

Erratum

The following box was omitted from the report and parents' summary.

Other aspects of the school

Special educational needs	Good; provision has improved and pupils make similar progress to others and are carefully monitored.
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INSPECTION REPORT

Holy Family Catholic High School
Carlton, Goole

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique Reference Number: 121718

Headteacher (Acting): Mrs F Newsome

Reporting inspector: Mr K Davitte
15029

Dates of inspection: 27th September – 1st October 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 708211

Inspection carried out under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
Type of control:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	11 to 16 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Longhedge Lane Carlton Goole East Riding of Yorkshire DN14 9NS
Telephone number:	01405 860276
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D A Fagan MBE
Date of previous inspection:	1st to 5th May 1995

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr K Davitte Registered Inspector		Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management Efficiency
Ms J Goodchild Lay Inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community
Mr A Lemon	Art Special educational needs	
Mr T Howard	Mathematics	Accommodation
Mr R Garrett	English	Assessment
Ms C Millband	Science	Staffing
Mr V Harrison	Design and technology Information technology	
Mr R Bulman	Modern foreign languages	Learning resources
Mr M Roberts	History	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Mr J Knight	Geography	Curriculum
Mr T Payne	Music	
Ms C Runyard	Physical education Equal opportunities	

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What the school does well

- The average GCSE points score per pupil was well above average based on the last three years.
- GCSE results were good in all the core subjects of English, mathematics and science in 1999.
- The majority of teaching is good or better with a quarter very good.
- Pupils with special educational needs receive very effective classroom support and make good progress.
- The contribution made by music to the development of all pupils is a strength of the school.
- Attitudes, behaviour and relationships are very good.
- The provision for spiritual and moral development is very good and pervades the school.
- The financial management of the school is very good.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. GCSE results in art, graphics, geography and history are too low.
- II. Where members of the senior management are heads of department, heads of year and have other major whole-school functions the load is excessive and prevents rigorous monitoring in some areas.
- III. Individual pupil target setting at Key Stage 3 is confined to a minority of departments.
- IV. Reports to parents do not make it sufficiently clear what pupils need to do to improve further.
- V. The access to facilities for information and communication technology (ICT) is inadequate.
- VI. Indoor accommodation for physical education is poor.
- VII. Some statutory requirements are not being met: not all subjects offer appropriate opportunities to pupils to develop and apply their ICT skills; there are inadequate dust extraction facilities in some areas of design and technology, and there is a lack of formal health and safety procedures.

The strengths greatly outweigh the weaknesses. The governors' action plan will set out how weaknesses identified during the inspection are to be tackled. The plan will be sent to all parents of the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

Overall improvement has been satisfactory. Much has been done to monitor and evaluate standards in the classroom and to spread good practice through observation of lessons and interviews. The school is now in a much better position to identify its strengths and weaknesses, but has not found a solution to all its problems and there are some subjects particularly at GCSE where standards are not high enough. Provision for special educational needs has improved dramatically, linked to the appointment of a new special educational needs co-ordinator. Similarly standards have improved in child development, food technology and music with new appointments. Planning has improved in most departments. Schemes of work are mostly well devised but too little has been done too late in design and technology for schemes acquired to have had the necessary impact. Increased numbers have added pressure on accommodation which was not designed for the present numbers in the school. With new systems being introduced and an acute awareness by the leadership and management of the school that standards can be raised further the school's capacity for improvement is good.

Standards in subjects

The following table shows standards achieved by 14 and 16 year-olds in national tests and GCSE examinations in 1998:

Performance in:	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Key
Key Stage 3 tests	C	E	<i>well above average</i> A <i>above average</i> B <i>average</i> C
GCSE Examinations	B	C	<i>below average</i> D
A/AS - levels	n/a	n/a	<i>well below average</i> E

Results in national tests at Key Stage 3 were average overall in 1998. In individual subjects in 1998 results were below average in English, average in mathematics and above average in science. Results in English and mathematics were average taking the three years 1996-8 together and above average in science. In 1999 results in mathematics and science remained similar to previous years but improved considerably in English. Only science has achieved consistently above average results, a standard which should be the minimum objective of all three core subjects. This would also improve the school's grading in comparison with 'similar' schools. 'Similar' schools are defined by the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals.

Results at GCSE, based on the average points score per pupil, were average in 1998 compared with all schools and well above average taking the three years 1996-8 together. The strongest results have been in science where pupils usually achieve higher results than the same pupils achieve in their other subjects. The reverse is true in weaker subjects such as art, geography, graphics and history where pupils have underachieved at GCSE. There was evidence in the inspection of markedly improved standards in geography and history. Results in child development and food technology have improved considerably in the past two years. In 1999 GCSE results in English, mathematics and science were uniformly good and show what it is possible to achieve in all subjects in the school.

Quality of teaching

	Overall quality	Most effective in:	Least effective in:
Years 7-9	Good	Science; modern languages; music; physical education.	Art
Years 10-11	Good	English; mathematics; science; modern languages; music; physical education.	Art; design and technology.
English	Good		
Mathematics	Good		

The quality of teaching is good overall. Of 144 observations during the inspection teaching was satisfactory or better in 92 per cent of lessons. In nearly two thirds of lessons teaching was good or better and in a quarter very good or better.

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

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Very good: most pupils respect and respond to the clear expectations of good behaviour in the school.
Attendance	Satisfactory: attendance is broadly in line with the national average. Authorised absence is average and unauthorised well below average. The progress of a minority of pupils is affected by poor attendance.
Ethos*	Very good: attitudes to work and relationships are very good and the school is committed to high standards which is reflected in the work and approach of most teachers.
Leadership and management	Good: under the good leadership of the acting-headteacher the school ran smoothly and efficiently during the inspection. The governing body is effective and well informed. Financial management is very good. Some members of the senior management team have excessive loads which affects efficiency and monitoring. Most but not all middle managers are successful.
Curriculum	Satisfactory: mainly broad and balanced at Key Stage 3; balanced at Key Stage 4 but lacking breadth. Opportunities for developing ICT skills across the curriculum are inadequate. Extra-curricular opportunities are good.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Very good: good for social and cultural development and very good for spiritual and moral. Opportunities to appreciate multi-cultural traditions need to be developed further.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Satisfactory: staffing is satisfactory but there are shortages of technician support and in particular in ICT; learning resources are adequate; accommodation is very tight although satisfactory overall; the library is too small and indoor PE facilities are poor.
Value for money	Good

*Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
VIII. The school enables their children to achieve good standards.	in design graphic
IX. The caring Christian environment and high values promoted.	
X. High standards of behaviour and discipline.	
XI. They find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems.	
XII. Pupils are encouraged to get involved in more than their daily lessons.	
XIII. The improvement in music in the	

<p>school.</p> <p>XIV. There are sufficient opportunities for parents to become involved in school activities.</p>	<p>experie</p> <p>inconsis homew</p> <p>make i further.</p> <p>behavio elimin</p>

Inspectors' findings support the views of the majority of parents in what they like about the school but judge that the standards in some subjects at GCSE have not been high enough, including results in graphics. Inspectors agree with some parents that the timing of work experience which takes place in the Autumn term of Year 11 is not ideal and would be better in Year 10, but realise that it is a slot allocated to the school rather than the school's own choice. During the week of the inspection the use of homework was satisfactory, a judgement also supported by checks on earlier work, but the school needs to continue to monitor this area closely. The concerns expressed by some parents over reports are justified as they rarely set clear targets for improvement. The school takes positive measures to deal with some misbehaviour reported on school buses, but it is a problem which has not been entirely eliminated. All matters and concerns raised at the pre-inspection parents' meeting concerning school transport have been referred to the school.

· **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

To improve standards the governors and senior management need to:

- (1) improve GCSE results in art, graphics, geography and history by: (paragraphs 11, 71, 120, 127, 135, 142)
 - (-) subject teachers setting higher targets aimed at pupils in these subjects achieving at least

- (-) as well as they achieve in other subjects at GCSE;
 - (-) rigorous monitoring of standards in these subjects by senior management and
 - (-) regular reports to governors.
- (2) review the structure and functioning of the senior management team to ensure that any member of the team is not excessively overloaded and is able to carry out all tasks delegated to them. (paragraphs 68,155)
- (3) ensure that the introduction of individual target setting at Key Stage 3 is carried out by all departments by: (paragraphs 48, 56, 65, 71)
- (-) impressing on all heads of department that it is their prime responsibility to implement
 - (-) agreed policy on target setting so that there is a whole-school thrust;
 - (-) using systems being developed in some departments at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 as
 - (-) models of good practice;
 - (-) senior management monitoring all departments and taking positive action if policy is
 - (-) not being implemented.
- (4) improve current reports to parents by always making it clear what pupils need to do to improve further. (paragraphs 35, 48, 65)
- (5) improve access to information technology by: (paragraphs 32, 70, 76, 79, 82, 149, 155, 156, 161)
- (-) considering the creation of a centralised and integrated library/ learning resources area to
 - (-) maximise accessibility and usage of equipment both during and outside lesson time ;
 - (-) providing appropriate levels of technician support.
- (6) continue to make representation for improved indoor accommodation for physical education, and take further steps to strengthen the case. (paragraphs 79 ,176)
- (7) meet statutory requirements by: (paragraphs 39, 63, 69, 134, 151)
- (-) all subjects providing appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in ICT;
 - (-) installing the required dust extraction facilities in design and technology areas;
 - (-) ensuring that all formal health and safety procedures are installed and implemented.

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. The Holy Family Catholic High School is a 11-16 mixed comprehensive in Carlton in the East Riding of Yorkshire. It is based in the local education authority of North Yorkshire. It is a voluntary-aided school. Pupils are recruited from a wide catchment area and mainly three primary schools. There is a wide social mix of pupils. Approximately 35 per cent of pupils are non-Catholic. The motto of the school is 'to increase wisdom and grace' and there is a ten-point mission statement.
1. Of 430 pupils on roll 217 are boys and 213 girls. At the time of the last inspection there were 407 on roll. The school is much smaller than other secondary schools nationally. The average number of pupils per teacher is 16.6 which is lower than the national average.
2. The school's population is mainly white. There are no pupils who come from homes where English is not the first language.
3. Twenty-nine pupils are eligible for free school meals (6.7 per cent) which is below the national average.
4. There are 80 pupils with special educational needs (18.6 per cent), which is higher than average. Over half are on Stages 2 or 3 of the special educational needs register. Fifteen have statements of special educational needs, which is higher than average. There were no statemented pupils at the time of the last inspection.
5. Attainment by the majority of pupils on entry in Year 7 has been average.
7. The whole-school targets for the proportion of pupils achieving five or more GCSE grades A*-C was 50.6 per cent in 1999 and it is set at 53 per cent for the year 2000. The average points score target per pupil for 2000 is 43.2. The 1999 target was exceeded.
- 7.

7. **Key indicators**

Attainment at Key Stage 3

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1998	38	46	84

7. National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 5 or above	Boys	14	22	25
	Girls	38	29	35
	Total	52	51	60
Percentage at NC Level 5 or above	School	63(78)	61(66)	72(75)
	National	65(57)	60(60)	56(60)
Percentage at NC Level 6 or above	School	20(30)	37(38)	34(33)
	National	35(30)	36(36)	27(27)

7. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 5 or above	Boys	19	20	33
	Girls	23	22	41
	Total	42	42	74
Percentage at NC Level 5 or above	School	71(68)	61(68)	89(90)
	National	62(61)	64(63)	62(62)
Percentage at NC Level 6 or above	School	47(27)	39(36)	49(41)
	National	31(30)	37(37)	31(29)

Figures in parenthesis refer to previous year's results

Attainment at Key Stage 4

Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1998	45	34	79

GCSE Results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A* to G	1 or more grades A* to G
Number of pupils achieving standard specified	Boys	21	41	44
	Girls	17	34	34
	Total	38	75	78
Percentage achieving standard specified	School	48 (44)	95 (92)	99 (100)
	National	44.6 (43)	89.8 (88)	95.2 (94)

Number studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and percentage of *such pupils* who achieved all those they studied:

	Number	% Success rate
School	n/a	n/a
National		n/a

Figures in parenthesis refer to previous year's results

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:

		%
Authorised Absence	School	8.4
	National comparative data	7.9
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.1
	National comparative data	1.1

7.

7. Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	2
Permanent	0

7. Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	25
Satisfactory or better	92
Less than satisfactory	8

7.

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

7. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

7. Attainment and progress

8. Attainment of pupils on entry to the school in Year 7 is broadly average.

8.

1. Results in National Curriculum tests at Key Stage 3 were average overall in 1998 and also taking the three years 1996 to 1998 together. In individual subjects in 1998 results were below average in English, average in mathematics and above average in science. Results in English and mathematics were average taking the three years 1996-8 together and above average in science. Boys' and girls' results have been similar to those nationally. In 1999 results in mathematics and science remained similar to previous years but improved considerably in English. Only science has achieved consistently above average results, a standard which should be the minimum objective of all three core subjects. This would also improve the school's grading in comparison with 'similar' schools which in 1998 was well below average. 'Similar' schools are defined by the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals.

2. Results at GCSE, based on the average points score per pupil, were average in 1998 compared with all schools and well above average taking the three years 1996-8 together. Compared with national averages boys' and girls' results have been similar. The average GCSE points score per pupil showed a rising trend over the last five years but at a slower rate than the national average. Results were average in 1998 compared with 'similar' schools.

1. Using another benchmark the proportion of pupils achieving five or more grades A*-C at GCSE in 1998 was broadly in line with the national average with a success rate of 48.1 per cent compared with the national average of 44.6 per cent. The proportion achieving five or more GCSEs at grades A*-G was above average and the proportion

achieving one or more grades A*-G was well above average. The strongest results have been in science where pupils usually achieve higher results than the same pupils achieve in their other subjects. The reverse is true in weaker subjects such as art, geography, graphics and history where pupils have underachieved at GCSE. There was evidence in the inspection of markedly improved standards in geography and history. Results in child development and food technology have improved considerably in the past two years. In 1999 GCSE results in English, mathematics and science were uniformly good and show what it is possible to achieve in all subjects in the school.

11.

12. Current attainment by the majority of pupils overall at the end of Key Stage 3 is average and is above average at the end of Key Stage 4.

12.

2. In individual subjects at the end of Key Stage 3 standards are above average in science, modern foreign languages and physical education. Standards are average in English, mathematics, art, design and technology including food technology, geography, history, information technology and music. In geography although the majority attain average standards a significant minority are below the national expectation. In English the majority of pupils read and write well and are confident enough to apply these skills to make good progress, and higher attainers show greater sophistication in these areas. As in other subjects across the curriculum lower attainers are held back in English by weaknesses in spelling and are slower in writing. They are supported well enough in class and in the lunchtime reading club however to make good progress. In mathematics average pupils are extended to reach above average levels in algebra and 'shape and space', while high attaining pupils are working at well above levels expected for their age in algebra and statistics. Above average pupils reach levels beyond national expectations in using Pythagoras' theorem, and work in books shows coverage of trigonometry, cumulative frequency graphs and curved graphs up to the level of 'exceptional performance'. Standards are similar in all aspects of science. As they move into higher levels of the curriculum, pupils in Year 9 can for example use scientific models to explain phenomena about wave patterns.

- 13.
14. In individual subjects at the end of Key Stage 4 standards are above average in English, mathematics, science, food technology, child development, modern foreign languages and music. They are average in drama, design and technology, business studies, geography, history and physical education. Standards are average in information technology when pupils are given the opportunity to show their skills. Standards in geography and history are currently higher than shown by past GCSE results. In geography preparation for coursework is now better and in history work is being monitored more rigorously, with pupils successfully undertaking more extended writing. Although during the inspection standards in design and technology met national expectations overall, some weak work was observed in graphics. Standards are below average in art.
- 14.
3. At Key Stage 4 most pupils experience a wide range of reading material in English and demonstrate their understanding in speech and writing. Confidence in reading aloud is widespread. Much writing reveals above average skills in sentence structure, clarity and fluency. Higher attaining pupils have strong analytical skills. Lower attainers when writing at length have less control of sentence structure and spelling. Higher attainers are able to use a wide vocabulary in sophisticated argument. The responses of lower attainers are briefer and not as articulate, but show an improvement from Key Stage 3. In mathematics average and high attaining pupils are working at levels up to and including 'exceptional performance' and a statistics option is currently running for Year 11 pupils where standards are high. At the start of Key Stage 4 below average pupils in mathematics are able to change fractions into decimals, but some are hampered by lack of speed in number work. By the end of Year 9, a high proportion of pupils in science competently carry out investigations with understanding of predictions based on scientific knowledge and fair tests, and the highest attainers in Year 9 are well above average in recording investigations. Whilst the very highest attainers can quickly interpret results and draw conclusions, others have difficulty using their own knowledge of science ideas and research.
4. Progress is satisfactory overall at Key Stage 3 and good overall at Key Stage 4. At Key Stage 3 progress is very good in music and physical education; progress is good in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, food technology, history and modern foreign languages; it is satisfactory in geography and information

technology. In art progress is unsatisfactory.

5. At Key Stage 4 progress is very good in mathematics; progress is good in English, science, food technology, child development, history, modern languages, music and physical education; it is satisfactory in business studies, design and technology, geography and information technology. In art progress is unsatisfactory. Although satisfactory overall in design and technology there are examples of poor progress in some lessons. Lower attainers struggle to make the same progress as others in business studies when dealing with trading accounts. Current progress in geography is an improvement on the unsatisfactory progress indicated by recent GCSE results. Whilst progress is satisfactory in information technology at Key Stage 4 much of that relies on what is offered by individual subjects, what pupils bring with them from Key Stage 3, plus experiences outside school. A large percentage of pupils have computers at home.

- 17.
18. In personal and social education programmes at Key Stages 3 and 4 pupils make consistently good progress.
- 18.
19. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils at both key stages, assisted in this by very effective classroom support. The above average results at both five or more GCSE grades A*-G, and one or more grades A*-G compared with all schools, is testimony to the good progress made by lower attainers, including those with special educational needs.
- 19.
20. In subjects across the curriculum most pupils read with understanding although some lower attainers and those with special educational needs read hesitantly. Whilst the majority write with good accuracy and higher attainers imaginatively, spelling errors persist, particularly for lower attainers. In some subjects lower attainers have difficulty in expressing their ideas in writing. Most pupils are confident speakers and listening skills are good. Pupils' use of number across the curriculum is good. Most pupils are able to work without calculators where necessary. The general level of numeracy observed in all subject areas is good. Lower attaining pupils usually cope adequately when given appropriate support across the curriculum in literacy and numeracy.
- 20.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

6. Pupils' attitudes towards their work are very good and there is a high work ethic within the school. Pupils settle quickly to written tasks when requested to do so, are interested in their studies and respond well when given challenging tasks. They work well in pairs and small groups when given the opportunity and actively encourage and support each other. In statistics, for example, pupils work well in pairs undertaking investigative project work and peer group support is evident within many lessons. Peer group evaluation and constructive criticism are a feature of modern foreign language lessons. Year 11 pupils worked effectively in a group to produce an improvised piece of drama for an assessed GCSE performance. Pupils show a sense of pride in their work, are proud of their achievements, and gain personal satisfaction for their efforts. Pupils with special educational needs gain in self-confidence as they move through the school, are well motivated, and persevere with difficult work. They

are well integrated and other pupils readily offer help and encouragement.

7. The behaviour of pupils throughout the school is very good and this has a positive impact on their attainment and progress. The standard of behaviour in lessons is rarely less than good. There are clear expectations of good behaviour that the majority of pupils respect. Teaching staff display a consistent approach to the management of pupils which contributes significantly to the high standard of behaviour throughout the school. The parental survey shows that the great majority of parents feel that the school achieves high standards of good behaviour. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting were also very positive about standards of behaviour.

8. Relationships within the school both between pupils and with adults are very good and are a significant strength of the school. Pupils are courteous and welcoming towards visitors. Care is taken of the school environment with the exception of some pupils dropping litter, which is totally out of character with the rest of the school. Equipment used in lessons is respected. In science lessons, for example, pupils in Year 7 handle apparatus with care and replace it back into its storage area at the end of lessons. Pupils are aware of the school's anti-bullying philosophy and of the procedures to follow if incidents occur. Any incidents that do occur are dealt with quickly and effectively. Bullying is not an issue in this school.
9. The personal development of pupils is good. Pupils are willing to accept responsibility when opportunities are provided. Year 11 pupils selected by teaching staff to act as prefects respond well. The remaining pupils are encouraged to take a responsible attitude towards managing younger pupils and do so in a variety of situations, including on the school buses. Pupils show initiative in the wider community by fundraising for a range of charities which benefit people both at home and in other countries. Hampers are given to senior citizens at Christmas and pupils and staff organise a Christmas party for them. Musicians from the school respond well to opportunities to play at civic events, the local power station, school concerts and carol services. Pupils show respect for values and beliefs different from their own.

24.

Attendance

10. The attendance level of pupils is satisfactory and was broadly in line with the national average for similar schools in the academic year 1997/98. The incidence of unauthorised absence is well below that of similar schools. The poor attendance of a minority of pupils, particularly those in Key Stage 4, has a detrimental impact on their attainment and progress as seen with some pupils in a lower set in science, despite the very good efforts of teachers to compensate. Incidents of lateness for morning registration are usually related to difficulties with school or public transport. Lessons start punctually. The school complies with statutory requirements for the registration of pupils.

25. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

25.

Teaching

25.

26. The quality of teaching is good overall. Of 144 observations during the inspection teaching was satisfactory or better in 92 per cent of lessons. In nearly two thirds of lessons teaching was good or better and in a quarter very good or better, which makes the quality of teaching a strong feature of the school. The most effective teaching at Key Stage 3 was in science, modern languages, music and physical education, and the least effective teaching was in art. At Key Stage 4 the most effective teaching was in English, mathematics, science, modern languages, music and physical education, and the least effective teaching was in art and design and technology. Examination results in art, geography, graphics and history over time indicate unsatisfactory teaching, as the same pupils achieved more highly in their other subjects. During the inspection standards of teaching were satisfactory however in geography and good in history.

26.

26.

27. Teachers show in nearly all lessons that they have good subject knowledge. In art good subject expertise helps to integrate aspects of modern art. In history interpretations are suggested for higher attainers which might otherwise be missed. Specialist teachers in ICT use good knowledge to explain concepts clearly in most cases. Knowledge in music is very secure. Teachers use their skills in physical education to demonstrate to pupils how to improve. The success of the personal and social education programmes, where teaching is consistently good, is influenced by the experience and knowledge of teachers involved, and the commitment of the school to the programme.

27.

11. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are good. In English, music and physical education expectations are high with all pupils including lower attainers encouraged to strive for quality. A good initial impetus is given to lessons in drama where teachers make their expectations clear. High expectations in food technology and child development have been an important factor in raising standards. Teachers of modern foreign languages use challenging language to stimulate their pupils. In science expectations are profitably shared with pupils but work set for higher attainers could be more demanding. There are high expectations in business studies, but there is a contrast between teaching which pitches lesson content at the right level and offers clear explanations, and other teaching where explanations are not clear and which leaves pupils confused. In art expectations are unsatisfactory at both key stages and as a result pupils do not use their skills imaginatively enough. Expectations in some lessons in graphics and geography are too low. In geography tasks designed to meet the needs of all pupils are only set in a minority of lessons. Expectations are mostly high in history but there are lessons where activities are not demanding enough.

12. Planning for lessons is good. Lessons in geography are usually well planned but there is often too close an adherence to textbooks and associated worksheets. Thorough planning in modern languages include a logical series of activities to reinforce vocabulary and exercise skills. Objectives are always clear in music as a result of the quality of planning. Teachers now use schemes of work more effectively than at the time of the last inspection but progress has been slower in design and technology.

30. Teaching methods and organisation are good. In physical education almost all lessons have probing question and answer sessions. Pupils who are unable to physically participate in PE lessons are nearly always profitably involved in coaching and umpiring. In English teachers use pupils' work effectively to illustrate points but although in general effective questioning techniques are used, some opportunities are missed. Teaching in music is well thought out to stretch the most talented and ensure that the least experienced do not struggle. A suitable variety of activities in mathematics prolongs interest and application by pupils. Pupils benefit from carefully structured practical work in science, but it is not balanced by enough independent investigative work. Methods to develop pupils' subject vocabulary in science are successful. In less successful lessons in geography and ICT there is too much teacher talk and insufficient time for pupils' activity. Occasionally in modern foreign languages, teachers make heavy demands on pupils with lengthy presentations. In ICT teachers build adequately on what pupils learn outside school which promotes progress. Whilst demonstrations of technique are effective in art, work set is heavily prescriptive and limits the scope for pupils to express their ideas.

30.

13. Teachers are well informed about pupils with special educational needs. The use of a variety of lively techniques in English for example helps pupils with special educational needs to build confidence. Very effective classroom support also enables good progress to be made. Pupils, including those with behavioral problems, are profitably involved in their target setting. Teachers and assistants, including a visiting behaviour support teacher, closely monitor how well pupils are responding to targets in individual education plans.

14. Teachers generally do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their use of ICT across all subjects, with access to facilities a problem, but in science it is used much more widely than at the time of the last inspection. Some good use of ICT was also seen in food technology. Teachers of modern foreign languages have done much to improve their ICT skills. Teaching in music and food technology make good use of equipment available and there is also some use in several other subjects. Teachers are keen to extend the use of ICT and would welcome improved access and technician back-up.

15. The management of pupils is very good. In English the use of praise and encouragement reinforce aspects of the lesson. Good organisation and high expectations in mathematics usually helps to maintain good discipline, but less effective teaching attempts to impart information when pupils are not fully concentrating. In physical education an outstanding feature of the teaching is the excellent management of the pupils and the mutual respect that exists between pupils and staff. Such standards were also seen in a business studies class where lower attaining pupils were skilfully cajoled and directed when taught about the importance of job application forms and related factors in selecting applicants for interview.

16. Teachers' use of time and resources is good. In music rigorous lessons proceed at a brisk pace with visual aids used imaginatively. Props and visual aids are also used imaginatively in modern foreign languages to focus pupils' attention. The pace of teaching is better in mathematics where pupils are taught in sets in Years 8 and 9, than when taught in mixed ability lessons in Year 7. The use of a 'house plan' as a resource in English enabled pupils with special educational needs to visualise the setting of their story. The pace of some lessons in geography is poor.

17. The quality and use of day-to-day assessment is good. It is made very clear in music what pupils have to do to improve. Assessment in mathematics is thorough. Ongoing assessment is a constructive feature in physical education. In English, science and geography, whilst marking encourages pupils it does not always make it clear where improvement is necessary. Written work is marked thoroughly in modern foreign languages with helpful comments, but insufficient use is made of National Curriculum levels in assessment. Comments pointing out what pupils need to do to improve further in all subjects also need to be a feature in reports to parents.

18. Homework is mostly used to good effect. In English there are particularly good examples of homework being reviewed in the following lesson. Homework is set regularly in science and is sometimes imaginative. History homework and enquiry-based projects encourage the development of higher learning skills.

- 36.

37. Extra-curricular activities are used well particularly in physical education and music to extend pupils' learning. Most teachers also give generously of their time in the lead-up to examinations at Key Stage 4 and provide invaluable extra support during lunchtimes.

37.

38. Overall standards of teaching are an improvement on the time of the last inspection, mainly as a result of the higher proportion of both good and very good teaching.

38.

The curriculum and assessment

19. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum that is appropriately balanced, but it lacks some breadth at Key Stage 4. Statutory requirements are not met in information and communication technology as not all subjects offer appropriate opportunities to pupils to develop and apply their ICT skills.

20. The Key Stage 3 curriculum is broad and balanced. All pupils study the subjects of the National Curriculum, drama, religious education, information technology and personal and social education. They also study information technology for the equivalent of one hour each fortnight and follow a course in education and personal relationships (EPR) which covers aspects of sex and health education. From Year 8 onwards careers education, EPR and information technology are timetabled together and rotated throughout the year. The first modern foreign language is French. Linguistically gifted pupils are encouraged to study German in addition from Year 8 onwards. The allocation of time to subjects is satisfactory and broadly in line with national averages, although it is rather short for discrete information and communication technology lessons. Pupils are placed in mixed ability groups in Year 7. In Years 8 and 9 individual subjects and groups of subjects are then able to decide the composition of classes set by attainment.

21. The Key Stage 4 curriculum is satisfactory. It is balanced, but lacks some breadth. All pupils follow a core of religious education, English, mathematics, science, a modern

foreign language, physical education, design and technology, careers and a modular course in personal and social education. They may then choose two further courses from a list that includes the other National Curriculum subjects. The curriculum is given some extra breadth by the inclusion of subjects such as child care, business education, drama and statistics. However, the statistics course is available currently in Year 11 only, design and technology includes no course in textiles and there are no vocational courses. All subjects apart from careers and personal and social education are offered at GCSE level. In geography lower attaining pupils are offered the alternative of a Certificate of Achievement. The well-planned course in personal and social education, followed by all pupils, includes elements of personal and interpersonal skills, social rights and responsibilities, personal qualities and attitudes, health and sex education and careers education. Some elements of sex education are taught in religious education, science and the educational and personal relationships course. The arrangements for sex education meet statutory requirements. The personal and social education course provides coherent careers education and guidance from Year 8 onwards. There is a three-week period of work experience for all Year 11 pupils in the autumn term. Parents approve of the quality of this provision but are critical of its timing in Year 11. Inspectors support the view that it would be better in Year 10. Parents view the school's contribution to careers education as satisfactory and the input from the North Yorkshire Careers Service as good.

22. The curriculum provides satisfactory equality of opportunity and access, and within the constraints of timetabling and staffing, departments create teaching sets that give individuals the opportunity to fulfil their potential. In most subject areas equality for boys and girls is achieved by ensuring that subject content and context do not debar either from participation. The setting arrangements however, do produce some gender imbalances, with a preponderance of boys in the lower sets. There are other exceptions which are unsatisfactory. Those Year 8 and 9 pupils studying two foreign languages have no discrete information technology lessons and fewer careers and physical education lessons than the remainder. Year 11 pupils may receive less physical education than others if they choose to attend careers talks instead.
23. The curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and meets the requirements of pupils on its special educational needs register. Most changes to address weaknesses identified during the previous inspection are having a positive effect. Individual education plans are well written and meet requirements. Annual reviews are in order. The lack of a lift to the first floor prevents full access to all facilities for wheelchair users.
24. Smooth transfer between Key Stages 2 and 3 is assisted by good quality liaison with the three main partner schools, particularly in the core subjects. However, transfer is made more difficult by the fact that these three schools and the remainder are in three different local authority areas. Within the school continuity and progression are assisted in most subjects by schemes of work that are logical and progressive, revisiting and reinforcing earlier learning. Curriculum planning in art does not provide smooth continuity and progression in that subject and there are some weaknesses in design and technology and information technology. Close liaison with the neighbouring college, and other post-16 institutions ensures effective transition at the end of Year 11.
25. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities. In sport the good provision is open to all, giving pupils the opportunity to play in team competition to a good standard. A football club for girls has recently been introduced. In music there are a small school orchestra, two choirs for pupils and one for staff, visiting musicians

and visits to concerts and workshops. Provision is also good in English, drama and science. In some other subjects provision is patchy or non-existent. Pupils attend diocesan retreats, other residential courses and accompany the annual diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes. The recently introduced Duke of Edinburgh award scheme is well supported by pupils and highly regarded by parents. There is a long-standing tradition of foreign exchanges in the languages department.

26. The school has addressed most of the curricular issues raised during the previous inspection. Most departments have revised and improved their schemes of work in time for them to have sufficient effect, a new homework policy has been written and whole-school literacy and numeracy policies, at present in draft form, will be introduced shortly.

27. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are satisfactory overall with most subjects having appropriate systems in place. Departments mostly follow the principles set out in the school's assessment, recording and reporting policy and associated statements on reporting to parents and homework. At Key Stage 3 assessments are linked effectively to National Curriculum levels, and at Key Stage 4 to examination board grade descriptors and criteria. There is still variation however in the quality of assessment procedures, and the best practice in subjects such as mathematics, science and modern foreign languages could be disseminated to all. These areas make use of a variety of techniques including rewards, individual profile sheets showing strengths and weaknesses and exemplar work for moderation. Information from testing on entry is beginning to be used more profitably in some departments.

48. The use of assessment to inform curriculum planning is satisfactory. Most subjects use assessment to plan future work or curriculum provision and to organize or review setting or grouping arrangements. As a result, pupils with special educational needs benefit from specially designed worksheets, including when preparing for examinations. Science and mathematics have computerised records of pupils' results which enable progress to be tracked throughout the key stages and allow analysis for setting targets and measuring 'value added'. The use of assessment to set individual targets is being well developed at Key Stage 4 but much more needs to be done at Key Stage 3. Some departments are lagging behind and individual target-setting, arising from assessment, needs to be applied throughout the school. The results of assessment could also be used more profitably in school reports to set targets for improvement.

48.

49. There are good procedures in place for the identification and assessment of pupils with special educational needs. Information is gathered from primary schools and used to plan the necessary provision for pupils at the start of the academic year. Pupils on entry are also tested on their reading and spelling skills and information is used to determine levels of support and monitoring necessary. Individual education plans have objectives directly related to assessed needs. Targets in successive plans are related to earlier plans and reflect progress made. Individual plans are reviewed regularly. Pupils with statements have their annual and transitional reviews at the appropriate times. Review meetings are well attended by professionals and parents and pupils are encouraged to participate in discussions. Most of the written reports give a clear assessment of progress made towards targets agreed at the previous review.

49.

28. Since the last inspection there is greater consistency in the use of assessment procedures. Development planning has ensured that the quest for improvement has been kept high on the agenda.

50.

50. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

29. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. In a variety of ways the school gives pupils an insight into shared values and beliefs and meets its priorities to

provide a Catholic education for all and give the opportunity to all to 'develop spiritually'. This occurs daily in form periods with prayer and in assemblies. The combination of assemblies and tutor periods fully meets the requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship. Assemblies include time for prayer and reflection and thought-provoking addresses on social and moral issues, drawing its spiritual guidance from the Gospels. Non-Catholics are respected and fully embraced into the school. The school choir plays an active role in assemblies and the celebrations of the Mass with special Masses for specific events in the religious calendar and pupils' lives. Further provision for spiritual development occurs in the many extra-curricular activities, which include residential retreats for pupils in Years 10 and 11 and an annual pilgrimage to Lourdes. Twenty-seven pupils from Year 10 went to Lourdes and this has influenced a number to take a more active role in celebrations of the Mass. Opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual awareness are provided in most subjects.

30. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Teachers are good role models and develop very good 'family' relationships with their pupils which influences behaviour and standards. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong and in many subjects are given the opportunity to explore moral issues, for instance in English deviousness and immorality are considered in studying 'Animal Farm'. In geography and science the opportunity is provided for pupils to consider issues involving moral judgements such as the abuse of the environment, acid rain and global warming. In physical education pupils are taught to show a strong sense of right and wrong in applying rules within a game and in learning to win and lose with equally good grace. Incidents of bad language are dealt with quickly and in a positive way. In physical education as in modern foreign languages pupils are encouraged to show consideration and sensitivity when evaluating critically each other's performance. Pupils on report evaluate their performance and progress in lessons with the teacher. Moral issues explored in history include consideration of whether or not the British should be proud of the events by which they extended their empire in the nineteenth century. Parents feel that the school promotes very high values.
31. Provision for pupils' social development is good. In addition to the retreats for older pupils, pupils in Year 7 have the opportunity to attend a residential course at East Barmby. Pupils have been successfully encouraged to prepare prayer anthologies for use in the chapel. The school provides a good range of opportunities for pupils to

show initiative and take responsibility including taking an active part in assemblies and services. The senior prefects are expected to help at open evenings, parents' evenings and celebratory masses. Opportunities are provided for pupils on the GCSE childcare course to take an active part in the local village playgroup and there is a community work programme involving Year 11 pupils, who visit the elderly in Carlton and do some shopping for them. In most subjects there are opportunities to work in small groups or teams. In physical education older pupils help with junior clubs and umpiring at matches and tournaments. In science pupils share the experience of practical lessons and the results achieved in them. Extra-curricular activities and visits also assist the development of positive social interaction. Parents appreciate the opportunities provided through extra-curricular events. The French exchange is thriving and that puts considerable personal responsibility on pupils for making a success of the partnership. In religious education pupils are encouraged to prepare Christmas cards to send to prisoners of conscience through the auspices of Amnesty International. There is a strong sense of belonging to the school 'family' and the introduction and use of the Book of Remembrance typifies this.

32. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Cultural difference and sensitivities are explored through the work of several subjects. In English and drama, pupils explore the rich heritage of English literature in lessons and school productions, which also assists their social development. Visits to the theatre and by touring theatre groups explore the literature of other countries. The culture of other countries and times are a feature of pupils' work in history and their study of foreign composers and musical form. In science pupils learn about the contribution to scientific development of both British and foreign scientists. In religious education the nature of other faiths such as Hinduism and Islam are explored in detail, but overall opportunities to appreciate multi-cultural traditions and to prepare pupils for life in a multi-cultural society are more limited than other aspects of cultural development.

54.

54. **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

33. The overall support, guidance and welfare provided by the school for its pupils are satisfactory. The school provides a caring, supportive environment. There is a good induction programme for pupils and they are well supported during their early life in school. Year 11 pupils are prepared well for the next phase of education, or for

entering the world of work, through career advice provided by the school, the external careers service and a wide range of outside speakers. Pupils benefit from the support provided by a range of adults other than teachers such as the Chaplain and school nurse both of whom are available to pupils for individual talks.

34. Procedures for monitoring the personal development and academic progress of pupils are satisfactory. Form tutors monitor pupils' personal development effectively. They know their pupils well. The school has recently introduced a pilot scheme for individual target setting for Year 11 pupils based on their examination performance at the end of Year 10. Individual target setting is also needed at Key Stage 3 to support pupils.
35. Procedures for supporting pupils with special educational needs are good. Effective support is provided in lessons and outside the classroom, for example in helping pupils improve reading and writing skills. The organisation of pupils into small classes, where additional support can be concentrated, is also an important factor in the good progress made. Progress is carefully monitored against the targets of individual education plans by teachers and assistants.
36. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. The school has high expectations of behaviour based on self-discipline and respect for others. Pupils are aware of the consequences of misbehaviour and clear about the sanctions it attracts. Members of staff are fair and consistent in the application of sanctions. The topic of bullying is addressed through the personal, social and health education programme. Pupils are clear about what action to take if incidents occur. The procedures for dealing with bullying ensure that any incidents are dealt with swiftly and effectively. In response to parental concern about incidents of bullying on the school buses, the acting headteacher has instructed Year 11 prefects and pupils to take an active role in managing behaviour on the buses and report any incidents the next day directly to her.
37. The governing body is appropriately involved in the exclusion of pupils and procedures are clear. This sanction is fairly administered and reserved for those rare pupils who fail to respond to other sanctions the school employs for serious breaches of the school's code of conduct.

38. The monitoring and promoting of attendance is satisfactory. Pupils whose attendance level is poor, or have any unauthorised absence, are identified and actively followed up. Four education welfare officers who cover the wide catchment area from which pupils are recruited support the school in this aspect of its work. There are inconsistencies in the coding of registers and in the understanding of what is authorised or unauthorised absence. The procedures for recording late arriving pupils, and for those leaving the school premises during the school day, are satisfactory.
39. Child protection procedures are very good. The acting headteacher is the designated person for child protection. She has received appropriate training in all aspects of child protection. Arrangements are in place for all members of staff to take part in an awareness-raising course in the near future. The procedures to follow are well documented if incidents occur and it is part of the school's induction programme for new members of staff.
40. There are sufficient members of staff with first aid qualifications and the medical care pupils receive is good. Currently the school has no medical room because the original has been converted into a disabled toilet. The school canteen provides a range of hot and cold meals at lunchtime.
41. Arrangements for health and safety within the school are unsatisfactory. Regular fire drills are held. A health and safety policy has been adopted but has not yet been tailor-made to meet the specific needs of the school. Risk assessments have not been carried out in all departments and regular safety audits are not carried out. The school has recently appointed a member of staff with responsibility for health and safety but he has not yet received any training. During the inspection it was noted that the dust extraction facilities did not meet the required health and safety standards and that it was impossible to secure one item of physical education apparatus into the floor of the large hall. The school is already aware of the need to install dust extraction facilities and plans are in hand.
63. **Partnership with parents and the community**

42. The partnership between the school and its parents is good. At the parents' meeting before the inspection it was noted that parents felt the school to be approachable and welcoming. Parents are consulted about changes in school policy; for example they have been involved in drawing up the sex education policy. They feel the school consults them well on important issues and that their concerns are generally addressed well. Parents serve the school well as members of the governing body. Many parents help with school productions and with transporting pupils home after sporting or other after-school activities. The Parent Teacher Association raises funds for the school and has been particularly active in raising funds for the school chapel. The governing body, staff and pupils value their contribution which enriches the daily life of the school.
43. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory. They are informed about events or the successes of pupils through newsletters although some parents would like them to be more regular. Parents are expected to take an active role in monitoring the completion of both homework and course work. If problems occur parents are contacted and work in partnership with the school to resolve them. Annual consultation evenings give parents the opportunity of discussing their child's academic and personal development with form tutors and subject teachers. Information evenings, which are also attended by representatives of the careers service, provide valuable guidance for pupils and parents when choosing both GCSE and post-16 options. Annual reports to parents are satisfactory and meet statutory requirements, but they do not contain sufficient information about how pupils can improve their work and raise their level of attainment. Improvements in this area should be tied in with individual target setting throughout the school. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are appropriately involved with their annual reviews.
44. Links with the community which enrich the curriculum are good. There are particularly good links with Catholic primary schools whose pupils move into Holy Family for their secondary education. Pupils in Year 6 are invited to visit the school for drama and musical performances and also attend two induction days. The partnership between the school and colleges of further education are good. Pupils in Years 9 and 10, for example, benefit from a one-day taster course at a local further education college. There are strong links with the parish of Saint Mary's in Selby where the curate is also the school Chaplain. School productions, musical concerts and carol services are

open to the local community. Musical groups are invited to play at civic events and other venues within the community. Pupils undertake community service in Carlton. There are no on-going curriculum-related links with industry.

45. Good use is made of the local community and wider area with many organised visits. Good use is made of the locality for fieldwork. Pupils studying child development visit a local nursery as part of their course. Speakers are invited to talk to pupils about a wide range of topics and careers which widens pupils' perspective of the world of work. This supplements the careers workshops organised during lunchtimes. The police and the school nurse work regularly with pupils through the personal, social and health education programme. Pupils in Year 11 undertake work experience during the Autumn Term. Pupils studying modern foreign languages benefit from exchange visits to France. There are very close and ongoing diocesan links. Other links are forged through a variety of fund-raising activities.

67. **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

67. **Leadership and management**

46. The leadership and management of the school are good. Under the good leadership of the acting headteacher during the inspection the school ran very smoothly and efficiently. Four senior teachers working alongside the acting headteacher and acting deputy head as the senior management team have assisted in providing stability during senior management changes, but there are weaknesses in this structure. The combined roles which each senior teacher carries in leading a department, acting as a head of year, plus some whole-school functions such as co-ordinating information communication technology are excessive and therefore unmanageable. The decision of the governors to set up the present management structure with five senior teachers for a fixed period was a wise one.
47. The governing body is effective, well informed and has a close working relationship with the school through its involvement in school development planning and associated activities. Governors hold the school to account and act as a 'critical friend' through being actively involved in proposals from an early stage. The

governors are rightly concerned that the school should guard against complacency and that further improvements are necessary and possible. The governing body meets its duties in relation to the majority of statutory requirements, but there are weaknesses in the provision for the teaching of information communication technology across the curriculum with the main problem being access to equipment. In addition a formal audit of health and safety is not carried out. Dust extraction facilities are not provided in design and technology, although such deficiencies have already been recognised and plans have been made to address them.

48. School development plans which incorporate action plans following the last inspection are used to good effect. They have appropriate targets, success criteria and review dates with resource implications stated wherever possible, which is an improvement from the last inspection. The ongoing priority to review ICT practice and provision is highly relevant but needs to embrace the library as part of an integrated learning resources facility. As time allows, major priorities should be reduced in number and pursued rigorously by all teachers to raise standards further. The setting of individual pupil targets throughout the school should be one of these objectives. A good start has already been made in this respect at Key Stage 4 and a much needed initiative is being introduced at Key Stage 3.

49. There is a strong commitment to the monitoring of teaching and curriculum development and there has been much activity since the previous inspection. As a result most departments are looking at their teaching more critically. Standards achieved in the classroom are now monitored and evaluated more precisely, although more could still be done to disseminate good practice from stronger to weaker departments particularly in individual target setting. Most subject heads provide good leadership. There is much support for weaker departments by senior management but not all that support has been successful. The linking of whole school and departmental planning has improved, but there is insufficient monitoring by senior management to ensure uniformity across all subjects. In order to improve standards in those subjects at GCSE where results have not been high enough, the governors and senior management need to monitor standards rigorously, and governors need to receive regular reports on progress in each subject.

50. The ethos of the school is very good. In devising and carrying out policy the school is

very much influenced by its declared ideals, its spirituality and Catholic faith. The schools' Code of Conduct based on the expectation that everyone will act with courtesy and consideration at all times is also an influential factor in the quality of relationships and the atmosphere which pervades the school. In response to pre-inspection questionnaires nearly all parents considered that the values and attitudes promoted by the school have a positive effect on pupils. There is a strong commitment to high standards across all subjects but there are areas where this has not yet been realised. Equal opportunities have been given a sharper focus with the formalising of a whole-school policy and greater attention being paid to gender issues in examination results.

51. The school is exceeding its targets for the percentage of pupils attaining five or more GCSEs. Whilst taking justifiable credit for the achievement of these targets the school should also consider whether the targets set are challenging enough.

52. Overall improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Much has been done to monitor and evaluate standards in the classroom and to spread good practice through observation of lessons and interviews. The school is now in a much better position to identify its strengths and weaknesses, but has not found a solution to all its problems and there are some subjects particularly at GCSE where standards are too low. Provision for special educational needs has improved dramatically linked to the appointment of a new special educational needs co-ordinator. Similarly standards have improved in child development, food technology and music with new appointments. Planning has improved in most departments. Schemes of work are mostly well devised, but too little has been done too late in design and technology for schemes acquired to have had the necessary impact. Increased numbers have added pressure on accommodation which was not designed for the size of the present school population. With new systems being introduced and an acute awareness by the leadership and management of the school that standards can be raised further, the school's capacity for improvement is good.

74. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

74. **Staffing**

53. There is a satisfactory match of number, qualifications and experience of teachers in almost all subjects and areas of the school's work. Teaching staff are nearly always well qualified, experienced and knowledgeable in the subjects which they teach. As previously reported during the last inspection a minority of lessons are taught by non-specialists, but this has no particular adverse effect on the standards attained by pupils. In such a small school with one or two-person departments in some cases, difficulties caused through absences are more acute when a specialist is away.
54. There are sufficient administrative and clerical staff but there are shortages of technical support. In addition to limitations on access to ICT facilities the situation is further exacerbated by lack of technician support and back up for teaching staff. The school is well served by its administrative and clerical staff and by the school caretaker. The latter also assists for some of his time as a technician in design and technology using his formal technical and skills qualifications. Non-teaching staff make an important contribution to the life and work of the school. There are sufficient support staff for pupils with special educational needs and they are an important factor in the good progress made. All teaching and support staff have job descriptions which are reviewed annually although with an acting headteacher and deputy, job descriptions in those areas have had to be made flexible.
55. The arrangements for the professional development of staff are satisfactory. Appraisal is well documented and has been used well to identify particular weaknesses. Currently a programme for the formal appraisal of teaching and non-teaching staff is 'on hold' pending national recommendations. The level of professional development across departments is inconsistent. It is particularly good in modern foreign languages and in English where staff attend various residential and non-residential courses which closely match both individual and departmental needs. Professional development takes place at departmental meetings and through opportunities for staff to observe each other teach and share good practice. There is no effective analysis of whole-school records of staff development and training to establish where there are gaps or insufficient activity. In supporting staff development very good use is made of external advice and in particular local educational authority personnel.

56. Newly qualified teachers (NQTs) or newly appointed teachers do not have a comprehensive induction programme provided by the school. Nevertheless, NQT's do have an informal programme and can also benefit from a weekend residential course provided by the local education authority. All recent appointees value the good support and help they are given within departments.

78. **Accommodation**

57. The accommodation is satisfactory overall allowing the curriculum to be taught effectively in most respects. There are some significant weaknesses. The school benefits from its setting surrounded by extensive playing fields but the buildings were not designed to cope with the present numbers in the school and there is therefore pressure on certain points. Several subject teachers teach in many different rooms making access to learning resources more difficult. Access to information and communication technology facilities is difficult with the main network, located in a history classroom, often inaccessible. The current library is too small and is not an integral part of a learning resources provision which also embraces ICT. Poor indoor facilities for physical education continue to be a problem with competing demands on the use of the hall and the low ceiling which affects standards in some games. There continues to be insufficient storage space in science and space for preparing lessons is limited. Since the last inspection there have been some noteworthy improvements including an attractive chapel and some better facilities for practise purposes in music. Displays in classrooms and corridors are generally of a good quality. There is little use of specialist accommodation off-site although the physical education department makes some use of the local sports centre.

58. The accommodation is mostly well maintained considering its intensive use. The attractive outdoor areas are marred in places by accumulations of litter.

59. Every effort has been made to improve access for disabled pupils with much conversion work completed of late in the form of ramps and adapted toilet facilities. The lack of a lift means that some classes which would normally be timetabled on the first floor have had to be transferred to the ground floor, causing some difficulties.

81. **Learning resources**

60. In most subjects the provision of books remains adequate and in music it is good. There are adequate books to allow pupils with special educational needs to make good progress and achieve satisfactory standards. Pupils usually have books to take home for independent study, which helps their progress. There are some shortages in history, information and communication technology and physical education. Books are supplemented in most subjects with good quality departmentally-produced booklets and worksheets, which are used well to target the needs of pupils and to help implement schemes of work. The school has done much to improve the quality of learning resources in ICT but there are still shortages. The main problem is however one of ready access to ICT facilities. Most classrooms have suitable equipment in audio visual aids, and teachers have access to video and satellite television recordings which help to broaden the curriculum. The provision of exercise books, folders and paper is sufficient. Much work by teachers, reprographic facilities and an efficient and helpful administrative team ensures good quality worksheets and other materials. Some small equipment used in physical education needs replacement.
61. The library has a limited amount of books and other materials such as periodicals, videos and CD-ROMs. It provides adequate resources for some projects, for example in science, but for most subjects the selection is limited. Fresh stock is bought in, or loaned from the local authority's library service which helps to compensate for limitations.

83. **The efficiency of the school**

62. The school's income per pupil is average. The school manages this budget well and financial planning and control are very good. Governors are totally involved in the strategic management of resources. The close working relationship between the efficient financial manager of the school and the governors is an important feature in the success of the policy. The arrangement of the financial manager acting as clerk to the governors helps in forging ongoing links.

63. The percentage of the budget spent on teaching staff is about average although it was slightly above that level in 1998-9. The use of teaching and support staff is very good. Teachers spend a higher than average percentage of their time teaching. The average contact ratio is helped by senior staff also having a significant teaching input which in a small school is an efficient use of resources. This also enables the pupil:teacher ratio to be slightly lower than the average for all secondary schools.
64. Expenditure on other staff, including support and clerical and administrative staff, is about average. Funding for special educational needs is used for its correct purposes. The deployment of assistants for pupils with special educational needs is good and well used to assist such pupils in making good progress. There is efficient management of the school's budget for caretaking and cleaning, although having to pick up litter dropped by pupils in outside areas is not a good use of the caretaker's time. The need for that should be eliminated. Using the caretaker to assist as a technician in the design and technology area for part of his time is a good use of his technical qualifications. Support, clerical and administrative staff are well used to make an unobtrusive and efficient contribution to the smooth running of the school.
65. There is a fairly average expenditure on staff development and all designated funds are used for that purpose. The school would benefit from regular audits of the level of activity in departments to see where there are gaps in training. Very good use is made of courses run by the local authority including inviting such personnel into school.
66. The sums allocated to learning resources are average. There is good planning to maximise use and all budgets are carefully monitored. In seeking to extend facilities for information and communication technology and plug some gaps in resources in some departments the school manages and plans its affairs carefully. All budgetary implications are debated thoroughly and well thought out.
67. Good use is made of limited accommodation especially with the pressures of increased numbers of pupils. This inevitably imposes restrictions. Faced with such pressures the allocation of a spacious room to Year 11 pupils as a base including for

social use is difficult to justify.

68. The most recent external audit reported positively on financial control and recommendations have been implemented.

69. In considering educational standards achieved particularly by most subjects at GCSE including core subjects, and the quality of education which the school provides in relation to its context and budget, the school provides good value for money.

91. **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

91. **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

91. **English**

70. In 1998 results in National Curriculum tests taken at the end of Key Stage 3 were below the national average compared with all schools. Taking the three years 1996-98 together, results were close to the national average, similar to those in mathematics but lower than in science. Results improved substantially in 1999 with 84 per cent of pupils achieving levels expected of pupils at age 14. Compared with 'similar' schools results in 1998 were well below average. Girls' results have been higher than boys'.

71. GCSE results in English Language in 1998 were above average at grades A*-C and with the exception of 1997 have been above average in every year since the previous inspection. In 1999, 64 per cent were successful at grades A*-C which was an improvement on the previous three years and slightly better than the 1995 result. Girls' results have been higher than boys'. Results at A*-G have been at least in line with national averages in each year since the last inspection, and all pupils have been successful at these grades in the last three years. GCSE results in English Literature in 1998 were just below average at grades A*-C, but otherwise have been at least in line with the national averages in each year since the last inspection. Fifty-seven per cent were successful at these grades in 1999 compared with 55 per cent in 1998. In the past four years there has been 100 per cent success rate at A*-G grades. In drama six of the nine candidates entered in 1998 achieved A*-C grades, but in 1999 results were weaker, with only two of nine candidates successful at these grades. All drama candidates have, however, achieved A*-G grades in the last three years.

72. Current attainment by the majority of pupils at the end of Key Stage 3 is in line with the national average and there are minorities achieving above and below that level. Reading skills are satisfactory overall, with most pupils able to read with concentration and understanding and higher attainers reading aloud with fluency and expression. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported through the reading policy

and the lunchtime reading club. Most pupils are able to write with reasonable clarity and accuracy, though spelling weaknesses can persist throughout the key stage. Higher attainers often write fluently, imaginatively and with a lively style, and present their work effectively. Lower attainers write at some length after careful preparation. Listening skills are good, and most pupils speak with reasonable clarity and fluency, though confidence in speaking aloud varies considerably among lower attainers. Higher attainers have some sophisticated speaking skills, including a wide vocabulary and the ability to persuade with convincing argument and tone of voice in discussion or debate.

73. Attainment by the majority at the end of Key Stage 4 is above the national average. Most pupils experience a wide range of reading material and demonstrate their understanding in speech and writing. Confidence in reading aloud is widespread. Much writing reveals above average skills in sentence structure, clarity and fluency. Higher attaining pupils have strong analytical skills and an awareness of the impact of expressive language. The best writing is very fluent, aided by the sophisticated use of connectives and expressive vocabulary. Pupils show they have developed greater competence in spoken skills by this stage and higher attainers are able to use a wider vocabulary in more sophisticated argument. The responses of lower attainers are briefer and not as articulate, but show an improvement from Key Stage 3.

74. Attainment in drama at the end of Key Stage 4 is in line with the national average. Pupils understand how to create character, and can improvise around a given structure. They work collaboratively, and most can speak and move confidently in role-play situations and can convey tensions in relationships. Drama work in Key Stage 3 is satisfactorily incorporated into the schemes of work for English, with opportunities for pupils to take part in simulations and other role-play activities.

75. Progress is mostly good at Key Stage 3. Pupils with special educational needs make good and sometimes very good progress as a result of the high standard of support they receive in vocabulary extension, reading practice and spelling. Most pupils show increased knowledge and understanding arising from the range of reading provided, and improve clarity and accuracy in writing as a result of encouragement and opportunity to write expressively at some length. At Key Stage 4 the majority of pupils

make good progress. Careful preliminary work leads to successful written assignments, with improved descriptive and analytical qualities. Pupils take account of teacher advice to adjust draft work and improve in their ability to assess their own work. Oral tasks, for example to justify the actions of characters in 'Animal Farm', help pupils improve their ability to speak convincingly in public. Pupils with special educational needs continue to make good progress. In drama, pupils make satisfactory progress in developing improvisation, performance and collaborative skills.

76. Attitudes to learning are good at both key stages. Pupils are interested and well motivated. They work hard during lessons and contribute to class discussion. Behaviour is consistently good. Higher attainers take responsibility for their work, for example researching a project outside school, and lower attainers are acquiring the confidence to take more initiative. Pupils with special educational needs have very good relationships with teaching and support staff. They are prepared to work independently in checking and learning spellings. In drama pupils are co-operative, respond to challenge, and take up the opportunities for independent learning.
77. The quality of teaching is always satisfactory or better and the majority is good. The best teaching occurs at Key Stage 4. Teachers know their subject thoroughly. Expectations are high with all pupils including lower attainers encouraged to strive for quality. Pupils are effectively encouraged to think about how words are used expressively. Teachers plan work well with a good choice of activities to extend pupils. They use pupils' work effectively to illustrate specific points, such as the importance of the opening sentence in making an impact. Other methods, such as the use of silence to help pupils comprehend the idea of an empty world, and good reading aloud to convey the power of childhood experience also help pupils' understanding. A variety of lively teaching techniques help pupils with special educational needs to improve and gain confidence. Teachers praise, encourage and reinforce positive aspects of lessons, and manage pupils' behaviour successfully. They use time effectively and provide appropriate resources, for example a 'house plan' enabled pupils with special educational needs to visualise the setting of their story. Marking encourages pupils, but does not sufficiently point out areas for improvement. Teachers usually use question and answer techniques effectively to assess progress and check knowledge but some opportunities are missed. Good feedback helps pupils to adjust. Homework

is used appropriately to continue or extend class work and is reviewed at the beginning of the next lesson. In drama teachers make clear their expectations, give a good initial impetus to a lesson, and settle pupils quickly into an activity.

78. The department has addressed weaknesses referred to in the last inspection report. There is now effective monitoring of reading and the department's assessment policy, schemes of work and planning for pupils with different needs have also improved. This has worked hand in hand with improved standards of teaching.

100. Reading, writing, speaking and listening skills across the curriculum

79. Most pupils are able to read with understanding in subjects across the curriculum with higher attainers more proficient in reading aloud with fluency and expression. In history and information technology lower attainers and those with special educational needs read hesitantly and skills in reading aloud vary considerably among lower attainers. Whilst the majority write with good accuracy and higher attainers imaginatively, spelling weaknesses persist throughout Key Stage 3, and in history too many pupils make elementary errors. This is also seen with some pupils in GCSE in physical education. Lower attainers write at length after careful preparation in English, but in geography such pupils have difficulty in expressing their ideas in writing. In science there is very good development of subject-specific vocabulary. Most pupils are confident speakers as seen in English, drama, information technology and other subjects. Higher attainers have some sophisticated speaking skills. Listening skills are good. Pupils with special educational needs make good and sometimes very good progress as a result of the high standard of support they receive in vocabulary extension, reading practice and spelling.

101. Mathematics

80. In 1998, results in National Curriculum tests taken at the end of Key Stage 3 were average compared with all schools nationally. Results in 1999 were similar in the percentage of pupils achieving levels expected at the age of fourteen. Taking the three years 1996-8 together results were close to the national average; similar to those in English but lower than those in science. Compared with 'similar' schools

results in 1998 were below average.

81. GCSE results in 1998 were above average for grades A*-C and have been above average in each year since the previous inspection, except for 1997 when they were average. Fifty-seven per cent were successful at grades A*-C in 1999 which was an improvement on the two previous years. Results for A*-G grades have been at least in line with the national average in each year since the previous inspection. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls.

82. Current attainment by the majority of pupils at the end of Key Stage 3 is average. Low attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, attain levels expected of fourteen-year-olds in number work. Average pupils are extended to reach above average levels in algebra and 'shape and space', while high attaining pupils are working at well above levels expected for their age in algebra and statistics. In a test, below average pupils in Year 9 were able to convert their scores into percentages, and in that year group average pupils are able to construct formulae from real situations and use them to find missing values. Above average pupils reach levels beyond national expectations in using Pythagoras' theorem, and work in books shows coverage of trigonometry, cumulative frequency graphs and curved graphs up to the level of 'exceptional performance'.

83. Attainment by the majority at the end of Key Stage 4 is above the national average. At the start of Key Stage 4 below average pupils are able to change fractions into decimals, but some are hampered by lack of speed in number work. Average and above average pupils in Key Stage 4 are able to work with simultaneous equations. In studying relative and absolute errors in combining values, average and above average pupils are extended to reach high standards. Current attainment in lessons indicates higher standards than in previous GCSE results. Average and high attaining pupils are working at levels up to and including 'exceptional performance'. This was seen in lessons with pupils studying inequalities in Year 10 and absolute and relative errors in Year 11. A statistics option is currently running for Year 11 pupils where standards are high. They can complete experiments successfully to estimate populations including use of capture and recapture methods. They are proficient in their understanding of samples, bias, a variety of presentational data and normal distributions.

84. The progress of pupils during Key Stage 3 is good, from average attainment on entry. There are also examples of very good progress when pupils respond to challenges set. This was evident in a mixed ability Year 7 lesson on scatter-graphs, in which pupils consolidated their understanding of co-ordinates and were able to understand and identify positive and negative correlation. Setting in Year 8 by ability accelerates progress. Very good progress was also seen during a Year 9 lesson when high attaining pupils merged their knowledge of algebra with estimation and rounding of number, forming the new technique of solving equations by 'trial and improvement'. Generally pupils are strongest when performing mechanical tasks and processes, but less secure when presenting their investigation methodology and results in using and applying mathematics. This improves as pupils progress through the school and all are successful in this aspect at GCSE. Progress at Key Stage 4 is very good overall with pupils building on average attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 to achieve above average results at GCSE level.
85. Low attaining pupils and those with special educational needs make similar progress to others in each key stage. This was observed in a Year 11 lesson where such pupils used appropriate language and were able to process fractions and percentages using mental processes. By the end of the lesson they were able to tackle questions from an appropriate level in a GCSE examination paper.
86. Pupils' attitude to their work is very good at both key stages. Pupils co-operate readily with staff and one another when working as groups or in pairs. This was seen in a lesson where 'paired' pupils carried out statistical investigations into population sizes, and pupils handled hundreds of pieces of apparatus without fuss and assisted one another with selections and recording of data. Presentation in pupils' books is neat, tidy and free of graffiti reflecting pride in their own ability and work.
87. The quality of teaching is mainly good at Key Stage 3 and very good at Key Stage 4. At Key Stage 4 there are examples of excellent teaching. All lessons observed were satisfactory or better and half were very good or better. All teachers are suitably qualified and have sufficient subject knowledge for the level of their teaching. Lessons observed were well planned, containing a variety of activities which enabled prolonged interest and application from pupils. Where teaching is most successful

teachers demonstrated enthusiasm and an understanding of the needs of the pupils as well as focusing on the concepts to be learned. Good organisation, high expectations of pupil behaviour and a respect for the individual help maintain good discipline. Where teaching is less effective teachers continue to deliver information when pupils are not fully engaged or insufficient time is allowed for pupils' activities. Assessment is ongoing during lessons and is thorough and developmental when commenting on homework and tests. Homework is used to consolidate learning or to allow pupils to prepare data for use in following lessons. Year 7 pupils are taught in mixed ability groups but in Year 8 and above pupils benefit from the more appropriate pace of teaching in classes which are 'set' by ability. Teachers make insufficient planned use of information and communication technology beyond Year 7.

88. The head of department shows strong, caring and enthusiastic leadership. The ethos within the department is one of working to improve standards for all pupils. Strategies for improving the quality of teaching and learning have been introduced, including classroom observations and departmental monitoring of pupils' books. The new scheme of work ensures all groups are completing course requirements. A structured assessment policy is in place, linked to reporting to parents on pupils' progress. Reports to parents however do not set targets for improvement. Teaching takes place in a variety of rooms including science laboratories and practical rooms, an arrangement which inhibits access to resources. There are few mathematics books in the library. The department has responded well to issues raised in the last report.

110. **Numeracy across the curriculum**

89. Pupils' use of number across the curriculum is good. Most pupils are able to work without calculators where necessary. The general level of numeracy in all subject areas is good and the majority of pupils are able to apply calculations taught in mathematics to other subjects. In science pupils develop good use of number skills and are competent in solving equations. In design and technology and business studies most pupils are able to use and make sense of information presented in tables, charts and diagrams. In modern foreign languages pupils use their numeric skills well when learning ordinal numbers, dates and use of money. They are able to add bills using large numbers in the target language and analyse and discuss statistical evidence from surveys. Statistics and graphical presentation of data is

widely used by science, food technology and geography and there is some use in history lessons. In geography at Key Stage 4 pupils gather data skilfully. In physical education, pupils show an understanding of co-ordinates and time during orienteering lessons. The majority are competent in applying numerical skills to trading accounts in business studies, but lower attainers struggle. Low attaining pupils usually cope adequately when given appropriate support across the curriculum.

111. Science

90. In 1998, results in National Curriculum tests taken at the end of Key Stage 3 were above average compared with all schools. Results in 1999 were similar to those of 1998 in the percentage achieving levels expected at fourteen years of age. Over the period 1996 to 1998 results were also above average with girls' results higher than boys'. Results were higher in science than in English and mathematics. Compared with 'similar' schools results in 1998 were average. GCSE results in 1998 were well above average at A*-C grades and have been at least above average in each year since the last inspection. Results in 1999 were similar to those of 1998 with 61 per cent of candidates successful at grades A*-C. Standards have improved steadily since the last inspection. Pupils usually achieve higher results in science than the same pupils achieve in their other subjects. Boys' results at GCSE have usually been higher than girls'.
91. Current attainment by the majority at the end of Key Stage 3 is above average. Year 7 pupils can think and operate as young scientists as they make oxygen. In Year 9, they know that everything is made of particles called atoms that are arranged differently in solids, liquids and gases. Higher attainers quickly grasp what happens to particles as they are squashed and confidently debate under what circumstances gases might be poured. Although lower attaining pupils need extra support from their teacher to classify these materials at room temperature, they know about the arrangement and movement of particles.
92. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 is above average overall. In deepening their knowledge about flow of electrical charge, pupils in Year 11 know that the potential difference across the components in an electrical circuit, and the current through

them, are carefully controlled by the resistance in each part of the circuit. In a lower set, where teaching explicitly encourages high standards, pupils accurately represent what is happening as green plants make sugar in daylight as a chemical equation. Pupils develop very good use of number skills in calculations and the use of formulae. Year 7 pupils quickly become more familiar with new measuring apparatus and equipment. In understanding the quantitative relationship between speed, distance and time, pupils in Year 8 accurately calculate how many hops Geraldine the rabbit does over five hundred metres in one hundred seconds. Higher attainers in Year 10 solve problems to show that acceleration of an object is inversely proportional to its mass and lower attaining pupils do so with the support of their teacher.

93. The range of practical work is no longer limited, a criticism in the previous report of both key stages. By the end of Year 9, a high proportion of pupils competently carry out investigations with understanding of predictions based on scientific knowledge and fair tests and the highest attainers in Year 9 are well above average in recording investigations. At the end of Year 11, many in the upper set identify sources of error and extend their conclusions from closer evaluation of results. Good evaluations are made, for example about the growth of alga pleurococcus on surprising areas of tree trunks. However, much of the work is carefully structured and there is not enough independent investigative work. Scrutiny of books showed conclusions and evaluations often missing from records of class experiments. While the very highest attainers can quickly interpret results and draw conclusions, others have difficulty using their own knowledge of science ideas and research. The standard of two-dimensional science diagrams has improved since the last inspection.
94. Progress is good at both Key Stages 3 and 4 and occasionally very good. In a Year 7 class pupils made very good progress because their teacher had high expectations of their capabilities to set up equipment safely and accurately graph observations. Observations and measurements are made with increasing accuracy as pupils compare different electric current in different circuits or use a potometer to record how much water a plant transpires each day. They organise and use a growing range of equipment and a wider range of scientific vocabulary correctly. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils. They make good progress as a result of the wise use and skills of teaching support assistants who work closely with teachers and know the plans of science lessons. High attaining pupils within sets,

however, are not given sufficient challenging activities for them to make their best progress. Progress is slowed down by too much guidance by teachers, and timetabling blocks of three consecutive lessons. Notable progress has been made by the department in creating more opportunities for pupils to develop a good understanding of experimental procedures.

95. Pupils take a keen interest in their work, enjoy activities and use time well. They busily share equipment safely as they happily record results about different properties of electrical circuits. During their practical work about the production of lead bromide they listen carefully to each other as they discuss patterns in their observations. Younger pupils are fascinated by new equipment and eager to learn how to use it properly to test the extension of elastic bands. There are, however, sometimes too few occasions when pupils ask questions themselves to enquire more deeply into a topic because they have too few opportunities to do so.

96. The quality of teaching is good overall with notable examples of excellent teaching at Key Stage 3, and very good teaching at Key Stage 4. Science teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic. Pupils are rightly praised and encouraged to learn in a happy atmosphere and expectations are shared with them. In the best lessons, speedy, skilled questioning is coupled with relevant role play and demonstrations and expectations are very high. However, work provided for higher attaining pupils is not demanding enough. Opportunities are missed for pupils to suggest hypotheses, plan work, record results in a variety of ways and explore their own ideas. Marking is consistent although not all teachers' comments contain sufficient advice about how pupils may improve. Homework is set regularly and is sometimes imaginative. There is very good development of pupils' scientific vocabulary but insufficient use of extended writing. Information and communication technology is now more widely used than at the time of the last inspection, for instance in using data logging equipment to explore temperature changes as stearic acid solidifies. It has already been integrated into several topics taught at Key Stage 3 and good developments are underway in fully integrating it throughout all schemes of work.

97. The department benefits from positive and clear sighted leadership and team work. Significant improvements have been made since the last inspection and teaching and learning are monitored well through classroom observations and scrutiny of pupils'

work.

119.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

119. **Art**

98. GCSE results in 1998 were very low with only 24 per cent of pupils achieving A*-C grades compared with the national average of 59 per cent. In 1999 the success rate increased to 36 per cent. Results have been well below average in three of the past five years but were above average in 1997. Results at A*-G were just below average in the past two years but in the three years prior to that all candidates were successful at these grades. While the success rate of girls in most years has been below average they have out-performed boys often by a difference much greater than that nationally. Standards are too low for all pupils and boys are underachieving significantly.
99. Attainment by most pupils by the end of Key Stage 3 is in line with expectations. A significant minority are below the expectation and a few pupils, mainly girls, are slightly above the level expected. The majority know basic facts on the major modern art movements and their exponents, for example Surrealism and Salvador Dali. Most pupils are competent at using line and tone with various media and make drawings from direct observation. A number have difficulty progressing beyond simple schemes for drawing objects and self-portraits. The few higher attainers distinguish themselves by the quality of their observations showing they understand structure, light and shade. Sketchbooks are used for drawing and experiments with colour and texture but the large majority do not understand the use of sketchbooks as receptacles of personal explorations, or a place where their ideas are stimulated and developed.
100. Attainment by the majority at the end of Key Stage 4 is below the national average. Pupils have visited the sites of Henry Moore's sculptures and have carved figures reflecting his style, but this work has not been developed further. A small minority are skilled in making drawings from observation and imagination. Some are skilled in using computer applications to create and modify images although this is too peripheral to the main body of their work. All pupils are able to make independent

choices of materials and media and experiment with these to refine and modify their ideas. However, this is narrow. There is too little pupil-centred research and experiment to generate and pursue ideas independently. Most are vague on the potential of their ideas and work and rely too much on the teacher for direction.

101. Progress by the majority of pupils is satisfactory at both key stages including for those with special educational needs. Girls make better progress than boys although the rate of their progress is too slow. Satisfactory progress is made by a few higher attaining pupils in developing observational drawing skills. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils have not gained enough knowledge of visual elements and how they can interact to produce successful work. In lessons, pupils learn about line and tone and they explore texture and colour but are not often challenged sufficiently to apply their knowledge of the visual elements in imaginative and creative ways. There are a few examples of very effective work by some pupils transcribing two-dimensional composition into three-dimensional ceramic sculpture that represents good progress. By the end of Key Stage 4 most pupils have consolidated sound drawing skills mainly using pencil. There are not enough opportunities for them to carry out their own investigations and experiments to enable an appropriate rate of learning. While pupils are aware of what will be assessed by the GCSE examining board such criteria is not sufficiently prominent in the plans for their work. There are not the regular opportunities for pupils to consider and gauge how well they match examination standards, nor is there enough information given out on what they need to do to improve.
102. Attitudes to learning are good at Key Stage 3 and satisfactory at Key Stage 4. Key Stage 3 pupils are interested in and enjoy art although some lack the confidence to be comfortable with the public display of their work. At Key Stage 4 the level of engagement and enthusiasm is not high enough. Discussion and questioning by pupils is very limited. All pupils' behaviour is good and those with behaviour problems are making good progress in relation to their behaviour plans.
103. The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory at both key stages. There is good subject expertise in the breadth of art which is used satisfactorily to integrate aspects of modern art with pupils' work. At both key stages pupils are not being challenged sufficiently to generate personal responses to topics and to apply the skills they learn

imaginatively. Homework is regular and relates to lesson topics but is not planned well to extend pupils' learning. Teaching is over-compartmentalised. Year 7 pupils waste lesson time collecting rubbings of textures rather than manipulating these for an artistic purpose. There is also too painstaking an emphasis in Year 10 on learning to draw separately each facial element in a portrait topic. Work is heavily prescriptive, narrowing potential outcomes and limiting the scope for pupils to express their ideas. A clear intention of what pupils are expected to learn beyond the acquisition of techniques is not stated explicitly in lesson planning. The purpose of some elements introduced into topics is not clear such as Hockney's joiner photograph of a face and Eileen Cooper's painted portrait. Assessment during teaching is unsatisfactory and misses evaluation of essential aspects of pupils' learning, although addresses the acquisition of skills appropriately. Demonstrations of techniques are effective and these are communicated well by the teacher to groups and individuals. Pupils are managed positively.

104. The art curriculum is not planned with sufficient detail on what pupils should learn as they move through both key stages. The lack of clearly stated learning objectives in curriculum planning means assessment information is of limited value and does not contribute significantly to improving planning and standards. While the quality of teaching and curriculum planning was judged favourably in the last inspection they are now unsatisfactory. Standards were low then and remain unacceptably low.

126. **Design and technology**

105. In GCSE results in 1998, 50 per cent of candidates achieved A*-C grades in resistant materials. Only 19 per cent achieved these grades in graphic products, which was well below the national average, and much lower than the same pupils achieved in other subjects. A*-G grades have usually been in line with the national average. In food technology results at A*-C were very low in 1996 and 1997 but improved in 1998 and were high in 1999 with 74 per cent of candidates successful at these grades. There has also been a notable upward trend in results in child development from a low base to 69 per cent of candidates achieving A*-C grades in 1999. All candidates in food technology and child development usually succeed at A*-G grades.

106. Current attainment at Key Stage 3 meets the national expectation and matches the teacher assessments for the end of Key Stage 3 in 1998 and 1999. A small percentage of pupils attain above national expectation and girls usually perform better than boys at this key stage. Whilst there is evidence of good design work in pupils' books there is also weak work with graphical skills often underdeveloped and a lack of variety in presentation. The better folders show good use of colour, shading and annotation in the work. Practical skills are usually good and pupils use tools and equipment safely and confidently. Higher attaining pupils can generate a range of ideas and use a variety of skills to develop and present information. Lower attaining pupils sometimes have difficulty in planning and applying ideas and in recalling previous work.
107. At Key Stage 4 attainment is in line with national standards overall with some detailed work in folders where pupils use colour, commercial material, photographs and some information communication technology. Occasionally design work is incomplete with shallow research and weak drawing skills. Work in food technology and child development is usually above average and is well presented. In graphic products, levels of attainment are sometimes unsatisfactory with pupils lacking urgency in application and completion of a task. Practical skills are usually satisfactory in all areas but some work is of a limited standard.
108. Progress is satisfactory overall at Key Stage 3. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make suitable progress in relation to prior attainment. They develop knowledge of concepts and processes in designing, making and understanding. Good progress is made in lessons where appropriate challenges are set as seen in a food technology lesson where pupils were involved in preparing ingredients using equipment confidently. In a lesson on mechanisms where pupils were using a commercial kit to investigate and understand movement, and in a lesson on structures where pupils were looking at frame and shell structures and their uses, progress was also good.
109. At Key Stage 4 progress is usually good in food technology and child development. Satisfactory progress was observed in resistant materials and graphic products in most lessons during the inspection, but there were also some examples of poor progress in these areas. Where progress is unsatisfactory it is mainly due to the lack

of urgency or pace in the lesson and pupils losing concentration. Where standards in graphics are unsatisfactory they mirror the poor progress made by GCSE pupils in recent years. Better lessons have good pace with teachers using demonstrations well, and offering appropriate support to pupils to maximise progress.

110. Pupils' attitudes to learning are usually good at both key stages. They work well and share workplaces and equipment co-operatively. There are some instances of inattention during the teacher's explanations or demonstrations. Pupils interviewed during the inspection explained how the majority dislike such instances of poor behaviour as it slows down the progress of those who want to learn. This does not happen in food technology or child development.

111. At Key Stages 3 and 4 the quality of teaching is mainly satisfactory. The quality of teaching is good in food technology and child development where there are high expectations, and this has been a key factor in raising standards. During the inspection, teaching in resistant materials and graphic products was mostly satisfactory, but in a quarter of lessons was unsatisfactory. GCSE results in graphics indicate that teaching in that subject over time has been unsatisfactory. The main weaknesses in unsatisfactory lessons in graphic products and resistant materials are expectations which are too low, a failure by teachers to make objectives clear and poor pupil management. The better lessons are delivered at pace, use appropriate resources to support learning and keep pupils on task. At Key Stage 4 where assessment is linked to examination board criteria constructive comments are made as to how the work can be improved. Marking is mostly regular and homework forms an integral part of the majority of lessons. Teaching makes insufficient use of information technology although some good practice was seen in food technology.

112. The leadership and management of the technology department as a whole lack real direction. Improvements have been made in some areas reflecting a new vision, particularly in food technology and child development as a result of a new appointment. Some classroom monitoring of teaching has taken place and this now needs developing to share good practice in the department. Since the last inspection improvements have been made in some GCSE results but others remain below or well below national averages. The inadequate storage areas have been addressed. Schemes of work have only recently been acquired and therefore have not as yet

made the required impact. Efforts are being made however to work more closely as a team. To move forward, the department needs to monitor standards in the classrooms and use information communication technology more as a tool to support learning. Some health and safety requirements are not met and dust extraction systems need to be installed in some practical areas.

134.

Geography

113. GCSE results in 1998 were well below average at grades A*-C compared with all schools. In 1999 they declined further with only 19 per cent of candidates successful at grades A*-C. In the three years prior to 1998 results were at least in line with the national average and well above in 1995. Nearly all candidates have been successful at A*-G grades since the previous inspection. Apart from in 1995 there has been a marked downward trend in examination results since the previous inspection. The relative performance of pupils in 1999 was significantly lower than the same pupils achieved in their other subjects, indicating unsatisfactory progress in geography for those groups.

114. Attainment by the majority at the end of Key Stage 3 is in line with national expectations. A significant minority achieve below and a smaller minority achieve above national expectations. These levels of attainment are lower than those indicated by the 1998 and 1999 National Curriculum teacher assessments. Higher attaining pupils at Key Stage 3 can explain the processes behind the daily pattern of weather in equatorial regions and understand the effects of latitude and altitude on climate. With teachers' guidance, they can extract relevant information from a range of sources to make clear notes and when given outline maps and diagrams, annotate them accurately. Lower attaining pupils can describe geographical patterns but cannot explain them and have difficulty in expressing their ideas in writing.

115. Attainment by the majority at the end of Key Stage 4 is in line with the national average. A significant minority of pupils achieve below the national average. Evidence taken from completed assignments, coursework and classroom observation suggests that current Year 11 pupils are working to higher standards than those reached by the two previous cohorts and that certain aspects of teaching, including guidance in

coursework design, have improved. Higher attaining pupils have, for example, a clear understanding of the different influences on the location of heavy industry. In their course work, which is produced to a high standard, they gather data skilfully and use simple statistical methods to test hypotheses. Most pupils are acquiring an extensive technical vocabulary, but as at the previous key stage, lower attaining pupils find difficulty with any task requiring passages of extended writing.

116. Progress by the majority of pupils is currently satisfactory at both key stages and better than shown by recent GCSE results. A minority of pupils make unsatisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and good progress when learning support assistants are in attendance. In most lessons observed at the inspection pupils recall and consolidate earlier learning and demonstrate advances in learning when answering questions during end of lesson progress checks. In response to enthusiastic teaching, a Year 9 class made substantial gains in knowledge during a lesson on equatorial climate. Year 11 pupils are making good progress towards the completion of their coursework, encouraged by good teaching of fieldwork techniques. In several lessons, teachers' guidance in the use of a range of learning resources has a positive effect on pupils' progress. Most pupils' writing improves from short completion exercises in Year 7 to passages of descriptive and analytical writing in Year 11 course work. Unsatisfactory progress occurs when the pace of lessons is slow and the content lacks challenge.
117. Attitudes to learning are mainly good. No instances of poor behaviour were observed. Most pupils concentrate well, especially when offered a variety of tasks in lessons. They work collaboratively in pairs or small groups on the rare occasions they are given the opportunity. They respect school property and relate well to each other and adults. Their capacity for personal study is well illustrated by the keenness of their approach to enquiry work. Most pupils take pride in their work.
118. The quality of teaching is mostly satisfactory. At Key Stage 3 there is a small minority of unsatisfactory teaching, while teaching at Key Stage 4 is never less than satisfactory and sometimes good. Examination results over the last two years suggest unsatisfactory features in Key Stage 4 teaching over that period. Current evidence suggests that any such shortcomings are being addressed successfully. The two specialist teachers have secure knowledge of the subject and of curriculum

requirements, while the one non-specialist has sufficient subject expertise to meet the requirements of Key Stage 3 teaching. Pupils gained much from the teacher's depth of knowledge in a Year 10 lesson on farming in East Anglia and the Lake District. The best teaching is characterised by appropriate expectations, brisk pace and deployment of a range of resources. Most lessons take account of what pupils know, start with a review of recent learning and then build on that knowledge. Lessons are usually well planned, following schemes of work closely, but there is often too close an adherence to textbooks and associated worksheets. Classroom management and control are secure in all lessons, an improvement since the previous inspection. Less successful lessons are characterised by too much teacher talk, leaving insufficient time for pupils' activity. Some of these lessons are slow paced and lack sufficient challenge. The setting arrangements do not meet fully the needs of pupils of all levels of attainment; tasks designed to meet the needs of all pupils are set in only a small minority of lessons. Marking is completed regularly, but makes insufficient use of helpful comments.

119. There are clear signs that as a result of the recent introduction of procedures for the monitoring of teaching and learning, standards are beginning to improve. If these improvements are to be sustained, the department should consider clarifying its management structure. The present arrangement of two teachers sharing responsibility for geography, one for each key stage, under the general direction of the head of humanities is unsatisfactory. Geography needs to extend its repertoire of teaching strategies to include more opportunities for collaborative learning and the use of computers.

141. **History**

120. GCSE results in 1998 were well below the national average at grades A*-C with 35 per cent of candidates achieving these grades compared with the national average for all schools of 54 per cent. Results at A*-G were above average. In 1999 results were slightly better with 40 per cent achieving A*-C grades but most pupils did better in their other examination subjects. Results have been well below average in each year since the last inspection. Nearly all candidates have been successful at A*-G grades during that time.

121. Attainment by the majority at the end of Key Stage 3 is in line with national expectations. A significant minority achieve well below national expectations and a smaller minority above. Over the key stage pupils' competence in the key elements improves. By Year 9 they can arrange Civil War and Second World War events chronologically, test for reliability when examining evidence about Henry VIII and identify bias and propaganda in First World War recruitment posters. Enquiry skills are developing effectively in preparation for GCSE coursework through project work on the North American Indians in Year 7 and slavery in Year 8. Empathy writing in the form of letters as if living in the conditions of an earlier century gives pupils a greater understanding of life in another time and awareness of contemporary values and feelings. The majority of pupils manage these skills well but lower attaining pupils are less competent and do not remember details accurately.
122. Attainment by the majority at the end of Key Stage 4 is in line with the national average but small minorities are well above or well below in equal proportions. Past GCSE results which have been below average do not match this judgement. With the help of senior management the department is monitoring its work rigorously with teaching methods audited and reassessed. The work of pupils is now more varied. They are undertaking more extended writing and independent learning and research skills are improving. Pupils use their own observations and local library reference sources to support conclusions about the town's developments over this century. Most use sources well to derive evidence to support conclusions and higher attainers use statistical evidence very well to support judgements about the role of women in the 1920s and understand their significance in the struggle to secure equal rights. At both key stages many pupils, but especially lower attainers and those with special needs, read hesitantly and need help with longer words. Extended written work is expected of pupils from Year 7 onwards. Lower attaining pupils write less well and despite the attention paid to spelling by teachers, too many pupils, even at Key Stage 4, make elementary spelling errors and write poorly.
123. The majority of pupils at Key Stage 3 make good progress and a minority make very good progress. Pupils at Key Stage 4 make good progress within very mixed ability groups. There is a steady improvement in the key skills from pupils' entry into the school particularly in understanding causation and analysing sources. Pupils respond well to the quality of class management and the very good relationships that

exist between pupils and their teachers. It enables pupils to concentrate on their work and be positive, particularly in those activities that require their active participation.

124. The quality of teaching observed in three-quarters of Key Stage 3 lessons is good or better and mainly good; in Key Stage 4 it is good. Specialist teachers' good command of history has an impact on learning. It develops thinking and for higher attainers can suggest interpretations that might otherwise be missed. Good class management creates an appropriate environment for positive learning that has an impact on progress. Activities are effectively organised using time targets to set a brisk pace. One exercise based on industrial developments was organised so well that it provided pupils with opportunities to develop their business decision-making skills and advance their social and moral development. Most lessons are challenging although expectations are not always high enough. Homework and enquiry based projects are set to encourage pupils to develop their higher learning skills. Fieldwork visits enrich the learning experience for all pupils.
125. Where teaching is unsatisfactory activities are insufficiently demanding and do not challenge pupils or occupy them for the full lesson. Moreover the relative performance of pupils in history, which has been significantly lower than the same pupils achieved in other subjects, indicates unsatisfactory teaching in the past. Attendance at examination board subject conferences could help to raise teachers' awareness of the rapidly changing demands of GCSE questions. The monitoring of teaching and pupils' work should assist in effectiveness of teaching. New assessment procedures to track attainment and monitor progress more thoroughly have the potential to be an effective tool in setting targets and raising expectations. The decision to keep exemplars of moderated work will help non-specialist teachers and make for more positive assessment in Key Stage 3. The head of department, who is also a member of the senior management team, promotes confident teamwork and manages still inadequate resources very well despite an excessive workload. She needs more time to translate those assessment and monitoring initiatives into improving results at Key Stage 4.
126. Improvements since the last inspection include a greater variety of teaching strategies and pupils using extended writing in all years, although literacy is still a problem. Measures to meet the Code of Practice for pupils with special needs are now being

applied.

148. Information and communication technology (ICT)

148.

127. Attainment by the majority of pupils at the end of Key Stage 3 is in line with national expectations. This judgement is similar to the National Curriculum teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 3 for 1999. Standards could be much higher however with improved access to ICT facilities. A survey by the school shows that over 80 per cent of pupils have computers at home and this contributes significantly to their proficiency.

128. Currently at Key Stage 3 most pupils are competent in the basic operations of using the keyboard, in mouse control and in printing out their work. They show good understanding of the importance of backing up their work and are able to retrieve it. Most pupils have satisfactory skills in interpreting, analysing and displaying information from given data. In more complicated work the majority understand the function of spreadsheets and are able to enter formulae satisfactorily and show good understanding when being introduced to working with commercial packages in Year 7. During the inspection a Year 7 class was also able to use the computer to assemble lists of pupils' names in various orders including alphabetically, by membership of a school house, or by gender. They appreciate the potential of the computer in saving time and in improving presentation of work. Some lower attaining pupils are held back by difficulties in understanding the simple demands of a written task. The standards achieved in specialist lessons at Key Stage 3 are supplemented by pupils' experiences in some but not all subjects across the curriculum. Examples seen at the inspection include using a computer in music to accompany song and play an instrument, using ICT to locate a country on a computer map and evidence of use by pupils in religious education who have used desk-top publishing to produce prayer anthologies for use in the chapel. Under present arrangements pupils who study a second modern foreign language at Key Stage 3 are deprived of specialist ICT lessons and therefore do not have the same opportunities as others.

129. Attainment at Key Stage 4 is mainly average but limitations on access slow development and progress. The quality of the cross-curricular provision for ICT varies

between subjects. As at Key Stage 3 pupils in music use facilities available where possible and employ keyboards alongside microphones and mixers to progress. Facilities are limited however and impose restrictions on use for composing although they make good use of computers, including their own, to develop and notate their pieces. In science a Year 11 class used sensors profitably to show a chemical reaction when investigating sodium thiosulphate reaction with hydrochloric acid. Pupils who take the option of business studies can use ICT as a tool within the context of the subject and appreciate real world applications of ICT in the economy. In art there is some subject specific software which is beginning to be used in lessons. In food technology pupils used ICT to prepare and analyse questions. Some use is made in other subjects including mathematics, modern languages and a little in design and technology. In most subjects pupils are encouraged to use word processors at home although staff realise that not all have access to a personal computer.

130. Progress is satisfactory overall. Pupils' understanding of basic concepts and use of hardware improves and older pupils at Key Stage 3 show positive progress by being able to create spreadsheets. Higher attainers develop a good understanding of the meaning of cells, series and formulae. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Although progress is satisfactory the majority of pupils have the aptitudes and necessary literacy and numeracy skills to make greater progress. The basis acquired at Key Stage 3 and opportunities in several subjects, plus experiences outside the school allow pupils to progress satisfactorily although slower at Key Stage 4. Whilst pupils show greater responsibility in their use of ICT overall opportunities need to be extended.
131. Pupils' attitudes to learning are usually good and nearly all show interest and enthusiasm. They are usually well behaved with only the occasional lapse of concentration. Pupils are willing to learn from their mistakes in seeking to solve problems. They answer questions readily and can work independently or collaboratively in sharing workstations and show responsibility in the safe handling of equipment.
132. The quality of specialist teaching is satisfactory overall with a small proportion of both good and unsatisfactory teaching. Pupils benefit particularly from specialist lessons in

Years 7 and 8. Specialist teachers have good subject knowledge and mostly explain concepts in clear and straightforward language giving confidence and encouragement to pupils. Expectations are satisfactory and there is adequate building on what pupils already know, including what they have learned outside school. Teachers manage pupils satisfactorily overall and mostly intervene appropriately to give support, allowing sufficient time for pupils to work out solutions for themselves. Where specialist teaching is unsatisfactory the teacher dominates, some lesson content is pitched at too high a level and pupils lose interest. The main messages are lost and consequently pupils struggle when they are finally allowed on to computers. Teaching in subjects across the curriculum is also satisfactory at Key Stage 4 and many staff have improved their skills in the use of ICT.

133. Whilst most subject teachers across the whole-school curriculum have responded to opportunities to develop their ICT skills, the full potential of this is being prevented by problems of access to ICT facilities and lack of technician support. In addition the co-ordinator of ICT has other significant responsibilities in the school and insufficient time to focus on the development of a crucial feature of the school's curriculum. There are weaknesses in mapping pupils' progress and in strategic planning.

134. Since the last inspection the school has not moved on quickly enough in ICT. Most departments are anxious to move forward and are targeting the greater use of ICT in development plans. The development of an integrated resource centre, with flexible access throughout the whole day embracing the main ICT facilities and the library, could move the school on rapidly.

156.

Modern foreign languages

135. GCSE results in French were just above average in 1998 at grades A*-C with 45 per cent of candidates succeeding at these grades compared with the national average of 43 per cent. In 1999, 57 per cent of candidates were successful. Results have been at least above average in each of the five years since the previous inspection at grades A*-C and in three of those years well above average. These results have been achieved with a much higher than average percentage of pupils being entered for the examination than is the case nationally. Pupils usually achieve higher grades in French than the same pupils achieve in other subjects. In German results at A*-C

have always been well above average since the previous inspection with a 100 per cent success rate in two of those years. Nearly all candidates have been successful at grades A*-G in both French and German over that period.

136. Attainment by the majority in French at the end of Key Stage 3 is above the national expectation and for a significant minority is well above it. Higher attaining pupils start German in Year 8, and at the end of Key Stage 3, their attainment is already above the national expectation. In both languages, girls attain higher standards than boys although within sets the difference is less marked. In French and German pupils use different tenses to refer to the past, and the higher attainers use a range of structures to express intentions and possibilities. Lower attainers, including some pupils with special educational needs, speak and write confidently and can follow lessons delivered entirely in French and at a brisk pace. Attainment by the majority studying French and German is above the national average at the end of Key Stage 4. A substantial minority uses a wide range of structures, while lower attainers converse more simply on a range of topics.
137. Progress by the majority of pupils in both languages is good at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, although some girls build more securely on previous skills and knowledge than boys. Within a few weeks of starting in French and German, pupils can seek information and give details about themselves, their families and daily lives. They adapt language to a variety of situations, ranging from brief personal descriptions to letters describing journeys and holidays. Most pupils at Key Stage 4 develop their reading and writing skills, noting relevant information in a range of increasingly demanding texts. Higher attainers speak and write convincingly about their own ideas, giving reasons for their observations. Many pupils, including those with special educational needs, progress steadily, consolidating their earlier learning. They simulate everyday situations, talking briefly with a partner, and communicate facts and opinions effectively in writing, some using computers in school or at home. The use of information and communications technology requires further development however.
138. Attitudes to learning are mainly good and usually enthusiastic. Boys and girls show interest in their work and pride in their achievements. They have good relations with their teachers and classmates, working productively in pairs and groups, and seeking assistance where necessary. They speak and sing confidently and with evident

enjoyment, and much of their written work is neat, accurate and well presented. Pupils from ethnic minorities are well integrated, and those with special educational needs gain confidence in small groups or with additional support. Most pupils have good powers of concentration, but a small minority lose interest when activities last too long or the work is too hard.

139. The quality of teaching in French and German is always satisfactory or better, with the majority good and a third very good. Teachers speak fluently, using challenging language to stimulate their pupils, or adapting the content to suit lower attaining groups. They are familiar with the National Curriculum and GCSE requirements and have high expectations including setting their sights on study beyond GCSE for many pupils. Lessons are thoroughly planned to include a logical series of activities to reinforce vocabulary and exercise skills. They usually culminate in a creative practical exercise such as designing a brochure or acting out a simulation, and are linked by appropriate homework. Teachers and pupils enjoy good, productive relationships and usually a busy, good-humoured atmosphere prevails in class. Occasionally, lengthy presentations and exercises make heavy demands on pupils' patience and compliance. Teachers use props and visual aids imaginatively to focus their pupils' attention. Teachers mark written work thoroughly, write helpful comments, and keep useful records of attainment. They need to make pupils more aware of their levels in relation to the National Curriculum and develop more formally the advice they give regarding improvement in future. Whilst teachers have improved their ICT skills, limited access to the school's main computer room is a barrier. There is no use of the internet.

140. The improvements in standards achieved since the last report result from consistent and co-operative good practice, shared through monitoring and discussion. A closely knit and energetic team benefits from a frank and free exchange of ideas. There is a high standard of leadership, direction and collaborative management and a commitment to high standards.

162. **Music**

141. GCSE results in recent years have been below average with the number of candidates until recently being small. In the present small Year 11 GCSE group,

standards are above average.

142. Currently attainment by the majority at the end of Key Stage 3 is in line with national expectations and many pupils are beginning to reach above average standards. This is a big improvement since the last inspection when standards were below average. When pupils enter the school there are wide differences in attainment as a result of different experiences in primary schools, the level of previous instrumental tuition, and the degree of parental support. The majority enter with below average attainment. Pupils now sing tunefully in parts with appropriate volume and clear diction. Most pupils play tuned percussion and keyboards in instrumental work. They show good control when playing together but many pupils lack confidence when they try to play their own pieces. Most pupils can name given notes or recognise common signs within printed music. Pupils who understand musical language best are instrumentalists, but they do not use their own instruments sufficiently in classroom work to achieve their potential. In composing, pupils understand structure, show imagination and create effective pieces. Pupils' listening skills are satisfactory. Most listen with interest to each other and when they appraise they use a good vocabulary. General musical knowledge, for example of composers, forms, styles, artists and instruments is satisfactory.
143. In the present small Year 11 GCSE group at Key Stage 4 standards are above average. Pupils sing well when performing their compositions and show good instrumental skills. Pupils compose coherent pieces in an appropriate range of styles showing a sound understanding of musical language; they make good use of computers, including their own, to develop and notate their pieces. They use appropriate technical vocabulary when appraising but pupils' wider general musical knowledge is below average. Standards in the larger Year 10 group are average.
144. Progress is very good at Key Stage 3. High attaining pupils who are instrumentalists and read music well, and those with less experience, are challenged. The practical nature of the music curriculum develops good singing. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress. Progress in examination work in Key Stage 4 is good and very good when pupils show mature attitudes, as in Year 11 classes. The limited number of practice cells imposes restrictions on the choice of instruments used and having only one computer hampers progress in composing at all stages.

145. Pupils show positive attitudes and very good behaviour supports progress and achievement. Pupils enjoy music and it is a popular subject. They are friendly, open, responsive, respectful towards staff and each other, use equipment very sensibly, work well collaboratively and remain on task. They show patience, perseverance and concentration. They show initiative and enjoy taking responsibility, for example when performing or composing in groups. In Key Stage 4 several GCSE pupils disadvantage themselves by not grasping opportunities in tuition or through not joining extra-curricular musical activities, which would support their work. Pupils recognise that music contributes to their social, cultural and personal development.
146. In classroom work at Key Stages 3 and 4 almost all teaching seen was very good. Subject knowledge is most secure and very good use is made of the voice and accompanying skills. Delivery is confident, instructions and musical direction are clear. Expectations of pupils' work and behaviour are high; lessons are well pitched and pupils are challenged. Objectives are clear; schemes and lessons are well planned to motivate and stimulate pupils. Methods are well thought out to match the needs of different groups of pupils so that the most talented are stretched and the least experienced do not struggle. Lessons provide ample opportunity for pupils to contribute and use their own ideas or imagination. Class management and relationships are excellent. Rigorous lessons proceed at a brisk pace and use imaginative visual aids, for example when pupils were able to step or jump along a huge card keyboard. Skilful questioning and assessment encourage and make clear how pupils can improve their work. Homework is set regularly, clearly and as an integral part of the lesson. Since the last report, teaching has improved from satisfactory to very good. Six visiting teachers provide a range of instrumental lessons to about ten per cent of the school's pupils and teaching is good, although some pupils need to practise more. They do not have practice books to enable them, their main class teachers or their parents to monitor their practice.
147. The hardworking department is most effectively led and has an excellent ethos. Documentation is complete and of high quality. Resources are good and well used but there is a need for additional computers. Extra-curricular activities support the instrumental teaching by giving appropriate ensemble experience and standards are good. Extra-curricular activities are well supported. There is a choir, a boys' choir and an orchestra which are all well taught. School concerts are held regularly. The most recent school production 'Dazzle', seen on video, was of a very high standard.

Groups from the school perform regularly in the community, for example at civic events, charity concerts and at the Drax power station. There are visits such as those to the National Centre for Pop Music at Sheffield and helpful workshops in school such as a recent Gamelan workshop. The rich extra-curricular work adds to the cultural life of the school, for example when musicians perform in assembly. The activities reflect the dedication of staff, the support of parents and the enthusiasm of the musicians. Music is a strength of the school.

169. **Physical education**

148. GCSE results in 1998 were in line with the national average with 50 per cent achieving grades A*-C. Fifty per cent of candidates were also successful in 1999. Results have been at least in line with the national average at grades A*-C in all years since the last inspection and in 1997 were well above average. Results at A*-G were above average in the last two years but below in the two previous years. Pupils usually achieve higher grades in physical education than the same pupils achieve in their other subjects.

149. Attainment by the majority at the end of Key Stage 3 is above the national expectation. A significant minority of pupils are in line with the expected level and a few are below. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Games and gymnastics are a strength with pupils showing increasingly refined techniques. In games, the teachers' depth of knowledge ensures that the pupils have advanced ball control, good spatial awareness and well-rehearsed tactics. A significant number of boys have above average football skills. They anticipate well and can control the game with good timing of moves and passes. In gymnastics pupils construct and perform complex sequences of movement with control and precision. Another strength is the pupils' ability to observe and accurately evaluate the performance of others using technical language. The teaching of these skills is successfully integrated into all lessons from Year 7. They understand the importance of exercise for a healthy lifestyle and are able to conduct their own activity-related warm up. There is little difference in the attainment levels of boys and girls in their respective activities. Those attaining below the expected targets have ball skills that are less refined.

150. Attainment by the majority of pupils at the end of Key Stage 4 is in line with the national expectation. A significant minority of pupils are attaining above this level and a few below. Many of the pupils show increasingly refined techniques and strategies in activities such as volleyball and football. They are able to make constructive coaching points within practices and games which contribute towards the rate of progress. Their officiating skills are less well developed. A few of the pupils have poor spatial awareness and are slow to anticipate the responses from others in a game situation. Attainment by the majority studying GCSE is average relative to examination requirements. Students mostly have a satisfactory depth of knowledge and are generally confident in the use of technical language. Higher attaining pupils present written work that is well structured with careful analysis. A few pupils produce work with poor spelling and showing limited subject knowledge. Practical work for the majority is average with a significant minority above average.
151. Progress by the majority of pupils is very good at Key Stage 3 and good at Key Stage 4. Only a few are below that level but still make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 4. The teachers devise challenging tasks and set realistic targets to allow pupils to progress at their own level. A good example of this was seen in a gymnastic lesson where accurate, ongoing assessment of all of the pupils ensured that they were continually stretched and as a result made very good progress. The majority of the pupils are quick to consolidate and learn new skills. This results from them being well motivated and determined to refine skills through practise. Pupils with special educational needs are carefully monitored and make good and often very good progress. Support staff are well prepared and work closely with the teachers. Progress is less rigorous in the theoretical aspects of GCSE because such pupils are not targeted systematically in areas of weakness.
152. Attitudes to learning are mainly very good and contribute strongly to the pupils' progress. They are enthusiastic and comply willingly to the established code of conduct. They work well together, demonstrate good sporting behaviour and thrive in the caring learning environment that is effectively fostered by the teachers. They answer and ask questions with increasing confidence and respect the opinions of others. They readily accept decisions and constructive criticism from each other and their teachers. GCSE pupils help to organise competitions and coaching sessions for junior teams. The good response to the varied extra-curricular programme allows all

pupils to further their interests and compete in school, county and national competitions. The take-up rate for the GCSE course is good among pupils at all levels of attainment.

153. The quality of the teaching is nearly always good or better and the majority is very good. A small minority of teaching is excellent. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Almost all lessons are reinforced with probing question and answer sessions to consolidate knowledge and provoke thought. The few pupils who are unable to physically participate are nearly always involved in coaching and umpiring. An appropriate range of teaching methods is used which encourages valuable responses. Teacher and pupil demonstration is effectively used to help pupils improve as, for example, in a volleyball lesson where the pupils evaluated the skill of a 'dig and set' and then used these observations to refine their own performance. Ongoing assessment in lessons is constructive, ensuring individual and group progress and there is always sufficient time in the lessons to transfer new and consolidated skills into the final activity. Teachers have high expectations of all pupils and continually encourage them to strive for better performance, appropriately related to their ability. Marking of GCSE theoretical work is mostly constructive. However, the department does not have a policy that ensures a standardised system. Outstanding features of the teaching are the excellent management of the pupils and the mutual respect that exists between pupils and staff, creating an effective learning environment.
154. The department is enthusiastically led with exceptional commitment to achieving high standards. These attributes have contributed strongly to improvements made over the last four years. A new assessment procedure has been designed to effectively track pupils' performance between the key stages. However, several issues from the previous report have not been addressed by the school. There is still inequality of access at Key Stage 3 for those pupils who study a second modern foreign language and more recently for pupils wishing to attend careers meetings in Year 11. The curriculum is still restricted by the confines of the school hall and after lunch the floor is not clean enough. Pupils are unable to play fully recognised games in the school hall as there are no court markings, and the ceiling is too low.

176.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

176. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspection was conducted by a team of 12 inspectors including the registered inspector. Forty-four inspector days were spent at the school during the week of the inspection and 144 lessons were observed. All teachers were observed at least once and the majority on more than one occasion.

In addition:

- the registered inspector made two visits to the school before the inspection and during one of these visits met the staff, the chairman of governors, and parents at the pre-inspection meeting;
- the responses of 228 questionnaires completed by parents were considered, some of which included additional written comments;
- a comprehensive range of school documentation was used before and during the inspection including whole school and departmental development plans, school budgets, policy statements, schemes of work, examination and assessment results, minutes of the governing body, annual reports to parents and during the inspection samples of pupils' reports;
- the most recent external audit report on the school's financial affairs was examined;
- inspectors held interviews with teaching, administrative and support staff and the registered inspector and three other inspectors met governors during the week of the inspection;
- inspectors attended assemblies, registration periods, and a range of extra-curricular activities;
- pupils were observed arriving and departing from school and during lunch and break times;
- samples of work of six pupils in each year group were scrutinised by the team of inspectors on one day after school and these pupils were interviewed the following day;
- individual education plans, statements of special educational needs and reviews of statements were examined.

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

430

Number of questionnaires returned:

228

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	30	63	6	2	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	56	42	2	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	26	58	11	4	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	33	57	7	3	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	41	53	3	4	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	50	47	3	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	40	55	4	1	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	36	57	4	2	1
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	54	42	3	1	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	47	47	4	1	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	52	41	4	3	0

Other issues raised by parents

Some parents do not like the timing of work experience which takes place in Year 11.

Some parents are concerned about instances of poor behaviour on the school buses.