachers are enthusiastic about their subject and students generally respond very positively and work hard. There is much evidence of students getting a high level of enjoyment and personal satisfaction from their lessons. The major weaknesses in teaching are some low expectations of what students can achieve at Key Stage 3, weak attention to the development of basic skills in the wider curriculum and insufficient use of ICT.
21. The quality of teaching is good in art throughout the school. The major strengths are the enthusiasm and subject expertise of the teachers with students' progress being carefully monitored and assessed. The planning and preparation of lessons are effective and a good pace is maintained which is reflected in the degree of students' progress. The quality of teaching is also largely good in geography because lesson objectives are clear, work is carefully planned and teachers' specialist knowledge adds significant detail to lessons.
22. Although the use of ICT is effectively used in science, design and technology and geography lessons, in English, mathematics and most other subjects insufficient use is made of computer technology to develop students' learning. Consequently, significant opportunities are lost to help students to become independent learners.
23. In the school as a whole insufficient attention is given to the encouragement of students' speaking skills. This was particularly evident in history lessons where teachers frequently talk so much that students get restless and have little opportunity to think for themselves. They seldom speak, and when they do it is in the form of a few short sentences. Because there is almost no exchange of opinions, either in the whole class or in small groups, students are not developing their thinking and reasoning skills. In some lessons in religious education class

discussion is also limited and lacks challenge because students are asked only for short factual responses.

24. In ICT, teachers are not yet confident in designing specific learning objectives that meet the needs of all the learners, in focussing the lesson's activities on those objectives, in having high enough expectations, and in assessing how well the students' progress. Consequently, most students do not achieve as much as they could; while they learn well in the best lessons, they still do not retain much of what they learn. All this is as true of those students identified as having special educational needs as of the others.
25. In some lessons in music students do not learn so well as they should and make only limited progress. In these lessons the teachers' instructions, explanations and expectations are not sufficiently clear and this can lead to some students failing to take an active part in lessons. Also musical concepts are not firmly taught and practised so that all students are aware of what they have to do. Students often need time to answer questions and to develop their answers. In the best lessons teachers showed good levels of knowledge and used effective questioning to ensure that students developed their answers fully and improved their knowledge and understanding of musical language.
26. The good teaching in modern foreign languages leads to good learning for students who make consistent progress in lessons; they have good recall of what they learnt previously and they are developing the use of French and German in real situations.
27. The learning of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. In geography lessons learning is enhanced through the provision of short structured tasks and in physical education teaching is sensitive and supportive in relation to individual needs. Effective individual support is also a feature of teaching in art. Generally, support staff are mostly well-used and are very effective in supporting pupils with statements; for example in life skills lessons seen individual support for students with statements sustains their confidence and gives them a high degree of motivation. In mathematics, support assistants worked closely with individuals in a Year 7 lesson to enable them to apply methods learned in the use of the ruler; they used assessment well and demonstrated correct methods when errors occurred. In a Year 7 science, lesson support staff played a full part in the lesson including participation in an experiment; they effectively supported students with a wide range of needs including behavioural difficulties and visual impairment. The progress of students in speaking and listening activities in modern languages is enhanced by the combination of good teaching and support. Specialist teaching for individuals and small groups builds confidence and raises self-esteem. Teaching in the support centre is well matched to needs, for example in challenging students to focus on their own behaviour and its impact on others.
28. Teaching is less effective in music when activities are not broken down into small steps and in English when work does not challenge pupils beyond the development of very basic literacy skills. In English, despite individual lessons in which the literacy needs of students with special educational needs are well addressed, provision is unsatisfactory overall because the teaching is in the hands of non-specialists who do not understand the learning needs of these students. In design and technology a common feature of the less successful lessons was the tendency for teaching to devote too much time to theoretical material at the expense of time spent on practical work which has a particularly depressing effect upon special needs pupils and low attainers. In subjects generally students with a statement of special educational need are taught well. In geography students with special educational needs make appropriate progress with very little adult support other than from the class teacher because, although finding the work difficult, they are able to work at a series of short, focused and attainable tasks.
29. In history, teaching styles do not always enable full use to be made of support staff. The effectiveness of support staff in ICT is limited by a lack of training. In one English lesson the effectiveness of support was limited by the need to provide the assistant with specific targets for the study of literature together with appropriate strategies. In one music lesson the assistant had no prior knowledge of lesson content and this limited the effectiveness of the support. In a literacy support lesson a combination of ineffective planning, non-specialist teaching and a lack of focused intervention by the teacher and support staff made the learning unsatisfactory.

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

30. The governing body has adopted a curricular statement which takes account of most statutory requirements and regularly reviews the curriculum to ensure matches the needs of all students. Provision is satisfactory in both key stages.
31. Overall, the range of learning opportunities provided by the school is satisfactory. The curriculum is broad and balanced and fulfils the school's curricular aims. The curriculum includes the range of subjects of the National Curriculum, and additionally drama, two modern foreign languages - French and German - and courses in personal and social education, including sex education. However, as in the last inspection, not all statutory requirements are met. Provision for ICT in the National Curriculum is insufficient for students to make the progress they should as its extent of use in all subjects is not meeting statutory requirements. The statutory requirement to hold a daily act of collective worship is not met.
32. The curriculum for Years 7 to 9 is under review in most subject areas. It aims to incorporate reinforcement of the basic skills of literacy, and numeracy together with extensive applications of ICT but this aim is inconsistently implemented. There are limited opportunities for speaking, listening and reading aloud to ensure that these important skills are constantly reinforced. In English the planned language programme extends to Year 7 but students do not read aloud often enough. Too little attention is also given to the application of number in the full range of subjects. ICT provision has been improved and there are examples of students' work on display, for example in geography and history but there were few examples of classroom use of the facilities during the inspection to demonstrate students' achievements.
33. Setting is introduced from the beginning of Year 7 into two broad bands for timetable purposes although more competent students are within the same band which helps teachers to match work to the ability level of students. All students learn French from Year 7 and students in the upper band begin German in Year 8. The timetable does not always support the learning of students well. Teachers work in a number of different curriculum areas and need to move between lessons, only to find some accommodation is inadequate for the size of group. All students have equal access to the curriculum.
34. Provision for students with special needs is satisfactory. Provision for students with statements is good in terms of the quality of support provided by support staff. The small teaching groups resulting from the school's setting arrangements benefit students with special needs in those groups. The life skills course for students in Years 10 and 11 is well matched to needs and provides students with a wide range of learning experiences, including work and college experience. The school effectively enhances its own provision by purchasing from the local authority relevant specialist support for students with specific learning difficulties. There is a very positive contribution from the school counsellor and other support agencies. The support centre provides a high quality learning environment with a very good student to staff ratio. The effectiveness of support is limited in some instances by a lack of training, for example in ICT. The arrangements for deploying support staff sometimes result in inconsistencies with support in particular teaching groups varying at different times in the year. Literacy support is inconsistent in its impact where non-specialist staff are deployed, where support staff have not received appropriate training and where the curriculum is not well matched to learning needs.
35. In Years 10 and 11 there is a satisfactory range of subject choice. This includes a programme of vocational subjects which has been strengthened since the last inspection. The three pathways offer good student choice, two lead to GCSE and GNVQ qualifications and one promotes vocational and life skills well.
36. GCSE examination students follow a core curriculum of English, mathematics and science. Many students also follow a 'core' humanities course and optional pathway towards GCSE or GNVQ qualifications. GCSE students follow a course of double science which is not the most suitable choice for lower attaining students. Students have the opportunity to continue with at least one language in Years 10 and 11, although quite a large number do not choose to do so. Other students have followed a language course only in Year 10. Competent modern foreign language students, who may have chosen to follow a second language of German, are attracted to GNVQ provision. A graphics course has been introduced into Year 10. It is very well supported through the Educational Action Zone initiative and with the planned inclusion of graphics into design technology curriculum for Years 7 to 9.

37. Integrated humanities was first examined in 2001 and showed standards had improved a little. The provision aims to provide more opportunities for religious education. However, the programme does detract from the qualities which make the individual disciplines distinct and there is insufficient time to enhance the learning opportunities. The allocation of time for geography, history and physical education is inadequate.
38. GNVQ courses were introduced in 1999 for business studies and information technology. A leisure and tourism course was begun but is not repeated in the current Year 10 due to the long term absence of staff. Other GNVQ courses are offered in the local colleges of further education. A life skills programme [ASDAN] provides an alternative certificated curriculum pathway for non-academic students. There are good opportunities for accreditation. Some students benefit from extended work placements and some teaching is off-site. The course has encouraged older students to attend more regularly.
39. Careers education is well considered and begins with an introductory module in Year 9 involving teachers, the careers service and local employers. There are very good opportunities to raise students' confidence through mock interviews and visits from local industrialists.
40. Provision for personal, social and health education is a strength of the curriculum at both key stages. Courses in PSHE have been very well developed and teachers receive regular training in their implementation. A preparatory course called 'Aiming Higher ' is provided in advance of work experience in Year 10 to raise students' career aspirations. The programme emphasises punctuality and attendance and is certificated at the request of local employers. A 'Drop in Centre' deals with students' personal problems.
41. A programme for the gifted and talented students includes summer school experiences and industrial visits and provides opportunities for information and communication technology development.
42. The usefulness of the twenty minutes spent on registration and assembly or registration and mentoring at the end of the afternoon is not always as effective as it might be for not all students return to their class base for registration and only a small minority are mentored on non-assembly days. During this time, homework diaries are checked but only on one occasion was the time well used to improve relationships as, for example, in a Year 7 class where the group was welcomed with an effective *Power Point* cartoon presentation.
43. The range of extra-curricular activities provided is good in sport and music where there is a range of ensembles and choirs. Theatre, fieldwork and residential visits enrich the curriculum well. Students and parents take good advantage of the opportunities available. Homework and examination revision clubs are well supported. Links with the community are satisfactory. There are good induction programmes for potential students from the primary schools although the strategies for developing literacy and numeracy are at an early stage. The school has developed a range of courses and good links with the local colleges and services. There are good links with business, employers and sporting organisations. Overall, as in the last inspection, arrangements for the integration of information and communication technology into the curriculum are insufficient and the school does not hold a daily act of collective worship. In addition effective strategies for writing were not being promoted across the curriculum. As at the last inspection, literacy and numeracy are not sufficiently integrated into the curriculum and this remains a serious weakness.
44. The school's mission statement and aims reflect a central concern for the personal development of its students. A good range of opportunities is provided for students to take responsibility and develop into good citizens, although, as at the time of the last inspection, there is not a whole school policy relating to these areas of the curriculum.
45. Opportunities for the spiritual development of the students remains limited, although the contribution of the religious education department is significant. Religious education lessons provide a highly spiritual content encompassing the spiritual element of Christianity, and all the major religions. Students attend assemblies only once per week which provide good spiritual experiences. Planning for students' spiritual development is not very much in evidence, although in some departments, for example music, students are given the opportunity to reflect on the effect of music on the listener. All students at some time visit Lincoln cathedral and are able to witness a sense of awe and wonder when in that building. There is little doubt that the Year 9 pupils' visit to the holocaust exhibition at the Imperial War Museum made a very lasting

impression on many students. The school's annual carol service is held at the Laceby Road Methodist church, and at appropriate times during the year, such as Remembrance Day, the school gives students time to reflect on the consequences of war. At the time of the inspection during the school's assemblies students were asked to reflect on the implications of the September 11th terrorist acts in the USA.

46. The provision for students' moral development is good, and results in a safe and secure environment. The code of conduct is widely displayed, and the school behaviour policy stresses rewards rather than punishments. There is a clear ethos in the school that indicates that students fully understand right from wrong. Teachers are generally good role models and the ethos of the school is friendly and caring. Students show respect for each other, for property and the environment. There is little evidence of graffiti or vandalism. The personal and social education curriculum includes a wide variety of topics that tackle moral issues and enhance students' development.
47. The provision for students' social development is also good. They generally interact well together, and these good social relationships enable them to work collaboratively and productively in group activities. They demonstrate social concern through their involvement in charitable causes. Good provision for social development is evident in the personal, social and health programme, where students are helped to gain an understanding of living in the community. They discuss different social issues including discrimination and prejudice. A wide range of extra-curricular activities including physical education clubs, musical events, school dramatic production and the Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme provide opportunities for students to work together and take responsibility. Citizenship skills are being developed through the school council and when raising money for charity.
48. Cultural experiences for the students are varied and good. Artists in residence, visits from dance and drama groups, speakers from a range of interests and backgrounds and trips to the theatre are regular events during the school year. The school provides many opportunities for its students to experience the culture of other parts of the world including a French evening when students had the opportunity to sample food, games and music of that country. At the time of the inspection students from Germany were in the school as part of an exchange programme. Students have been able to take part in a dance workshop run by the Raymond Takalani African dance troupe. Many students took an active part in the Millennium concert that featured drama, dance and music from many parts of the world. The overall curriculum provision is very similar to that described at the time of the last inspection

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

49. The overall level of care for students is good and is one of the school's strengths which has been maintained since the last inspection. The system for child protection is excellent and the designated Child Protection Officer has written the module for child protection which has also been adopted as a model by the local authority. The Child Protection Officer is very well aware of his duties and very full and effective liaison takes place between the school and the appropriate agencies regarding child protection matters. Child protection records are extremely detailed and other members of staff are well trained in child protection matters.
50. The school is a safe environment. It has an adequate number of first-aiders, all of whom are in possession of current certificates and have received appropriate training. Accidents and incidents are correctly recorded and fire drills are held regularly but the fire alarm is not officially tested. The school does not carry out a complete annual health and safety audit and several items requiring urgent rectification were identified during the inspection week, including broken and uneven paving slabs, inadequate ventilation in the reprographics room, and flights of steps without whiteline warnings. Risk assessments are, however, undertaken by subject departments and the science and design and technology departments carry out control of hazardous substances and monitor and identify the use of equipment.
51. The school has a well developed pastoral system whereby heads of year remain with students throughout their life at school which helps develop bonds between students and teachers. The school has devoted some time each day for the counselling of individual students who know whom they can refer to if they wish to discuss matters or have problems.

52. The monitoring of students' academic performance and personal development is satisfactory. Assessment is carried out on a regular basis using guidelines set out by the school management. Students are assessed on entry to the school using the levels achieved at primary school and are independently tested shortly after entry. Students are then allocated to sets for each subject. Regular discussions take place between subject teachers and heads of year at which each student's progress is analysed and adjustments made to their teaching groups where thought necessary. Links with feeder schools are good with full use made of information received to identify the needs of students on entry to the school. Testing procedures on entry are thorough. All students are tested for reading and spelling promptly at the start of Year 7 with selected students re-tested in both the spring and summer terms of Year 7. In the autumn term of Year 7 there is an appropriate focus on assessing students who may need additional local authority provision; individuals are carefully assessed with decisions made by the end of the autumn term. There are regular reviews of progress of all students at stages 2 to 5 on the special needs register. The procedures for annual reviews of students with statements are thorough, with good use made of support staff attached to individual students to inform the review process. Individual education plans are well constructed with targets that are well matched to individual needs. The procedures for identifying pupils for additional literacy support result in students of average and below average attainment being inappropriately grouped together.
53. The assessment arrangements present a very mixed picture. In English and mathematics, procedures do not make students aware of the levels they have reached or what they have to do to improve. However, in modern foreign languages assessment is a strength. All students at Key Stage 3 have a set of indicators in their books which they tick each time they reach that standard. All extended pieces of work are marked and levels of attainment are identified by teachers so that statutory requirements are fully met. The data gathered from assessment informs curricular planning. This department is in regular contact with parents to praise, criticise or monitor students' progress and behaviour. In ICT, assessment is being developed but no reports are given to parents regarding progress. Assessment informs curricular planning to an extent only but systems are improving and a major planning review to improve assessment procedures is under way. In history, procedures for assessing students' academic progress are good. The department has issued assessment sheets for each unit of work and clear guidelines about how they are to be used. Each student keeps a chart for each unit showing the skills acquired, the target grade and actual grade achieved.
54. Although attendance at the school is unsatisfactory at 85%, the school has always taken this issue seriously and is now focusing well on improving it. The school has invested much of its inclusion monies in the appointment of three dedicated attendance staff who monitor attendance, undertake home visits and liaise fully with the education welfare service. In addition, a behaviour support teacher works with these staff and produces work to be done at home by students who do not attend because of illness or other reasons. The school is vigorously addressing the low attendance figures and as the measures to improve attendance are only recent, it is too soon to show whether these figures have significantly improved.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

55. The majority of parents have a very positive view of the school. The significant majority of parents who responded to the parental questionnaire believed their children are making good progress in the school, that they are kept well informed on their children's progress, and feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems. They believe the school works closely with them. The inspection findings concur entirely with these views.
56. The school provides satisfactory information about its facilities and activities to parents. The school prospectus is a simply produced document but does contain a mission statement about the school's aims and all statutory information needed to enable parents to assess provision being made for their children's education. In addition, a separate brochure is produced for parents of new entrants. A school newspaper and regular newsletters are produced, giving parents up to date information about activities within the school and significant changes to policy. These are much appreciated by parents.

57. Full reports are provided on an annual basis and three interim reports are provided each year. In some instances reports do not give adequate information about what pupils can or cannot achieve, or give targets for future achievements. Reports do, however, give good explanation of grades awarded for work and conduct.
58. The annual parents' evening has been replaced by a review which now gives parents timed appointments to discuss their children's progress and an opportunity to attend during day or evening. This innovation has greatly improved the attendance of parents and is much appreciated by them.
59. Parents are contacted promptly by the school if the school has concerns regarding their children's conduct or work, or if the school has positive comments to make regarding students' progress. Parents also have immediate access to the headteacher and staff if they have any areas of concern they wish to discuss.
60. A small number of parents regularly help in the school by hearing readers, accompanying staff on school organised outings, and the Friends of Hereford School, to which every parent belongs, organises a large number of social and fundraising functions which provide valuable funds for school needs. Opportunities are provided for parents to contribute to their children's education by making comments on reports and students' planners. Parents of students with special educational needs are invited to annual reviews and are fully consulted in the compilation of individual education plans and target setting.
61. Induction procedures for parents of Year 7 pupils are good. At an open evening for prospective parents, observed during the inspection week, over 300 parents attended and were given a good introduction to the school and its facilities by the headteacher and chair of the governing body. The school also fully consults parents of Year 11 students regarding the next stage of their education and offers advice and counselling facilities following results of GCSE examination predictions. The positive efforts by the school to promote partnerships with parents, identified in the previous inspection report, have been maintained but the comments made to improve annual reports to support students' progress have, in some instances, not yet been acted upon.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

62. The school has clear aims and is intent on meeting them. It is able to identify its key priorities appropriately and to plan effectively. In these respects the school has made good progress since the last inspection. Communications have also been much improved, not only between the headteacher and the governing body which are now very good, but in the school as a whole. There is a good sense in the school of a staff and governing body working together for a common purpose. Much of this progress is attributable to the headteacher who works tirelessly on behalf of the school, promoting its name locally, ensuring that it is properly recognised for the achievements of its students and that all agencies are exploited fully if they can be used to the advantage of the school. Parents are very positive in their support for the school and the direction in which it is now going. Because of all these factors the headteacher's leadership is good.
63. A strength of the school is the underlying and unwavering care it shows for the students and the way this support is organised. The school has gone to great lengths to ensure that it is doing its utmost to promote better attendance, students with statements of special educational need are well provided for, there is a good range of extra-curricular activities, and the school has a good grip on the diverse needs of its students and is working effectively to meet them. In this it enjoys the support of a caring governing body which is at one with the headteacher and the key staff in their identification of the school's priorities and how to meet them. For the most part, it provides good support to teachers in the school, helps the school to run efficiently and is now, with fuller data at its disposal, in the process of holding the school to account for its overall performance.
64. Whilst the overall management of the school is good because policies are well thought out and appropriately applied, there are some weaknesses which are hindering improvements. Although some monitoring of teaching and learning is taking place, especially in some individual departments, in the school as a whole it is inadequate. The school still needs to improve the overall attainment of students significantly, and it is critical that all departments and

faculties in the school are working in concert to promote best practices, otherwise it is dissipated. Although the school's performance management programme has enabled all teachers to be observed teaching at least once, the school's best practices in teaching and learning are not being maximised nor are its weakest practices being identified and eradicated. Especially significant is the fact that the school is not effectively addressing the development of literacy at all points in the curriculum because this is the major weakness which is at the root of the underachievement of many students in the classroom. There is a similar need to promote the development of numeracy. Some gains have been made in incorporating ICT in learning in science, geography and design and technology, but its use is not yet firmly embedded in the work of all departments and faculties.

65. Departments are mostly well led and effectively managed. The recently appointed head of department for English has provided much needed leadership in establishing a scheme of work that gives progression and continuity to students' learning, has also raised expectations of what students can achieve, and, like the head of the mathematics department, has developed a good team spirit. The departments of science, art, music, expressive arts, and physical education are also particularly well led and managed. Leadership and management are especially successful in the faculty of modern foreign languages because there is a good team ethos, teachers have delegated responsibilities, new schemes of work have been introduced, and effective policies formulated for monitoring teaching and learning, all of which have had a beneficial impact on standards. Geography is well organised within the humanities faculty and has an effective system for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning although the dispersed nature of the accommodation makes informal monitoring difficult. Students' progress is carefully monitored against National Curriculum levels in music. Altogether, this represents a strong platform of expertise and augurs well for future developments in the school.
66. There are some weaknesses relating to the efficient functioning of the departments. The staffing of the English department, comprising three non-specialist teachers, one graduate trainee, a part-time specialist and four full-time specialists, presents a considerable challenge, even for an experienced manager. To manage these challenges successfully, the head of department requires support from the senior management team to help identify where colleagues need training or direction and to monitor standards and provision in the lowest attaining classes. In mathematics, the monitoring and evaluation of teachers' work has started but insufficient attention is given to standardisation. The management of the design and technology department has many positive features, especially given the staffing problems in the department, but monitoring is insufficiently developed to ensure that existing strengths are consolidated and continual improvement promoted. In science there is insufficient monitoring of students' books to ensure that students' notes are complete.
67. Accommodation is especially good for ICT. The accommodation for music making is also good with attractive displays of students' work. It is adequate for art where the quality of display in the department is rich and illustrates students' achievements in a wide range of activities. When used by large classes, however, the studios are crowded. Temporary accommodation is inadequate for the size of groups in geography and is distant from other geography teaching rooms which makes it more difficult to create a sense of common purpose and practice. Many history lessons are taught in dilapidated huts which are so small that they restrict the activities that more adventurous teaching would require. The accommodation for teaching mathematics is unsatisfactory and requires attention. The overall accommodation has greatly improved in design and technology but accommodation for teaching textiles is poor.
68. The school has experienced many difficulties when trying to appoint well qualified and experienced staff. This has especially adversely affected stability and continuity in English, design and technology and the humanities. Recent staff changes in staffing and additional responsibilities of post holders in geography has reduced the number of specialists and more teachers are now working in a number of departments. There is a good staff development programme based on individual teachers' needs and the school's developmental priorities but it is not yet fully developed so that it is effectively embracing the wide ranging needs of all staff, including classroom assistants. Newly qualified teachers are well supported.
69. The school is very well served by support staff. Technical support in science is good. Many learning support assistants provide effective help for students with special educational needs. The office staff are an experienced team with a strong sense of loyalty to the school. They bring good levels of expertise to their work and show high levels of professional responsibility,

working effectively as a well led team, able to show flexibility and to work independently when required.

70. Although the school is mostly adequately resourced, there are some significant weaknesses. The school is well resourced for ICT, but the shortage of reading books in classrooms and in the library prevents the development of independent and varied reading for pupils and this weakness reduces the opportunity for reading practice. There is an acute shortage of textbooks in mathematics which means that students sometimes have to share texts which is inconvenient and restrictive, especially when homework is set. The number and variety of music books in the library are insufficient and do not reflect sufficient variety of musical styles, times and places. Whilst resources for physical education are good, and there is no shortage of equipment or textbooks, there is a need for more books of a technical nature on the subject in the school library. The science department has insufficient sensors and power supplies. In art work in three-dimensional design is restricted by resource limitations. In history, there is too great a dependence on worksheets, and computers are seldom used.
71. There is a whole school approach to special needs. The designated governor is appropriately involved and has regular contact with the special needs co-ordinator. The governors' annual report does not contain sufficient detail on the implementation of the school's policy. There are good links between senior staff and the special needs co-ordinator, with regular meetings held. The co-ordinator is appropriately involved in regular meetings with key pastoral and academic staff. Links with departments are good, and staff are kept fully informed about pupils' special needs. The special needs co-ordinator provides good leadership. Individual education plans are informative and contain clear targets. Planning is good and the school is well prepared for the revised Code of Practice with a draft policy in place and circulated to staff. Good use is made of external services and funding is appropriately deployed. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection.
72. Departments give due attention to health and safety but the school would now benefit from a rigorous risk assessment as minor hazards are apparent. The systems for organising and keeping track of the school's finances are good. The school understands the principles of best value and work hard to apply them. It is making a difference to the students who attend because their personal development is well supported. They mostly make progress in the school and in some subjects this is good. As yet, there has been no major improvement to the attainment of the students and this is a weakness but there are recent signs that standards are beginning to get better at Key Stage 3. The unit costs are much higher than the average for maintained secondary schools. When all the factors are brought together, including the starting point for students which is well below average, the school can be said to be giving value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

73. **In order to raise standards further, the headteacher, staff and governing body now need to**
- (1) raise the overall attainment of students at the end of both key stages. [paragraphs 1, 2, 6, 9, 74, 75, 86, 87, 98, 133]
 - (2) ensure that full attention is paid to the development of literacy and numeracy in all subjects of the curriculum. [paragraphs 3, 4, 19, 20, 43, 78, 79, 85, 89, 95, 96, 99, 122, 125, 128, 129, 132, 158, 160]
 - (3) improve the quality of teaching and learning by sharing the good practice that exists in the school, by the introduction of close, regular and frequent monitoring of lessons, and by providing opportunities for students to develop independent study habits. [paragraphs 10, 13, 64, 65, 67, 83, 119]
 - (4) ensure that at Key Stage 3 all subjects incorporate the use of ICT in their planning and practice. [paragraphs 22, 31, 32, 82, 89, 135]
 - (5) improve attendance. [paragraphs 3, 16, 54, 76, 77]

(6) ensure that all departments adopt the best practice in the school when assessing students' work so that students are aware of the levels they have reached in their subjects and know what they have to do to improve further. [paragraphs 53, 103, 124, 151]

In addition, the following, less significant aspects of provision should be considered

- the introduction of a risk assessment programme. [paragraphs 50, 72]
- improvements to the school library. [paragraphs 70, 149, 156]
- training in literacy for classroom support assistants. [paragraphs 28, 29, 34, 76]
- a review of the allocation of teaching time for geography, history and physical education. [paragraphs 37, 125, 131, 156]
- the provision of more books in English and mathematics. [paragraphs 70, 78, 83, 94]
- improved accommodation for mathematics, the humanities and textiles. [paragraphs 94, 120, 126, 131]
- providing a daily act of collective worship and enhancing the spiritual aspects of the curriculum. [paragraphs 31, 45]

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	139
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	58

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	21	60	43	15	0	0
Percentage	1	15	43	31	10	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y7 – Y11
Number of pupils on the school's roll	1113
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	380

Special educational needs	Y7 – Y11
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	45
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	327

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	6

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	71
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	51

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	11.4
National comparative data	7.7

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	3.3
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 (Year 9)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	111	99	210

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	29	39	40
	Girls	53	52	40
	Total	82	91	80
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	39 (37)	43 (44)	39 (26)
	National	63 (63)	65 (62)	59 (55)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	14 (11)	20 (17)	12 (6)
	National	28 (28)	42 (38)	30 (23)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	33	38	29
	Girls	48	59	52
	Total	81	97	81
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	39 (32)	46 (43)	39 (28)
	National	64 (64)	66 (64)	62 (60)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	9 (12)	30 (27)	10 (7)
	National	31 (31)	39 (37)	29 (28)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 4 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	107	95	202

GCSE results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A*-G	1 or more grades A*-G
Numbers of pupils achieving the standard specified	Boys	13	79	96
	Girls	21	67	81
	Total	34	146	177
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	17 (17)	74 (72)	90 (86)
	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	23 (23.2)
	National	38.4

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	3
Black – other	4
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	2
White	1048
Any other minority ethnic group	5

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y11

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	55.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20

Education support staff: Y7 – Y11

Total number of education support staff	27
Total aggregate hours worked per week	688

Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y11

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	74.1
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Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y11

Key Stage 2	
Key Stage 3	24.4
Key Stage 4	23.75

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	11
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	29

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	7.6
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	6.6
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1.0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

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	112	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	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	3162685
Total expenditure	3214904
Expenditure per pupil	3019
Balance brought forward from previous year	
Balance carried forward to next year	-52219

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	1064
Number of questionnaires returned	193

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	42	46	8	4	1
My child is making good progress in school.	48	39	5	1	7
Behaviour in the school is good.	28	53	10	2	8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	47	1	3	4
The teaching is good.	46	46	2	1	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	36	5	4	12
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	28	4	2	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	32	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	31	55	4	2	8
The school is well led and managed.	50	40	2	1	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	40	54	2	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	36	42	8	3	10

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

ENGLISH

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

Strengths

- Improving standards at Key Stage 3.
- Good scheme of work for Key Stage 3.
- Leadership of the department.

Areas for improvement

- Teachers' expectations and students' standards of attainment at both key stages.
- The use of assessment and target setting.
- The monitoring and evaluating of teaching and learning.
- The shortage of books.
- The teaching of students with special educational needs.

74. In 2000, the proportion of students achieving the expected level in national tests by the end of Year 9 was well below the national average, but was in line with the average of similar schools. The proportion of students who achieved the higher level is better, above the average for similar schools, although still below the national average. Results in the national tests in 2001 show similar standards. Boys' results have been significantly lower than girls' over the last three years, following the national pattern. Over the last three years, the students' average points score in tests has risen in line with the national trend, but has remained well below it.
75. Standards in the GCSE examination are well below the national average in both language and literature and are well below the average for similar schools. The percentage of students achieving grades A* - C and A* - G is well below the national average. Boys' results are well below those of girls in both subjects. By the end of Year 11, students achieve less well in English than they do in all other subjects. GCSE examination results have remained well below the national average for several years. A high proportion of students achieved results in the GCSE examination below what would be expected from their results in national tests taken at the end of Year 9.
76. Progress for many students in all year groups is impaired by high rates of absence. In GCSE examinations, the level of entry has been well below the national average, reflecting the poor attendance and incomplete coursework of some students. The level of entry improved in 2001, when about 15 per cent more students were entered for the examination than in previous years. The progress of students with special educational need is unsatisfactory, because of insufficient support for them in the past. Current arrangements to give additional support are often not effective because non-specialist teachers and untrained classroom assistants are given the task of improving the basic literacy skills of students whose attainment is well below the expected level for eleven and twelve year olds. While average and below average students have not made satisfactory progress in the past, there is evidence in the work of students currently in the lower part of the school that their learning is satisfactory and they are now making the expected progress. Students whose ability is above average make satisfactory progress although this would be even better if teachers had higher expectations of what they could achieve. Learning for students between Years 7 and 9 is improving significantly since the new head of department introduced a full scheme of work to ensure that basic literacy skills are taught progressively across the three year groups. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy progress units for lower attaining learners is also improving learning for younger students.
77. Standards in speaking are below the expected level for the majority of students in all age groups. While they answer questions audibly, students often lack the confidence to expand their thoughts and restrict their answers to one or two words. Higher attaining students reach the expected level. Listening standards are at the expected level for the majority of students and most students pay good attention to teachers' explanations. Students show good factual retention of what they have learned which, again, demonstrates that they listen well. The impact of this, however, is diminished for the many students who attend infrequently.

78. Standards in reading are well below the expected level, with a large minority of students unable to read independently with good understanding. Younger students in Years 7 and 8 are reaching higher standards, as a result of the reading programme which has been operating for the last two years. Higher attaining students read with sound understanding and reach the level expected for their age, although the higher reading skills of inference and deduction are not well developed. The shortage of reading books in classrooms and in the library prevents the development of independent and varied reading for pupils and this weakness reduces the opportunity for reading practice. Standards in writing are well below the expected level for fourteen and sixteen year olds, who show little evidence of being able to write for different purposes. Standards in Year 9 have been affected by poor organisation of the curriculum provision in the past. This situation has been remedied and, again, improving standards are evident in the work of students in Year 8.
79. The standards reached by students at the end of Year 11 are well below average, mainly because of the lack of a progressive scheme of work when they were lower down the school. Many average and lower attaining students have lost ground in their learning over time so that, now, their skills of reading and writing show many gaps. Higher attaining students have achieved better and they reach the expected standard for their age, reading with understanding and writing well structured essays and stories for coursework. However, the majority of students write brief factual accounts and do not show the expected knowledge of paragraphs to give structure to their work.
80. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall. In about one third of the lessons observed it was good or better; but in one lesson in six it was unsatisfactory. Where teaching is unsatisfactory it is either because a teacher is not a subject specialist, or the teacher is new to the age range and lacks a clear understanding of what the students can achieve. Where teachers are subject specialists, their knowledge is at least sound and sometimes good. A Year 9 class made very good progress when learning about news reports because of the teacher's skilful presentation of ideas and very good questioning. Well led discussion by the teacher in a class of higher attaining Year 11 students led them to a better than expected understanding of a poem. When discussion is not developed in the teaching of older students, then their quality of speaking diminishes and they seldom develop ideas, too often being content to note what the teacher says as the 'right answer.'
81. Teaching of the younger students in Years 7 and 8 shows an appropriate focus on language and how to use it effectively in writing. Where this is well done, as in a Year 7 lesson on poetry, students achieve well and are able to talk about the poem using the correct terminology. This contrasts with the ability of many older students who have not benefited from this kind of teaching in the past and find it difficult to express their ideas and opinions fluently. The teaching of students with special educational needs is unsatisfactory, because this is done mainly by non-specialists who do not understand the learning needs of these students, many of whom are seen working at levels below those they have already attained.
82. ICT was not seen in use during the inspection. The new scheme of work includes the use of ICT, but evidence from students' work in the previous school year showed little use of computers.
83. Since the last inspection, there has been satisfactory progress in the provision for teaching English. The scheme of work now in place ensures that all students have the same curriculum and have the opportunity to make progress in their knowledge and skills. The head of department is keen to develop a framework of regular assessment and to use it to set appropriate targets for the students. Resources in the department are improving, but there are not enough books to motivate pupils to read for pleasure. The recently appointed head of department has provided much needed leadership in establishing a scheme of work for students in Years 7, 8 and 9. She has also raised expectations of what students can achieve by extending the entry of students for GCSE examinations. She has developed a good team spirit among members of the department, who are keen to support her efforts to raise standards. She does, however, face some difficulties in her management of the department. The staffing of the department, which comprises three non-specialist teachers, one graduate trainee, a part-time specialist and four full-time specialists, presents a considerable challenge, even for an experienced manager. To manage these challenges successfully, the head of department requires support from the senior management team to help identify where colleagues need training or direction and to monitor standards and provision in the lowest attaining classes. She is also in need of professional development to enhance her own management skills. Without

urgent intervention and support, the good start that has been made in improving the climate and provision for learning could well lose its effect.

84. The provision for drama in the expressive arts faculty has little impact on students' standards in English. The curriculum for students in Years 7, 8 and 9 is good, and mainly concerned with the development of theatre skills. While it provides good opportunities for students to develop self-discipline and self-confidence there are no specific links with the English curriculum. There were not enough lesson observations in the subject during inspection to make a judgement on the quality of teaching or the standards achieved by students.
85. The school has recently reintroduced a policy for developing literacy in all subjects of the curriculum and has appointed a literacy co-ordinator to oversee its implementation. These are much needed initiatives, since, at present, the promotion of literacy in subjects other than English is poor, overall. In some subjects, such as science and ICT, there are examples of good practice, with students given opportunities to read aloud in lessons and encouraged to develop ideas through talk. On occasion, in geography lessons, students are also given good opportunities to talk. However, in most subjects, the identification and display of vocabulary to assist with spelling and the acquisition of new words is the only strategy being used to develop students' literacy skills. In many subjects, there are insufficient opportunities for students to express themselves and they are required to remain passive listeners for long periods while teachers explain the work of the lesson. They have few opportunities to develop note-taking skills because they are asked to copy passages from books, the board or to complete worksheets. Not enough subject teachers provide students with reading, either as a class or individually, to develop their independent reading skills. If standards of attainment are to rise in all subjects, it is crucial that all teachers understand and fulfil their role in developing the literacy skills of all students.

MATHEMATICS

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

Strengths

- Quality of teaching leading to a gradual improvement in attainment.
- Good relationships between teachers and students, leading to good attitudes towards learning.
- Management of students which leads to good behaviour.

Areas for improvement

- Concerted attention to the recommendations in the last report.
- Greater use of ICT to help the understanding of mathematics.
- The monitoring and evaluating of students' work.
- The shortage of books.
- Accommodation.

86. Standards at the end of Year 9 are well below national averages. In 2000, the percentage of students reaching Level 5 or above was well below the national average, and the percentage reaching Level 6 or above was well below the national average. When judged on average points scores, students performed well below the national average. Attainment has risen slowly during the last few years in line with the national trend. When the results are compared with those of schools with a similar proportion of free school meals, results are average. Students achieve results in line with expectations as they enter the school with well below average attainment.
87. Standards in the GCSE examination are well below the national standards. Girls performed slightly better than boys in terms of grades A*- C, in line with the national figures. The girls' results at grades A*-E were very low compared to the national average. Students' results were in line with their results in all other subjects; girls performed below the average level in other subjects and boys performed at about the same level. Very few students achieve the highest grades, but the work seen in the most able set of Year 11 indicates that students are being well challenged and better results can be expected in 2002. When comparison is made between the students' performance in the Key Stage 3 tests three years ago and their performance in the GCSE examination in 2000, the students' achievement is good.

88. Students enter the school with very low mathematical skills. A large number of students also have special educational needs and low levels of literacy. They find mathematical problems difficult, but concentrate well in lessons. In most lessons, achievement is as expected. Students' learning is satisfactory because of tight control by teachers; students concentrate well and listen carefully to the teachers. Sometimes, students have to concentrate for long periods of time, and progress would be improved by breaking lessons into smaller and different types of tasks.
89. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, with about half of the teaching being good or better. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject are good. The teaching of the basic skill of numeracy is satisfactory, but not enough creative and practical methods are used to retain students' interest and motivation. Teachers plan lessons in outline, but only one lesson plan of real quality was seen. Teachers give the objectives of the lesson to students at the beginning of each lesson, so that students are clear about what has to be learnt. Teachers set high standards and students are expected to reach them. They also expect that homework will be completed on time, but this needs further monitoring. Most lessons are very formal and are led from the front of the class by teachers which limits opportunities for investigative or practical work. Opportunities are missed to use ICT to enhance students' learning; this is an area for development, which was also identified in the last inspection report. However, two classrooms are fitted with interactive whiteboards and these are used very effectively to demonstrate concepts of mathematics. In a lesson of low ability students in Year 11, students were encouraged to use the new technology at the front of the class and they did so with confidence. All mathematics teaching rooms would benefit from the installation of these teaching aids.
90. Teachers know students very well. They show caring support for students and only a few instances of poor behaviour were seen. All lessons start reasonably promptly, with students making efforts to arrive on time. The pace of learning is satisfactory. In several lessons, teachers enhance the pace of learning by using a digital clock and insisting that students finish a specific task in a given time. This is good practice. Very few teaching and learning resources are used. The introduction of these aids would enhance students' learning.
91. The standards of presentation of students' work is below average. Higher ability students take a greater pride in setting out their work. Overall, insufficient stress is placed on setting out problems and showing all the working. Marking varies from teacher to teacher, and helpful comments are not commonly written alongside students' work. Long term assessment is detailed and well planned. Students' use of their planners is sketchy, and teachers do not always insist that all students enter the relevant facts about homework.
92. Students with special educational needs are placed in appropriate sets according to ability. The curriculum and pace of learning is adjusted to match their abilities. Classroom support assistants give useful help to the teachers, but the mathematics department does not control their timetables and there is a lack of continuity of support. Targets on individual education plans are very specific, and the teachers concentrate appropriately on these.
93. Students' attitudes are good. They are generally keen to learn mathematics and concentrate well in lessons. In question and answer sessions, students are polite and do not shout out answers. They are considerate of other students and do not disrupt their learning in most classes. There is a small proportion of students who show unruly behaviour, but this is normally well controlled by teachers. Students have very few opportunities to take the initiative for their own learning, but work sensibly in pairs in the classroom.
94. The head of department of mathematics is building a good corporate spirit within the department. The team of teachers works hard; they are caring of students' welfare, patient in their dealings with students, maintain good levels of discipline in most lessons and organise lessons in which all students can achieve satisfactory standards. Improvement since the last inspection has been limited, and there are still many issues to be addressed. In particular, the key issues of developing numeracy work and providing ICT opportunities still require action. Resources for learning are inadequate as students have to share textbooks. The accommodation is unsatisfactory and requires attention. Monitoring and evaluation of teachers' work has started but insufficient attention is given to standardisation. The department has coped well with the staffing problems which it has had to face. Students are well served and there are signs that standards will continue to improve.

95. Students' numeracy skills on entry to the school are well below national averages. This hinders their development in mathematics. The mathematics department must seek ways to improve numeracy skills by introducing more practice during lessons. Creative and practical methods should be used to motivate students' learning. There has been no in-service training for the teachers but this is planned for the future. Schemes of work have been considered, and these should be refined. Teachers should share successful ideas and resources. Liaison with other secondary and primary schools about appropriate methods would be a good initiative. The local education authority will also have a responsibility for supporting this important area for development.
96. There has been no development of numeracy in all subjects of the curriculum. However, the students' very low numeracy skills do not significantly inhibit learning in most subjects other than in science, where weak number skills inhibit students' attainment in calculations and in coursework which is one of the reasons why more students do not reach the highest grades at the end of Year 11. In a survey in English of leisure activities, students competently compile results, add the number of hours spent on activities and construct bar charts including scales. Students in design and technology confidently use calculations in food technology, for example proportions are examined in recipes and there is measuring in electronics and resistant materials. In Year 10 students show that they can quickly interpret bar graphs from their textbooks and record information accurately. Less able students interpolate from statistical information, using climate graphs of rainfall in equatorial forests. In history during a survey of Cleethorpes, students constructed pie and bar charts but ICT was not used, and the resulting diagrams were untidy. During music lessons, students sequence numbers in songs, count beats and divide music into bars. In modern languages students practise ordinal numbers in dates and birthdays. Some simple computation exercises are used in learning the numbers themselves. The co-ordination of methods of approach to numeracy applications among departments is not yet helping students to acquire greater skills in this area of learning.

SCIENCE

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

Strengths

- Improved standards, particularly at Key Stage 3.
- Good teaching.
- Good assessment procedures.

Areas for improvement

- More specific target setting for all pupils.
- Review the Key Stage 4 curriculum.
- Provide more technician time.

97. Standards in Year 9 are well below average when compared with all schools and average for similar schools. In 2001, there was a significant improvement in results, which are likely to be below the national average when comparative information is available. Results in science are slightly better than those in mathematics but considerably better than those in English. Over the last three years students' average point scores has increased steadily from well below to below the national average. Students achieve results in line with expectations given their well below average attainment on entry to the school.
98. Standards in the GCSE examination are well below the national average but are average when the results are compared with those of similar schools. Very few students achieve the highest GCSE examination grades. The percentage of students attaining grades A*- G is below the national average. By the end of Year 11 students achieve better results in science than in mathematics and English. GCSE examination results have remained constantly well below the national average for several years. Students achieve GCSE results around what might be expected based on their attainment at the end of Year 9.
99. Most students have limited literacy and numeracy skills which inhibits their attainment in this subject. Their explanations of scientific principles are at best superficial. They cannot apply their knowledge well. Students have great difficulty with calculations which are required for both their terminal examination and their coursework. High absence rates result in students having

an incomplete set of notes from which to revise. Teachers make satisfactory provision for gifted and talented pupils through extension work matched well to their needs. Students with special educational needs make good progress, particularly when the teacher and support staff work well together. This is not yet a common practice with all teachers. Most teachers use the technical language of the subject well and improve the students' literacy skills by the use of key words. More and more students are now gaining access to the newly equipped computer room, a helpful factor in the raising of standards.

100. Overall, the quality of teaching is good and in about a fifth of the lessons it is very good. In the one lesson where teaching was unsatisfactory the teacher failed to control the poor behaviour of some very difficult students. Teachers are confident when using computers, interactive whiteboards, demonstrations and experiments all of which enable students to learn well. Teachers manage the students effectively in the classroom so that they all have every opportunity to learn. Teachers use a wide range of methods and resources to achieve the lesson objectives. Several teachers make good use of the recently equipped computer room so that students can develop their ICT skills. Teachers mark work regularly but there is some inconsistency in the quality. The reports to parents are unsatisfactory because teachers fail to say what pupils can and cannot do in science, which was a weakness identified in the last inspection.
101. Overall, students learn well. In Year 7, students make very good progress learning about fuels and how to produce energy transfer diagrams. A key feature of this lesson was the way the teacher stressed the need for students to use the correct technical language, helpful guidance for these students with weak literacy skills. When finding out how the joints in the body work, students in Year 8 learnt well. The clear explanations and organisation of the teacher led to all students understanding well how their arms and legs move. In Year 9 students learnt well about the dangers of cigarette smoking. The teacher used a combination of a video, worksheet, and class discussion to help them make an informed judgment about whether smoking was a good thing for them to do. Another teacher made good use of local developments to illustrate how such developments can affect the environment. In a Year 10 lesson students took part in a lively discussion which was well controlled by the teacher. In Year 11 students learnt well how bacteria grow. The teacher gave students the opportunity to use computers to display bacterial growth graphically. Pupils not only improved their scientific understanding but also improved their ICT skills at the same time. A key factor in the good learning is the use teachers make of a wide range of methods and resources to capture students' interest. This hard-working team of teachers can be justifiably proud of the work they do to improve students' learning.
102. The quality of students' written work indicates that their attitudes to high academic achievement are only satisfactory. Little attempt has been made to complete or make up for missed work. Students work well together when carrying out experiments and move responsibly around the laboratory to collect materials and equipment. Behaviour is usually good. Some students spoil otherwise worthwhile answers to their teacher's questions by calling out. They have good relationships with their teachers and each other.
103. The GCSE examination course which is offered at the moment, is not the most suitable for these low attaining students. One of the reasons for their low attainment is that they have low levels of recall and understanding of their previous work. Consequently, these pupils would benefit from a course, which tested them more frequently, rather than at present when they are only examined officially at the end of Year 11. The department has very good assessment procedures to track the progress of the students who have a good understanding of the level or grade they are working at and of their target level or grade. However, they do not know what they specifically need to do to improve. The technician team is efficient and supportive although the school fails to provide sufficient time for this important work. The department is now in a very good position to deliver the ICT requirements of the science curriculum because of Technology College funding. The department still requires more sensors and power supplies. The head of department provides very good leadership and management. The high quality of the schemes of work is evidence of a committed team of teachers working well together. It is important that the head of department increases the monitoring of students' books so as to improve the completeness of their notes. The department gives due attention to health and safety. Many written risk assessments for experiments exist. Importantly, these risk assessments vary with the particular group of students carrying out the work.

104. Overall, the department has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Teachers now use a much wider range of teaching strategies and work is better matched to the needs of students but there has been only a minor improvement in the provision of technician support.

ART AND DESIGN

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

Strengths

- Good results in GCSE examinations.
- Good teaching.
- Good management.

Areas for improvement

- Assessment procedures at Key Stage 3.
- Size of teaching groups.

105. At the end of Year 9, students' attainment is about average. An understanding of the work of major artists is evident and students are able to incorporate this understanding in their own creative work; the painting of Andy Warhol, for example, provided the basis for imaginative painting in a Year 9 class. Printmaking is competently carried out and students produce some colourful and very lively compositions. Work in three-dimensional design is restricted by resource limitations and takes the form of experimental structures in card and light materials.
106. There is too little use of computers in art and design. Literacy is addressed by the analysis of subject terms, and students extend numeracy by the experience of measuring and judging proportion.
107. Achievement at the end of Year 9 is good and represents good progress as students' attainment on entry to the school is well below average. Students develop good technique in drawing, design and the use of colour. Those with special needs are helped to reach their full potential by a range of projects tailored to their needs, which allow for success at different levels. Talented students are also able to develop their talent in response to the same course material. Assessment procedures have recently been developed to relate grades to the National Curriculum. This framework is in need of detailed development but present assessments indicate that students' attainment is around the national average.
108. By the end of Year 11, the overall standard of students' work is about average. They show a capacity for developing ideas independently. In personal projects there is imaginative use of art history allied to sound creative technique. Use of ICT is sparse and work in three dimensions is comparatively underdeveloped which depresses standards. Results in GCSE examinations were below average in 2001. Achievement is satisfactory. Students make steady progress in acquiring art skills from Year 9 onwards with the additional advance represented by independent working. Written work is variable in quality and there is little extended writing. Literacy and numeracy are addressed by vocabulary extension and by measuring in design. As at the earlier stage, students with special needs are helped by the 'open' nature of the curriculum allowing for progress appropriate to prior attainment and experience. The curriculum at both stages to the end of Year 9 and to the end of Year 11 is broad and varied, allowing for drawing and painting, printmaking and design, graphics and lettering with restricted coverage of ICT and three-dimensional design. Extra-curricular work is available during lunchtime and furthers students' interest in the subject and contributes well to the development of their skills.
109. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. The major strengths are the enthusiasm and subject expertise of the teachers. Projects are imaginatively designed to combine historical exploration with individual creative work. Students' progress is carefully monitored and assessed and assessments are well used to make decisions about the direction of further work. The planning and preparation of lessons is effective and a good pace is maintained which is reflected in the degree of students' progress. A very good working atmosphere is generated in studios.

110. The department is well managed. There is a high degree of commitment, and good relationships prevail between teachers. The quality of display in the department is rich and illustrates students' achievements in a wide range of activities. The accommodation is adequate, consisting of two studios, a staff room and a study but, when used by large classes, the studios are crowded. Since the last inspection, improvement has been satisfactory.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

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

Strengths

- Provision for ICT.
- Improvement in GCSE examination results.
- The level of commitment in teaching.

Areas for improvement

- The balance between practical and theoretical work at Key Stage 3.
- The development of ICT in food and textiles.
- The monitoring of teaching.

111. The attainment of students by the end of Year 9 is below average compared with standards nationally. However, in relation to the attainment on entry and in comparison with other similar schools, students achieve well.
112. Students produce good work in textiles. They are able to weave wool using handlooms effectively. In food technology they can prepare and cook food successfully and show good skills when handling equipment. The written work which accompanies projects is well presented and illustrated. Students show an understanding of 'input' and 'output' in 'systems' and electronics, together with good skills in modelling ideas using ICT.
113. Students' achievement by the end of Year 9 is satisfactory. Progress through Years 7-9 is steady and new learning is evident in electronics, systems and ICT. The recent improved provision for ICT has had a marked impact upon learning and improvements in accommodation generally form the basis for more organised learning and progress. Basic skills are addressed by the analysis of subject terms on the one hand, and the measurement involved in design work and calculation in food technology.
114. The progress of students with special needs and those with special talent is aided by the 'open-ended' nature of the curriculum, which allows for successful work at many different levels.
115. The attainment of students by the time they reach the end of Year 11 is below average. However, the current success rate marks a major improvement over the last three years in GCSE examinations. Nonetheless, standards vary widely across the range of GCSE options offered, a major variation is evident between the success rate of girls and boys, girls gaining much better results than boys overall. In examinations, girls' results are much nearer to the national average than boys'. A feature of the comparatively low attainment of boys is the very poor results attained in the resistant materials option. By contrast, girls attained comparatively very good results in textiles whilst, overall, results in electronics have been relatively good.
116. The progress made by students before they reach the end of Year 11 varies from course to course. Steady progress is made in food technology and, in this area, students with special educational needs achieve well. The nature of work also allows students who are gifted and talented to do well.
117. The quality of teaching varies between being from good to being unsatisfactory. The most effective teaching was imaginatively planned and derived from well-prepared lessons in ICT, food technology and 'systems'. A strong feature of this teaching is the quality and pace of individual help and tuition. Although only one lesson was judged unsatisfactory, a consistent feature of this and other less successful teaching was the tendency for teaching to devote too much time to theoretical material at the expense of time spent on practical work. This has a particularly depressing effect upon special needs students and low attainers, although behaviour generally is satisfactory. Students benefit from individual support and

encouragement in the development of their projects and they make steady progress. Assessment is thorough and regular and is closely related to National Curriculum and GCSE assessment objectives.

118. The department has suffered from some problems in staffing in recent years. The difficulties in acquiring and retaining a stable teaching force have undoubtedly adversely affected attainment.
119. The management of the department has many positive features. There are very good relationships between members of the department and there is an atmosphere of mutual respect. A further strength is the fact that the head of department plays a full and enthusiastic role in the teaching. However, given the staffing problems in the department and some of the shortcomings noted in teaching, a thorough review of teaching strategies is indicated. In this, the monitoring role of the head of department needs to be extended, together with extended discussion by all staff of ways of consolidating existing strengths and promoting continued improvement.
120. Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory. The improvement identified at that time in textiles and electronics has been consolidated. However, the disaffection noted when the focus of the lesson is based upon design briefs, remains a problem. The degree of unsatisfactory teaching has decreased since the last inspection and targets have now been profitably introduced. Accommodation has improved in quality and there is now provision for computer-aided design and manufacture. Accommodation for textiles, however, is poor and improvement in this area is a priority if attainment is to be raised. The department is well served by a very able non-teaching technician who makes an important contribution to the work in this subject area.

GEOGRAPHY

Overall, the quality of provision in geography is **good**.

Strengths

- Students achieve well.
- Students' own knowledge of their learning is good.
- Relationships are good between teachers and students.

Areas for improvement

- Attainment in GCSE examinations.
- Share the very good classroom management practice across the department to improve all learning.
- Improve the unsatisfactory temporary accommodation.

121. The overall attainment of students on entry to the school is well below average but attainment improves and by the time students reach the end of Year 9 it is below average. Girls achieve better results than boys. Recent GCSE examination results have been well below the national level and are in the lower quartile for those found nationally. However, students often achieve better results in geography than in their other subjects. In 2000, a small proportion of students reached their predicted GCSE grades and a number of students improved by one or two grades although boys did not achieve as well as they should. In the same year, most students who were entered for the Certificate of Achievement were successful. In response to the last inspection and the need to raise standards in GCSE examination courses the faculty introduced an integrated humanities course. In 2001, the first year in which students took this examination, the school increased the number of higher grades by almost a third. Boys' performance improved and their overall results were also better than those of girls.
122. Students achieve well throughout the school. They usually reach the standards expected of them and some do very well. Students, in a middle ability Year 7 class, for example, used a range of skills to build on their geographical knowledge and understanding to decide where they live in relation to cities and other countries in the world. Learning through the use of the interactive white board activity stimulated students' thinking as they freely offered to locate Liverpool on a British Isles' map. This creates good opportunities for speaking and listening although the recording of work in exercise book is less precise. By Year 9, competent students have gained a good knowledge and understanding of geographical patterns, processes and

skills. They write well and with sensitivity, a good example being their descriptions of the impact of the volcanic eruption in Montserrat. By the end of Year 9, students make very good progress because the teaching places emphasis on the development of skills essential for learning in the subject critical. For instance, students' work in ICT involving the drawing of graphs helped them to make very good progress in understanding the differences between weather and climate and to make comparisons between Britain and the equatorial rain forests. Students who find learning more difficult, and those with special needs, follow the teacher's explanations and begin to write competently, but as in the last inspection, there remain weaknesses in students' writing, spelling and punctuation.

123. In Year 10 and Year 11, students study an integrated humanities course. Students have completed their geographical enquiry and in local studies have analysed the changes in the attraction of Cleethorpes to visitors between the nineteenth and twentieth century. Maps and diagrams show good spatial awareness and some students use ICT to enhance the presentation of their individual and group work. Further use is made of the local town in a Year 11 lesson to describe how different types of residential areas can be related to population models. Two thirds of this more able group are predicted to achieve above average grades.
124. The quality of teaching is good overall. It was very good or satisfactory in all but one lesson. When the teaching is very good, lesson objectives are clear and the work is carefully planned. Specialist knowledge adds significant detail to the lesson and teachers manage students effectively so that very little time is wasted. Work is well matched to the needs of the students. It challenges competent students to make very good progress and to complete a quantity of work whilst students who find the work difficult, follow a series of short, focused and attainable tasks. Students with special need make appropriate progress with very little adult support other than from the class teacher. Teachers work hard to keep students focused on their work but the management of students' behaviour is not always secure. Then the pace of learning is reduced. Not enough account is taken of the results of assessment so that all students can be set work at challenging levels. Sometimes, classwork is not completed. In some lessons insufficient time is set aside for students to record their homework.
125. Overall, there are very good opportunities for learning in response to very good teaching. Students learn very well, particularly when they build on first-hand fieldwork enquiry. Most students know how well they are achieving and what needs to be done to improve their performance. There has been satisfactory progress since the last inspection. Schemes of work have been reviewed for Year 7 and Year 8 in response to changes to the National Curriculum. A different GCSE syllabus has been adopted although curriculum time is limited. The literacy policy is being gradually integrated into the teaching programmes although more opportunities need to be created for this to be effective. Students' ICT skills are improving. Standards have improved.
126. Geography is well organised within the humanities faculty. There is regular and effective monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning. Relationships are good in a department that wants to succeed. However, recent changes in staffing and additional responsibilities of post holders has reduced the number of specialists and more teachers are now working in a number of departments. Temporary accommodation is inadequate for the size of groups and distant from other geography teaching rooms. This precludes informal monitoring of classroom practice and is having an adverse effect on standards.

HISTORY

Overall, the quality of provision in history is **unsatisfactory**.

Strengths

- Teachers' skill in making history memorable.
- Range of extra-curricular activities for all students.

Areas for improvement

- Raise attainment in both key stages.
- Encouraging students to become independent learners.
- Promote speaking skills and the use of ICT.

127. Standards at the end of Year 9 are well below national expectation. Girls perform markedly better than boys. GCSE examination results have been consistently well below the national average for the last six years. Just under a third of candidates achieve high grades compared with a national average of over half. In 2001, boys' results were similar to those of girls.
128. Standards observed in lessons were in line with these results. By the end of Year 9, the ablest pupils are able to explain, for instance, how developing technology in the first world war enabled both sides to experiment with new weapons. When students write imaginary diaries, or undertake other imaginary work, such as the compilation of an eighteenth century slave ship's log, their writing is accurate and well presented. However, most students, those with lower ability, seldom write at any length. They tend, instead, to fill in blanks on a worksheet. Both handwriting and accuracy are weak. Students of all abilities have mastered few of the skills which are particularly associated with the study of history. They do not question their source material or investigate how events may have been interpreted in different ways. They do little of their own research. They seldom use ICT, either to research historical data or to present their work in attractive format.
129. Work seen in Year 11 is subject to the same weaknesses. The best write with a fair degree of accuracy and can research diligently a topic such as the historical development of Cleethorpes. They present their findings clearly, making good use of graphs, tables and bar charts. But the weaker students have poor literacy skills, and in some cases copy long passages off the Internet, without digesting and analysing the information. All students have difficulty in organising an effective essay. For instance, when discussing the reasons why peace has been so elusive in the Middle East they rely on giving a straight narrative of the Arab-Israeli conflict. There is little analysis and no reasoned conclusion. They do not explain what sources they used, and provide no evaluation of them.
130. The quality of teaching is generally unsatisfactory. In the best lessons the teacher explains things clearly, giving a dramatic account of, for instance, life in the trenches, or making the story of Romulus and Remus come alive. Such teaching arouses students' interest, and leads on to some understanding of concepts such as the role of propaganda, or the difference between fact and myth. But in many lessons the teacher talks so much that students get restless, and have little opportunity to think for themselves. Students seldom speak, and when they do it is in short answers of a sentence or so. There is almost no exchange of opinions either in the whole class or in small groups. Neither the teacher nor the support assistants have much time to discuss the work with individuals. As a result students' learning is restricted. They achieve less than they might and make only slow progress. Those with special educational need make satisfactory progress when they get active support in class, but such support cannot easily occur if the teacher is talking.
131. Although it was not possible to see all the teachers who teach history as a result of staff illness, the teachers who were observed worked hard to make the subject attractive. They are especially assiduous in helping students at the end of lessons, but the marking of written work is often limited to a tick and brief word of encouragement, with insufficient guidance about how to improve. Work is enhanced by many out of school visits. Standards are lowered by the lack of time given to the history component in humanities at Key Stage 4; and may well be affected by the deployment of nine people teaching history, all of them teaching at least two and sometimes five other subjects, when the curriculum requires three teachers at most. There is no shortage of funds for teaching effectively and the humanities faculty is fortunate to have the exclusive use of a room equipped with fifteen computers. But there is too great a dependence on worksheets, and the computers are seldom used. Many lessons are taught in dilapidated temporary classrooms which are so small that they restrict the activities that more adventurous teaching would require.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY [ICT]

Overall, the quality of provision in information and communication technology is **unsatisfactory**.

Strengths

- Good accommodation and specialist resources.
- Very good leadership and management.
- Good pace and variety in many lessons.

Areas for improvement

- Meeting National Curriculum requirements for students in Years 7-9.
- Ensuring that all students have full opportunity to develop their ICT skills and understanding through work in other subjects.

132. The standards of the students' work are always below national levels in Years 7, 8 and 9. In 2001, at the end of Year 9, 36% of students reached or passed the national standard of Level 5; however, this is likely to be well below the average around the country. Indeed, every year the students' attainments at the end of Year 9 have been well below the national average although every year they have improved very significantly. By the end of Year 9, almost every student has acquired the main skills of working with keyboard, mouse and windows but many are unable to work with more than one window at a time and few can type with both hands or more than a few fingers. Most students have at least a basic grasp of word processing and some experience with other software and hardware packages. In one class at this stage only one student could type quickly but was inaccurate. Only two could type accurately but were extremely slow and the rest were neither quick nor accurate. In another such class, the students' standards of word processing were somewhat better but few had a reasonable grasp of the text checking system and left many errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar in their work. Most of these students could access the Internet and find something out, but none could search in a focused way and none could evaluate and select from what they found.
133. In 2001, almost two thirds of those entered for the Intermediate GNVQ award passed; this, too, is likely not to be very close to the national picture if the national figures are maintained at past levels, but 2001 was the first time the school has entered Year 11 students for any qualification in this subject. Standards are sometimes below expectation in lessons in Years 10 and 11, though there is some good work. Many students have now gained some fluency with word processing and know how to choose and insert clip art pictures and how to add colour and special effects to text; some have a grasp of the skills of using other forms of software too. However, not many realise that word processed documents, database reports and *Power Point* slides are all ways to communicate information to an audience – too often their work is hard to read or formatted in a way that conveys a different message to that intended, while the actual words do not always make sense. Also, it is rare to find students who understand the advantages of using computers in a given context or who can give "real life" examples of what they are doing. The attainment of students throughout the school is unsatisfactory
134. The overall quality of teaching in almost every lesson seen during the inspection was satisfactory and in some it was good or very good. Particular strengths are the full-time ICT teachers' subject knowledge, ability to keep lessons moving at a good pace, and variety of teaching approaches and resources. ICT lesson planning is thorough and careful. However, none of the teachers is yet secure in designing specific learning objectives that meet the needs of all the learners, in focusing the lesson's activities on those objectives, in having high enough expectations, and in assessing how well the students' progress. Objectives of this kind are only now starting to be used in ICT lessons and they have great potential for raising standards. As it is, most students do not achieve as much as they could; while they learn well in the best lessons, they still do not retain much of what they learn. All this is as true of those students identified as having special educational needs as of the others.
135. Currently, only students in Year 7 have ICT identified on their timetables. This school must therefore rely heavily on other subjects to give all students the wide, deep and assessed ICT experience they need. As yet the use of ICT by the other subjects as a tool for learning is very underdeveloped. For these reasons, and because there is very little use of the school's computers by students outside lessons, the school does not offer every student in Years 7, 8 and 9 the National Curriculum entitlement. In the other two years, every student does have timetabled IT lessons; while again there is as yet little use of ICT as a tool for the students' learning in their other subjects and little use of the facilities outside of lessons, the school is able to meet National Curriculum expectations.
136. The school is making good progress in the provision of resources for ICT. Since the last inspection, progress has been good through the employment of specialist staff, dedicated accommodation and much improved computer facilities which in some ways are very good in comparison with those in similar schools. The ICT co-ordinator is a member of the senior management team and provides very good leadership and management in the development and use of the necessary systems and materials; the rest of the senior management team provide much support in their turn. There is still a long way to go because the very good

facilities are under-used; there are health concerns as regards the lack of air conditioning and ergonomic problems; while the level of staffing is not sufficient to provide the timetable coverage, the supervision of the facilities, and the necessary support to the other departments. Even so, the school *is* making good progress and has the capacity to succeed in addressing the remaining aspects of the provision of ICT and to do so in a fairly short time.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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

Strengths

- The quality of leadership.
- The quality of teaching.
- Learning resources.

Areas for improvement

- The development of planning for work in reading and writing matched to students' abilities.
- Reducing the amount of English in some teaching.

137. As at the last inspection, students' attainment in French in the GCSE examination at grades A*-C in 2000 was low. It had improved on 1999 but fell back again in 2001. Attainment at A*-G was low in 2000 but has been average or better in the other three of the last four years.
138. Attainment at grades A*-C in German in 2000 was very low. It had fallen back from the two previous years but improved significantly in 2001. Attainment at A*-G was high in 2000 but very low in 1999 and again in 2001, largely because of absence. At the last inspection, attainment in German was low and girls' standards were better than boys. In both languages in 2001, the gap between girls' and boys' attainment has narrowed and standards are now similar.
139. Attainment at the end of Year 9 in the first modern foreign language was low in 2000. In 2001, it recovered to the 1999 level when it was in line with national averages. This represents an improvement from the last inspection when it was just below average.
140. The standards reached by students in work observed in the school were better than those suggested by the results at the end of Year 11 and are in line with the results of teacher assessment by the end of Year 9. Students listen and read well and in Years 7, 8 and 9 speak well, on occasions for genuine communication. Their writing is less good because of the lack of work appropriate to students' abilities. In Years 10 and 11, speaking standards are weaker, as the students are hesitant and showing the effects of too much English in their earlier teaching. More able students are beginning to develop skills in drafting and re-drafting when writing at length. The improvement in attainment coincides with the appointment of a new head of faculty and greater stability in the staffing in modern languages. This is still unsatisfactory, as present staff shortages are resulting in Year 7 classes receiving limited specialist teaching. In addition, a group in each of Years 10 and 11 is disappplied from modern foreign languages.
141. Teaching in modern foreign languages is good throughout the school. Teachers plan their lessons well, except in the respect of reading and writing tasks for students with different abilities. They make consistent use of French or German but could further reduce the amount of English in their teaching to encourage students to make more consistent use of the target language. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to use French or German and make sure students understand what is heard and read and introduce all lessons by making the objectives clear. All of these aspects of teaching were recorded as concerns at the last inspection.
142. This good teaching leads to good learning for students which has improved from the satisfactory progress identified at the last inspection. They make consistent progress in lessons; they have good recall of what they learnt previously and they are developing the use of French and German in real situations. Boys and girls make equal progress, students for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress but students of different ability do not reach their potential because of the lack of materials aimed at their particular abilities. Support assistants, when present, make a good contribution to learning in the lowest sets. The good teaching also leads to good attitudes and behaviour from students. They

concentrate well, show commitment and, especially in Years 7, 8 and 9, show enthusiasm for language learning.

143. Students are attentive: they respect others' rights to speak and be heard, follow instructions in French or German and work well in groups or pairs, when they sustain the target language well. Any incidents of potentially poor behaviour are satisfactorily resolved by good teaching. The curriculum in modern foreign languages meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and has satisfactory breadth and balance. Opportunities for students to meet native French and German speakers are provided by two of the school's teachers and the two foreign language assistants. There is plenty of high quality display in classrooms and on corridors and there are three visits abroad every year.
144. Assessment procedures are good. Students' work is thoroughly marked and includes a National Curriculum attainment target and level. They keep a helpful record of the levels they have attained on a grid inside the front cover of their exercise book. The leadership and management of the faculty are very good. There is a good team ethos and members of the faculty have delegated responsibilities to whole school groups. The head of faculty has introduced new schemes of work, new policies and monitoring of teaching and learning. This has had a considerable impact on standards in the faculty.

MUSIC

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

Strengths

- The head of department has a clear understanding of priorities and focus for development.
- Management of students.
- Variety of extra-curricular opportunities.

Areas for improvement

- Continue to develop and improve materials and teaching strategies to ensure students of all abilities make progress.
- Continue to develop appropriate ICT resources for all students.

145. There were only a small number of students who took music in the GCSE examination in 2000. All students achieved better than their predicted grade. No students took the examination in 2001. Standards in music by the end of Year 9 are below the expected standard. Overall, girls' achievement is higher than that of boys. Observations based on lessons and students' notebooks reinforce the overall picture of standards. However, there are examples of students achieving well. One group from a Year 8 class had been studying *Blues* music and their performance showed confident playing with a sense of style and purpose. Another recording of variations demonstrated understanding of the use of dynamics and texture. This piece used repeated sequences to gain variation. Written work for students in Years 7-9 is very limited. This means that few students are able to comment in their own words on their own or other peoples' music using musical language. This lack of oral and written evaluation skill is evident for students in Years 10 and 11. They are unsure how to develop their answers and give musical reasons for their choices.
146. The quality of teaching for students in Years 7-9 varies between very good and satisfactory. Overall it is satisfactory with some examples of very good teaching. It is good for students in Years 10 and 11. The best teaching in Years 7-9 is characterised by clear expectations and well planned learning tasks. This ensures that students understand what they have to do. It also ensures that their musical knowledge and skills are developed and practised on a regular basis. These lessons move at a good pace and work is well planned so that different activities are well linked. In a Year 7 lesson the enthusiasm generated by the teacher kept all students involved. A musical pattern was built up in four parts with students learning different parts thoroughly so that they became confident when performing together. In these lessons students with special educational needs were able to make progress in line with the rest of the class as the lesson was carefully planned and taught.

147. Where teaching is less successful students do not learn so well and make only limited progress. In these lessons the teachers' instructions, explanations and expectations are not sufficiently clear and this can lead to some students failing to take an active part in lessons. Also musical concepts are not firmly taught and practised so that all students are aware of what they have to do. Students often need time to answer questions and to develop their answers. In the best lessons teachers showed good levels of knowledge and used effective questioning to ensure that students developed their answers fully and improved their knowledge and understanding of musical language.
148. Many students enjoy music lessons. The good variety and range of extra-curricular events, instrumental provision and workshops enrich and develop the curriculum. The instrumental lessons are well organised with regular monitoring and contact between the department and peripatetic staff. The department operates an 'open door' policy during the day so that students can practise and make progress. There are good relationships in many classes where students are keen to learn. Very often this is because it is linked to interesting and relevant work that meets their needs.
149. The department is well led and managed. The head of department is also head of the expressive arts faculty, and has a clear focus and priorities for development both for music and within the faculty. Since her appointment music is now an option subject for GCSE examinations and is growing in popularity. The expressive arts option is popular for many students, with several achieving their better results in this subject. The department reacts well to various initiatives so that best use is made of available funding. Students' progress is carefully monitored against National Curriculum levels. However if these were broken down into different musical skills a broader picture of students' ability would be seen and this would help teachers to plan accordingly. There are good ICT resources but more software programs are needed so that all students can use ICT in composition work. At present the programs offered are not suitable for all. The number and variety of books in the library are insufficient and do not reflect sufficient variety of musical styles, times and places. The accommodation for music making is good with attractive displays of students' work.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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

Strengths

- The wide range of activities.
- Good quality teaching.
- The range of extra-curricular activities and sporting events.

Areas for improvement

- Offer students the opportunity to study dance as a GCSE examination subject.
- Allow students to become more involved in the evaluation of their work.
- Use assessment information to set targets for individual students.

150. Since the last inspection, the school has introduced the opportunity for students to take a GCSE examination course in physical education. In the 1999 and 2000 examinations the number of students gaining A* - C grade passes was well below the national average. However, in the 2001 examination, although the number of students gaining the higher grades significantly increased, overall results were still below the national average. Nonetheless, these results compare very favourably with the results the same students gained in their other subjects.
151. Students arrive at the school from their primary schools with varying levels of physical education skills, but mostly below the level expected. They quickly respond to the teaching which is of good quality, and by the time they reach the end of Year 9 they have progressed to the point where the vast majority are achieving levels that are in line with national expectations, with a small majority doing even better, and a few less. This judgement is in line with the assessments made by teachers. Students perform well in a wide range of physical education activities. In games activities, particularly in soccer and netball, they demonstrate good levels of skill, often showing good ball control and being aware of simple defence and attack strategies. In gymnastics pupils are able to display a range of movements both on the floor and on

apparatus, with an increasingly competent ability to link them together into complex sequences. Students arrive at the school with only limited experience of dance but quickly get involved and by the end of Year 9 many are able to take responsibility for developing a story line, choreographing it, and then performing with fluency and poise. Most students have a satisfactory understanding of how to prepare for physical activity, but are still usually dependent on the teacher to lead them at the beginning of lessons. Some students are able to evaluate their own and others' performances, and to make perceptive comments on how improvements can be made, but others are given too little opportunity to develop these aspects.

152. The levels of attainment of most students by the time they reach the end of Year 11 are also in line with the national expectations, with a significant number doing even better. They are developing skills in performance and evaluation in a range of games. They have sufficient knowledge of rules and tactics to be able to undertake a range of roles, including officiating and coaching. Students in examination groups are developing understanding and expertise in both the theoretical and practical aspects of the subject. Higher attaining students present written work that is well structured and well presented. A number of students do well in the practical parts of the course, but find it difficult to get success in the theoretical aspects.
153. Students with special educational needs are well integrated and are given much help and encouragement from their teachers and other students and reach appropriate levels of attainment. School teams take part in many inter-school matches in a wide variety of sporting activities and do very well, particularly in athletic competitions. Many students have represented the school in district competitions in a range of activities, and some have gone on to play with Humberside teams. There are students in the school who have gained national honours in a variety of sports.
154. The department has maintained the good standard of teaching noted at the time of the last inspection with none of the lessons observed being unsatisfactory. In the majority of lessons the quality of teaching was good or very good. All lessons begin in an orderly manner with objectives being clearly stated that helps students understand what is expected of them and how to improve. Activities are chosen that sustain students' interest and involvement. There is an expectancy by teachers that their students will work hard and behave well, and usually these expectations are met. Teachers are enthusiastic about their subject and their students generally respond very positively and work hard. There is much evidence of students getting a high level of enjoyment and personal satisfaction from their lessons. Teachers show a concern for them whilst encouraging the best in fair play, co-operation and competitive experiences.
155. The curriculum has been revised since the last inspection with less time being allocated to games activities resulting in a more balanced curriculum. Students in Years 10 and 11 have the opportunity to take the GCSE examination in the subject and this has been taken up by enthusiastic groups. The department should now consider offering students the opportunity to take a GCSE course in dance. The department has good assessment procedures and comprehensive information is kept in a readily accessible form on students' attainment and attitudes. Staff now need to use this wealth of information to influence the curriculum planning and to set targets for individual students.
156. Many staff give very freely of their time to provide a wide range of extra-curricular activities and inter-school matches and competitions, which are well supported by large groups of students. The good quality facilities have a very positive effect on the attainment of the students and of their enjoyment of the subject. The time allocation for most students in Years 7 and 8 is good and allows them to cover the requirements of the National Curriculum. However, there is a group of Year 9 pupils whose time allocation is one hour per week and this is barely adequate for them to cover the syllabus. Resources for the subject are good and there is no shortage of equipment or textbooks, although there is a need to put more books of a technical nature on the subject in the school library. High quality departmental displays around the school effectively stimulate students' interest in the subject. This is a well led and well organised department. The schemes of work and other documentation are of high quality and are regularly revised, and this revision ensures the best ideas are used. Hard-working teachers work together effectively as a team sharing a commitment to the department and being very supportive of each other. Since the last inspection progress has been good. The department has continued to provide good quality physical education for all students. The revision of the curriculum offer has resulted in a broader and more balanced range of activities and the department is now offering students the opportunity to gain a GCSE qualification in the subject.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Overall, the quality of provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- Consistent standard of teaching.
- Improved examination results.

Areas for improvement

- Curriculum planning.
- Methods to improve literacy skills.
- The development of assessment.

157. Standards are below average in comparison with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus by the end of Year 9 and achievement is satisfactory. Students display a greater range and depth of knowledge and understanding of Judaism, Islam and Sikhism than of Christianity. They describe the origins and symbolic importance of different features of Sikh dress but in contrast their written work on features of Christian churches and the work of priests is limited to a narrow factual content. They express opinions on social and moral issues although they do not readily apply religious knowledge and understanding to such issues; they give examples of prejudice in different parts of the world but find difficulty in linking prejudice to the Christian concept of "neighbour". Their written opinions lack depth because of their weak literacy skills. Students with special needs make good use of appropriate terminology, including sacrifice, idol and meditation, in a discussion on the life of Muhammad.
158. Standards are also below average by the end of Year 11 but students' achievements are satisfactory. GCSE examination results in 2000 were very low in comparison with the national average although the results in 2001 show a significant improvement following a change of course. The work of higher attainers shows a good range and depth of understanding; they are confident, for example, in identifying and describing the importance of symbolism in the rites of passage of different faiths. The work of other students, including a minority who take the subject as part of a life skills course, is characterised by weak literacy skills resulting in generalised written responses. Students' writing about places of worship lacks detail with an over-reliance on general knowledge. Those following the life skills course, including those with special needs, are confident when discussing moral issues; they select information on different charities from sources and write brief summaries.
159. A feature of students' achievement across the age range is that the development of religious knowledge and understanding is stronger than the development of skills in personal reflection and response especially in writing. Students' attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory. They work with good concentration on individual activities and collaborate well in group-work, although such opportunities are limited.
160. Teaching is satisfactory throughout the age range. Subject knowledge is at least satisfactory. In the most effective teaching lesson introductions are clear and straightforward and enable students to gain a good understanding of concepts such as belief and worship and then apply this understanding to the study of a particular faith. Teaching is less effective when there is an over-emphasis on developing students' factual knowledge. The development of literacy skills is a weaker aspect of the teaching, with lost opportunities during and following class discussion to challenge students to give reasoned opinions in writing. Written work in lessons is too often confined to consolidating basic factual knowledge without providing opportunities for extended writing. Lesson objectives are always clear although there is not always an effective match between objectives and lesson content; in a study of special clothes in Judaism pupils gained a factual understanding of the different items of clothing although their written responses showed less understanding of what made each item special. The level of challenge in lessons is satisfactory and is often good when the focus is on social and moral issues; in one good example students were challenged to give personal responses to a wide range of moral issues and then shared their responses in class discussion. In some lessons the level of challenge in class discussion is not sufficient when there is an over-reliance on using students' previously acquired knowledge without developing their learning further.

161. Teaching methods are appropriately varied. There is some good practice in managing class discussion, particularly when resources are used as a point of reference to consolidate understanding. Class discussion is less effective and less challenging when students are asked only for short factual responses. Methods do not contain a sufficiently wide range of strategies to develop literacy skills, especially to enable all students to extend their writing beyond brief factual responses. Time is generally well used to incorporate discussion and individual activities. The use of assessment is variable and in some lessons there is insufficient use of assessment during individual writing activities. Homework is used effectively to extend lesson activities, for example through tasks that involve Internet research.
162. Leadership is satisfactory. The change of GCSE course has had a positive impact on results. Good progress has been made recently in revising schemes of work although more work remains to be done in developing a wider range of assessment methods. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory and the appointment of specialist staff has had a positive impact.