

INSPECTION REPORT

REDMOOR HIGH SCHOOL

Hinckley

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number:120271

Headteacher: Mrs A R Smith

Reporting inspector: Mr T Feast
3650

Dates of inspection: 1st – 3rd October 2001

Inspection number: 195710

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Secondary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	11 to 14 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Wykin Road Hinckley Leicestershire
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of responsible officer:	Mrs M Gethin
Date of previous inspection:	23 rd June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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19913	R Garrett	Team inspector	English	
30699	A Kemp	Team inspector	Mathematics	
20832	M Galowalia	Team inspector	Science English as an additional language	
8503	A Alfree	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology	
22849	R Catlow	Team inspector	Geography	How well is the school led and managed?
27407	B Stoneham	Team inspector	History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
30046	R Parker	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Special educational needs	
16950	C Orr	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages Equal opportunities	
12276	T Payne	Team inspector	Music	How well are pupils taught?
18888	J Boulton	Team inspector	Physical education	
10807	P Quest	Team inspector	Religious education	How well does the school care for its pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Redmoor High School is a small, mixed comprehensive school for pupils aged 11 to 14 years. There are 460 pupils on roll, which is a small increase since the last inspection. The gender balance has swung since the last inspection and there are now more boys than girls. The school serves a socially mixed area and about a quarter of the pupils come from outside the school's catchment area. The family circumstances of pupils remain broadly average overall. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals at just over nine per cent remains below the national average. The number of pupils identified by the school as having special educational needs has risen since the last inspection and at over 25 per cent, is above the national average. The number of pupils with statements of special educational needs provided by the local education authority is at a similar level to the last inspection and at over four per cent of the total number of pupils, is above the national average. The number of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and those speaking English as an additional language remains a very small percentage of the school roll but is a bit higher than in most schools. Using pupils' average points scores from the national tests at the age of eleven, the attainment on entry of the 2000 intake was broadly in line with the national average but for the two years prior to that, it was below it. Attainment on entry in 2001 is below the national average.

At the time of the inspection, the headteacher was absent from school on the grounds of ill-health.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

There are many positive aspects to Redmoor High School. Most pupils make good progress by the end of Year 9 to reach standards broadly in line with those expected nationally. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Leadership and management are currently unsatisfactory. The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory and it gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards achieved in mathematics, science, art and design and geography are above the national average.
- Pupils make good progress in most subjects whilst at the school.
- The quality and range of the curriculum, including the provision for extra-curricular activities and careers education, is good.
- Attendance is above the national average and procedures for monitoring it are good.
- The provision for pupils' social development and pupils' response to these opportunities are good.
- Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good.

What could be improved

- The leadership of the headteacher and governing body in ensuring clear educational direction for the school.
- Standards achieved in English, music in the classroom and religious education.
- The behaviour of a small group of pupils and the procedures for eliminating this poor behaviour.
- The consistency with which the monitoring and evaluation role of managers is carried out and the use made of information gained to effect improvement in teaching and learning.
- The school's statutory provision of a daily act of collective worship and the spiritual development of the pupils.

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 inspected in June 1997. The school has made a satisfactory response to the key issues identified by the last inspection. Since then, there has been a satisfactory improvement in the management and co-ordination of special educational needs. Target setting has improved, as has the provision of more relevant resources, advice and support to staff. There has been good improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection. The proportion of unsatisfactory teaching has been reduced substantially and the proportion of good teaching or better remains over 50 per cent of the total number of lessons observed. The improvement in the use of information and communication technology (ICT) has been satisfactory. There has been a satisfactory improvement in the setting and marking of homework and the provision of appropriate materials for pupils to use to complete their homework. The governing body is more involved in the work of the school but not yet sufficiently pro-active in shaping the direction of the school or in monitoring and evaluating the progress towards school priorities, for example in relation to improving behaviour. The school does not fully comply in respect of the provision of a daily act of collective worship.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 9 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
End of Key Stage 3 tests	C	D	C	E

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

The school's results in the national tests at the end of Year 9 in 2000 were close to those nationally in respect of pupils' average point scores but they were well below average when compared to similar schools. In the 2001 national tests at the end of Year 9, the percentage of pupils achieving what is expected nationally was similar to the school's results in 2000 in mathematics and science, but there was a significant reduction in the percentage achieving what was expected nationally in English. The trend in the school's average National Curriculum points for all the core subjects of English, mathematics and science in the period 1996 to 2000 was below the national trend. In the teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 in 2001, the percentage of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard was well above the previous year's national figures in geography and modern foreign languages but well below the previous year's national figure for ICT. The school was close to meeting the targets it set for itself in 2001 and the targets for 2002 look realistic. During the inspection, there were strengths seen in the work in mathematics and science, which were above average. Weaknesses were seen in the work in music and religious education. Attainment in the work in English, art and design, design and technology, geography, history, ICT, modern foreign languages and physical education was in line with national expectations. In most subjects, pupils were achieving well in relation to their standards in the subjects when they started at the school. These include English, mathematics, art and design, design and technology, geography, history and physical education. Achievement was unsatisfactory in religious education and music.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory overall with many pupils demonstrating good attitudes but this positive picture is undermined by the attitudes of a small group of pupils.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory overall and this has a positive impact on the attainment and progress of most pupils but many lessons are disrupted by the poor behaviour of a small minority of pupils. The number of exclusions has risen since the last inspection.
Personal development and relationships	Good. There is a range of opportunities for pupils to accept responsibility and show initiative as they move through the school.
Attendance	Attendance levels are good and have steadily improved over the last three years.

Generally the personal development of pupils is good but because of the unsatisfactory behaviour of some, opportunities for pupils to undertake independent research or to work unsupervised is limited.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 7 – 9
Quality of teaching	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.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In over half the lessons observed, the quality of teaching was good or better and very little unsatisfactory or poor teaching was seen. Particularly effective teaching was observed in art and design, geography, physical education and science. Weaknesses were observed in the teaching of religious education and music. The teaching in mathematics and science is good. The teaching in English is satisfactory. Most lessons are well organised to use a range of strategies and in most lessons, expectations are high. Whilst the management of behaviour is generally good, the pace of lessons is not always maintained and the use of assessment varies in lessons as a tool to help pupils improve their work. The school has worked hard on teachers' planning to meet the needs of all pupils in lessons and this aspect of teaching is good. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught satisfactorily in English and mathematics lessons but the lack of a co-ordinated approach results in variations, both between and within other subject areas. There is insufficient emphasis on the development of literacy and presentational skills in some subjects. The pupils acquire new skills, knowledge and understanding well in most lessons and most learn enthusiastically, working at a good pace and with good effort.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. Broad, balanced and relevant with a good provision for extra-curricular activities. Careers education is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision, both in withdrawal sessions and when in-class support is provided.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The needs of the small number of pupils with English as an additional language are well met.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall the provision is satisfactory. Provision for pupils' social development is good. Provision is satisfactory for pupils' moral and cultural development. It is unsatisfactory for their spiritual development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance and procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are both good. Procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are unsatisfactory.

The school works satisfactorily in partnership with the parents and overall, the parents have positive views of the school. The school's curriculum meets statutory requirements.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Unsatisfactory overall, as the vision for the school has not yet been translated into real improvements in areas such as improving behaviour and achieving consistently high standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory overall. Statutory requirements other than for collective worship are met. Governors are not yet sufficiently proactive in the planning process and monitoring and evaluating progress in relation to identified targets.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory overall, but there is not yet sufficient consistency from governors, senior managers and heads of departments and heads of year involved in this process.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory.

The senior management team in school at the time of the inspection were effective in leading and managing the school. However there are weaknesses in the work of the governing body, the headteacher and managers in ensuring that there is both a clear

direction for the school and effective progress in tackling issues that are identified. Statutory requirements are met in the main and there have been satisfactory improvements in relation to key issues identified at the last inspection. The accommodation is good, as are the match of the teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum. Learning resources are adequate overall. Principles of best value are satisfactorily applied.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents feel comfortable approaching the school. • The school expects their child to work hard. • Their child likes school. • Their child is making good progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their child getting the right amount of work to do at home. • The school working closely with the parents. • Behaviour in the school. • Better communication on how their child is getting on.

The inspection team agrees with many of the views of the parents about the school. The school is approachable. There are high expectations that pupils should work hard. Children do like school and most make good progress in their time at the school. The setting of homework has improved since the last inspection but is still inconsistent across subjects and year groups. Whilst the behaviour of most pupils is good, there is a small but significant group who are disruptive, who slow the progress of others in lessons and on occasions their behaviour threatens others. The school works satisfactorily with parents and the information parents receive is satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The standard of work seen in lessons and in the books of the oldest pupils in Year 9 during the inspection was above the national expectations in mathematics and science and meets national expectations in English. In mathematics and science, this represents a similar picture to that reported in the national tests for 14-year-olds in 2000 and in line with results achieved in the national 2001 tests. In English, it represents an improvement on both the 2000 and 2001 results. Given their attainment on entering the school, the achievement of these pupils in all three subjects is at least satisfactory and usually good. The pupils achieve better results in mathematics and science than in English as their progress has been less affected by staffing changes over the last few years. The performance of boys and girls has varied in the past in different subjects. In the period 1998 to 2000, girls performed better than boys in the national tests. However, the results for 2000 showed that the differences by gender had been reduced and that the boys outperformed the girls in mathematics and science. The results in the 2001 tests show again little overall difference in the performance of boys and girls. In lessons observed and in the scrutiny of work, no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls was reported, other than in modern foreign languages and geography. In modern foreign languages, girls outperformed the boys, whilst in geography, the reverse was the case.
2. The school's overall performance in the 2000 national tests was close to the national average when using average points scores. In science, it was above the national average, with both boys and girls achieving above the national average. In English, it was close to the national average, with girls outperforming the boys and achieving scores in line with the national average. In mathematics, the school's performance was close to the national average, with boys achieving above the national average. When comparing the 2000 results with those of schools in a similar context, the school's overall performance was well below average. In 2001, results using average points scores were below the national average. Results in science were close to the national average, but in mathematics they were below and in English well below the national average. The trend in average points score over the period 1996 to 2000 for all three subjects combined was below the national trend. There was a similar deterioration in results in 2001 when comparing the percentage of pupils achieving the level expected or better nationally with similar schools. In the 2001 tests, the percentage of pupils reaching standards at or above the national expectation was well below average in English, below average in science and close to the national average in mathematics. The misbehaviour of a small number of pupils has an adverse effect on pupils' attainment and limits opportunities for independent research and working individually or in small groups on extended projects. However, the school was close to meeting its targets in 2001. Targets for 2002 have been raised and the school is well on its way to meeting them.
3. Standards in literacy are satisfactory overall and there are some good strategies to enable higher attaining pupils to write well in subjects like art and design, design and technology and history. Strategies for supporting the development of literacy are not yet consistent across all subjects and this hinders pupils' achievement. A similar picture is evident with numeracy where standards are satisfactory and supported well in some subjects such as geography, art and design and science but there are

inconsistencies of approaches across all subjects and this hinders pupils' achievement.

4. The current Years 7 and 9 entered the school with attainment below the national average, whilst the current Year 8 pupils' attainment was in line with the national average. By attaining standards in line or above the national average in national tests at the end of Year 9, pupils' achievement overall is good. Pupils' listening skills are good and in English, it is an important factor in their gains in knowledge, understanding and skills. Pupils make good gains in their reading skills and in writing. In subjects like art and design and design and technology, pupils make rapid progress both in their use of subject specific vocabulary and in their ability both to record the visual world through drawing and to communicate ideas in varying degrees of complexity using both written and graphical methods. In geography, they make good progress in accessing information from text, and in history, they make progress in developing their literacy skills. Good teaching in these subjects is an important factor in the good progress the pupils make. Achievement in religious education is unsatisfactory, mainly due to the lack of challenge and pace in lessons. The progress most pupils make in their ability to read music is unsatisfactory. The progress that higher attaining pupils make in Year 9 in modern foreign languages is slower than it should be, mainly owing to the pattern of curriculum organisation as they are, at present, no longer grouped by ability.
5. The percentage of pupils who are registered with special educational needs has risen significantly since the last inspection and is above the national average. A specific group of pupils have additional needs relating to behavioural problems. These pupils absorb a great deal of the available support, and on occasions, their behaviour in lessons impedes the learning of others. Overall, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards targets set in their individual education plans.
6. The school's analysis of national test results by ethnicity shows that pupils' standards are above average and the progress they make is good. There is no analysis by ethnicity in subjects not tested nationally but evidence from lessons indicate that the few pupils with English as an additional language perform well and are often in the higher groups when subject groups are organised by ability.
7. The school has raised the quality of teaching when compared with that reported in the last inspection and in many subjects, this is particularly true in relation to the planning to meet the needs of all the pupils. This has had a positive effect on standards but standards are still not consistently high across all the subjects. The impact of the poor behaviour of a small group of pupils in many lessons has an adverse effect on the standards reached and the achievement of pupils. However, during the inspection, there were strengths seen in the work in mathematics and science, which were above average. Weaknesses were seen in the work in music and religious education. Attainment in the work in English, art and design, design and technology, geography, history, ICT, modern foreign languages and physical education was in line with national expectations. In most subjects, pupils were achieving well in relation to their standards in the subjects when they started at the school. These include English, mathematics, art and design, design and technology, geography, history and physical education. Achievement was unsatisfactory in religious education and music.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Pupils' attitudes towards school are satisfactory. In a small number of lessons, the pupils' attitude to learning was very good. The majority of pupils demonstrate an interest and involvement in their lessons when presented with stimulating teaching. There are a minority of pupils who are not enthusiastic learners, are unco-operative and make little use of their learning opportunities. During the inspection, there were

occasions when pupils demonstrated a lack of interest in their studies and disrupted the learning of others. Pupils interviewed confirm that this is a regular feature in some lessons. The majority of pupils settle quickly to their work and are able to sustain good levels of concentration throughout the lesson. Relationships between teachers and pupils and between pupils themselves are satisfactory and there are many examples of pupils working well together where they encourage and support each other. For example, in a physical education lesson, pupils sensitively evaluated each other's performance. Pupils generally participate well in class discussions. The majority of pupils with special educational needs are keen to learn and enjoy the work. For example, two boys in Year 8, withdrawn from lessons for help with literacy, showed a real sense of fun as they practised spelling rules using nonsense words.

9. The behaviour of the majority of pupils is satisfactory overall and this has a positive impact on the attainment and progress of these pupils. Behaviour was considered to be, in the main, good at the previous inspection. Most pupils are courteous and welcoming towards visitors. The standard of behaviour was good in the majority of lessons during the inspection though pupils state that many lessons are disrupted by the poor behaviour of a small minority of pupils who do not wish to learn. Where behaviour in lessons was unsatisfactory, it was often related to inappropriate lesson content or the teacher's poor class management techniques, but the school does have a small group of pupils who regularly exhibit challenging behaviour. Pupils interviewed complained about an overuse of praise for this group and this has a negative effect on their own good behaviour and attitudes towards their work. The school's recently introduced behaviour management procedures are not yet consistently practised by all teachers. This leads to an inconsistency in what is considered to be an acceptable standard of behaviour and how pupils who misbehave are managed. There are opportunities during assemblies and personal, social and health education lessons for pupils to consider the impact of their actions on others and learn respect for feelings, values and beliefs different from their own, but the impact of this is not always evident in the behaviour of some pupils towards each other. There are incidents of oppressive behaviour, some involving violence, towards both staff and pupils, that are not always effectively dealt with by the school. In response to concerns expressed by parents, the governing body instigated the development of the new behaviour management procedures. The number of pupils excluded for a fixed term has risen since the previous inspection. During the last academic year there were 22 fixed-term exclusions and one pupil was excluded permanently. Local education authority guidelines for the exclusion of pupils are not consistently followed. There has been an inconsistent approach towards the exclusion of pupils, that at times, has put both pupils and teachers at risk. It also affects the ability of other members of staff to confidently manage potentially difficult situations, makes them feel unsupported and reduces their effectiveness.
10. The personal development of pupils is good. There is a range of opportunities for pupils to accept responsibility and demonstrate initiative as they move through the school. A school council has recently been set up that enables pupils to represent the views of their peer group. Pupils act as librarians and readily show visitors around the school. They represent the school in the wider community through sporting events and the choir sings at a range of external venues. Senior citizens take their lunch in school and pupils help them by serving meals and washing up for them. In the past, pupils have represented the school on the local Youth Parliament and the school ensures that pupils represent them when similar opportunities occur. Pupils in Year 9 wear a different coloured top to identify them as senior members of the school community and the majority of them provide good role models for younger pupils. Because of the unsatisfactory behaviour of some pupils, opportunities for pupils to undertake independent research or work unsupervised are limited.

11. The attendance level of pupils is good and above the national average for 1999/2000. Unauthorised absence is broadly in line with the national average for the same period. There has been a steady improvement in the level of attendance over the last three years and this aspect has improved since the previous inspection. The money the school has invested in the monitoring of attendance has been effectively used. There are a minority of pupils who arrive late in the morning who are dealt with effectively using the agreed procedures. The school complies with requirements for the registration of pupils.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

12. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and much good teaching was observed. Much of the best teaching was seen in science, geography, art and design, information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education. Relatively little unsatisfactory teaching was observed and this was mainly in music in class lessons and in religious education. There has been a good improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection.
13. The quality of teaching was satisfactory or better in 93 per cent of the lessons observed. It was excellent or very good teaching in 20 per cent of lessons. In nearly 40 per cent of lessons, teaching was good and in a further third of lessons, teaching was satisfactory. In seven per cent of lessons, the teaching was unsatisfactory or poor. The quality of teaching was similar in all three years. Teaching in English was satisfactory and in mathematics and science it was good. The overall quality of pupils' learning is also satisfactory and generally reflects the teaching pupils receive.
14. The school has made a good effort to improve the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection and has a systematic programme in place to continue this. In particular, it has focused on developing the variety of teaching and learning styles, the pace of lessons, the use of ICT and particularly, the use of planning to cater for the needs of the most talented pupils and those with special educational needs. This focus is having a positive effect in many classrooms. Newly appointed teachers have made a good start in making a positive contribution to the quality of teaching.
15. Teachers' subject knowledge is good overall with the result that most staff teach confidently because they are well prepared to impart knowledge, skills and understanding. When this occurs, as in ICT lessons, pupils are inspired and focused. Instructions and objectives are generally made clear so pupils know what to do, for example in physical education lessons. Good demonstrations support learning, as was seen in a science lesson on corrosion in Year 8.
16. In most subjects, there is suitable attention to the teaching of basic skills, for example in a design and technology lesson where clear explanations of the technical terms related to food hygiene ensured that pupils used the correct vocabulary. There is an appropriate focus by many teachers on the development of literacy, numeracy and subject-specific skills, but even more attention to the development of literacy and presentational skills would improve work in subjects such as modern foreign languages.
17. Most teachers plan lessons effectively to take account of the needs of pupils who can work quickly and those that work at a slower pace or who have special educational needs. As a result, most pupils are engaged in learning at the appropriate level; extended work is used effectively in history, as seen in a lesson on the Reformation

and religious conflicts in Tudor England, which challenged all the pupils in the class. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory; they are taught mainly within mixed ability classes in Year 7 and in ability groups in most subjects in other years. They are well integrated and receive appropriate support from teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils with English as an additional language are well integrated into their lessons. Schemes of work are often detailed as in ICT or in music. However, some schemes are work need to be updated, for example in physical education and music.

18. Teachers' expectations are usually appropriately high as seen in English, geography, history, physical education, art and design and particularly ICT lessons. This results in pupils working well, behaving well and making good use of the time, but pupils are insufficiently challenged in religious education and music. In German in Year 8, very effective learning resulted from a teacher providing a high level of challenge by speaking in German virtually all the time, but in modern foreign language lessons in Year 9, pupils are not grouped by ability fully and the needs of the higher attaining pupils are not being met.
19. Most lessons are well organised to use a range of strategies; lessons have clear structures and variety and teaching is very well organised as, for example, in ICT. In physical education, the organisation is very good, as seen when equipment and space were used well and there is good attention to health and safety as seen in a Year 9 lesson. Good, collaborative learning occurs, as for example in English when pupils were studying 'Lamb to the Slaughter' in Year 8. Classroom organisation in modern foreign languages, religious education and music is not always appropriate to ensure that pupils make the planned progress in lessons.
20. The management of pupils is satisfactory overall. It is most effective in ICT where it is very good but in music and religious education it was less so. Where management is good, pupils are engaged, concentration is maintained, relationships are secure and learning is good. Teachers use praise well and this encourages pupils, but occasionally pupils are spoken to inappropriately. Relationships are very good in physical education, which results in very good learning. Many lessons have brisk starts when the pupils are settled quickly but pace is not always maintained, as in some lessons in English and music.
21. Lessons usually start on time and adopt an appropriate pace. There is appropriate use of support staff and visual aids but time is not always used well, as in some English lessons where explanations are sometimes overlong, or in religious education, where the lack of pace leads to pupils sometimes underachieving.
22. The quality of ongoing assessment is satisfactory but there are considerable variations between subjects. For example, in art and design and ICT it is very supportive so that pupils are guided to improve their work, but it is unsatisfactory in design and technology, religious education and geography where insufficient guidance is given. Homework is used appropriately in most subjects, except physical education where it is not set, but in ICT, it is used very well to support and extend the learning of pupils. The use of it in modern foreign languages is inconsistent.
23. The specialist teaching for pupils with special educational needs who are withdrawn from lessons is very good. The teacher has a wealth of experience and brings a wide range of techniques and skills to the task. She creates an easy rapport which enables pupils to relax and focus on their learning, and she can approach problems from

different perspectives if pupils are finding tasks difficult. During the inspection, only small numbers of pupils were selected for this support, and they were taught intensively for the full lesson. This arrangement does not make the most effective use of the available expertise.

24. In other lessons, learning assistants collaborate with teaching staff to provide good support for pupils with special educational needs. They operate on their own initiative, and they help a range of pupils in the classroom. Subject teachers are well aware of the needs of individual pupils. They take pains to ensure that they are included in class activities, and that their contributions are valued. A small number of teachers find it difficult to manage pupils with special behavioural needs consistently. This can skew their approach to the whole class, and impedes the learning of other pupils.
25. The learning assistants focus primarily on solving difficulties which arise during lessons. They do not always anticipate the needs which might arise, or prepare individual materials to meet those needs. This would support the quality of teaching, since materials, particularly in science and design and technology, are not sufficiently adjusted to meet the needs of pupils with limited reading skills. Classroom assistants are not sufficiently involved in the planning and assessment process. This reduces their effectiveness, for example in providing the class teacher with important additional information about how well pupils with special educational needs and others are learning.
26. Overall, pupils with special educational needs learn satisfactorily. Those who have learning difficulties, and those who are supported for problems with literacy make good progress, both in their intensive small group work and when they are supported in class. Across all subjects, they make good progress when they are supported and when the work is adjusted to meet their needs. Their progress slows when they are either not supported or work is not adjusted, but it is still satisfactory. The majority of pupils with special behavioural needs make satisfactory progress but some exploit the inconsistencies in the way that they are managed so that their difficulties sometimes restrict other pupils' learning.
27. Most pupils acquire new skills, knowledge and understanding well, and those with English as an additional language demonstrate good learning. Where teaching is good or better, pupils concentrate well and show great interest, for example in art and design where pupils willingly apply themselves to the tasks and work at a good pace and have a good knowledge of their own learning. The quality of learning is adversely affected by the behaviour of a few pupils and this results in insufficient opportunities to work independently or to carry out researches to their own questions. Overall, the quality of learning is satisfactory and reflects the quality of teaching that the pupils receive.

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

28. All pupils are offered a curriculum which meets statutory requirements. The curriculum offers good breadth and balance and a good range of learning opportunities. Good provision is made for pupils who have special educational needs and there are satisfactory strategies for the teaching of both literacy and numeracy. The previous inspection report highlighted a number of strengths of the school's curriculum, particularly identifying the enrichment experiences that were on offer. Though some changes have been made to the way in which the curriculum is delivered, it remains

good. The school makes determined efforts to ensure that it caters for all requirements, and all pupils are offered a good range of learning and enrichment opportunities. The curriculum is socially inclusive, offering good access and opportunity for all pupils to benefit from the wide range of activities available. A small number are temporarily withdrawn from their modern foreign language classes. They are given additional support in basic skills, and this work is arranged to reflect some aspects of the study of foreign culture. These pupils clearly benefit from the additional attention within a small group. The school has an appropriate emphasis on the work of gifted and talented pupils, and staff planning in many lessons helps to extend higher attaining pupils in the work they do.

29. There is good breadth to the school's academic curriculum. Pupils are taught the full range of subjects required by the National Curriculum, and the time allocation available for subjects is broadly appropriate, other than in music. Funding is available for after-school clubs, though full advantage of this opportunity has not yet been taken. The school's planning has identified the need for further extension work to be allied to the mainstream curriculum. At present, the curriculum includes timetabled extension classes for all pupils. These classes cover areas such as literacy, numeracy, citizenship and technology. Part of the programme offers pupils opportunities to gain first aid and basic food hygiene qualifications. This extension of the curriculum is planned well and is designed to offer additional support to pupils who are making slow progress, as well as offering more challenges to pupils identified as having particular aptitudes or talents. The personal, health and social education programme makes suitable provision for health and sex education, as well as paying attention to social issues such as drugs abuse.
30. Further enhancements to the curriculum are offered through the school's annual activities week. This well-planned programme offers pupils many activities from which to choose and includes residential visits to Austria and France, as well as to the Brecon Beacons. Pupils who do not participate in residential courses are offered other opportunities that are based at school, or within the local geographical area. Other enhancements to the curriculum are offered through extra-curricular activities. Many of these are sports orientated, but there are subject clubs in science and computing, and the library/study skills club is a popular option. The school's provision for aesthetic pursuits is beginning to improve. A major drama production was held during the last academic year; the first for some time. A drama workshop has been formed as a result. There is also a good range of extra-curricular musical activities which pupils enjoy.
31. One area of the curriculum for which the school plans well is its provision for careers education and guidance. Provision commences in Year 7 when themes such as 'widening horizons' are considered as part of the school's personal, health and social education programme. In all three years, appropriate themes are considered and the school has developed a good working relationship with the Leicestershire Education and Business Partnership (LEBP). One benefit to arise from this is that local fire brigade staff mentor some of the school's pupils. Good links also exist with the local college and this helps the transfer process at the end of Year 9. Through a governor contact, the school is also trying to develop a link with Rolls Royce. Though the school is keen to develop this aspect of its education, it has been less successful in establishing strong partnership arrangements with firms based in the local economy. In part this reflects the situation that none of the school's pupils leave to enter the world of work. No examples, however, can be cited where curriculum provision has been enhanced by the pupils working in school on relevant projects designed by

members of the local business and commercial community. The school has good links with contributory primary schools and this is helping with the continuity of curriculum planning.

32. The contribution of other subjects to standards of literacy is satisfactory overall. There are some good features in, for instance history, where extended writing is encouraged, particularly for higher attaining pupils. Unusually, pupils in mathematics have opportunities to read aloud from their textbook and thus develop their reading skills. The development of literacy skills is not always consistent, however, in every subject. Pupils in music lack a vocabulary to write or talk about music. In physical education, there are opportunities for speaking and listening but there is not enough emphasis on explaining or making explicit the key words of the subject. The school's literacy policy is being implemented, but inconsistently, with variation both between and within subject areas.
33. The contribution of other subjects to standards of numeracy is satisfactory overall but there are variations between subjects in supporting its development. In science, graphs were used to explain the rate of chemical reaction, graphs were plotted using a computer program and algebra was employed in solving speed/distance/time formulae. Basic knowledge of time and chronology is used in history, together with the use of graphs including pie charts showing the differing comparisons of how work and leisure time changed during the nineteenth century; however, systematic analysis of the data was weak. The lack of a co-ordinated approach is resulting in considerable variation amongst subjects and does result in pupils not making as much progress as they could.
34. The overall provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory but there are weaknesses in provision for spiritual development. A lack of consistency results in some tutor periods not being effectively used to promote this development and the school does not comply with the legal requirements for a daily act of worship.
35. The school aims to provide an environment that enables each individual to achieve the highest possible standards in moral and social development. Staff are committed to ensuring that the ethos of the school reflects this provision and it has completed an audit to ensure that the whole school reflects this aspect. Despite this, no subject has a policy on its provision in this area.
36. Examples of spiritual provision can be found in several subjects. In art and design, there are numerous opportunities for pupils to develop a sense of awe and wonder. The beliefs and values of others are explored in religious education. In endeavouring to meet the requirements for a daily act of worship, the school has adopted a 'theme for the week' approach. During the visit, this theme was effectively used in assemblies. In the main-school assembly, pupils were encouraged to reflect upon the concern that we should have for other people's happiness. Some tutors used this theme effectively in tutor time, whilst others dealt with it in a very indifferent and casual manner. The failure of some subjects to support this aspect and the inconsistency in the delivery of the theme for the week means that the provision for spiritual development is unsatisfactory.
37. The provision for moral development is satisfactory. Pupils are frequently reminded of the school's code of conduct, both visually and in constant reinforcement by staff. In the main, staff relationships are positive with most staff seeking to provide good role

models for pupils. Opportunities to explore moral dilemmas are provided in English and religious education. In history, pupils' understanding of moral issues is encouraged through activities such as an examination of child poverty in the eighteenth century.

38. The provision for social development is good. Several subjects provide opportunities for pupils to develop a sense of social responsibility. In a science lesson, pupils were actively collaborating with others, whilst in physical education, pupils supported each other in paired groups. Pupils are encouraged to respond to social issues in subjects such as history and religious education. Year 9 pupils were examining the important role played by organisations such as Christian Aid, encouraging pupils to consider the impact of their purchases on other people when buying food. The personal, social and health education course encourages pupils to develop a sense of social responsibility. Pupils help out at such things as school functions, helping to run the library and assisting people who come to the school community for lunch. The school has yet to implement the new requirements for citizenship but is actively seeking to identify the contribution made across the curriculum.
39. Several subjects encourage pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions. The humanities department encourages an exploration of local culture by arranging trips to places such as Lincoln. This is reinforced in English where pupils examine poetry and literature that reflects our cultural heritage. By adopting a topic-based approach to modern foreign languages, the department ensures that pupils have an understanding of European culture. School trips abroad extend this. The wide diversity of cultures and faiths that are found in our society is underrepresented in the school. Art and design and religious education do make a positive contribution to celebrating this diversity. In religious education, pupils have recently been considering the Islamic faith, whilst work in art and design has covered Aborigine art. Assemblies are not used to celebrate other religious festivals and there is a dearth of visual material that celebrates other cultures. The provision is satisfactory overall.
40. This is a similar picture to that found at the last inspection. The provision for spiritual development is still a weakness. In view of this, progress since the last inspection is unsatisfactory.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. The overall provision for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils is satisfactory. There are good policies in place but there are inconsistencies in the way in which they are carried out throughout the school. Some elements, such as the provision for monitoring attendance and for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good and improved since the last inspection, but in other aspects, such as the monitoring and elimination of oppressive behaviour, there are significant weaknesses.
42. There is good liaison with contributory primary schools which enables pupils to transfer successfully. The tutor system is well organised with tutors and heads of year moving up with pupils as they progress through the school. The school prides itself on the quality of its pastoral care, with staff feeling that all teachers know the children well and are committed to caring for them. This sense of a close community is good but inconsistencies in such things as the mentoring system are not carefully monitored, with the result that there is some inequality in the care given to pupils. Tutors are encouraged to play a leading role in monitoring pupils' academic progress. Effort profiles are produced at regular intervals but little time is allocated for carrying out

mentoring. Some tutors spend considerable time with pupils whilst others do not. Heads of year, who all carry other responsibilities, are under considerable pressure and do not monitor this aspect of the system consistently.

43. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. The school co-operates well with the local education welfare officer who is used effectively to follow up any problems that are identified. Although the school has not yet updated its practices in line with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) guidance on social inclusion, the special educational needs co-ordinator is efficient and has all the necessary links with parents and outside agencies to ensure that the progress of pupils with special educational needs is carefully monitored. The needs of gifted and talented pupils have also been identified, with extra help being available in special after-school sessions. Child protection procedures are in place. Staff have been trained and care is taken to ensure that confidentiality is fully respected. The progress of the small number of pupils with English as an additional language is carefully monitored.
44. There is a good health and safety policy. Risks assessments have taken place in all the relevant subjects such as physical education and design and technology. Records of incidents are kept with the person nominated for first aid. Good support was seen during the inspection being given to pupils who have minor injuries and headaches. There are sufficient staff on duty to monitor behaviour around the school during break and lunchtimes although communication between the assistants and the school management can be poor.
45. Satisfactory procedures for monitoring and improving behaviour are now in place but they are not consistently implemented. The school has recently produced a new policy on exclusions. A new isolation room has been established. The use of this room is being carefully monitored to identify problem areas and persistent offenders. A colour-coded system of daily referral slips is used to monitor behaviour. However, there are inconsistencies in the way this policy is carried out. This variation in the operation of the new policy and also in the way in which classroom disruption is dealt with causes problems. During the visit, incidents were not dealt with consistently. This lack of consistency means that the procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are unsatisfactory. Inconsistency is also evident in the way rewards are distributed. Some staff frequently give out rewards whilst others are more reticent. As a result, pupils complain of uncertainty and unfairness and this does not support the consistent drive for high standards of behaviour.
46. The school takes a strong approach to bullying. Incidents are dealt with quickly and efficiently. Part of the personal social and health education (PSHE) programme is devoted to ensuring that pupils fully understand these procedures and have the skills to deal with it. A similar approach is taken with racism. Appropriate action is taken and any incidents fully reported. Tutors deliver the PSHE programme. It contains all the important elements that are normally found in such a programme including sex education, drugs education and careers education. Tutors have some choice over materials and methods, with outside specialists being brought in as necessary, including other agencies such as the Samaritans. The programme was not being timetabled to be taught during the inspection but evidence from pupils and heads of year suggest that there is considerable variation in delivery. The PHSE lessons are not consistently monitored by the appropriate managers and the programme does not play as effective a role as it should in supporting the highest standards for pupils' welfare.

47. There is a good policy on assessment that is followed in most subjects. Good examples can be found in science, modern foreign languages and art and design. In art and design, for instance, pupils are fully aware of their progress. All pupils have targets and know exactly what levels of performance they are operating at. This has a very positive effect upon motivation with pupils responding well to the challenges set. Some other departments such as design and technology and religious education are not yet as consistent in following this policy. Formal assessment of pupils with special educational needs is done effectively but there is still some inconsistency in the way such information is used in subjects to establish subject-specific targets. Reports tend to deal with attitudes rather than showing clearly how well a pupil is performing in a subject. Most subjects use the information gained from assessment well and the school is using the data it has to identify areas of weakness.
48. There are some significant improvements since the last inspection. Attendance is carefully monitored and target setting is in place in some areas. However, there are also some areas where matters have either remained the same or deteriorated. Inconsistency in monitoring and dealing with behaviour and exclusions are examples. For these reasons, progress since the last inspection is only satisfactory.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. Parents' views of the school are good overall.
50. The quality of information the school provides for parents is only satisfactory and this accurately reflects the views of a sizeable group of parents who believe they could be better informed as to how their child is getting on. The school holds a consultation evening for parents to discuss their child's annual report, and interim reports recording effort grades are sent out twice a year. The quality of annual reports to parents varies between subjects. The information they contain does not consistently enable parents to assess what their children can do and what they need to do to raise their level of attainment in subjects. Targets identified for improvement are mainly of a pastoral nature. There are half-termly newsletters issued to parents about the life of the school and these are effective in giving parents appropriate information. The pupil planner is used as a daily means of communication between home and school but the extent to which it is used varies. Many of those scrutinised contained little evidence of comments from either tutors or parents. Liaison with some parents about potential problems is not as effective as it should be, although overall, the communication between the school and parents is satisfactory. The home-school agreement helps to focus the responsibilities of all and supports parents' satisfactory contribution to their children's learning at home and at school.
51. The school is well supported by its parent governors. In response to parents' concerns about incidents of bullying in the school, they have been instrumental in setting up a review of the procedures the school adopts and this has led to the implementation of a new behaviour management policy. Parental views were sought on the new behaviour policy and their comments considered appropriately as part of the consultative process but a sizeable group of parents still consider that behaviour in the school could be improved. Procedures for administering medicines and first aid are satisfactory.
52. The parent teacher association (PTA) raises funds actively through a range of activities and provides support for performances and consultation evenings. It also

hosts information evenings for parents on topics such as homework and the use of ICT. The PTA organises the supervision of the pupils' monthly discos. Its efforts are greatly appreciated by the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. Overall, the leadership and management of the school are unsatisfactory and this represents a decline in the standard reported at the last inspection. While the school has explicit aims and values, identified coherently in a clear mission statement, its success in achieving them is variable. Standards are not yet consistently high across all subjects and the eradication of poor behaviour has not been achieved.

54. Whilst the governors, headteacher and senior staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, the development planning, particularly by the governing body and headteacher is poor, lacking sufficient focus on some of the real weaknesses. Some, such as the quality of teaching and improving attendance, have been tackled well since the last inspection but there is not yet a coherent drive to raise standards to high levels in all subjects and to eliminate the poor behaviour of a few to enable all pupils to make good progress in a secure environment.
55. Whilst there was evidence during the inspection of much good leadership and management by senior staff, their efforts in normal circumstances are hindered by a lack of formal senior management team meetings and by job descriptions failing to reflect current responsibilities. Whilst much of the day-to-day organisation is good and real progress has been made with implementing and using the results from new assessment procedures, there are inconsistencies in the way the school monitors the work of individual departments and the implementation of school policies such as the behaviour management policy and the use of tutorial time. Governors have not always been given sufficient information to inform their role in both strategic development planning and in monitoring and evaluating progress towards targets set. This results in the absence from the school development plan of areas of concern like behaviour management and of governors' meetings receiving little information about the incidence of exclusions. These weaknesses make the management of the school more difficult than it should be and lead to staff not being given a sufficiently clear vision of where the school is heading. This impairs some of their efforts to bring about improvement.
56. All heads of department produce development plans. They vary in quality; most are satisfactory and some are good. All could be improved with clearer and measurable criteria for success, the identification of appropriate methods for judging the impact of classroom practice on standards and the quality of learning and better costing of priorities linked to those in the school development plan.
57. The quality of leadership and management of special educational needs overall is satisfactory. Strengths lie in the support from the local education authority, good staffing ratios and resources, appropriate reviews and departmental documentation. However, too much information is held by the special educational needs co-ordinator. Individual education plans need to be made more specific and include subject specific items.
58. Governors are committed in their support for the school, but their effectiveness as a governing body in fulfilling their responsibilities is unsatisfactory. They are too reliant upon the headteacher and staff for information. When they carry out their visits to the school, they are not systematically targeted to ensure that they have appropriate first-hand knowledge of the school's priorities for development. The governors have taken some steps to improve how they monitor and review the school by receiving information from some staff about the work of their departments but this has not always been supported by information from the headteacher in other areas, for example in relation to the incidence of poor behaviour. They are insufficiently aware of how they can shape the direction of the school by being more actively involved in the production of the school development plan and in ways of reviewing its impact on the school. There is insufficient linkage of the financial planning with priorities for improvement. While the governors were rigorous in their challenge to a new behaviour policy, they are less aware of the school's success in implementing it.

59. Staffing levels are satisfactory, the ratio of teachers to pupils being 1:18. Class sizes are satisfactory with an average class size varying from 27 in Year 7 to 21 in Year 9. Staffing turnover has increased recently and, whilst at the time of the inspection there were no vacancies, the heads of modern foreign languages and English were not in post and some vacancies were being covered by supply staff. These and newly appointed staff were being effectively supported by senior staff. The number of learning assistants is above average and they are deployed well and are effective in supporting teaching and learning. The technician support in science is good and staffing in the library is very efficient; however there is insufficient support for maintaining and developing ICT.
60. Staff have job specifications which are reviewed periodically; however some of the senior management team have heavy management roles which have been increased by both delegation from the headteacher and by covering for currently unfilled posts, for example in modern foreign languages and English. Teachers are becoming more involved in the system of professional review including observations of their classroom practice. However, review of the school documentation shows that there are inconsistencies in the implementation of the procedures for observation of all staff. Opportunities for professional development have been taken up by staff regularly but there is not a consistent link between these activities and priorities identified in the school development plan.
61. The school has, for the most part, satisfactory accommodation and learning resources to support the delivery of the school's curriculum. The lack of some basic equipment and the availability of access to computers to record performance levels in physical education have an adverse effect on attempts to improve skill levels. Managing the department is hampered by the lack of office space. In design and technology, pupils do not have access to the breadth of media necessary for their learning. While the science area has been refurbished from time-to-time, some of the equipment is now out of service and prevents appropriate practical experiments. The information and resource centre based in the library provides the latest resources and a stimulating learning environment for the pupils to learn in. It is used well by both staff and pupils. The facility is well managed by a new librarian who has ambitious plans for its development. The newly renovated food technology suite is a good addition to the school's accommodation. Learning resources are generally used well and enhance the quality of learning the pupils receive.
62. Systems for effective financial control are in place. The school has a satisfactory understanding of best value principles and where they have been applied, it has been done effectively, for example in relation to the equipping of the new ICT and food technology suites and in the contracting process for school services such as catering and site management. Governors had a clear understanding of the school's budget planning, however they have been limited to scrutinising what is put in front of them, not being sufficiently pro-active in targeting resources at priorities they have identified. This is unsatisfactory. The recommendations from a recent audit are now in the process of being acted upon.
63. Whilst governors are well intentioned and there are many good aspects to the leadership and management of senior staff and heads of department and years, the current situation is unsatisfactory. Standards are not yet consistently high enough and the school has not been effective in managing the poor behaviour of a small group of pupils which has an adverse impact on the progress and learning of many pupils.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

64. The governors should include in their post-inspection action plan the way they intend to respond to the following issues in order to raise standards in the school. The governors, headteacher and staff should:

(1) Improve leadership and management by:

- involving the whole school community in determining the school's priorities for improvement and the consideration of strategies to be used to ensure progress towards targets set;
- adopting a consistent approach at all levels in the implementation of agreed school;
- monitoring and evaluating consistently and effectively the school's policies and development priorities for the future;
- providing high quality information and advice to governors in order that they may more effectively monitor and evaluate the outcomes of their decisions;
- maintaining a formal programme of meetings of the senior management team with agendas and minutes;
- taking effective action when weaknesses in leadership and/or teaching are apparent.

Paragraphs 3, 32, 33, 34, 41, 42, 44, 45, 46, 47, 53, 54, 55, 56, 58, 62, 63, 106, 130

(2) Raise standards in English, religious education and music in lessons by:

- improving the quality of teaching where necessary;
- improving the quality of leadership and management where necessary in the departments;
- adopting schemes of work which enable pupils to be motivated and involved fully in their learning.

Paragraphs 2, 4, 12, 17, 20, 21, 65, 114, 115, 126

(3) Improve the poor behaviour of the small group of pupils who disrupt lessons and interfere with the learning of others by:

- consistently applying the school's behaviour policy and insisting on the highest standards of behaviour;
- supporting staff where necessary in the acquisition, development and implementation of effective behaviour management strategies;
- continuing the development of a curriculum which is relevant to the needs of all the pupils.

Paragraphs 2, 5, 8, 9, 10, 20, 24, 37, 45, 51, 77, 86, 98, 129

(4) Meet the statutory provision of a daily act of collective worship and the spiritual development of pupils by:

- all involved planning that the daily activities identified meeting this requirement do so;
- all subjects producing and implementing a policy which identifies and plans their contribution to this aspect of pupils' development.

Paragraphs 34, 35, 36

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	85
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	15	33	29	6	1	0
Percentage	1	18	39	34	7	1	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s].

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y7 – Y9
Number of pupils on the school's roll	460
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	43

Special educational needs	Y7 – Y9
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	18
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	104

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.5
National comparative data	7.7

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
National comparative data	1.1

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	78	68	146

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	34	58	53
	Girls	43	46	41
	Total	77	104	94
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	52 (67)	69 (71)	68 (67)
	National	64 (63)	66 (65)	66 (59)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	18 (28)	39 (42)	31 (33)
	National	31 (28)	43 (42)	34 (30)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	46	51	54
	Girls	45	45	44
	Total	91	96	98
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	63 (64)	69 (69)	68 (63)
	National	na (64)	na (66)	na (62)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	25 (29)	34 (37)	31 (33)
	National	na (31)	na (39)	na (29)

Percentages 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	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	456
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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	20	1
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7-Y9

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	25.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18

Education support staff: Y7-Y9

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	268

Deployment of teachers: Y7-Y9

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	77.2
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Average teaching group size: Y7-Y9

Key Stage 3	23.4
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	1,180,722
Total expenditure	1,147,644
Expenditure per pupil	2,442
Balance brought forward from previous year	12,155
Balance carried forward to next year	45,233

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	470
Number of questionnaires returned	269

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	30	56	9	2	3
My child is making good progress in school.	29	55	4	1	11
Behaviour in the school is good.	25	51	12	3	10
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	16	51	18	3	12
The teaching is good.	26	57	4	1	11
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	25	45	13	2	14
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	45	44	4	2	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	39	3	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	25	48	14	3	10
The school is well led and managed.	25	49	6	4	15
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	31	52	5	1	11
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	46	8	1	14

Other issues raised by parents

A small number of parents at the parents' meeting were concerned with procedures for administering medicines and first aid at breaks and lunchtimes.

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

- Teaching of basic skills.
- Pupils' good achievement in the subject in relation to their prior levels of learning.

Areas for improvement

- Leadership of the department.
- Stability and continuity of staffing.
- Standards of attainment in comparison with similar schools.
- Use of time in some lessons, particularly in relation to over-lengthy explanations or a limited range of activities.

65. Standards of attainment are in line with national averages at the age of 14. Given many pupils' below average attainment on entry, this represents good achievement. The department has a recent history of fluctuating test results. Although the pupils' average point score in 2000 was in line with the average for all maintained schools, it was well below average when compared with similar schools. The trend of results, including provisional test results for 2001, suggests a declining performance since the last inspection. Much of this can be attributed to staffing instability and changes in leadership affecting continuity of learning, pupils' confidence and the consistency and coherence of the department's approach to its work. At the time of this inspection, the English department had no head of department. The one experienced specialist teacher, the newly qualified teacher, supply teachers and classroom assistants are sustaining teaching. It is to their credit that they are currently maintaining standards in line with national expectations, particularly in Year 9.

66. Pupils' standard of writing is average overall by the age of 14. Higher attaining pupils write with some insight about, for example, 'The Machine Gunners' by Robert Westall, and can produce confident personal and imaginative writing. Middle attainers present work well, with reasonable accuracy. They can produce lively descriptive writing. They can sustain a lengthy story or narrative but the quality of writing deteriorates if it is too long. Lower attainers typically write less and have less control over sentence punctuation and spelling. They make mistakes in copying. The handwriting and presentation of lower attaining boys is often scrappy. Pupils' speaking reaches average standards by the age of 14. Some younger pupils in Year 8 could speak at length about, for example, the short story 'Lamb to the Slaughter' (Roald Dahl) and recall key elements of the story using some appropriate vocabulary like 'exposition', 'complication' and 'climax'. Pupils in Year 9 spoke confidently about the elements of a ballad, and were able to describe character successfully using words like 'innocent', 'jealous' and 'protective'. Listening skills are above average and pupils' attentive listening is an important factor in the gains they make in knowledge, understanding and skills. In a Year 9 class, for instance, pupils listened carefully to the teacher's exposition of drama techniques and to each other when 'hot-seating' the characters in the poem 'The Ballad of Charlotte Dymond'. Reading skills are average overall, representing good gains in reading standards from the below average attainment on entry. This reflects the department's emphasis on reading. In Year 7, pupils keep a

reading log and comment on the books for other readers. A wide range of fiction is available in the library, and pupils take full advantage of this. Pupils encounter and benefit from some challenging reading material in Year 9 (for example Browning's 'Porphyria's Lover'). Although no formal drama lessons were observed during the inspection, scrutiny of work showed that pupils have a satisfactory appreciation of how the structure and organisation of scenes and plays contribute to dramatic effect and that they can evaluate critically performances they have watched. Most pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards targets set in their individual education plans. The progress of the few who do not is hindered by their behavioural problems. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress with their understanding of English and their attainment is in line with that achieved overall by the school.

67. Standards of literacy across the curriculum are satisfactory overall, although there are variations between subject areas. There are good features in art and design and design and technology, when pupils are writing about the work of artists or when they are evaluating what they have done. In geography, pupils are encouraged to read from textbooks and have plenty of opportunity to practise speaking in question and answer sessions. Key words appear in books and on wall displays and the use of geographical language is encouraged. The development of literacy skills is not always consistent. In science, for example, the use of key words is frequent but underdeveloped, particularly when pupils need language to compare one thing with another. As a result, they can have difficulty explaining differences or discussing relationships. Pupils in music lack a vocabulary to write or talk about music. In physical education, there are opportunities for speaking and listening but there is insufficient emphasis on explaining or making explicit the key words of the subject.
68. In English, teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Pupils are usually well managed and teachers develop good relationships with them. As a result, there is a good working atmosphere in English classrooms and pupils listen carefully and behave well. Occasional disturbances with difficult pupils are dealt with effectively. Occasionally, pupils become restless towards the end of a long lesson if a teacher, through inexperience, has not sufficiently varied the range of activities. Some teachers have developed good question and answer techniques to review pupils' knowledge and reinforce their understanding, use reading aloud well to convey the atmosphere of a story or poem and exploit paired and group work effectively to promote pupils' learning together. For example, a teacher combined review, reading and a 'hot-seating' activity in one lesson to further pupils' knowledge of ballad structure and the characters in 'The Ballad of Charlotte Dymond'. A supply teacher sensitively drew out the feelings of the boy in the story 'Buddy' (Nigel Hinton) by good reading, question and answer and paired activity. As a result, in these lessons, pupils learned how to interpret character in different ways and relate characters' feelings to their own experience. Good work is being done to encourage pupils to develop their creative imagination, and some have had poems published in '2001 Poetry Odyssey'. Their teacher is aiming for further entries in a new publication 'Future Voices'. Teachers reinforce basic skills effectively through a weekly programme of skills-based activities. Some teaching places too much emphasis on explanation, however, and this can affect the impetus of a lesson and slow down the pace of learning. This happened in a Year 8 class, for example, when the teacher over-instructed the pupils on how to tackle an activity designed to develop understanding of the structure of the story 'Lamb to the Slaughter', and thus kept the pupils waiting to start it. In a Year 9 class, an inexperienced teacher used writing activities which were insufficiently varied to meet the needs of all the pupils, so that some pupils, particularly those who

experience difficulties in English, tended to lose heart and made more mistakes rather than fewer. Overall, thanks to commitment and with the support of experienced supply staff, teaching is satisfactory. However, problems of continuity and consistency of quality are inherent in the staffing situation, both in the recent past and currently, and raise questions about the department's capacity to maintain standards at the present satisfactory level.

69. Improvement since the last inspection has not been satisfactory because standards of attainment and teaching quality have declined, and because the unstable staffing situation and lack of leadership in the department have led to a loss of clear direction. The department is 'living from day-to-day', and though the school management is doing its best in difficult circumstances to act in the best interests of the pupils, the capacity for improvement rests on fragile foundations.

MATHEMATICS

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

Strengths

- Standards are high and achievement is good in the subject.
- Good teaching.
- Pupils attitudes to the subject.

Areas for improvement

- Greater use of school assessment data, in particular increasing pupils' awareness of their targets.
- Presentation of books, in particular greater rigour in note taking.

70. In 2000, pupils' results in the national curriculum tests for 14-year-olds, were close to the national average in the average point scores of pupils and they were above the national average of the percentage of pupils achieving Level 5 or better. The same pupils entered the school with below average attainment. This increase in attainment, above the anticipated gain nationally, is the equivalent of one additional term's progress. The results in 2001 indicate an almost identical set of results. When compared with similar schools, using the free school meals criteria, the overall results are below national expectations.
71. The inspection findings confirm the pattern of attainment. By Year 9, the work of higher attaining pupils is above that which is expected nationally. Higher attaining pupils are adept in the use of algebra. Competent manipulation of equations, accurate calculation of tables of values, together with drawings of parabolic curved graphs, suggest a secure grasp of what many pupils generally find to be a difficult aspect of mathematics. Some pupils in lower attaining groups demonstrate achievement in number work which is at least in line with national expectations, such as when Year 8 pupils were exploring the various methods for mentally adding numbers after converting them from the written word to numerical digits. Pupils with special educational needs progress well and the department is using recently published resource materials specifically designed to raise standards. For example, in a bottom set Year 7 class, pupils were introduced, very deliberately and slowly, to reading numbers accurately, in particular correctly identifying place values. Their learning was supported by the effective use of a decimal strip. Despite their very low level of ability, interest was maintained and the lesson flowed without interruption. Most pupils, by the end of the lesson, could read numbers accurately and place them in correct sequence

up to thousands. For those who continued to experience difficulty in correctly positioning numbers, the teaching assistant gave patient support. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make good progress in their lessons and their attainment is in line with that achieved by the school.

72. The quality of teaching and learning was good overall. In the best taught lessons, teachers use competent subject knowledge to make well-structured presentations. Lessons are well planned, display clear objectives and include suitably demanding and varied activities. In one particular lower attaining Year 9 lesson, pupils were totally engaged with the work throughout the session. The teacher effectively used an interactive question and answer approach to discussion of positioning objects on a grid map of the moon. Pupils clearly understood co-ordinates, axes, negative and positive numbers and could accurately, orally and in writing, express their understanding. The teacher had clearly adapted the style of teaching which reflected recent initiatives; for example pupils were encouraged to try to spell words related to the work and also to read aloud from their textbooks thus reinforcing the issue of literacy. The teacher had an excellent rapport with the class and because of the whole-class involvement, the pupils became enthusiastic and effective partners in their own learning. In many lessons, teachers were particularly competent in the use of time and pace and pupils were invariably encouraged to explain their individual methods of working. This enabled a sharing of ideas and identification of more effective ways of learning. Good lessons also displayed a high proportion of time devoted to dialogue and demonstration, which clearly linked to the objectives of the lesson. In the single instance of unsatisfactory teaching, the work was of insufficient challenge to the ability of a Year 7 class. Pupils displayed less interest as the lesson developed and as a consequence, little progress was achieved.
73. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in mathematics lessons are good overall. Most pupils understand that in lessons they are expected to work and many teachers present suitably demanding and varied tasks to encourage this. In exercise books, including those of high attaining pupils, there is a significant minority of poorly presented and incomplete work. This weakens the progress of pupils and because such work lacks structure, it does not foster fuller understanding or retention of mathematical skills. Systematic note-taking is not in evidence in written work.
74. Standards of numeracy are satisfactory across the curriculum, although there are variations between subjects in supporting its development. In geography, population data was presented using line and bar charts. Birth and death statistics were obtained 'live' from the Internet showing the ever-changing balance of population data of the United States. Good evidence from Year 7 was found in art and design, in terms of appreciation of proportion and relative size. In design and technology, measuring, weighing and calculating and working to scale with the use of drawing, was seen in lessons. However, other subjects contributed nothing to pupils' numeracy skills and this lack of a co-ordinated approach across the school does result in pupils not making as much progress as they could.
75. The schemes of work are in the process of review. This is a response to recent changes in the National Curriculum, together with newly published material for Key Stage 3 strategies. The department is well resourced with textbooks, which support and reflect current trends. These aspects of improved provision and reaction to change support the desire to secure higher standards within the department. Leadership and management of the department are satisfactory. Assessment and monitoring are developing, with the use of whole-school data, which is recorded on

the department database. This information is used in informing the teachers of intake scores and predicted levels of attainment; however it requires a wider application if pupils are to become active partners in target setting. ICT is employed, specifically in the use of spreadsheets. Pupils learn basic manipulation which when developed, is used to convert raw data to graphical representations for more detailed analysis. Since the last inspection, the overall quality of teaching has improved, this is a major contributory factor to the maintenance of high standards and the improved progress of the pupils whilst they are at the school.

SCIENCE

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

Strengths

- Standards are above average and achievement is good in the subject.
- Good teaching.
- The quality and range of learning opportunities are good.
- Assessment arrangements and use of assessment information are good.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Areas for improvement

- Match tasks more closely to the diverse needs of pupils in each class.
- The management of a few disruptive pupils.
- Pace of teaching and learning, and engaging those who do not concentrate enough on learning.

76. National test results of 2000 show that pupils attain above average results. Results of 2001 reflect similar standards. The 2000 results, however, are below average in comparison with similar schools. Attainment of boys and girls is close to their respective national averages. Within the school, the performance of boys and girls is broadly similar. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Pupils for whom English is an additional language and higher attaining pupils make good progress. Teacher assessments are similar to the national tests. Standards of attainment of Year 9 are above average and represent an improvement from the last inspection. The use of ICT is improving with the work in hand for a computer suite to be shared between science and mathematics departments. This was a weak point in the last inspection. Although current teaching and learning are good, inappropriate behaviour of a very small minority of pupils reduces the overall achievement to satisfactory level.

77. Year 7 pupils are beginning to use a wide range of instruments and apparatus correctly and safely, for example a microscope and a Bunsen burner. They investigate the effect of salt on the temperature of ice, tabulate the results and use the computer to enter data and draw and interpret the line graph. Year 8 pupils' above average attainment is reflected in their knowledge and understanding of plant and animal cells, including the names and function of their organelles. They investigate the effect of intensity of light on the rate of photosynthesis and how the battery power affects the working of bulbs in series and parallel circuits. Pupils have a good understanding of the key concepts, for example those related to reproduction and solutions. Year 9 pupils' above average attainment is reflected in their knowledge and understanding of thermal changes in exothermic and endothermic reactions and pupils' skills in investigating these.

78. The overall good quality teaching and learning are seen in the teachers' subject expertise which is used effectively for expositions, demonstrations and explanations. These motivate pupils, generate interest and increase pupils' knowledge and understanding of the subject. Teachers provide and make good use of resources. Instructions are given clearly so that pupils know what they are expected to do. Fill-in-the-gap exercises are used effectively to assess the rate of learning. Pace, management of pupils, vocabulary and matching tasks to pupils' needs are more variable. In the majority of lessons, good management of these elements produces good learning. In others, these prevent pupils making as much progress as they should.
79. Most pupils display good attitudes and behaviour in lessons. Their good interest and concentration help them to learn well and make good progress. However, a few pupils are unable to work as independently as they should. Consequently, they do not make as much progress as they could. A very small minority, in a very few lessons, display inappropriate behaviour. Not only do they learn little themselves, they constantly deflect teachers' attention from teaching others effectively. As a result, pupils in such classes do not make as much progress as they should.
80. Good leadership and management of the department make effective contributions to teaching and learning in science. The department is well organised and all teachers and support staff in the department are fully committed to help pupils achieve well. This is seen in the good opportunities provided for developing skills in scientific enquiry. The curriculum provided for learning biology, chemistry and physics is equally challenging. Assessment procedures are well developed. The information is used effectively, for example for placing pupils in different sets and setting targets for individual pupils. Teaching and monitoring of teaching and taking effective action are well developed. Science contributes well to pupils' skills in numeracy and they are used satisfactorily, for example in plotting and interpreting graphs. Pupils' literacy skills are used satisfactorily, for example using science texts and developing pupils' vocabulary, but the use of key words is not consistently developed in all classes. The use of ICT to help pupils learn science and to develop their ICT skills is satisfactory. It is likely to improve with the provision of the planned, dedicated computer suite for science and mathematics. Although the accommodation provides good space, some refurbishment is needed to update the laboratories, for example for secure and safekeeping of chemicals.

ART AND DESIGN

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

Strengths

- Good teaching.
- Very good approach to assessment which helps to motivate and improve standards.
- The progress made by all pupils in relation to their prior levels of learning is good.
- Good leadership and management.

Areas for improvement

- Improve the range and availability of visual resources to stimulate creativity.
- Use ICT in making art as well as learning about art.
- Extend the range of media available to pupils.

81. In 2000, the number of pupils meeting or exceeding national expectations was in line with the proportion nationally. In 2001, the results were similar. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
82. In lessons and in the work done by pupils, standards overall met national expectations. When pupils enter the school, standards in drawing improve quite quickly, particularly when they are asked to work from direct observation as in the bottles and container project in Year 7. Here, pupils showed a good understanding of shape and form, and the quality of line used was increasingly more sensitive. In Year 9, combining media with increasing confidence, pupils explore an Aboriginal theme through printing and pattern work. This widened their understanding of media and techniques. All projects have dedicated sketchbooks with clearly defined homework tasks. Where this work is based purely on secondary sources as in the Aboriginal project, standards of drawing are less good. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of art are good, they develop a subject-specific vocabulary and they are confident when talking and writing about the work of others, which is effectively supported by the use of the Internet.
83. Pupils' achievement is good. When pupils enter the school, attainment in art and design is below average. Rapid progress is made, particularly in their ability to record the visual world through drawing. By the time they reach 14, they can record their ideas in a sketchbook and confidently use a range of two- and three-dimensional media to interpret their ideas. Equally good progress has been made in their acquisition of knowledge and understanding about art and design, both as a result of practical work and independent research work. This is true of all pupils, including those with special educational needs.
84. The good progress made by pupils is a direct result of good teaching. The quality of learning is also good. Lessons and projects are well planned. Each lesson begins with a clear whole-class instruction with pupils fully involved, asking questions, reviewing what has been done before and talking about the lesson in hand. Good teacher demonstrations fully involve pupils and help them to understand what they are to do and how their work might be approached, as for example in the Year 7 drawing project where the relative size of objects within pictures is discussed. The effect of this is that drawing standards improve and pupils make good progress. Good technical instruction improves confidence and gives pupils a clear understanding of difficult concepts such as multi-colour printing from a single lino block. As a result, pupils' craft skills improve. A particularly good feature of teaching is the thorough assessment of pupils' work, which takes place both during and at the end of projects. The teacher has a very good understanding of both the attainment and progress of each pupil and gives clear targets for improvement. The effect of this is that pupils feel well informed about how well they are doing in relation to National Curriculum levels and this information has a positive effect on the motivation of pupils and their involvement in their own learning. Pupils enjoy art. The atmosphere in the classroom is positive with pupils willingly applying themselves, maintaining interest in what they are doing. Such positive attitudes are linked to the high expectations set by their teacher.
85. Since the last inspection, standards and the progress pupils make have improved. Teaching which was then satisfactory, is now consistently good and the signs are that standards will improve further. The management of the department is good with the breadth of the curriculum being improved since the last inspection even though resources are meagre. The head of department has a clear vision of what needs to be done to improve further.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

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

Strengths

- The progress made by nearly all pupils in relation to their prior levels of learning is good.
- Teachers' good knowledge and understanding of their subject.
- Good facilities for food and textiles teaching and learning.

Areas for improvement

- More opportunities in resistant materials for pupils to instigate design briefs and develop problem-solving skills.
- Ensure that all pupils are more aware about how well they are doing in design and technology.
- Strengthen the place of electronics and the study of mechanisms within the curriculum.
- Increase opportunities for pupils to use computers in their routine work.

86. In 2000, the number of pupils meeting or exceeding national expectations was above the proportion nationally. In 2001, attainment was lower but still in line with the proportion nationally. This reflected the nature of the respective year groups. Girls did better than boys but not significantly so.
87. The overall standard of work seen in lessons is in line with those expected nationally. There are differences in standards seen between different areas of the design and technology curriculum. For example, standards in a Year 8 textiles lesson where pupils made containers to protect possessions such as spectacles, mobile phones and delicate electronic toys, were above average. This is because pupils were given the opportunity to research and develop their own solutions to design briefs. In contrast to this were the standards of Year 8 pupils who are constructing a paper-holding device. Whilst the standards of cutting, shaping and constructing were good, there was no opportunity to innovate or to investigate alternative ways of solving the problem, thus standards of designing were lower than they should be. The same was true in the picture frame project. Here, freedom was given to pupils to decorate and to embellish but not to explore different ways of displaying a picture. The standard of graphical presentation is mostly good but often graphics work merely rehearses technique as in, for example in the Year 9 bedroom design project.
88. Pupil achievement is good. When pupils enter the school at 11, their understanding of, and skills in design and technology are below average but by the age of 14, their skills are in line with those expected nationally. By the time they reach 14, pupils can communicate ideas in varying degrees of complexity using both written and graphical means. They can select and use a range of tools, materials and processes in the different areas of food, textiles and resistant materials. Through evaluating what they have done, pupils are able to say whether the items they have made are suitable for the job for which they have been designed. Good progress is made in designing and making within food and textiles and within making in resistant materials. There is no significant variation in the progress made by pupils of differing ability. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their fellow pupils in class. There are a small number of pupils, mainly boys, whose standards and progress are below average because they lack motivation and do not behave well in lessons.
89. Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lessons are well planned and pupils are provided with clear information about what they are expected to do. Where planning provides a good balance between instruction in skills and opportunities to respond openly to a design brief, as in the Year 9 food project where pupils design a high energy snack bar, standards attained and progress made are good. Where teachers' planning provides limited opportunity for pupils to explore their own design briefs as in the Year 8 paper-holder project, designs are repetitive and pupils make limited progress even though the thorough teaching of skills leads to improved standards of making. The way in which assessment can be used to motivate and set targets for improvement is not well developed. The systems in place for recording

attainment and progress are satisfactory, but they are applied inconsistently across the department. Teachers do provide plenty of good verbal feedback to pupils as work progresses, but there are few formal points of assessment as projects progress and marking is sometimes cursory, with the result that the opportunity to set short-term targets for improvement is lost. Pupils are made aware of their National Curriculum levels at the end of most projects, but no pupils have any notion about how these add up to a coherent assessment of their attainment and the progress made in the whole area of design and technology. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils in terms of behaviour. Pupils on the whole respond well and enjoy their work in design and technology. Overall, behaviour in lessons is good.

90. Overall, the management of the department is satisfactory. Good aspects of management relate to the care and maintenance of tools and equipment and in the care and organisation of teaching materials and resources. A less good feature of management is the monitoring of the whole curriculum, in ensuring that assessment procedures are fully implemented and that all areas contribute effectively to the acquisition of skills both in designing and making.
91. The curriculum broadly meets the requirements of the National Curriculum but aspects such as electronics and the study of mechanism are not sufficiently secure within the normal allocation of time. Pupils do not use computers enough in their routine work within design and technology. The department is very safety conscious and goes to great lengths to ensure that pupils work in a safe way. The size of some groups – 28 pupils – however, does present a potential hazard in workshops.
92. Since the last inspection, standards of making in resistant materials have improved and those in food and textiles have been maintained. In the previous inspection report, progress was described as satisfactory. Pupil achievement is now good, particularly in the acquisition of skills in presentation and manufacture. It is less good in the acquisition of design skills across all areas.

GEOGRAPHY

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

Strengths

- The progress made by most pupils in relation to their prior levels of learning is good.
- Good teaching.
- The employment of different resources and activities which enhance pupils' learning.

Areas for improvement

- The increased use of ICT.
- Strategies to increase the use of independent learning in lessons.
- A review of the marking policy to include formative and summative comments.
- A policy to support and improve pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development.

93. In teacher assessments the proportion of pupils gaining Level 5 and better at the end of Year 9 is above the national figure. The majority of pupils are achieving well and making good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
94. By the time they reach 14, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations with some pupils attaining just above that. This is in line with what was reported at the last

inspection for the subject. The majority of pupils can construct accurate diagrams, maps and graphs, using them well with their written work to display a good understanding of geographical processes, particularly the relationship between physical and human aspects of the subject. These qualities were well illustrated in a lesson on population where, with an ICT presentation, the reasons for population increases were given and the follow-up work was clearly understood. In a lesson on a similar topic but using a role-play exercise, the global distribution of food and water was graphically brought over to the pupils, which greatly enhanced their learning. As pupils progress from Year 7 to Year 9, they show an increased confidence in accessing information from text. Many pupils, but particularly those who are higher attaining, can write well on a given topic but are given insufficient opportunities in extended writing to improve their work even further. The boys overall were operating at a slightly higher level than were the girls; however, the number of boys in many classes was higher than that of girls. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in working towards targets laid down in their education plans and this is particularly apparent when they are supported by additional staff, but the identification of subject-specific targets would give greater information on their progress with the subject.

95. The quality of teaching is good overall with some that is very good and this is reflected in the quality of learning, which is good. The lessons are well planned with stated aims and objectives, though not often shared with pupils, using a good range of activities and resources. Video material, when used, illustrated and reinforced points being made in a lesson but was insufficiently used when it would have been appropriate. The value of such a resource was seen in a lesson on erosion where it greatly enhanced pupils' learning. The use of ICT greatly enhances pupil learning when used. However, its wider use would increase the involvement of all pupils. Teachers have a good command of their subject, and where high expectations are demanded, pupils usually responded accordingly. Tasks are mostly matched to the needs of pupils and most are sufficiently challenged. Teachers usually provide well-prepared resources and in sufficient quantity. Question and answer sessions are used well to check that previous work has been learnt, as well as the understanding of new learning, as in Year 7 lessons on a topic introducing geography. The good use of oral assessment encouraged a greater number of pupils to become involved in the lesson. Pupils' attitudes were generally positive and where they were not, this did not impair their learning or the learning of others. They usually responded well when firm demands were made on them; this resulted in good behaviour in the classroom. Marking of pupils' work was regular; however, there is insufficient recording of constructive comments by all staff, with the purpose of these comments being to provide pupils with guidance on how to improve their work.
96. There is a new head of department who already has shown a strong commitment to improving the standards already achieved, but who also benefits from an ethos previously provided. The curriculum has been planned to develop and reinforce key skills. Geographical visits to Bradgate Park and a shared visit to Lincoln are used to extend what has been learned in the classroom. Resources are good with a wide range of texts and some useful videos. The accommodation is satisfactory, although one classroom suffers from the mobile partition as sound strays from one room to another interfering with pupils' learning. The department has tackled most of the weaknesses identified in the last report. However, attention still needs to be given to the quality of marking and the further use of independent learning as an aid to improve pupils' learning.

HISTORY

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

Strengths

- The progress made by all pupils in relation to their prior levels of learning is good.
- Higher attainers make very good progress in history and this is reflected in the high grades that they receive when they leave the school.
- Assessment procedures are very good, being thorough and detailed, and this enables history staff to identify pupils that need both support and more challenge in their work.

Areas for improvement

- More opportunities should be offered to pupils to develop their use and application of numeracy skills.
- Non-specialist teachers should be offered more support to ensure that their lesson planning adequately identifies tasks that will offer suitable challenges to the pupils.
- The department's assessment sheets should change the wording used to describe the quality of written work produced so that high quality work can be more readily identified and celebrated.

97. Teacher-based assessments at the end of Year 9 indicate that standards attained are above national average figures. In 2000, 63 per cent of the school's pupils achieved Level 5 or better compared to a national figure of 60 per cent. In 2001, there was a slight improvement with 65 per cent attaining the national expectation or better. In addition, the department's own data clearly shows that all pupils make good progress in relation to their attainment in history when they entered the school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards targets set for them and their achievement is in line with those of their fellow pupils. The vast majority of pupils leave the school at the end of Year 9 having achieved results that are better than those that would have been predicted when they entered the school in Year 7.
98. The attainment of present pupils is average overall. In lessons observed, pupils attained standards in line with those expected for the ability of the class. Scrutiny of work shows that some pupils, particularly in Years 8 and 9, are attaining standards that are well above national expectations. Pupils' attainment is directly linked to their literacy skills and especially their good ability to produce well-presented and detailed answers. The department places much emphasis on developing the pupils' literacy skills. This strategy is helping all pupils to make progress, but is particularly benefiting higher achieving pupils, many of whom write fluently and accurately.
99. The quality of teaching in history is good. This is reflected in the quality of learning which is good. The consistency in the quality of teaching offered helps all pupils in their learning. A number of key strengths can be identified. These include their knowledge and understanding, their skills in developing literacy, the quality of their ongoing assessment and their classroom management. These factors all combine to foster learning. For example, in a very good Year 7 lesson introducing pupils to life in medieval England, very good planning, allied to the variety of teaching strategies used, enabled all pupils to make good progress in their learning. All pupils realised the importance of source material and many could distinguish between primary and secondary sources. Pupils were able to identify certain key features of medieval life from the sources presented, and some vivid language, such as 'barbaric', 'cruel' and 'vicious' was used to describe aspects of the living styles portrayed. Higher achieving pupils displayed some very good analytical skills, noting that the sources showed

conflicting images and that, in some cases, the way of life depicted was gentler and involved leisure activities that were not based on violence and cruelty. In this lesson, learning for all was very good and the teaching strategies used ensured that higher attaining pupils were set work that presented them with suitable and interesting challenges. Learning is also helped by the sensible use the department makes of ICT. For example, in their studies of the First World War, Year 9 pupils are given opportunities to research using selected Internet sites such as the War Graves Commission site. Such work enhances learning and also contributes to the pupils' spiritual and moral development.

100. Where teaching is occasionally less effective, the pace of lessons is slower and lessons are teacher centred. Learning is reduced and some pupils become restless and inattentive. This particularly applies to some boys in some classes, whose conduct is unacceptable. Such unacceptable behaviour adversely affects the learning of all pupils. Though staff prepare well for their lessons, some lessons are taught by non-specialists. Their lesson planning tends to concentrate more on content than on how the lesson may be taught.
101. The management of the department is good, especially the quality of planning and the assessment procedures which are employed. These strategies ensure that the department successfully caters for the needs of all pupils, including those who have special educational needs. Good progress has been made since the last inspection. The emphasis that the department places on developing literacy skills, allied to its very good assessment procedures and sensible use of ICT, all serve to ensure that a greater proportion of lessons sufficiently challenge the pupils. In order to record further progress, more emphasis should be placed on developing the role of numeracy in the teaching of history. In addition, the department's assessment sheets should be changed to help the identification of high quality work so that pupils know it is of a high standard.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

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

Strengths

- The teaching during the inspection was very good, based on a new scheme of work which focuses sharply on National Curriculum targets.
- The pupils' response to the subject is very good.

Areas for improvement

- The use of ICT in other subject areas is underdeveloped.

102. Standards attained by pupils during the inspection were in line with those expected nationally and this represents an improvement on teacher assessments in previous years. The achievement of pupils is good. They increase their knowledge, understanding and skills in using ICT, so that by the time they are 14, their standards are in line with those expected nationally. Pupils of all abilities are making good progress and this is helped by the very good teaching and the very good attitudes shown by pupils to the subject. The leadership and management of the subject in developing the good use of the new resources are good. There has been a satisfactory improvement overall since the last inspection.

103. In Year 7, pupils build a suitable repertoire of skills. The units of work are well planned so that they quickly adopt new ways of using technology to present information. Rigorous teaching ensures that they start to evaluate the effectiveness of different techniques. All pupils enjoy the challenge of creating a slide-show about themselves, and they are well motivated by the very clear examples that they are shown. Higher attainers can import pictures into their presentations and make effective judgements about how long each slide should be displayed and how best to move from one slide to another. These decisions are easier because they are carefully taught how to assess each aspect of their own work.
104. In Year 8, pupils continue to develop appropriate presentation skills, using a wider range of computer software. In a well-designed 'café' project, they produce a plan and then illustrate what the 'café' will look like before designing menus and modelling a budget. Throughout this process, they are constantly reminded to concentrate on explaining the purpose of their designs so that when they come to the menu, they are thinking carefully about layout and text styles that will suit their intended clients. Lower attainers grasp the notion of suitability but tend to think in concrete terms. They are given clear instructions and they work hard to meet the challenges which they are set. Higher attainers are beginning to think about a specific audience's needs. Prompted by skilful questioning from the teacher, they can say how their designs and the use of ICT might be appropriate for them.
105. In Year 9, pupils explore more complex presentations, and successfully manipulate a wide range of ICT resources to meet their own specific needs. They create web pages for the Internet, building links from one page to another, and designing the pages to be easy to manage and easy to understand. They have to work hard at this because the teacher sets high standards. One high attaining girl's web page showed real awareness of the need to make the information quickly digestible, and she had used the desktop publishing package skilfully to manipulate text and images so that the links to other pages were really easy to use. Another pupil had incorporated a compelling news page with up-to-date photographs of the recent terrorist attack, and a recording of an interview with an alleged terrorist which the pupil had imported on his own initiative from the Internet. Lower attainers are able to use their sense of design to create less ambitious web pages with their own individual style. A high level of teacher support ensures that pupils persevere with difficult tasks and use the technology as a tool rather than a toy.
106. Pupils with special educational needs are able to learn effectively. Lessons are very well managed so pupils behave well and waste little time in settling down to work. The tasks are planned so that they do not depend on literacy skills but offer other ways of expressing ideas. The results of their efforts are also immediate so those who have difficulty concentrating in other lessons maintain a good work rate because they enjoy the activities.
107. The new scheme of work provides appropriate coverage of the National Curriculum, and the units that have been planned in detail are helping pupils to learn effectively. Both pupils and teachers build each unit around careful assessment of each completed project. Individual lessons are very carefully planned to give a balance of activities and to re-emphasise learning goals. The new computers and teaching aids enable teachers to demonstrate effectively, and this contributes to the easy rapport and effective use of time in lessons. This is encouraging high standards but there is insufficient assessment of individual achievements during each lesson. This means that some opportunities to help individuals to make the step to a higher level of skill

are missed. It also contributes to some lack of continuity when lower attaining pupils are slow to build on what they had achieved in the previous lesson.

108. The use of ICT in other lessons is uneven, and all pupils are not guaranteed access to an appropriate range of experiences. However, there are pockets of good practice in a range of subject areas. In art and design, pupils use the Internet to access images for their critical study of pop art. Here, lower attainers do not make such good use of the technology because they are drawn into repeating similar activities in marginally different ways. They need tighter guidelines to focus their research. In a German lesson, pupils of all abilities were motivated to focus on grammatical structure because the work was well planned, entertaining and adjusted to suit different levels of confidence. Here, higher attainers would have worked harder if they had been set clearer targets to be achieved during the lesson. In design and technology, pupils can use authentic software to test nutritional values in food, and in science, teachers use ICT to enable individuals to extend their skills and to bring immediacy when they record the results of experiments. Pupils can use computers after school and at lunchtimes, and they are well supported by a recently appointed technician. This allows subjects such as English to set Internet research tasks as homework. However, there is insufficient access to computers to enable all teachers to use ICT effectively. The school needs to extend access to the network and to support less confident teachers to develop the necessary skills.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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

Strengths

- Teachers manage their pupils well which ensures that the majority of pupils concentrate.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are good in nearly all classes.
- Accommodation and classroom equipment are of good quality.

Areas for improvement

- Standards in Year 9 are not as high as they should be.
- Not all teachers use the foreign language enough and make sure a balance of tasks, including oral activity, is provided.
- Monitoring of teaching and the sharing of the best practice is not fully developed.
- The departmental handbook does not contain essential agreed policies on teaching and learning, including suggestions for improved literacy.
- A significant number of pupils, particularly the higher attainers in Year 9, make insufficient progress in the wide ability groups.

109. In Year 7, pupils begin either French or German and are taught in mixed-ability groups. In Years 8 and 9, the lower attainers are taught in smaller groups specially created for them. All other pupils are taught in wide-ability groups.

110. The teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 in 2000 were broadly in line with those nationally. Pupils achieved well to gain these results given their below average attainment on entry to the school. The gap between the performance of boys and girls reflected the national picture. The teacher assessments in 2001 indicate that the pupils' standards remained broadly in line with those nationally.

111. The standards of work in Year 9 have gone down when compared to the results achieved by pupils in the previous two years, and this year are just below that expected nationally. This is the first year that higher attaining pupils have not been set in separate groups; they are working together with average attaining pupils and their progress is slower than it should be. A scan of the work of previous pupils towards the end of Year 9 shows that these higher attaining pupils, who were taught in setted groups, could write at length in some detail and could use the past tense with accuracy. However, the current Year 9 pupils are very unsure of the present and past tense, particularly the average attainers, and need much help and support from the teacher. Average attainers try hard to write accurately but their lack of understanding of the more complex grammar slows down the progress of the higher attaining pupils. Some of their work is untidy, and a significant number of pupils do not pay enough attention to the literacy skills of good presentation and careful copy writing. In previous years, pupils did not have exercise books but relied on worksheets and separate sheets of loose paper. The department now provides exercise books for all years but all pupils are not made sufficiently aware of the need to practise the literacy skills they have learnt in other subjects. Most pupils can take part in very brief conversations about themselves but are very hesitant in speaking and many lack confidence. With vigorous teaching and sufficient practice, they quickly gain more confidence. For example, in a Year 9 German lesson, pupils applied themselves very well, encouraged by the teacher's supportive approach, and replied accurately to their partner's questions. Similarly, in a Year 7 French lesson, pupils took part enthusiastically and with increasing fluency in role-plays and dialogues about themselves. Pupils in a parallel Year 7 class, who had not had the same amount of directed practice, were very confused and hesitant in asking and replying to questions of the same type. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, generally achieve satisfactorily, except for the higher attainers in Year 9 and a significant number of pupils in Year 7.
112. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Most lessons seen were satisfactory with around one third at least good. One was very good, when the whole Year 8 lesson was conducted in German, and the pupils were led systematically to a real understanding of how prepositions work. Teachers have a good knowledge of the languages they teach and plan their lessons well but some need to ensure that there is a good balance of skills in the range of activities. They do not all use the foreign language enough, even for classroom instructions, nor ensure that all pupils take part in the oral work. Most teachers, however, manage their pupils well and make sure that they listen well. Only in one lesson was there a departure from the general good behaviour and concentration; here the teacher dealt with the pupils effectively. Teachers do not pay enough attention to standards of good presentation in exercise books and worksheets. They do not always set objectives clearly enough nor review them at the end of the lesson. Overhead projectors are generally used well, and some good examples of work produced on the computer are on display. Opportunities for using computers in languages are in the scheme of work and one lesson observed, of pupils in the computer room was of very good quality. The quality of ICT education is unsatisfactory in the department as a whole but this is a developing area.
113. Pupils learn satisfactorily. Most pupils are attentive and work productively. However, some pupils are very slow at getting down to work, especially the new pupils in Year 7. When they are required to, the vast majority of pupils work well in pairs for individual language practice. A small number of pupils, particularly boys, need reminders about maintaining concentration.

114. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. The standards of average attainment by the end of Year 9 have been maintained. However, the attainment of the higher attainers in Year 9 is not monitored adequately to ensure that these pupils make fast enough progress to reach the higher National Curriculum levels achieved in previous years. The needs of the higher attainers in the mixed-ability groups and those of the more passive learners, which were pointed out in the previous inspection, have not yet been fully addressed. Good standards of behaviour have been maintained. Appropriate new textbooks have been bought for French.
115. The department is managed this term by an acting head of department who has heavy responsibilities in the senior management team. She gives very good guidance and support to the three new teachers. Departmental development is temporarily suspended until the arrival of a new head of department next term. Accommodation is good and printed resources are now adequate to ensure that pupils have appropriate worksheets, but not textbooks, to take home for homework.

MUSIC

Overall, the quality of provision in music is **unsatisfactory** in classroom work but **good** in instrumental tuition and extra-curricular work.

Strengths

- The range of opportunities in instrumental tuition is very good and involves a high number of teachers; teaching is good.
- The range, numbers involved and standards reached in extra-curricular work are above average and teaching is good.
- Since the last inspection report, there has been good improvement in some aspects of the organisation of music, for example teacher assessment of pupils' standards.

Areas for improvement

- By Year 9, standards are below average; performing, composing and listening skills are underdeveloped; achievement is unsatisfactory.
- Pupils sing insufficiently and irregularly.
- The quality of teaching is too variable in classroom work.
- Learning is too academic and does not sufficiently develop practical skills; pupils make insufficient use of their own instruments in classroom work.
- Accommodation is crowded and lessons and activities are affected by the layout of the room.
- The time allocated to music is low.

116. Pupils enter the school with very variable musical experiences related to the quality of their musical education in their previous schools, interests and level of home support. Some enter with above average experience but most pupils enter with below average attainment in music and teachers' assessments confirm this. Standards in Years 7 and 8 are close to the national expectation but in Year 9, standards are below average. Teachers' assessments confirm this. The achievement of pupils of all abilities varies in lessons from good to poor but overall, achievement is unsatisfactory; a contributory factor is the low allocation of time given to music. Most pupils are working between Levels 4 or 5 but some talented pupils attain higher levels. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is similar to that of their fellow pupils in lessons. Pupils sing well in Year 7 but sing irregularly and insufficiently in other years to develop their skills fully. Instrumental skills are underdeveloped; many pupils find it difficult to keep time in

ensemble and pupils are given insufficient opportunity to use their own instruments. Pupils' composing shows some imaginative ideas and many are developing skills approaching the level expected but the understanding of most pupils of compositional devices is insecure and no use is made of ICT in composing. The music-reading skills of most pupils are unsatisfactory. Pupils listen respectfully to each other when performing but their general musical knowledge, for example of instruments, composers, forms, structures, artists and well known pieces of music, is less than expected.

117. Teaching in classroom work varies from very good to poor; this variability makes it unsatisfactory overall. In instrumental tuition and extra-curricular work, teaching is good. In classwork, teachers show secure subject knowledge so that they teach confidently. Instructions and directions are clear and teaching is enthusiastic; pupils understand the objectives. There is appropriate attention to developing musical vocabulary. Schemes and lesson content are most thoughtfully put together but a major weakness is that the focus is often related to technical aspects so that there is too much study of music and not enough making of it; this affects the attitudes of pupils. Expectations are sometimes too low so that pupils, especially the high attaining pupils, are insufficiently challenged. As a result, many pupils, especially boys, become bored and attitudes are neutral or negative. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated and make similar progress to the other pupils. Lessons have clear structures and are well organised but often run out of time. The management of pupils is often good, especially with the younger classes, but is less secure with other groups and overall is unsatisfactory. As a result, relationships are variable. Lessons start briskly and maintain a good pace so that pupils remain focused at first because of the energetic and enthusiastic style but often the tasks set do not engage the pupils sufficiently and their interest wanes. Pupils are usually good humoured and work well, especially in practical work, but they dislike written work and the academic approach where much time is spent at desks. The desks hamper practical work and the constant movement of them unsettles the pupils. As a result, behaviour varies from very good to poor which affects both the progress and the atmosphere in classes. Although some pupils are keen and work productively and give good support to each other, many pupils cannot always be trusted to work independently, for example to rehearse in groups. This is often because they lack the skills and confidence to tackle the task. Music technologies are not used as the music room lacks a computer. The lack of sufficient tuned percussion instruments further restricts pupils' creative work. The assessment of pupils is supportive and shows them how they can improve. Satisfactory use is made of homework to extend pupils' learning but this could be more practical.
118. The management of music is satisfactory, combining both strengths and weaknesses. There have been good improvements in aspects of management since the last report. However, the teacher has insufficient time within the timetable to manage the department, resulting in great pressures on her. There is no technical support, and long awaited requests, for example for shelving or for a telephone, still need to be met so that the department can be more ordered and its facilities used more fully. Documentation is very thorough and day-to-day organisation is good, reflecting the commitment and hard work of the teacher. There is appropriate monitoring and evaluation of the subject's performance; the support of the link governor for the subject is having a positive impact. Assessment is well thought out and used to review planning. There are useful links with other schools but curricular links with the primary schools need improving. Keyboard resources are good and support pupils' learning well but there is an urgent need for access to computers and to tuned percussion

instruments such as xylophones and glockenspiels in order to enhance creative work. These constraints limit the opportunities to make music in the classroom, as does the lack of curriculum time.

119. Thirty-one boys and fifty-three girls receive instrumental lessons from ten visiting teachers; this is almost a fifth of the school's population and this number is well above average. Standards are above average. Teaching is good and some very good teaching was observed in brass and steel pan tuition. More than half of the boys who take lessons play steel pans. The progress and achievement of pupils is good in relation to their ages and the time they have received tuition. The curriculum insufficiently supports instrumental tuition, and tuition makes little impact on the quality

of pupils' musical experiences in the classroom. The range of extra-curricular activities in music is good and includes choir, orchestra, recorder group, flute ensemble, clarinet choir and a music theory group. These regular activities involve relatively few boys. Standards and the quality of teaching are good, as was seen during the inspection and on videotapes. The school promotes regular concerts involving good numbers of pupils. Music groups perform in assemblies but the regular use of live and recorded music in assemblies is underdeveloped. Groups perform at local primary schools, festivals and local arts and charity events and at a local nursing home. There has been a visit to see the Philharmonia at De Montford Hall. These activities reflect the commitment of staff, support of parents and the enthusiasm of the pupils involved, whose performances bring credit to the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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

Strengths

- The quality of teaching is good overall.
- Relationships between pupils and teachers are very good.
- Pupils' achievement is good. They make good progress over time.

Areas for improvement

- Appoint a dedicated head of department.
- Review the schemes of work and link to assessment procedures.
- Extend the number and variety of extra-curricular activities.
- Ensure pupils are taught in the same group for both lessons.
- Provide a physical education office with ICT, more resources and appropriate storage space.

120. Judgements on standards are based on observations of boys' football and rugby lessons and girls' netball and hockey lessons. Such observations, together with discussion with teachers and observation of extra-curricular activities, indicate that attainment in physical education is in line with the nationally expected level at the end of Year 9. On entry to the school, pupils' attainment is below national expectations because they have little experience of the major games and fitness activities. The attainment of Year 7 boys in football and Year 7 girls in netball confirms this. After four lessons of these activities in the school, the majority of boys and girls have not yet mastered the basic skills. However, pupils in Year 7 understand the importance of warming-up and stretching their bodies before and after exercise, and by the time they reach Year 9, pupils can name the main muscle groups and stretch independently and effectively.

121. Pupils' achievement is good. Pupils in Years 8 and 9 have made good progress and their attainment has risen to be in line with expectation. Most boys and girls can modify and refine their skills in order to improve their performances. The boys in Year 9 played football indoors because of inclement weather. They showed a high level of skill and ball control in the limited space of the gymnasium. When playing netball, girls in Year 9 have good passing and footwork skills but in a game, these skills are less consistent. In Years 8 and 9, higher attaining boys and girls perform basic skills well and readily help other pupils in their group. Lower attaining pupils do not organise others and their basic games skills lack consistency. Pupils in all year groups do not develop their evaluative skills enough and there is a lack of guidance in promoting this strand of the National Curriculum in the units of work. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is similar to that of the other pupils in their classes.

122. Individual pupils and teams achieve high standards in district competitions in rugby, football, athletics, netball and hockey. The attainment of these pupils is above the national average and they benefit considerably from the extra opportunities provided by their teachers.
123. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was good overall, with one third of lessons being satisfactory and one sixth very good. Learning is good overall and pupils of all abilities make good progress. The percentage of good teaching and learning is higher than at the time of the previous inspection. Objectives are shared with pupils at the start of each lesson and good summaries at the end ensure that learning is well focused. Teachers give appropriate demonstrations and handle pupils' responses effectively. This gives pupils a clear idea of performance technique and enables pupils to improve their skills. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good and teachers have a sensitive approach with those pupils who find some activities difficult. These strong relationships help teachers to manage the behaviour of pupils, especially that of a few difficult boys. This, together with most pupils' enthusiasm for the subject, enables their learning to be effective. Large numbers of pupils are involved with school teams and fixtures but it is disappointing that they do not have the opportunity to join in a broader range of activities in the extra-curricular sport.
124. Pupils are taught in mixed-ability and single gender groups for games but for gymnastics, dance, athletics and swimming pupils are taught in mixed gender groups. These groupings help to extend the more able pupils, for example boys in rugby. This curriculum organisation provides equal opportunities for boys and girls and is a positive response to the previous report. However, because pupils in Years 8 and 9 are timetabled with different groups of pupils for each of their two physical education lessons, pupils' learning is hindered by lack of continuity and progression. Pupils' learning is also hindered by the lack of equipment in the department. There is one rugby tackle bag, no indoor footballs, no match netballs and limited numbers of small pieces of equipment.
125. Teachers are beginning to emphasise numeracy and literacy skills in their teaching but opportunities for pupils to use ICT are not yet provided. Assessment is developing to meet the new National Curriculum orders but pupils are not yet fully aware of the criteria and teachers do not use the information to plan and adjust the curriculum.
126. The department is jointly managed by two teachers, one of whom is part-time. Both teachers have major responsibilities in other areas of the school and whilst they work well together and the leadership of the physical education department is sound, they are fully stretched. Their capacity to build on new initiatives and extend opportunities for pupils is limited and the department needs a dedicated, full-time specialist to successfully address the areas that need improvement.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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

Areas for improvement

- A review of the agreed syllabus should be made, emphasising links to attainment targets.
- Assessments linked to attainment targets should be carried out regularly to ensure that pupils' level of attainment is clearly monitored and information used to support progress.
- Teachers should be less dependent upon centrally planned lessons which in turn are dependent upon centralised worksheets. This is particularly important as the person who produced the lessons is no longer in the school.
- A range of learning resources should be produced to meet the needs of all the pupils in lessons.
- The pace and challenge of lessons should be improved with tasks being more relevant to pupils and meeting their specific needs.
- The marking of pupils' work should be improved and be more consistently undertaken.
- Care is taken to bring a sense of equilibrium into the management of relationships.

127. In the absence of any level descriptors from the locally agreed syllabus, this report is based upon the levels set out in the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) non- statutory guidance on religious education.

128. The overall provision for religious education is unsatisfactory. Standards of attainment are below national standards expected, with pupils in Year 9 currently achieving between Levels 3 and 4 of the levels set out by QCA. The quality of learning is unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory. The standard of work produced by the pupils in the previous year lacked depth. The achievement of the pupils is unsatisfactory in relation to their prior knowledge and the progress they make in lessons is unsatisfactory.

129. Pupils' knowledge of the major beliefs and practices of the religions found in our society is low. A Year 9 class found it difficult to describe some of the key beliefs and practices of Islam even though they had covered the religion at an earlier date. Year 8 classes had spent a considerable time looking at Christianity last year but had a very shallow knowledge of Christian beliefs and practices. They were unable to describe such rites of passage as infant baptism. Whilst they are aware of the importance of sacred writing, their knowledge does not extend beyond a knowledge of the name of the various books. Similarly, their understanding of the importance of symbolism in religion is limited to knowing the major signs such as the cross and the star of David. Whilst they appreciate that the founders of religions such as Mohammed and Jesus are important, their understanding of these figures does not extend beyond a simple level of knowledge. Pupils who had been studying the life of Mohammed could only recall simple details of his life.

130. Pupils do have a satisfactory understanding of the connection between morality and religion and realise that people base their lifestyles on religious teaching. A group had studied the life of Martin Luther King and understood the significance of his religious faith in motivating his life.

131. The quality of learning is unsatisfactory. Currently, the subject is taught by teachers who have limited experience in the subject. Whilst their knowledge of the subject is

satisfactory, their knowledge of the methodology used to teach religious education is weak. Lessons are planned using schemes of work and lesson outlines produced by the previous head of subject. Whilst they are adequate and well resourced, the teachers' lack of involvement in the planning does result in lessons that lack challenge and pace. Consequently, pupils who are interested quickly become inattentive and restless. At times, relationships are confrontational, yet at other times, praise is effusive and rewards given for relatively simple efforts. A small minority of pupils disrupted lessons. Resources are good but not always used well. During the visit, a video on Christian Aid was effectively used to illustrate the way in which religion can inspire people to meet human need, but the follow up did not fully develop this theme. Pupils with special educational needs were well supported by both teachers and learning support assistants but there was no evidence of any development of learning materials to meet the differing needs of pupils in the classes. During the visit, homework was set but evidence from pupils' work suggests that this is not always the case. Marking varies considerably but in the main is unsatisfactory, with some pupils' work going unmarked for most of the year.

132. The overall management of the subject is unsatisfactory. The school accepts that religious education has been a 'Cinderella subject' with a long history of unqualified teachers. A recently appointed head of department has limited experience of managing the subject. The syllabus is well organised, meeting the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. It is supported by a good selection of worksheets. There are very few examples of different learning materials to cater for the range of abilities and needs in lessons. Pupils' work reflects an over-dependence upon worksheets, resulting in a lack of flexibility and creativity in lessons. This factor has a restraining influence upon pupils' progress. Pupils at all levels of attainment do not make sufficient progress. Assessment is carried out at regular intervals but this is not tied in with attainment targets. There is no overview of the progress that pupils make.
133. Progress since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. Standards have fallen and the quality of teaching has deteriorated.