

INSPECTION REPORT

HULL TRINITY HOUSE SCHOOL

Kingston-upon-Hull

LEA area: Kingston-upon-Hull

Unique reference number: 118115

Headteacher: Mr J Janulewski

Reporting inspector: Geoff Headley
1714

Dates of inspection: 18th to 21st September 2000

Inspection number: 197186

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	11 - 18
Gender of pupils:	Boys
School address:	Hull Trinity House School Princes Dock Street Hull
Postcode:	HU1 2JX
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Capt. R J Bland
Date of previous inspection:	April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Geoff Headley 1714	<i>Registered inspector</i>	Art and design.	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements; How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? School data and indicators.
Deborah Granville-Hastings 19720	<i>Lay inspector</i>		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Carmen Rodney 18950	<i>Team inspector</i>	English.	
Hamish Wilkie 3753	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics; Information technology.	
John Mitchell 23246	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Lynne Kauffman 15051	<i>Team inspector</i>	Design and technology.	Special educational needs.
Cliff Blakemore 15462	<i>Team inspector</i>	Geography; History.	
Ron Bulman 15396	<i>Team inspector</i>	Modern foreign languages.	Staffing; Equal opportunities.
Stuart Johnson 12475	<i>Team inspector</i>	Music.	Accommodation; Resources.
Jackie Pentlow 30563	<i>Team inspector</i>	Physical education; Religious education.	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Hull Trinity House School is a small non-denominational voluntary aided school for boys between the ages of 11 and 18. There were 282 on roll at the time of the inspection, coming from Hull and areas outside the city. The school was founded in the 18th Century to provide training for boys intending to go to sea. It still serves this purpose, but now admits boys with other career aspirations. It has retained its distinctive character and strong nautical tradition. The school is popular and oversubscribed, with very few pupils arriving or leaving at times other than the usual admission or leaving dates. Almost all pupils are white. An average proportion is entitled to free school meals, and a below average proportion has special educational needs. No pupils have English as an additional language. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is broadly average, with few at the extremes of the ability range.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school has been successful in raising attainment, enabling its pupils to do well compared with national standards. However, A Level results have been poor for several years. A declining number of pupils continue to study after the age of 16 and this has influenced the decision to close the Sixth Form. The school's leadership is sharply focused on improvement; much has been achieved in recent years, and the most important weaknesses have been eradicated. There is much good teaching and very little that is unsatisfactory. There is a strong positive ethos; pupils have good attitudes and respond well to the school's expectations. However, aspects of the curriculum have shortcomings. Accommodation is inadequate; the library is poorly resourced and underused. Nevertheless, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Key Stage 3 results are well above average and improving;
- Most GCSE subject results are above the national average;
- Good leadership has raised standards and improved several other aspects of the school;
- Most teachers are effective, and a high proportion of lessons are taught well;
- Pupils have good attitudes. They behave well and learn successfully. The school monitors their academic and personal development effectively;
- There are many opportunities for pupils to link with the community.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- There is poor teaching and persistent low attainment in art; although standards are rising in design and technology they are still not high enough; religious education remains weak;
- Shortcomings in the curriculum result in imbalance, preventing pupils from having their full entitlement and choice of subjects. The range of extra-curricular activities is not wide enough;
- Governors give strong support but do not provide enough leadership;
- Much of the accommodation is inadequate. Some subjects have too few resources; the library is poorly resourced and underused.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in April 1997. Since then, the Key Stage 3 test results have risen at a faster rate than nationally and are now well above average. Results in English have improved significantly, and in 2000 rose to the high level of mathematics and science. The GCSE results have also improved, but at a slower rate. The upward trend continued in 2000. A Level scores have declined and are now further behind national figures. Attendance has improved.

The school has responded satisfactorily to the key issues of the previous inspection. It now has strategic direction, although governors still need to make a greater contribution to defining its priorities. Teaching is now good, in contrast to 1997 when a significant proportion of lessons was unsatisfactory. It has been accepted that the Sixth Form is not cost effective, and it will cease to exist after this year. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is now satisfactory overall. Provision is good for moral and social development, and satisfactory for spiritual. Although there has been improvement in cultural development, it remains unsatisfactory, particularly the multi-cultural aspects.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 16 and 18 year olds based on average point scores in GCSE and A-Level/AS-Level examinations.

Performance in:	compared with				<i>Key</i>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
GCSE examinations	C	E	C	C	<i>well above average</i> A <i>above average</i> B <i>average</i> C <i>below average</i> D <i>well below average</i> E
A-Levels/AS-Levels	E	E*	E*		<i>very well below average</i> E*

The overall Key Stage 3 results (not shown in the table) have risen, and in 1999 they were well above the national average, and in the highest 5 per cent of similar schools. Mathematics and science also achieved these high positions; English results were in line with national figures and above the average for similar schools. In 2000, results in English moved to a very high position, level with mathematics and science. The results are above average for boys.

The proportion of pupils gaining five or more A*-C grades at GCSE has risen. Poor results in 1998 slowed the trend, but the pass rate in 1999 was above average. The average point score puts the school in line with the national position; the school's score has increased but at a slower rate than nationally. In 2000, the proportion gaining five or more A*-C grades increased again. Most subjects were above average, also comparing favourably with boys' results nationally. Geography and business studies were average, though art and design and technology were below. The school met its statutory GCSE target in 1999, but fell just short of a very challenging target in 2000.

The small number of pupils who enter the Sixth Form achieve poor A Level results. The E* grades above indicate that the school was in the bottom 5 per cent nationally.

Pupils' work seen during the inspection mostly reflects the entry profile and the examination results. Pupils have good attitudes and learn well, usually making satisfactory progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils come prepared to learn. They show interest, and respond well to the school's expectations and the opportunities offered. They have a strong sense of pride and loyalty to the school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils adhere to the code of conduct and behaviour is good, except for a small minority who exploit weaknesses in teaching and are over-boisterous in communal areas. Bullying is very rare.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are generally relaxed and mutually respectful. Younger boys feel protected by senior pupils. Pupils thrive on the reward system and carry out their responsibilities well.
Attendance	Attendance has improved and is slightly above average.

The school is very successful in establishing a good working atmosphere. There is a good balance between its formal aspects and the comfortable sociable atmosphere.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 11-14 years	aged 14-16 years	aged over 16 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Satisfactory

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

The overall quality of teaching is good. 95 per cent is satisfactory or better; 15 per cent is very good; 5 per cent is unsatisfactory. English teaching is very good, mathematics is good and science is satisfactory overall, with good teaching at Key Stage 3. There is some good teaching in most subjects and, with the exception of art and religious education, all are at least satisfactory.

The skills of literacy are taught well in English, although not always sufficiently extended through other subjects. There is a narrow range of books to suit below average readers. Numeracy initiatives are successfully raising standards. Number skills are taught well in mathematics; there are opportunities to develop the skills in a few subjects, but these are not co-ordinated across the school. Provision for the few pupils with special educational needs has recently improved and is good when they are supported directly, but there is insufficient response by some class teachers. The most able pupils are taught well, but need more attention to help them achieve the highest examination grades. Learning is good in most subjects as a result of good teaching and pupils' positive attitudes. Pupils are disenchanted because of prolonged poor provision in art, and as a consequence they are ill-prepared and apathetic.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is satisfactory overall, but it needs better balance at Key Stage 4 so that pupils can make appropriate choices and receive their entitlement; religious education is not taught in the Sixth Form; the range of extra-curricular activities is too narrow.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	New arrangements have improved the level and standard of provision. Pupils benefit from good teaching. They receive good direct support and progress satisfactorily. Subject teachers do not always plan well enough to meet their needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Personal development is promoted satisfactorily overall; spiritual development is satisfactory, occurring through assemblies and in some classrooms; moral and social development are good; cultural development is unsatisfactory because multi-cultural issues are not considered sufficiently.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Teachers know the pupils well; they monitor their academic and pastoral development and give good guidance and support. Attainment and progress are assessed thoroughly.

The school provides satisfactory information to parents, both generally and about their own children. Profiles provide a useful cumulative picture about their children's personal development and progress. However, written information on academic standards is not specific enough.

The curriculum has some shortcomings. At Key Stage 4, there is no opportunity to take a creative arts subject; some pupils do not have access to a humanities subject; because all take information technology, pupils have to make a choice between French and design and technology. Statutory requirements are not met because religious education is not taught in the Sixth Form. There is no opportunity for pupils to experience either food technology or textiles as part of design and technology, and the subject has less than the recommended time at Key Stage 3. The extra-curricular programme is too narrow, with few subject-based activities.

The pastoral arrangements are good overall, with sound procedures for child protection and ensuring the general welfare of pupils. Pupils receive support through termly interviews with their tutor and individual mentoring in Year 11. The assessment of their attainment and progress is thorough, although not enough use is made of the information to modify teachers' planning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, well supported by his deputy, gives clear direction and is focused on key areas for improvement. Monitoring procedures are effective. Department reviews needs to result in focused targets and precise improvement plans.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are very supportive but they do not help set the school's priorities, and monitor its effectiveness. They fulfil their statutory duties except for breaches in curriculum provision.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher and deputy have carried out a thorough and honest evaluation of the school's performance; data analysis is used wisely and areas needing improvement are openly declared.
The strategic use of resources	The school is constrained by its size. Steps are being taken to overcome a budget deficit whilst dealing with important developments. Accommodation and resources are used efficiently, except the library and its stock, which are underused and not managed and financed appropriately.

The teachers are appropriately qualified; there is some overstaffing because of curriculum constraints on a small school. The accommodation is inadequate; attainment is not adversely affected in most subjects but the standard of accommodation is unacceptably low in parts of the school. Resources are also satisfactory overall, but inadequate in some subjects and poor in the library.

The headteacher gives very good leadership in guiding the school through important improvements, supported well by his deputy. The emphasis on attainment has brought rewards in most subjects, but the decline in standards in art has not been halted, while much is still to be done in design and technology. Middle managers are largely effective. Governors need to develop their role. The principles of best value are applied in the school's comparison of its own performance against others, and when purchasing goods and services with limited resources.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost all feel that the school expects their children to work hard. • Most feel that teaching is good. • Most feel comfortable about approaching the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than a quarter are dissatisfied with the range of extra-curricular opportunities. • Many are dissatisfied with the amount of homework their children receive.

Parents are largely positive about the school and the inspectors confirm their approving views. The expectation that pupils work hard is evident in the strong learning ethos and the purposeful atmosphere in most lessons. Teachers express clear expectations about the quality of work and the effort put into it. Inspection evidence confirms that teaching is good. From limited first hand evidence, the school is welcoming and prepared to listen to parents' concerns. Parents are right to be dissatisfied with the range of extra-curricular activities. The range is narrower than found in most schools, and, although facilities are very limited and staff give their time freely, there is too little offered to extend subjects or to provide enrichment activities. Parents' concerns about homework were not borne out; inspectors found it be satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The results in the 1999 Key Stage 3 standard assessment tasks (SATs) were well above the national average and very high compared with similar schools. Overall standards have been higher than average for some years, with a better rate of improvement than is the case nationally. The results in 2000 continued the upward trend. Both mathematics and science have remained well above average, and English has improved significantly, with the latest results reaching the high level achieved in the other two subjects. The overall results compare very favourably with those achieved by boys in other schools.
2. At GCSE in 1999, the results were average compared with all schools nationally and with those that have similar intakes; the results were above the national average for boys, as was also the case at Key Stage 3. The average point score and the proportion of pupils gaining at least a C grade in five or more subjects have risen since the last inspection. However, poor results in 1998 slowed the rate of improvement, and the upward trend has been below that achieved nationally. However, the 2000 results continued to rise, with 59 per cent of the year group achieving five or more passes at C grade or above. The school has consistently enabled a higher than average proportion of pupils to achieve five or more A*- G grades. In some years, including 2000, all pupils have done so.
3. There is variation in subject results. Relatively good results were achieved in the core subjects in 1999. Science was the strongest of the three, being well above the overall national average and the average for boys. English literature results were above national figures, and English language was average when compared with all pupils and above average for boys. Mathematics results were broadly in line by both measures. In other subjects, results matched the national average in history and in French; pleasing in the latter subject because nationally boys achieve relatively low results. In contrast, the art, business studies, design and technology, and geography results were below national figures. Comparing pupils' performance in all the subjects they entered at GCSE in 1999 shows that, in each of the three core subjects and French, they did significantly better than in the average of all their other subjects, whereas in art, design and technology and geography they did worse. The overall improvement in the most recent examinations is reflected in the fact that the proportion of pupils gaining A*-C grades was higher than the national average in most subjects; improvements in geography and business studies lifted those subject to an average position. Design and technology remained well below average, and the art results were very poor, with no pupil gaining above a grade D. In both 1999 and 2000, a high proportion gained at least a C grade in nautical studies, although there are no national figures to judge the relative performance. The school's own analysis shows that geography and business studies have made the most significant improvement, but that art is in severe decline. In this subject, for several years a significant proportion of pupils has not been helped to achieve even the lowest grade, and in 2000 none entered the examination. Over the same period, there has also been poor performance in design and technology and, although the position is improving, it remains at a low level.

4. Further analysis of the school's examination results shows that the bulk of the passes are at grade C, with relatively low proportions in all subjects gaining A* and A grades; science gets nearest to the proportions achieved by other schools. Much effort has gone into helping pupils lift their grades from D to C. Strategies to raise attainment of the most able are in the early stages of development and need accelerating. However, the overall results demonstrate that most pupils are making appropriate progress. The profile of pupils on entry to the school shows attainment for the majority to be average with few at the extremes of the ability range.

5. The school met its statutory target for GCSE passes in 1999, but fell just short of a very challenging one set for 2000. The target set for 2001 is the same as for 2000 and appears achievable, on the basis of internal data on pupils' prior attainment.

6. Very small numbers of pupils continue their studies into the Sixth Form. The five pupils currently in Year 13 are the last cohort to be entered for A Levels, before the school's change of status to one that educates boys from the age of 11 to 16. For several years, the A Level average point score has been significantly below the national figure. A subject comparison with pupils' performance in other schools is not statistically valid. However, seven pupils were entered for English in 1999 and none passed; in all the subjects taken, no one achieved a grade higher than D.

7. Literacy skills are generally above average. At the time of the last inspection, they were judged to be sound. The English and special educational needs departments have pioneered a well planned literacy scheme that mirrors many features of the National Literacy Policy, some of which are embedded in teaching and learning. The policy is monitored, and support is provided for teachers in departments other than English; however literacy skills are not always sufficiently extended through other subjects.

8. Pupils speak confidently and articulate their views clearly when answering questions and giving their opinions. They display good oral skills when explaining processes, as illustrated in a geography lesson where Year 8 pupils gave their opinions on river erosion. Conversational skills are displayed in French and English, where pupils express their views and make speculations on a range of topics. Listening skills are good, and have improved in most areas of the curriculum since the last inspection.

9. Standards in reading are good. The reading policy in English provides pupils with the opportunity to test their competency, based on a stepped award scheme of increasing difficulty. In science, for example, pupils read, extract, translate and present information. In French, by the end of both key stages pupils skilfully read a range of texts with specialised layout.

10. A wide range of writing is undertaken, including extended writing, and most pupils write accurately and fluently observing grammatical conventions. A small number of the lower-attaining pupils do not spell accurately or use spelling diaries consistently. However, the majority copy accurately from the board, and standards of presentation are uniformly good. This is also the case when pupils make use of information technology to present their work in subjects such as English.

11. Standards of numeracy are satisfactory and often good. The National Numeracy initiative and another developed in Hull, together with the mathematics department's own programme, are helping to raise pupils' competence with multiplication tables and number bonds. Several subjects of the curriculum support numeracy development effectively. This includes data handling and presentation in science and geography, word-processing and graphics in English, measurement and weighing in design and technology, and financial calculations in business studies. There is now a clear need to co-ordinate these activities to make joint use of them amongst all subjects.

12. Standards in information technology are generally above national averages at Key Stage 3. They are less high at Key Stage 4 because the Year 11 pupils received no discrete provision in Year 10, but standards are satisfactory overall. Information technology skills are effectively supported by work in several curriculum areas, although not all subjects have developed them sufficiently. Successful provision includes word processing in English and geography, the use of spreadsheets in mathematics, and control in design and technology, as well as general use of the Internet as a source for research.

13. Standards observed during the inspection, in lessons and through the scrutiny of pupils' work, mostly match the entry profile and the results achieved at Key Stage 3 SATs, GCSE and A Level. Good teaching is raising standards to the expected level in design and technology, especially for the younger pupils. Standards in art remain low, most notably for Year 9 pupils who are well behind the national expectations for the subject. In religious education, the attainment of pupils is below the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus at Key Stages 3, and the expectations of the GCSE short course at Key Stage 4. Low attainment in A Level examinations is reflected in the work of the small group of pupils currently in Year 13. Although they benefit from individual support, they do not benefit from large group interaction or other experiences designed to provide intellectual challenge, features that are typical in a vibrant and successful Sixth Form. There are very few pupils in the school with special educational needs. Those who are identified as such are clearly below average, but they make satisfactory progress. Some Key Stage 3 pupils who have special needs are achieving better than expected results, and the majority at Key Stage 4 meet their estimated GCSE grades.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils are good, as they were at the last inspection. Pupils respond well to the opportunities offered to them, and live and work together in a comfortable and sociable atmosphere.

15. Most pupils have good attitudes to learning. They show interest in their lessons, work hard and apply themselves to the tasks set readily. They ask and answer questions, join in discussions and contribute well during lessons. Most pupils are good-humoured and relaxed. They are generally enthusiastic about lesson activities. In science, Year 7 pupils thoroughly enjoyed learning how to use a bunsen burner, and thought science was a 'step up' from primary school. In English, pupils applied intellectual effort well and showed a lively interest

in their consideration of English as a world language. Year 9 pupils showed good database skills and responded well to the challenge given them in information technology. In history, Year 11 pupils worked very productively whilst examining the origins of the 'Cold War'. Despite the inclement weather, Year 8 pupils played rugby and football with great enthusiasm, developing their skills well and appreciating the efforts of others.

16. Behaviour of the majority of pupils around the school and in lessons is good. Pupils are involved in drawing up the classroom expectations and consider them to be fair. Pupils are supportive of one another in lessons, working together well and sharing ideas and findings. They socialise well outside the classroom and the atmosphere is good-humoured. Anti-bullying is considered in tutorial time, assemblies and the personal and social education lessons. Pupils report there is little bullying, and feel they can go to someone for help and their problem will be resolved. They have a strong sense of loyalty towards their school and are very aware of its tradition and heritage, wearing their uniform with pride.

17. During the last academic year, there were 18 fixed term exclusions involving 14 pupils and no permanent exclusions. Exclusions are the final stage in a clear, structured approach to dealing with unacceptable behaviour and are not a sanction that is used lightly. Since the last inspection, the school has adopted a positive approach towards managing behaviour, which has encouraged pupils to take responsibility for their actions and to be aware of the effect of their behaviour on others. Staff, pupils and parents feel that behaviour has improved, with a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to school.

18. Relationships are good between staff and pupils, and between pupils themselves, creating a supportive and caring atmosphere. Pupils are valued both as individuals and for their contribution to the daily life of school. They are polite and friendly, and enjoy having visitors to their school and lessons. They respect each other's feelings and are willing to listen to opinions different from their own. Most lessons give the opportunity for group discussions, which pupils enjoy. In religious education, pupils showed respect for the Jewish faith when discussing the Bar Mitzvah. In physical education, they encourage the efforts of others, and their choice of 'man of the match' was based on effort and attitude rather than pure ability.

19. Pupils respond well to the opportunities to take on responsibility within school. The system of stripes, buttons and appointing officers is highly thought of and is instrumental in motivating and stimulating pupils into trying their best in all aspects. Once obtained, pupils must continue to earn these awards as they can be removed. Year 10 and 11 officers play an important part in the daily routines of the school and in upholding its traditions in a modern school setting. These responsibilities are accepted and carried out with pride, and younger pupils aspire to being an officer. The school council was established last year, and provides a genuine voice for pupils' opinions. The council instigated the setting up of the lunchtime table tennis and pool sessions. Pupils respond to the careers and work experience placements well. Many arrange their own work experience placements, and the school receives many complimentary letters about their pupils' attitudes and approach. When given the chance, pupils respond well to independent learning. In design and technology, particularly, there is an emphasis on the need for personal organisation. Year 8 pupils were designing and making a toy for five year olds, and responded well to the challenge of taking responsibility for their own learning. Many pupils use Hull central library for independent research.

20. Attendance at the school has improved since the last inspection and is satisfactory. The attendance rate for 1999/2000 was 92 per cent, which was slightly higher than the national average. Unauthorised absence was broadly in line with the national average. Pupils register with their tutors in the morning and afternoon, and most subject teachers take registers each lesson. Registers are marked accurately and absences are recorded correctly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

21. Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection when 25 per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory. Now the overall quality is good, with 5 per cent less than satisfactory, 49 per cent good and 15 per cent very good. There is very little difference between the key stages and the year groups. History, French, music and physical education, highlighted in the last report as unsatisfactory, have all improved significantly. Weaknesses in religious education noted in the last inspection have been partly overcome, but some lessons are still not successful because pupils are not challenged sufficiently. Standards in art have declined mainly as a result of staffing difficulties and disruptions to teaching, occurring particularly in the last year. A series of temporary arrangements have not been successful. Current teaching in art is unsatisfactory, mainly because the gaps in pupils' learning have not been correctly identified and the content of lessons and classroom methods are not well chosen to ensure that their weaknesses are overcome. In all subjects other than art and religious education, teaching is always at least satisfactory. In the core subjects, it is strongest in English, where the majority of lessons are very good. This is followed by mathematics, where all teaching is good, and then science, which is satisfactory overall, with good teaching at Key Stage 3.

22. Pupils benefit from some good teaching in most subjects, although some subjects are taught well more consistently than others. The majority of lessons are planned thoroughly and provide a range of activities to maintain pupils' interest. Good classroom management secures effective use of resources and provides an environment in which teachers' expectations are understood and accepted by pupils. These are common features, and, when coupled with various others, they make a strong contribution to pupils' satisfactory learning and progress. Very good teaching, seen in several subjects, amounted to 15 per cent of lessons. In English, for instance, Year 7 pupils were using 'My Desert Island', and the teacher's expectations that they read at a high level and good assessment of their understanding ensured swift progress. Year 8 pupils' progress was greatly assisted in design and technology because the teacher focused sharply on the targets for the lesson and then required that they review their work done as part of a toy-making project. Very good learning as a consequence of very good teaching occurred in a Year 10 geography lesson; the teacher's confident use of subject knowledge, and tasks set with time limits, resulted in the pupils making good gains in knowledge and understanding of farming in East Anglia. A history lesson on chronology taught to a Year 7 class was very good because of the teacher's clear, purposeful approach, effective use of resources, and stimulating and challenging input. Year 9 pupils also received very good teaching in an information technology lesson on the use of data-bases; here questions were posed effectively and pupils received strong individual support, ensuring their understanding. In a very successful French lesson, Year 11 pupils became instantly involved and motivated by the teacher's enthusiastic and imaginative approach to developing their speaking and listening skills. When Year 9 pupils were given careers guidance, explicit learning objectives, a brisk pace and very clear explanations and instructions combined to make a very good personal and social education lesson.

23. Pupils with special educational needs also benefit from the good teaching. There are particular strengths in English, geography, and design and technology, where the newly appointed teachers' aides (learning support assistants) are well informed and deployed effectively. Where additional classroom support is not available, pupils do not always receive the help they require. Basic skills are taught well, especially spelling and reading, and success builds pupils' confidence. There could be further improvement if there was a wider range of books, both in the library and in the English department, to interest and help the pupils with a low reading age. Individual education plans and individual behaviour plans are beginning to inform teaching, although there is still much to be done. Teachers' planning to meet the needs of all pupils is very variable. There is good practice in English, but in several subjects, despite teaching having more strengths than weaknesses, the range of pupils' needs does not receive sufficient attention when lessons are planned and taught. The most able pupils also need closer attention to ensure that they all achieve to the level of which they are capable; as yet there is no specific provision for the pupils who are gifted and talented.

24. The quality of marking and homework is satisfactory overall, with good practice in both. Marking is good in religious education and particularly good in English. It is done regularly in most subjects, although rarely so constructively as to inform pupils of their level of attainment and give them guidance on how to improve. Homework is given frequently, but it does not always extend class work sufficiently, and it rarely presents pupils of different abilities with different challenges.

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

25. The curriculum is satisfactory overall although there are some unsatisfactory features. There are constraining factors that come about principally because the school is very small and has less flexibility than most when matching subjects and teachers to pupils' entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum.

26. At Key Stage 3, provision is appropriate because pupils are taught all the subjects of the National Curriculum, together with religious education. In addition, there is proper provision for health education through personal and social education, well planned and delivered by the teachers who are key stage managers. Careers education begins in Year 8, which is relatively early, but it forms a good foundation for provision later in the school. Nautical studies support the distinctive characteristics of the school and are taught from Year 7. Pupils undertake the practical elements of their nautical studies at the school's sailing facility at Welton Water. Subjects are organised satisfactorily and given reasonable teaching time, although design and technology is allocated less than is recommended nationally, receiving the same as nautical studies; music receives less time. Subjects are organised through a two-week timetable, which is an appropriate solution to the constraints. It works satisfactorily, with only a few problems to do with continuity where groups are taught a particular subject twice every two weeks. Provision for the key skills of literacy is good in English and likewise numeracy in mathematics. In English, there is good provision for reading, supplemented by an award scheme linked to National Curriculum levels; this is effective and helping to raise standards. Aspects of information technology are covered in several subjects, in addition to discrete provision in a lesson every two weeks. With the exception of art, which has suffered staffing difficulties and has not been planned satisfactorily over several

years, all subjects are well prepared, and delivery is organised effectively. In addition to the matter of time, there is another shortcoming in design and technology. The subject lacks breadth because it does not provide opportunities for pupils to do food technology and textiles, both important in their own right but also useful in tackling gender stereotyping. Drama is not taught in English or as a discrete subject.

27. More significant shortcomings emerge at Key Stage 4, and cause the curriculum to be unsatisfactory because it lacks balance. In the option arrangements, provided in addition to the compulsory National Curriculum subjects, there is no opportunity for pupils to continue with art or music. This has come about partly because of previous problems in art and low numbers of pupils opting to take music. However, the consequence is that pupils have no access to any aspects of the creative or the performing arts beyond the age of 14. Information technology has been introduced as a GNVQ course for all pupils in Years 10 and 11, a curriculum decision based on the perceived needs of the pupils within a nautical school and in the light of current career opportunities. This has posed a dilemma for the school because in order to deliver the course, both French and design and technology have become optional, with approximately half the pupils from each year group taking each subject and therefore not receiving one to which they are entitled. Furthermore, the change to the new arrangements has meant Year 11 terminating either French or design and technology at the end of Year 10 after completing half the examination course. A further consequence of introducing the GNVQ course is a restriction of access for subject areas to information technology facilities. However, this should be temporary because plans are well advanced to increase the facilities and equipment in the coming months.

28. Pupils have to make a choice between geography, history and business studies as GCSE subjects, and as a result some have no access to a humanity subject. Nautical studies continue for all pupils, and most take the GCSE examination at the end of Year 10. Personal and social education and careers education continue. The provision for careers education and guidance is worthy of note. The work is carefully organised, well managed and effectively taught. Pupils are also fully prepared for the well-organised work experience scheme, about which the school regularly receives complimentary letters from employers. The school has very good links with the local and wider community. It enjoys very good relationships with companies and other organisations, and also the local university; some organisations have formed curriculum links with school departments. An international shipping company has been particularly supportive of the school by donating money for curriculum developments. The image of the school in the community is enhanced in other ways, by regular appearances of its pupils in civic parades and in providing guards of honour for visiting dignitaries.

29. The Sixth Form curriculum is extremely narrow, providing A Level subjects for the five remaining pupils. They have no enrichment or additional studies programme to follow. The legal position is that they should all take religious education, but, as this is not offered, the school is in breach of its statutory obligation.

30. Curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs is well targeted, deploying newly appointed teachers' aids (learning support assistants) in response to detailed assessment of identified pupils. Teachers are also allocated time to support in classrooms.

31. In spite of some strengths, the provision for enrichment of the curriculum by extra-curricular activities is unsatisfactory. Provision for sport is good, with a good range of sports teams in, for example, rugby, athletics and cricket. There is a regular modern languages visit to Normandy, and the English department organises a Film Club and theatre visits. Musical activities include a Christmas production and a choral group, which meets regularly. The Young Engineers Club is an innovation much enjoyed by its Year 7 members. Subject revision clubs operate at certain times of the year. Information technology studies take place for different year groups at lunchtimes. Provision is weakened because the school lacks a coherent, planned programme of curriculum enrichment, designed to compensate for the lack of breadth in the taught curriculum. Apart from revision classes, there are few subject-based clubs to broaden pupils' experience and extend their learning. Few visits are made outside school to widen pupils' experience, for instance visits to sites of historic interest to raise pupils' appreciation of their cultural heritage. A substantial proportion of parents expressed concern in the pre-inspection questionnaire about the narrow range of extra-curricular opportunities, and inspectors confirm their views.

32. Overall provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is satisfactory. The school acknowledges the importance of these elements, and has made some improvement since the last inspection. There has been training, and this has motivated many staff, but as yet the school has not established a cohesive policy to promote all aspects. This results in an inconsistent approach across departments and missed opportunities.

33. Provision for pupils' spiritual development has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. The whole school joins together each day for a parade, in which they raise the school flag and consider issues presented by the headteacher. They have time to pray and reflect together. Year group and key stage assemblies also give pupils the opportunity to think about issues, such as responsibility for oneself and the affect of one's actions on others. Some of the assemblies seen during the inspection were inspiring, and all made a positive contribution to spirituality within the school. In tutorial times, some, but not all, tutors follow up the assembly theme, reinforcing the messages within the classroom. The monthly chapel service brings together pupils, staff, governors, residents and pensioners of Trinity House in joint reflection. Pupils and staff have a great pride in their heritage and tradition. The daily routines and uniqueness of the school bind all together in an atmosphere of joint endeavour and responsibility, which strongly contributes to individual self-awareness and belief. A few subjects make a contribution to the spiritual development of pupils. In English, pupils are encouraged to empathise with and relate to characters and situations in their studied texts. In history, pupils explore the Catholic persecution during the reformation and the relationship between the church and the state. In geography, pupils are beginning to understand the forces of nature through their work on earthquakes. In religious education, pupils study the faiths of Judaism, Sikhism, Islam and Christianity to gain an understanding of how people live within these faiths. However the important contribution of this subject is dissipated because topics are not always covered in sufficient depth.

34. Provision for moral development is good. The school has established a framework of values that successfully regulates behaviour, and parents feel that the school's values have a positive effect on their children. The classroom expectations are displayed in every room, and emphasise the attitude and behaviour expected from pupils. Relationships between staff and pupils are good, and pupils show respect and work hard. The principles of fairness, honesty and respect are embedded in daily life and reinforced through tutor time, assemblies

and personal and social education lessons. English lessons make a strong contribution to pupils' understanding of moral issues through their study of literary and non-literary texts, as when Year 10 pupils explored the themes of racial prejudice and victimisation in 'To Kill a Mockingbird'. Other pupils consider the rights and wrongs of vivisection. In geography, pupils think about the effect the exploitation of tropical rain forests has on the indigenous people of South America. In history, they think about the persecution of the Jews in the Second World War. In science and design and technology, pupils are aware of laboratory and workshop procedures, which enables them to work in a safe environment. In physical education, the emphasis on a moral code in relation to the rules of games and working with each other effectively contributes to a positive learning environment.

35. The social development of pupils is good. Relationships throughout the school are good, between pupils and between staff and pupils. Movement around the school is good-natured, and pupils are friendly and courteous towards visitors. The school council offers pupils the chance to take on responsibility and contribute to the day-to-day running of the school. Pupils feel their opinions are listened to and that they can make an effective difference to school life. The personal and social education programme promotes responsible attitudes to and good awareness of the problems associated with growing up and life in general. The careers guidance and work experience placements are well managed, and give pupils the chance to consider their own future. In most lessons, pupils are encouraged to work in groups or pairs, and they do this well and productively. Staff have high expectations of standards of behaviour and co-operation, and pupils respond to this accordingly. The quality of the provision for moral and social education is at the heart of the school's success in helping pupils to become responsible young people.

36. The school has made some improvement in the provision for cultural development since the last inspection, but it is still unsatisfactory because of the few opportunities within and outside the curriculum for pupils to learn about multi-cultural issues. Some departments include a range of visits to support their studies, but there is little evidence of departments seeking to enrich pupils' knowledge and understanding of other cultures through planned activities. In this respect pupils are being taught to appreciate their role as citizens in a multi-cultural society. Pupils have a keen awareness of the cultural traditions of their own school and are rightly proud of their heritage. In music, there is good support for the concert choir and the drum corps. The instrumental ensemble gives concerts in local residential homes for the elderly and in primary schools. However, the music of other cultures is insufficiently represented in the curriculum. English makes a strong contribution to pupils' cultural development. Units of work on Shakespeare provide the opportunity to study the cultural and social history of Elizabethan times. Pupils develop their thinking and aesthetic skills when considering the development of language, the cultural implications of borrowing words from other countries and the role of English as a world language. However, there is little opportunity for pupils' creative and imaginative development through art, drama, music or dance.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. The school offers a good level of care and support for its pupils, which is appreciated by parents and pupils alike. This area has improved since the last inspection.

38. There is effective provision for the physical care and well-being of the pupils. The child protection policy follows the local authority procedures. The designated officer has attended appropriate training, and provides advice and support for staff and pupils. Good use is made of outside agencies, and lines of communication are clear. There are effective arrangements for dealing with first aid, sickness and accidents, and there are regular checks on fire and electrical equipment. There is a rigorous and responsible approach to health and safety. Monthly checks are carried out, with issues identified and addressed accordingly. Risk assessments are carried out in departments; safe working practice was observed in lessons during the inspection.

39. The school provides good support and guidance for its pupils, and has created a secure and caring environment. Tutors play a central role in making this so positive. Most tutors and pupils stay together for a number of years. Each day, they have a fifteen minute tutorial in the morning and ten minutes in the afternoon. This gives plenty of opportunity to build stable and effective relationships. Teachers know pupils well individually and have a genuine concern for their progress, welfare and personal well-being. Pupils have trust and confidence in their teachers, and find them approachable, responsive and encouraging. The quality of the relationships is the basis upon which much of the personal support is built, and this contributes to pupils' confidence and attitude to school. The school is a happy place, and most pupils enjoy being there.

40. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance, which is improving as a result. The school is constantly looking for ways to improve further, and has set itself high attendance targets. Registers are checked daily by an administrative assistant, and contact is made with parents on the first day of absence if no notification has been received. Tutors and heads of year follow up absences promptly, and parents are often reminded of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality through letters home. Parents are notified when their child's attendance drops below 90 per cent, and their help and support is requested. Attendance at tutor groups and year groups is monitored each week, and pupils are expected to monitor their own attendance through the Hull Compact scheme. The ethos and atmosphere within the school is one of high expectations, which motivates pupils well. They want to be at school, and good attendance and punctuality are essential if pupils are to win their much-coveted stripes.

41. The school has good systems and procedures for encouraging and maintaining discipline and behaviour, based on a climate of trust, respect and honesty. Pupils were involved in drawing up the classroom expectations, which they consider to be fair and reasonable. The expectations are displayed in each classroom and around the school, and teachers often refer to them to remind pupils of what is expected of them. The merits and sanctions are clearly understood by pupils, and felt to be effective in maintaining good behaviour and attitudes. Staff use behaviour tracking sheets, referral forms and profiles to monitor behaviour and attitudes carefully, and use this information when awarding stripes,

buttons and positions within the officer system. This system is highly motivating as pupils take great pride in being an officer. Staff show a lot of respect for their pupils and for each other, which contributes strongly towards the calm and friendly atmosphere within the school.

42. There are good systems to support pupils' personal and academic development. The termly pupil profiles give a clear picture of pupils' progress in all aspects of their development. Tutors have individual interviews with pupils each term to discuss their profiles and look at ways they can improve. In Year 11, each pupil has a mentor within school to whom they can turn for support and advice. For those who need extra help, mentors from outside school have been organised. Staff have in-depth knowledge of all their pupils and communicate well with each other. This plays an important part in the on-going process of monitoring the overall progress of pupils through the year.

43. The arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and progress have been developed well. The school has made many changes in tackling the shortcomings identified in the previous inspection report, and the procedures are now good overall. Procedures are good in most subjects; they are satisfactory in geography, but unsatisfactory in art, music and religious education. In the subjects where they are good, pupils' work is assessed regularly and accurately. Pupils are reliably informed of their level of attainment and sometimes carry out self-assessment. Science and history have particularly good recording systems for keeping track of pupils' progress.

44. Pupils are aware of what they need to do to improve their work in many subjects. Within otherwise good provision in French, design and technology and science, pupils are not given enough guidance. There are good examples of target setting in history, geography and French. For example, the French department has recently introduced a self-appraisal system and target setting booklets for Year 7 pupils. Nevertheless, the quality of target setting varies in each department, and the school has not achieved consistency in ensuring that targets are specific and meaningful.

45. There have been improvements in the use of assessment data. The information is used diagnostically and made widely available. Detailed information on pupils' attainment is used to track their progress and alert staff and parents about under-achievement. After evaluating its procedures, the school is trying out a new profile, which includes more detailed information of each pupil's performance. The school uses data from external tests and examinations, including the cognitive assessment test results, to place pupils in teaching groups. Results are also used to predict grades and chart pupils' progress, as well as to set targets for the school. In some subjects such as history, geography, English and French, borderline and under-achieving pupils are identified and given extra support. Although there is some good practice, assessment information is not used effectively to guide planning in several subjects. There are effective procedures for assessing pupils with special educational needs, and the information is used to write their individual education plans. However, the impact of these plans is not monitored closely enough for changes to be made as necessary.

46. Sixth Form pupils do not benefit sufficiently from the school's drive for better quality information and better use of it. This is highlighted by the poor examination results over several years with many examples of pupils not achieving even the lowest pass grades. In many ways, students are floundering without fully understanding the requirements and demands of a successful Sixth Form. They are appreciative of the general support given by the school, but have not experienced close monitoring and rigorous appraisal of their attainment and progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. Parents have a positive view of the school. They feel that the school has high expectations of their children, that it promotes good values, and that their children are encouraged to be mature and responsible.

48. Parents receive satisfactory information about the school and its philosophy and approach. The prospectus and annual report from governors provide detail on how the school works, but they are a little formal and miss the opportunity to celebrate the individuality of the school. Letters home are relevant and informative, and letters praising pupils' achievements and attitudes are frequently sent.

49. Parents are kept informed about their child's progress through consultation evenings, termly pupil profiles and an annual written report. Attendance at the consultation evenings is good, and staff make direct contact with parents who cannot attend. Pupil profiles build a cumulative picture of all aspects of each pupil's development over the years. Parents can see at a glance if there is a problem in one particular area. Behaviour, attendance, punctuality, effort, progress, homework and having correct equipment are all graded and analysed. The written reports consist of short comments on pupils' performance in each subject. Whilst encouraging and supportive, the comments are often too general and do not always clearly identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses. Some teachers refer to targets, but again these are general rather than specific to the subject, and give little advice to parents on how they can help their child improve. Reports at the end of Key Stage 3 clearly indicate the National Curriculum levels achieved by pupils. Parents of pupils who have special educational needs are invited to all meetings concerning their child, especially the annual review, but uptake is variable.

50. The informal communication between staff and parents is very good. Parents find staff approachable and responsive, with a genuine wish to work together for the benefit of the pupils. Parents are kept fully informed of incidents relating to behaviour, either by letter or by telephone call. Parents are expected to sign the homework diaries every week and to acknowledge the receipt of letters. As merits are also stamped in the diaries, regular checking keeps parents up to date with their child's achievements.

51. The school appreciates the good opinion of parents, but as yet has done little to actively involve them in the development of the school. Parents were not involved in drafting the home-school agreement, and the school has not sought their views on major issues. However, most parents are happy with the way in which the school is managed. The parents' association supports the work of the school and is always present at events and functions. Parents readily offer their services to transport pupils to and from competitions and activities, and events such as the Christmas carol service are very well attended.

52. Overall, the school has a satisfactory partnership with parents. Involving parents more actively in decisions that affect the development of the school would improve this partnership further.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. The headteacher gives very good leadership and receives strong support from his deputy. They have formed a very successful working relationship in which their roles are clearly defined and their skills and personal qualities are used effectively. Three senior teachers join them to form a management group that ensures oversight of all school matters. The collaborative style enables senior managers to widen their experience and develop their professional knowledge.

54. The school has a positive ethos, its aims and values are clear and fulfilled through its work. The school is being managed successfully through a period of change that includes closing the Sixth Form and increasing the numbers in the 11 to 16 age range. The qualities noted in the last inspection have been maintained and built upon. There is now a sharp focus on raising standards, with clear expectations for the involvement of staff, which has resulted in a distinct and shared commitment to school improvement. Judicious management has overcome occasional resistance to change, and has been largely successful in dealing with some long term absences and other staffing difficulties. Attainment is rising in most subjects. Sustained attention is needed to ensure standards continue to rise in design and technology and religious education, and begin to rise in art.

55. Progress has been made in several important areas by accepting the constraints of a small school and the features that cannot be improved quickly, such as the limitations of the buildings. Emphasis has rightly been placed on the features the school can affect, such as teaching and learning and pupils' behaviour and attendance. Close monitoring of these has paid dividends, in that behaviour management is now more effective and the considerable attention given to attendance has brought about improvement. Regular classroom observations and guidance on good practice have raised the quality of teaching, and the standard of pupils' work is checked by scrutinising their books. Honest evaluations of current procedures have indicated that they should be more rigorous as the process becomes more established and the plan to increase the involvement of the heads of subject is implemented.

56. A good balance has been struck between formal and informal procedures for managing routine matters and for overseeing more complex ones, such as the effectiveness of departments. The size of the school enables daily contact between senior staff and all other teachers. This is used successfully as part of the monitoring process, and supplements the

formal reviews where staff are required to account for their successes and failures. Refinements to the existing review procedures should result in clearly defined strategies for achieving targets so that performance can be monitored more precisely.

57. There is much data analysis used to determine pupils' academic potential and monitor their progress. There is also increased use of the information by teachers to spot under-achievement in individual pupils, although it is not yet used widely to modify their planning of classroom work so that pupils are helped to reach higher levels. Data are used as a management tool to compare the school's performance with national and local standards. The principle of best value is also applied in the purchase of goods and services.

58. Development planning has improved, and is now satisfactory. It now identifies more clearly the priorities for the school and is more precise in stating how and when change will take place. Although all staff contribute to the formulation of the plan, a position has not yet been reached where all subject and pastoral priorities are linked closely to those identified for the whole school. Some plans contain priorities that are little more than routine management tasks, whilst omitting to include important aspects that will improve pupils' attainment and progress. Furthermore, opportunities are missed to use the outcomes of the review and accountability procedures to agree targets and strategies that then become firmly embedded in the department plans of each department.

59. The last report placed an obligation on governors to clarify the strategic direction of the school. The change of status and the expansion proposals give the school direction, but governors have insufficient involvement in establishing priorities and planning, or in monitoring developments other than matters to do with finance and the school's facilities and buildings. Other aspects of the school need their attention, and governors need to enhance their strong support for the school by being more aware of its strengths and weaknesses and becoming its critical friends. Their links with subject departments need to have an explicit purpose, with a more streamlined committee structure to help them carry out their functions. They will then be in a better position to carry out their leadership responsibilities to judge the effectiveness of the school and monitor its progress. Governors carry out their formal duties properly and their willingness to undertake regular training is a credit to them. Their statutory responsibilities are fulfilled except for their oversight of the curriculum, which does not provide religious education for Sixth Form pupils, while recent decisions about the Key Stage 4 curriculum have resulted in pupils not receiving their entitlement to a balanced programme.

60. The small teaching staff has sufficient qualifications and experience to deliver the curriculum and their other duties as subject and pastoral leaders. Where non-specialist teaching occurs, it is satisfactory, though the current shortage of French teachers has reduced the curriculum provision at Key Stage 4. The gender balance and age profile of the staff are good. Provision for special educational needs has improved because a special needs co-ordinator and classroom assistants have recently been appointed. Developments in some areas, such as the library, art, French and information technology, have been hampered either by insufficient staffing or recent long term absences. Currently the teaching staff is stable and attendance is good. A measure of over-staffing results from covering the curriculum in a small school, but teachers with lighter timetables perform useful additional duties in learning

support, the library and the behaviour referral unit. External funding is beneficially used to employ mentors for attendance as well as for gifted and talented pupils. The school has a vigorous programme of induction and professional development, and several teachers are valued members of local subject associations. The clerical and administrative staff is efficient and contributes much to the smooth running of the school. There is insufficient technician support, particularly in design and technology and information technology.

61. The school occupies a restricted site and space is at a premium. This does not affect standards in most subjects, but the accommodation is inadequate in quality and size in several areas. In art, music and indoor physical education, the accommodation is poor and has an adverse effect on standards. The off-site provision for physical education is good, but the travel involved reduces the amount of time available and standards are affected as a consequence. The library, which doubles as a music store, is too small for the needs of the school. It is difficult for a whole class to work there, and too small for it to be developed into a modern learning resource centre. Communal areas such as the hall and corridors are very shabby in appearance and do not contribute to a positive learning environment. The small central courtyard, the only outside space, is unsuitable for recreational and vigorous play activities. The English rooms are relatively new and provide an attractive learning environment, as does the learning zone, a recently re-decorated area for pupils with special educational needs and others who are gifted or talented.

62. Funding for resources has been increased to above average levels in the current year to make up for financial cuts in the previous year. The standard of resources is good in English, design and technology, history, geography and information technology. However, they are unsatisfactory in music and very poor in art. The ratio of computers to pupils is above average, although this does include some machines with limited capability. The provision of a new computer suite, which is expected to be operational by January 2001, will improve the provision significantly and give increased access for subject departments. The library is poor; much of the stock is out-of-date and little used by the pupils. Provision is poor in mathematics and art, and unsatisfactory in science, modern foreign languages, geography, history, music and religious education. Only English has a good collection of books. The arrangements for managing and funding the library need urgent revision. It is not always accessible and it is used infrequently when open. The school is taking appropriate steps to overcome a budget deficit. Specific grant is properly used for its purpose. The unit costs are high, but the resources available to the school are used wisely and efficiently and the school gives satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63. The school is in a strong position to maintain progress. It should now:

- Tackle the poor teaching and low attainment in art by:
 - * making every effort to appoint permanent, well qualified and skilled staff;
 - * providing classroom support whilst monitoring the existing arrangements more carefully to ensure the adequacy of teaching and the appropriateness of curriculum content;
 - * seeking external specialist advice on how long term decline in provision can be halted, standards at Key Stage 3 can be raised and how pupils can be prepared for future GCSE work.
(Paragraphs: 3, 21, 91-96)
- Raise standards in design and technology by:
 - * supporting the department so that better teaching leads to identifiable improvement in pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding at Key Stage 3;
 - * identifying and tackling the remaining and deep rooted weaknesses in the subject that threaten the improvement in examination results at the end of Key Stage 4.
(Paragraphs: 3, 97-99)
- Raise standards in religious education by:
 - * ensuring that teaching is consistently successful and the recently introduced GCSE short course gives greater depth to pupils' learning.
(Paragraphs: 21, 136-141)
- Deal with the shortcomings in the curriculum by:
 - * achieving a better balance at Key Stage 4 so that all pupils can choose to study a humanity and a creative arts subject;
 - * resolving the dilemma whereby all Key Stage 4 pupils are taught information technology but have to choose between French and design and technology;
 - * exploring ways of increasing provision for design and technology at Key Stage 3;
 - * providing a more extensive extra-curriculum programme;
 - * giving Sixth Form pupils their statutory entitlement to religious education.
(Paragraphs: 26-29, 31)
- Improve the effectiveness of the school library by revising arrangements for its funding and management; by auditing its stock and improving resources in subjects where inadequacies have been identified; by increasing the use of the facility.
(Paragraph: 62)

- Sharpen the governors' leadership role by complementing their strong support for the school with increased involvement in identifying its strengths and weaknesses, planning the priorities for development and monitoring the effectiveness of their decisions.
(Paragraph: 59)
- Continue to improve the accommodation by impressing upon all the agencies that have a legal interest in such matters and all other potential contributors that the standards in several areas of the school are unacceptably low and not compatible with a modern curriculum.
(Paragraph: 61)

64. In addition to the above key issues governors may wish to include these other matters when drawing up their action plan:

- Further improve GCSE examination results by:
 - * developing strategies to help more pupils achieve the two highest grades;
 - * increasing the use of available assessment data to plan work which is appropriate for pupils at different levels of attainment in each class;
 - * ensuring that there is a consistent approach to setting targets for pupils;
 - * co-ordinating the promotion of literacy, numeracy and information technology skills across all subjects of the curriculum.
(Paragraphs: 4, 7, 11, 12, 44, 45)
- Ensure the success of the few remaining Sixth Form pupils through a comprehensive programme of support which:
 - * gives a rigorous and honest assessment of their level of attainment;
 - * provides high quality marking which gives strong guidance on how to improve and sets targets to achieve;
 - * gives detailed advice on examination technique and study skills.
(Paragraph: 46)
- In otherwise improving provision for pupils with special educational needs, teachers should be more specific in their lesson planning, particularly where there is no additional classroom support.
(Paragraph: 23)
- Accelerate the involvement of middle managers in the school's monitoring procedures by:
 - * strengthening department development planning, including the link with whole school priorities;
 - * using existing review procedures to establish explicit performance targets and improvement strategies for departments.
(Paragraph: 55)

- Promote pupils' cultural development, particularly through opportunities in the curriculum to consider multi-cultural issues.
(Paragraph: 35)
- Within better overall provision for arts subjects, consider opportunities for pupils to experience drama as part of English or as a discrete subject.
(Paragraph: 26, 27)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	96
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	48

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	15	49	31	3	2	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Y7– Y11	Sixth Form
Number of pupils on the school's roll	278	5
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	38	0

Special educational needs

	Y7– Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	25	0

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.2
National comparative data	7.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.3
National comparative data	1.1

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	1999	52	0	52

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 5 and above	Boys	36 (45)	47 (47)	43 (46)
	Girls	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Total	36 (45)	47 (47)	43 (46)
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 5 or above	School	71 (82)	90 (85)	83 (84)
	National	63 (64)	62 (58)	55 (56)
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 6 or above	School	29 (40)	60 (55)	42 (53)
	National	28 (34)	38 (34)	23 (27)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 5 and above	Boys	46 (42)	42 (50)	45 (51)
	Girls	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Total	46 (42)	42 (50)	45 (51)
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 5 or above	School	90 (76)	82 (91)	87 (93)
	National	64 (60)	64 (62)	60 (61)
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 6 or above	School	24 (30)	22 (63)	37 (32)
	National	31 (29)	37 (35)	28 (30)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year	1999	52	0	52

GCSE results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A*-G	1 or more grades A*-G
Numbers of pupils achieving the standard specified	Boys	27 (7)	50 (44)	50 (46)
	Girls	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Total	27 (7)	50 (44)	50 (46)
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	51.9 (14.6)	96.2 (91.7)	96 (96)
	National	46.6 (44.6)	90.9 (89.8)	95.8 (95.2)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	37.6 (26.5)
	National	38 (36.8)

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

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

Attainment at the end of the sixth form

Number of students aged 16, 17 and 18 on roll in January of the latest reporting year who were entered for GCE A-Level or AS-Level examinations	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	9	0	9

Average A/AS points score per candidate	For candidates entered for 2 or more A-Levels or equivalent			For candidates entered for fewer than 2 A-Levels or equivalent		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
School	2.1(2.9)	0	2.1 (2.9)	N/A	N/A	N/A
National	17.7	18.1	17.9 (17.6)	2.7	2.8	2.8 (2.6)

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

Vocational qualifications		Number	% success rate
Number in their final year of studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all those they studied	School	0	0
	National		

International Baccalaureate		Number	% success rate
Number entered for the International Baccalaureate Diploma and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all they studied	School	0	0
	National		

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	280
Any other minority ethnic group	2

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	18	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes:

Y7 – Y13

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	20.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15.7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff:

Y7– Y13

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	111

Deployment of teachers:

Y7– Y13

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	70
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Average teaching group size: Y7– Y13

Key Stage 3	25.7
Key Stage 4	24.9

Financial information

Financial year	1998/1999
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	£
Total income	835691.00
Total expenditure	846757.00
Expenditure per pupil	2971.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	0.00
Balance carried forward to next year	- 11066.00

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	282
Number of questionnaires returned	107

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	33	7	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	46	44	3	0	7
Behaviour in the school is good.	31	58	7	2	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	45	11	3	5
The teaching is good.	43	52	0	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	37	10	2	8
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	26	4	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	76	24	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	43	44	4	3	7
The school is well led and managed.	54	37	2	1	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	34	1	1	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	41	16	11	8

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

ENGLISH

65. In 1999, results of the standard assessment tasks (SATs) were above the national average for the percentage of pupils achieving Level 5 or higher and Level 6 or higher; they were well above the average for similar schools. Even higher standards were reached in 2000, when 90 per cent of pupils achieved Level 5 and higher, and 60 per cent achieved Level 6 and higher. The results now match those in mathematics and science, and have risen more rapidly than the upward trend nationally.

66. In the 1999 GCSE examinations, the proportion of pupils gaining grades A*-C was in line with national figures for English and slightly above for English literature. These results were better than those achieved at the time of the last inspection. The upward trend continued in 2000 in both subjects, with a particularly sharp increase in the literature results. All pupils are entered for both examinations, and in the most recent all gained at least a G grade. However, the proportion achieving the two highest grades is relatively small. Pupils perform better in English and literature than in most other subjects. Pupils do very well in the subject in comparison with boys nationally. The English results are better than those in mathematics and equal to those in science. By contrast though, the A Level results are very poor; of the seven entries in 1999, none gained a pass grade.

67. In the work seen during the inspection, standards of attainment reflected the recent examination results. At the age of 14 and 16, standards are better than those expected nationally for pupils of the same age.

68. Oral skills are good in all year groups, and pupils articulate and defend their viewpoints forcefully by using examples to illustrate their views. At Key Stage 3, the younger pupils talk effectively in groups and during class question and answer sessions. For example, in a Year 9 lesson on Shakespeare, pupils used a range of techniques, including interviews, role-play and discussion to gather information and develop aide-memoir. At Key Stage 4 and in the Sixth Form, pupils respond well to any form of oral work. They speak confidently and forthrightly, as was seen in a Year 10 lesson where pupils discussed moral issues surrounding racism portrayed in 'To Kill a Mocking Bird', and similarities with racist name-calling in the present day. Pupils with special educational needs make good contributions during speaking and listening sessions. Overall, pupils respond appropriately and display good listening skills.

69. Reading is a high priority, and opportunities are continuously given for pupils to read aloud and model their reading on that of their teacher. They read competently and fluently, though expression is usually lacking. At Key Stage 3, pupils have good recall and knowledge of texts and understand the key elements of analysing a text, as seen in a Year 9 lesson on Hinton's 'Buddy', where pupils selected key points and made notes on plot, setting, time, mood and characters. From Year 7, pupils with higher attainment are introduced to literary texts often reserved for Key Stage 4. For example, the ablest Year 7 pupils read extracts from Golding's 'Lord of the Flies' to develop their understanding of moods, survival and potential inhumanity on a desert island. By the end of Key Stage 4, textual analysis is

thorough and literary devices are understood, such as an author's use and style of language. An example of pupils' appreciation of good literature was seen in a Year 11 lesson where middle and lower-attaining pupils discussed and analysed Bhatt's 'Search for My Tongue'. Sixth Form pupils show a good level of engagement when analysing literary and non-literary texts.

70. Attainment in writing is good at both key stages and in the Sixth Form. Pupils with high attainment write accurately and with precision. They use a wide and complex vocabulary and a range of sentences to express their ideas. At Key Stage 3, comprehension exercises are well handled and contribute the development of extended writing. Year 10 and 11 higher-attaining pupils produce essays that are carefully researched, crafted and argued, such as seen in the work on Bram Stoker's 'Dracula'. Pupils in all year groups make accurate notes to summarise their reading. Lower-attaining pupils do not spell consistently well and some essays lack depth. However, they produce emphatic extended writing that captures the tone of a text, as seen in their work on 'Of Mice and Men'.

71. Pupils show a high level of motivation and energy. At Key Stage 3, the pupils, particularly those in Year 7, derive much fun from their lessons and are keen to learn. They respond well to instructions and engage closely with their work. There is a high level of participation, and time is not wasted. They listen attentively to each other, and mutual respect permeates lessons. Behaviour is good in virtually all lessons and it is occasionally excellent. Pupils are clear about teachers' expectations and classroom procedures, and their willingness to follow instructions and co-operate contributes to the teaching and learning.

72. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall with little difference between the key stages. No lessons were taught unsatisfactorily; just more than half were good and the others were very good. Planning is meticulous. Teachers discuss with pupils the main learning objectives that are linked to attainment targets, and they use plenary sessions to highlight pupils' achievements. Lessons begin with succinct reviews of previous learning and involve pupils in answering questions and making comments about their learning. Pupils are expected to think critically before giving a response, and secondary questions are used to probe their understanding. Effective questioning, supported by concrete and clear examples, contributes to pupils' learning. Lessons are made relevant and brought to life as background information is used to introduce topics, and issues with moral and social dilemmas are not shirked. Good examples of this were seen in a Year 11 lesson on homelessness and turbulent relationships, as pupils read and analysed Michele Robert's 'Your Shoes'. A similar discussion on racism took place in a Year 10 lesson on 'To Kill A Mocking Bird'.

73. Lessons are well balanced in terms of written and group work, whole class teaching, reading, discussion and the use of observational skills. The range of activities engages pupils and sustains their interest. Every opportunity is used to expand pupils' vocabulary, and this in turn leads to pupils experimenting and being more adventurous in using a wide choice of words. Teachers' command and enjoyment of the subject is passed onto pupils, and their enthusiasm leads to pupils seeking to develop their understanding of the subject beyond the classroom as they ask, for instance, about buying their own learning aids and resources. Teachers have high expectations of all pupils. For instance, time constraints are used effectively, so that, as a result, pupils learn quickly and keep up with the pace of the lesson. The very good management of pupils, combined with good classroom organisation, contributes to effective teaching and learning. The occasional liveliness of a very small number of pupils adversely affects their work rate and their progress.

74. The curriculum fully meets statutory requirements, with good emphasis on language skills and the needs of pupils with special educational needs. However, the department has limited resources to support such pupils; and has a very narrow range books suitable for those with a low reading age. A weakness in the curriculum is that there is too little work at Key Stage 3 on the literature of other literary heritages. Leadership and management of the department are good, with good progress made since the previous inspection. Teachers have taken account of the under-achievement of boys nationally and adopted strategies which have been successful in raising standards. There are effective procedures for monitoring and evaluating pupils' attainment and progress, though the information is not used effectively to set appropriate targets for each pupil. The subject development plan needs clearer priorities and targets, and more explicit strategies and success criteria.

MATHEMATICS

75. In the 1999 Key Stage 3 national tests, pupils attained well above the national average for the proportions achieving Level 5 or higher and Level 6 or higher. The results for 2000 were even better, with 91 per cent of pupils reaching at least the nationally expected level, and 69 per cent going beyond it. In every year since 1997 the average point score has been well above the national figure; the 1999 results were very high, in the top 5 per cent when compared with similar schools. In that year, the mathematics results were the same as those in science and slightly better than those in English. The 2000 results were similar to those in the other core subjects. Results have improved at a faster rate than is the case nationally.

76. The GCSE results have improved since the last inspection although not so impressively as the Key Stage 3 results. In 1999, 48 per cent of pupils achieved grades in the range A* to C, which was just above the national figure. In 2000, this rose to just over 50 per cent reaching these levels. The pupils who entered mathematics in 1999 did better than in the average of their other examination subjects, though the results are below those achieved in the other two core subjects.

77. Very few pupils take A Level and they achieve poor results. It is inappropriate to compare the results of such a small sample with national figures. The remaining four pupils in Year 13 obtained C and D grade passes in the examination modules, taken when they were in Year 12.

78. The entry profile shows pupils to be broadly average, with few high and low attainers. The national test results at Key Stage 3 indicate that the department is enabling pupils to make good progress from Year 7 to the end of Year 9. The planning and delivery of lessons reflect the structure of the National Numeracy Strategy, which pupils now experience in their primary schools. As a consequence of this approach and that promoted by the Hull numeracy initiative, standards continue to rise. Few pupils are below the expected level for their age and most are above it. This is confirmed by lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work. Pupils enjoy the short sharp games at the start of lessons to exercise mental arithmetic skills and demonstrate their understanding of tables and bonds. They are well equipped to deal with a range of tasks which require competence in using and applying number. For instance, pupils confidently use climatological data in geography; in science, they use linear and non-linear graphs well to summarise experimental data; in design and technology, they weigh and measure accurately. Calculators and graphical calculators are used effectively and

accurately. Standards are generally above average when pupils deal with space, shape and data handling. Investigational work is well developed and pupils' skills in this aspect of mathematics are generally secure. Particularly good examples of pupils using skills effectively from across the mathematics curriculum were seen in the 'Magician's Hat' and 'Strange Billiard Table' investigations. In contrast, opportunities to endorse mathematics skills were missed in a nautical studies lesson, where pupils were calculating breaking strains of ropes but were not required to use the quadratic graphs that they had plotted in a mathematics lesson earlier in the week.

79. Pupils' progress in lessons and over time is good at Key Stage 3 and satisfactory at Key Stage 4. Pupils make gains because teachers are effective in securing their understanding, and ensuring that they develop new skills and consolidate those which have been learned previously. For instance, in a Year 11 class, pupils were seen to use their knowledge of quadratic functions to accurately plot and use reciprocal functions. In a Year 9 lesson pupils successfully used their knowledge of algebra to model number series. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the thorough coverage of topics and make satisfactory, and sometimes good progress in lessons.

80. Teaching is always good and promotes pupils' enjoyment of learning. This is better than at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils are motivated and well behaved because teachers know their subject, they have clear expectations and plan lessons to keep the whole class involved. They usually provide a range of activities so that pupils can learn in different ways. Teachers give clear explanations, to the whole class and to individuals, and they are patient with those who have difficulty in grasping concepts. Generally, lessons are conducted at a brisk pace, although not always in a lively and enthusiastic way. Some lessons are successful because teachers use effective question and answer techniques. Pupils respond very well to this by taking risks with their answers and by discussing their understanding with others in the class, often using appropriate mathematical terms. Pupils have a willingness and ability to persevere, particularly when undertaking investigations. They are keen on this kind of work but need to use information technology more, to build on their secure investigative skills and also make the tasks more interesting. In all areas of mathematics, pupils are usually proud of their efforts, and standards of presentation are good. Pupils respond to mathematical challenges and they are keen to succeed, particularly the younger ones. This was illustrated in two Year 7 lessons where pupils competed to finish their mental games quickly at the start of the lessons. Teachers have good knowledge of their pupils and deal with them well as individuals. Assessment is thorough and the information is used well to plan further learning. Pupils' work is usually marked in a way which gives them guidance on how to improve. Homework is used in a variety of ways to develop pupils' understanding of particular topics.

81. The good features noted in the last inspection have been maintained and there has also been steady progress. There is now a stable teaching staff and the department is well led. There is a clear commitment to make further improvements, and appropriate priorities have been set. Departmental procedures for monitoring teaching have yet to be developed.

SCIENCE

82. By the end of Key Stage 3, attainment is well above national expectations. In the 1999 national tests, 82 per cent of pupils achieved Level 5 or higher, and 42 per cent reached at least Level 6. The results are well above the national average and very high, in the top 5 per cent, compared with similar schools. Test results in 2000 were even better, with 84 per cent reaching at least Level 5 and 53 per cent at Level 6 or above. Over the last four years, the results have been rising at a rate above the national trend. Science results have been the same as mathematics and higher than English, though in 2000 all three subjects reached the same very high level.

83. Many pupils attain significantly above national expectations. In a Year 8 lesson on elements and compounds, a large proportion of the class showed that they were familiar with the terms acid and alkali, and that a pH of 7 represents neutrality. By the end of the key stage, high-attaining pupils are beginning to understand molecular structure and can speak confidently about the distinctions between plant and animal cells. Pupils with lower prior attainment, and those with special educational needs, show levels of knowledge in line with national expectations. Although these groups of pupils show weaker understanding of underlying ideas, they have a good enough grasp of scientific vocabulary to be able to make progress.

84. At Key Stage 3, there is a wide range of attainment. All pupils have a good grasp of scientific vocabulary, which enables them to take an effective part in class discussions. For example, in a biology lesson on cells, pupils in a lower-attaining group were able to draw effectively on their prior knowledge to develop further their understanding of the function of the nucleus in the cell. In physics, calculations are carried out accurately and with appropriate units. Numeracy and literacy skills in science are above national expectations, and are sufficiently well developed to support the work of all pupils. However, the weakness identified at the last inspection in the development of independent experimental investigative skills remains. All pupils develop basic practical skills across the key stage, but attainment in planning and carrying out their own investigations is below expectations.

85. Attainment at Key Stage 4 is above the national average. In the 1999 GCSE examinations, 63 per cent of pupils achieved at least grade C and all achieved at least grade G, which was well above the 1999 national figures for boys. Results achieved in 1999 were also significantly higher than in English and mathematics. In the 2000 examinations, 67 per cent reached at least grade C, and 15 per cent achieved grades A* or A. These latest results show an improvement in the attainment of the most able pupils since the last inspection, and overall results have improved steadily since then. Nevertheless, too many pupils at Key Stage 4 fail to develop the essential skills of planning and evaluating. However some very good examples were seen of GCSE coursework, in which all the strands of complete investigations were present. For example, in physics, excellent work was seen in which pupils investigated the factors affecting the resistance of a wire, and produced reports that scored high marks. However, such skills are neither consistently applied nor well enough developed across the key stage for all pupils.

86. A Level results in the sciences have been low for several years, although a comparison with national averages is not possible because very few pupils take the examinations. The Year 13 pupils currently involved are working below the expectations for the courses.

87. Pupils make good progress at Key Stage 3 and satisfactory progress at Key Stage 4. At both key stages, pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils, mainly due to the support they receive from their teachers and, in some cases, from support staff. Pupils make good gains in knowledge and understanding in life processes, materials and physical processes. They make satisfactory progress in basic practical skills, but the development of their investigative skills and their ability to work independently are insufficiently developed. Their positive attitudes and their ability to concentrate throughout a lesson aid the good progress that pupils make. Progress is good in lessons that move at a good pace. Teachers have high expectations and use a variety of techniques. For instance, Year 8 pupils learning about the human life cycle made good progress in a lesson in which they watched a video about the development of the human body, followed by an effective question session and then written work to reinforce learning. Year 7 pupils rapidly developed their safe use of a bunsen burner in a well-structured practical lesson.

88. Pupils make progress at Key Stage 4 in line with that expected from their Key Stage 3 results. Pupils' attitudes contribute to their progress, as well as some of the features of the teaching. Progress is aided by the use of good question and answer techniques in almost all lessons. However, in some lessons, single activities, with too much direction from the teacher, are pursued for too long. As a consequence, pupils make slower progress than they should. Key Stage 3 pupils in particular have very positive attitudes towards science. They concentrate and work well on tasks given to them in class and at home. They are articulate and confident speakers. They respond well to questions, and many show initiative in asking unsolicited questions. They work safely in co-operating with each other and with their teachers. In a few classes, though, a small minority are restless and inattentive, mainly due to single activities being pursued for too long by the teacher.

89. Teaching is good at Key Stage 3 and satisfactory at Key Stage 4 and in the Sixth Form. Teaching is never less than satisfactory. This represents substantial improvement since the last inspection. Teachers have good subject knowledge, and their expectations are generally well matched to the prior attainment of pupils. The deliberate emphasis on the teaching of scientific literacy contributes significantly to the ability of pupils to make progress through the key stages. Where teaching is good, lesson planning is clear, with well structured activities. Lesson objectives are clearly stated, and there is lively discussion to establish prior knowledge, followed by a range of activities in which pupils can work on their own or with teacher support. Such a structure results in good progress for all pupils. Nevertheless, the planning of some Key Stage 4 lessons lacks imagination and is inflexible. Some lessons do little to promote enthusiasm and do not give pupils enough opportunity to develop their own ideas, particularly in practical work. The use of assessment in lessons is good, and marking of written work is done regularly. However, it does not give pupils enough feedback on what they have to do to improve. The teaching of independent learning skills remains a weakness, as noted at the last inspection.

90. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and lesson plans show opportunities for developing scientific literacy. The department is effectively managed. Assessment is thorough, and there are good records. Test and examination results are carefully analysed, and plans made to further raise standards. The rise in standards at GCSE is testimony to the effectiveness of these plans. Developmental planning is linked to the school development plan, with priorities and responsibilities allocated. The monitoring of teaching and the evaluation of the work of the department is at a very early stage of development.

ART AND DESIGN

91. The GCSE results have been below or well below the national average for several years. In 1999, only 12 pupils took the examination, and five achieved a grade C or above. In the last year, a teacher's long term absence and temporary cover arrangements have added to the decline of the subject. None of the 16 pupils entered for the examination in 2000 achieved above a grade D. Interest in art has now evaporated, and presently no pupils are taking the course at Key Stage 4. The subject is currently in a worse position than at the time of the last inspection.

92. As a consequence of the poor provision in the past, pupils currently in Years 8 and 9 are attaining well below the nationally expected standard. Understandably, many have a negative attitude to the subject, which leads to some misbehaviour. This is particularly so in Year 9, where at best, pupils are casual and superficially engaged in their work and at worst rude and disruptive. Year 7 pupils are reasonably keen; they listen quite well and comply with requests and instructions, but the work produced so far indicates low standards of attainment on entry to the school.

93. In all three years, pupils lack confidence and skills when observing and drawing. It is very noticeable that older pupils have not acquired knowledge of the basic elements, such as line, pattern and colour, which are crucial when appreciating or making art. They are unaware of simple technical terminology and the historical and contextual aspects of the subject; they know nothing about artists and artistic style. Indications are that they are very likely to go through the school without recognising and enjoying the thrill and satisfaction of communicating their ideas in visual form. A lack of adequate assessment has left pupils not knowing if they are achieving well or not, and certainly not knowing what they have to do to improve.

94. The current arrangements are not tackling the deep-rooted problems. The classes are taught, but not well and not at the right level to match pupils' skill, knowledge and understanding. A lack of experience and preparedness to adopt a methodology that suits the situation is resulting in lessons that are taught mostly poorly or unsatisfactorily. Teaching is undoubtedly enthusiastic and was judged to be satisfactory in one out of four lessons. This is mainly because Year 7 pupils are compliant, not disenchanted and the generally sound advice given to them is acted upon.

95. The position is exacerbated by a severe shortage of resources and a teaching room that doubles as a design and technology area. The resources bought recently to kick-start the new term can only give pupils a narrow range of experiences and lead to limited outcomes. The teacher has made good use of the room's restricted display space, but has not been able to show work done by pupils in the school, so has provided drawings and paintings from elsewhere. The room does not have the equipment, facilities and furniture which are regarded as basic entitlements in most secondary school art departments.

96. The school was ineffective in halting the decline that became obvious after the last inspection, although it acknowledges the urgent need to make better provision and raise standards. Initial staffing difficulties have been resolved, and although there are local recruitment difficulties every effort should be made to overcome these, so that pupils achieve as least as well in this subject as they do in others.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

97. Results in the design and technology GCSE examination in 1999 were well below the national average for the proportion achieving a grade in the A*-C range. This was an improvement on the very low percentage of A*-C grades in 1998, but still well below those achieved at the time of the last inspection. The results in 2000 were the same as for 1999. However, a recent change in department management, revised and improved teaching schemes, and effective attention to assessment and monitoring of project work are already having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Lower-attaining pupils perform relatively well. Pupils' average point scores in design and technology are well below the school average, indicating the need for significant improvement.

98. At Key Stage 3, pupils' theory work is broadly in line with national expectations. There is no use of information from pupil's primary school experience of the subject to inform planning in Year 7. During Key Stage 3, pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding improve. However, their drawing and annotation skills are restricted by the exercise books used, the nature and size of which inhibit design development. The time- tabling of rooms restricts the use of the systems and control room at Key Stage 3, because it is also used as an art room. At Key Stage 4, this position is rectified, but making up for lost time presents problems for the majority of pupils who find it difficult to meet deadlines.

99. Good techniques for maintaining the pace of work, such as dated checklists, detailed class discussion and written feedback on research and evaluation, are now in place helping to keep pupils on track. These are good features and an improvement on the position at the time of the previous inspection. There are limitations on the breadth of choice in technology compared with the national picture because, for example, there is no designated area for food technology. The standards of practical work is satisfactory, but are impeded by the lack of technical support to maintain equipment; this was also the position in the previous inspection. For example, tools are blunt, and though pupils manage the best they can, there is an impact on the accuracy and the quality of the finished products. Low-attaining pupils in particular respond well to the challenge of problem solving and regularly produce better than expected results.

100. Attitudes and behaviour are very good at Key Stage 3. At Key Stage 4, the immature behaviour of a minority of pupils has an influence on their personal motivation and the standards achieved. In previous years, there has been a focus on practical work and a lack of emphasis on design. Now, the importance of design is used to challenge pupils' thinking skills and is also attracting them to extra-curricular activities, such as 'The Young Engineers Club', where they extend their knowledge and understanding, and widen their experience of designing and making products. The response to homework by pupils is good in the majority of cases. Good peer discussions, effective team work and respect for each other's work are improving decision making, and developing their problem solving skills. This is an improvement on the situation at the last inspection.

101. Teaching is at least good in all lessons, and very good in some at Key Stage 3. Pupils' learning is good at Key Stage 3 and satisfactory at Key Stage 4. Teachers form a small, enthusiastic, well-balanced team. Subject expertise is enhanced by electronics experience from industry. Teachers' commitment encourages pupils to take personal responsibility for their learning, as was seen in the Year 9 clock project, where the creativity shown by pupils

in their homework has had a significant impact on the quality of the final prototype model. Focused evaluation by pupils and good consolidation of learning through whole-class discussion helps pupils to improve on their original designs. Assessment procedures have been revised, and good intervention by teachers rationalises pupils' modifications of their work; these are supported by clear and honest evaluations. However, this detail is not always included in formal recording, so points for action are missed. For example, reports to parents compliment success but do not give future targets. Teaching schemes and lesson planning are regularly revised in response to pupil's needs. Teachers refer to the individual education plans of pupils with special needs, and give support to lower-attaining pupils, while equally challenging and encouraging more able pupils to extend their learning. Basic skills are applied effectively, for example, by ensuring pupils measure accurately and by insisting on the correct spelling of technical words. Additionally, graphical and modelling skills are promoted to develop experimental work, as was seen in circuitry design as part of a Key Stage 4 alarm project.

102. The department has limitations because of the narrow range of materials available; this constrains pupils' choice and ways of working. The restricted curriculum time available at Key Stage 3 also has an accumulative effect at Key Stage 4 because of the pressure on time to teach and practice both design and making skills effectively. The need for clearer assessment procedures was noted in the previous report. Progress has been made, though it has not yet been formalised and established as a written policy. The succinct revised handbook, the effective implementation of the new schemes of work, and rigorous classroom assessment are positive features. The strengths of the teaching team are being used well and capitalised upon to raise the standard of pupils' work. A firm development strategy is needed to ensure that the recently improved position leads to a significant improvement in examination results.

GEOGRAPHY

103. The proportion of pupils gaining grades A* to C in the 1999 GCSE examination was well below the national average, and achievement in the subject was significantly below that of boys nationally.

104. The pupils entered for geography in 1999 did worse than in their other subjects. However, there has been an improving trend over recent years, particularly in 2000 when the results at A* to C grades equalled the national average of recent years.

105. Evidence gathered during the inspection indicates pupils' attainment at Key Stages 3 and 4 is broadly in line with the level expected nationally. Most pupils at Key Stage 3 achieve appropriate standards, given their prior attainment, but a minority are not achieving a high enough standard towards the end of the key stage. Pupils achieve well at Key Stage 4. Individual education plans provided for pupils with special educational needs are detailed, and set specific geography targets within a timetable for improvement. As a result, whilst pupils in general make sound progress at Key Stage 3, those with special educational needs make good progress.

106. At age 14, most pupils are competent in a range of map and graphical skills, though the standards of accuracy and presentation of a minority are below those normally seen. Most pupils have satisfactory knowledge of places and geographical processes. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 8, for example, have knowledge of geographical terms and understanding of river processes in studies of the Conwy valley and Humber estuary. They have good awareness of the implications and

morality of timber exploitation in the tropical rain forests, but, in many cases, their knowledge of climatic characteristics and the ecological process is vague. Pupils make effective use of computers to develop projects, showing competence in graphics and word processing. Written work is generally of a good standard.

107. At age 16, pupils consolidate map skills and draw on their mathematical knowledge to produce graphs and charts. In GCSE coursework, they undertake research assignments in Beverley. They collect data, set hypotheses and produce evaluative reports. Standards are generally high, with good illustrative and written accounts. In studies of agriculture in East Anglia, pupils link the land use pattern to relief and climate, and make comparisons with other parts of the country, though the written answers of a minority of pupils are not specific enough.

108. Teaching and learning are never less than satisfactory. The quality of both is satisfactory at Key Stage 3 and good at Key Stage 4. In instances of good teaching at Key Stage 3, pupils in a higher-attaining group consolidated prior learning on river erosion, with the support of video and map resources, to identify and explain the process of formation of features. However, progress at the end of the key stage is slow when pupils do not concentrate and listen to the teacher's explanations. Pupils' learning is extended and enhanced through opportunities beyond the classroom at both key stages. They progressively improve research skills, learn about urban change in the local area and how to present their findings. Year 7 pupils, for example, learn to classify the use of buildings on the waterfront, and Year 8 study the power of waves in coastal formations at Bridlington, presenting their results through the use of computers. Good lesson planning at Key Stage 4 ensures that pupils make good progress. Well-chosen resources and tasks in a Year 10 lesson on agriculture in East Anglia provided suitable challenges, and pupils' learning was extended through independent work at home. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress when given additional in-class support. Their needs are identified in individual education plans, and targeted help, such as reading support enables them to make effective progress. The subject plans and regular assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding of topics are effective. Although pupils are aware of their level of attainment, marking does not give them enough guidance on their strengths and weaknesses to help them to improve their performance.

109. Pupils are provided with a broad and balanced curriculum that is enhanced through visits out of school, so that class-based study is linked with real world experience. The resources for learning, particularly books, make a good contribution to progress including home based study, but the quality of the book stock in the school library is poor. Subject reports note pupils' levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 3, but assessment information is not collected in enough detail to ensure that individual progress is monitored consistently. The schemes of work give guidance on content to be covered and time scales, but planning intentions do not identify the use of computers, the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and resources to support the learning of pupils at different levels of attainment. The availability and quality of the subject's resources have improved considerably, raising the quality of pupils' learning, including the opportunity for independent study.

HISTORY

110. The proportion of pupils gaining grades A* to C in the 1999 GCSE examination was above the national average and well above the achievement of boys nationally, although no pupils achieved the A* or A grade. The good results have been maintained in 2000, and represent a marked improvement on the results of earlier years, when they were well below average. This is due to improvement in staffing stability and expertise.

111. In work seen during the inspection, pupils' standard of attainment at the age of 14 is above that expected nationally. Pupils have a sense of chronology and can sequence events in time-lines. They understand the difference between primary and secondary sources of historical evidence, and how historians evaluate evidence in seeking information about the past. In the early part of Key Stage 3 for example, pupils are able to evaluate family photographs, place them in order according to age, and give reasoned oral and written answers. Lower-attaining pupils gain knowledge about relations between the church and the state in Tudor times, and understand that the power of the monarchy has changed over time. However, their understanding is often superficial and their achievement reduced by weakness in their written work, particularly spelling.

112. Standards of attainment at the age of 16 are in line with the national expectation. They gain knowledge of a range of topics such as the 1914-18 war, and sequence the events that led to its outbreak. In a Year 10 lesson for instance, higher-attaining pupils evaluated sources of evidence to understand the significance of the assassination of the Archduke Ferdinand in Bosnia in contributing to political instability in Europe. Most pupils know about the origins of the 'Cold War', and the political and economic differences between communists and capitalists, except for a minority who show confused thinking in oral and written work. The few pupils with special educational needs are well supported in class, particularly in reading, enabling them to achieve the lesson's aim. Written work of the majority is of a high standard, though a minority make insufficient use of sources of evidence to interpret events.

113. The quality of teaching and learning at Key Stages 3 and 4 is good, and is never less than satisfactory. This is a much improved from the time of the last inspection. One history specialist does most teaching. The lessons are well planned, and incorporate a range of activities that provide interest and challenge, enabling pupils to make good progress. Pupils' learning is well supported through a range of resources, particularly modern texts, enabling them to work independently in lessons and at home. Teachers' assessment of work addresses historical content as well as grammatical accuracy, and sets clear targets for improvement at both key stages. Pupils are well informed about their attainment and progress, which contributes substantially to the rising standards evident in the work seen. The teacher has high expectations of effort and performance, and monitors progress closely. Pupils respond positively to the challenges set for them; they have a desire to learn and achieve high standards. This ethos is central to the good progress that most pupils make. Occasionally teaching is not fully effective when the pace of lesson development is too slow and insufficient progress is achieved. Lapses in concentration in a Year 8 lesson, for example, led to insufficient time available to consolidate learning towards the end of the lesson. Sometimes in Key Stage 4 lessons, teachers talk for too long, pupils lose concentration and their learning is reduced.

114. The management of the department is good and has ensured improvement since the last inspection. The schemes of work are current and inform about policies and departmental practice. Assessment procedures are well established and linked to National Curriculum level descriptions, enabling pupils' progress to be closely monitored. The future development of the subject is identified in line with school policy, though the criteria for evaluating the success of its targets are not specific

enough. The absence of planned visits to places of historical interest and the use of computers to promote learning are weaknesses that reduce opportunities to broaden learning experience. Book resources for both key stages are good after a recent injection of funds, but the range of equipment available is limited and there are few artefacts to support learning.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

115. Since the previous inspection, the arrangements for providing information technology have changed considerably. It is now taught for one hour per fortnight as a discrete subject for all pupils at Key Stage 3 and as a GNVQ Intermediate level subject for all pupils at Key Stage 4. The present Year 11 will in effect get a half course, as there was no provision in Year 10. In addition, all pupils receive some further experience in some subjects of the curriculum.

116. In lessons during the inspection, most pupils were seen to be generally competent users of information technology, attaining above national expectations, though this is less marked in Year 11 because of the break in provision. Year 9 pupils use a data base effectively, successfully searching for specific data modifying it confidently. In Year 11, pupils were seen to analyse different documents effectively. Pupils at both key stages are also competent users of the Internet, as a revision source, for general help with homework and for research. For example, it has been used in geography to provide useful data for one local study and for research information in design and technology. Word processing skills are enhanced and used successfully in English, and some of their skills in the use of spreadsheets are used effectively in mathematics investigations. Desk-top publishing is used well in religious education and in English to improve communication with readers. Various aspects of information technology are used extensively in design and technology. One excellent application was in the design of a control system for a light beacon on a buoy. The special educational needs department is beginning to use the 'Successmaker' software successfully to improve standards of basic literacy and numeracy. Outside this, pupils with special needs learn well and progress at the same rate as other pupils.

117. Teaching of the subject is good and occasionally very good. None of the lessons seen was less than satisfactory. Both teachers know their subject well and relate very well to their pupils. They manage their lessons well and keep their pupils on task, which sometimes means keeping them from the Internet when it is not appropriate for it to be used. Lessons are inevitably tutorial in style, given the nature of the courses. Planning is likewise dictated to an extent by the programme, although it is carefully structured and modified to meet pupils' needs. Pupils enjoy using computers and generally learn well in classes. Teachers are using the self assessment within the systems to contribute effectively to overall assessment. Pupils are well motivated, generally well behaved in the computer room, and largely competent and confident. They love using the equipment and especially enjoy surfing the Internet. They are mostly responsible and are keen to work at the tasks set. They persevere well and are very good at helping each other with any problems associated with their lesson. The majority regard learning the subject as fun.

118. The subject is expanding, with the introduction of the GNVQ course at Key Stage 4. A consequence of this is less free computer time available to other subject teachers to deliver their cross-curricular work. The planned introduction of another computer suite will help solve this problem, but in the meantime some departments have lost out in the re-organisation of provision. There is a need to reassess the school's requirements and desired delivery of information technology across the whole curriculum.

119. The department is well led and in a good position to develop. There is, however, an urgent need for technician support to back up the teaching team, so that they can devote more time to guiding staff and dealing with important matters of development. The school is sensibly planning to increase the computer expertise of all staff in the immediate future as part of the staff development programme. Overall, the department has made good progress since the last inspection.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

FRENCH

120. In 1999, the results in French at grades A*-C were well above the national average, and well above the average for boys. The relative performance of pupils in French was significantly higher than their achievements in other subjects. This standard, which was much higher than the low results obtained in 1998, was sustained in 2000. In the last two years, almost all pupils have gained a grade in the A*-G range. By contrast, the results at the time of the last inspection were below national figures.

121. The current attainment of pupils in French is above average during and at the end of Key Stage 3. Within a few weeks of starting to study the language, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, can exchange everyday greetings and basic information about themselves and their daily lives. They learn the vocabulary and phrases they need in class, and most can soon read simple texts and captions. In Year 8, the majority can use grammar and tenses to predict and explain possibilities, such as things to do in town and how to get about using transport. Written work by a substantial minority of pupils at the end of the key stage shows confident use of past tenses. Most pupils can describe people and situations from life in school and at home. They express their preferences about lessons and sport, giving reasons for their opinions. Many pupils speak less confidently than they write, although this is improving in lessons designed to exercise skills through paired work and short personal statements. With additional support, small groups of lower-attainers practise and become more confident in using a recording machine. Most pupils have satisfactory listening skills, but a few lose interest and achieve less in consequence. Pupils can follow lessons conducted almost entirely in the foreign language, usually showing understanding and good-natured appreciation of other pupils' contributions

122. At Key Stage 4, higher and lower-attainers work as a class or independently on a series of linked activities, developing the skills they need in their examination. Most can speak and write in various styles, ranging from brief instructions, descriptions and directions to detailed descriptions of recent events in informal letters. The opinions they express cover a wide range of topics, such as motoring, holidays or the environment. A minority of pupils, who have suffered a previous lack of continuity in teaching, find both listening and reading difficult. Both higher and lower-attainers, including pupils with special educational needs, improve over time with individual support and helpful extra prompt sheets provided by their teachers.

123. The quality of teaching is good and a substantial minority of lessons is very good at both key stages; none is less than satisfactory. A combination of very good subject knowledge and lively, imaginative teaching methods contributes to the presentation and effectiveness of many lessons. The sequence of activities is usually well planned to include short, amusing language tasks, including games and simulations. The teacher leads part of the lesson, for example when formally introducing prepositions, balancing this with paired work, allowing independent progress at different levels of attainment. Conventional audio-visual resources are put to effective use, but the extensive windows and skylights in the classroom require better blackout to make this even more successful. A few pupils use computers to improve the presentation of their work. Relations between teachers and their pupils are usually positive. Inattention and lack of effort are firmly dealt with, without confrontation. A busy productive atmosphere prevails in the best lessons, when pupils put their French and literacy skills to practical use. A minority of the teaching, based too closely on the textbooks, is not adapted to suit a wide range of ability, and consequently some pupils lose interest. Teachers conduct informal assessment by frequently testing pupils' understanding and eliciting spoken responses from groups and individuals. While some marking has previously been scant, there are now secure frameworks at both key stages, enabling pupils to co-operate with their teachers in assessing and planning their own progress. Homework is regular and links work done in class, but many pupils are more conscientious in following up lessons than in preparing for them in advance.

124. The school offers a basic provision of one European language, which is successfully taught and could usefully be expanded to include at least one other. The head of department and some pupils gain wider experience through involvement in school-based and locally organised development schemes. Since the last inspection, the quality and stability of staffing have improved, and GCSE results have risen. Amongst other reasons, the current shortage of language teachers has resulted in French only being offered as an option at Key Stage 4, so that many pupils do not have their full curricular entitlement. To build on its current success, the department needs to concentrate on methods and subject matter that appeal to boys, develop the use of computers for wider communication, and make more consistent use of individual learning targets for all pupils.

MUSIC

125. The school does not offer music at Key Stage 4. At Key Stage 3, standards of attainment have improved since the last inspection, and are now broadly in line with those found nationally. By the end of the key stage, pupils have a well-developed sense of rhythm and are able to clap rhythmic patterns with confidence. Knowledge of notation is above average, with pupils able to identify notes in treble and bass clef, show awareness of time values and major and minor chord construction. In Year 9, however, composition standards are below average, and this reflects the impact that poor accommodation and equipment have had on the subject. The singing in lessons is enthusiastic, but it lacks quality of tone and pitch definition. The attainment of pupils receiving instrumental lessons is in line with national expectations.

126. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils in music lessons are good. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection and reflects an improvement in the quality of both teaching and learning. No examples of unacceptable behaviour were observed, and pupils are generally courteous and respectful. They have good relationships with each other, with many examples of pupils helping each other and collaborating effectively.

127. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. It is now satisfactory in all the class lessons, and satisfactory or good in the instrumental lessons. The staff have good subject knowledge with appropriate specialisms. Lessons are well planned and effectively structured, building on pupils' positive attitude and their willingness to sing and take part in practical activities. Teachers' explanations are given clearly, and there is good use of extracts of recorded music to illustrate and support teaching points. Homework is used effectively to consolidate learning in the classroom. Theoretical work is sometimes over-emphasised at the expense of a more practical performance-based approach. Most of the teaching is pitched at one level and, while the tasks set enable lower-attaining pupils to perform at an appropriate level, expectations are sometimes too low to challenge higher-attaining pupils. When explanations are too long, the pace of learning is slow and insufficiently productive. This is particularly the case in composition work, where there is a need for shorter tasks requiring less explanation. Marking is carried out conscientiously, but lacks helpful comments pointing to ways of improvement.

128. The Key Stage 3 curriculum is structured on a modular pattern to give a good balance of activities and to cover the basic requirements of the National Curriculum. However, there is not enough emphasis on music of non-Western European cultures. The range of extra-curricular activities is limited, although there is a good level of participation in the school's choral activities. The accommodation and resources have been improved since the last inspection, and most of the lessons now take place in a good-sized room. However, some lessons still take place in unsuitable rooms and there are no facilities for group work. This affects standards, particularly in composition work, as does the lack of access to suitable computers and software to facilitate information technology work in music. The new resources being provided will improve the provision significantly, but will still leave deficiencies such as lack of a piano for the music room and no high quality audio equipment.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

129. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 is in line with the national expectation, although there are differences between the activities. Attainment in the outdoor activities section, which includes sailing, exceeds national expectations. Attainment in games is in line with expectations, but the attainment of the pupils in gymnastics is below the nationally expected level. Pupils understand the necessity of warm-up before activity, and are beginning to be able to lead the class in this. Their hand and eye co-ordination enables them to play small invasion games successfully, and they are beginning to take part in full games. In gymnastics, they can put together sequences of movement, but their quality of movement is below that expected for their age. When pupils are asked to evaluate their own performance in games, they are able to do so and suggest ways of improving their skills. Nevertheless, they do this less frequently in pair work and do not often do it spontaneously. Evaluation of gymnastics movement is weaker.

130. Attainment at Key Stage 4 is also in line with national expectations when pupils take part in more complex games, using a greater level of skill and tactics. Those opting for rugby are good at planning team tactical moves to use within a game. Many pupils also obtain Royal Yachting Association qualifications. There are no GCSE or A Level examination courses on offer at the school. Sixth Form pupils are given the opportunity to take part in physical activities, but currently none is taking advantage of the offer.

131. Attitudes towards the subject are very good. Pupils come properly equipped and prepared to take part in lessons, whatever the weather, and show very good behaviour and a positive attitude throughout. There is a pleasant relaxed atmosphere within lessons and very good relationships between pupils and between staff and pupils, enabling learning to take place in a constructive environment. Pupils work well in pairs, in small groups and in teams respecting each other's contribution. This is seen at the end of each lesson when pupils nominate 'a man of the match' from the opposing team, and they show great sensitivity in those decisions. Team matches help to promote social development, and older pupils often attend matches and take responsibility in a coaching capacity.

132. Teaching is satisfactory overall, and almost half is good. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. There are no significant differences between the quality of teaching at Key Stage 3 and 4. Strengths within the teaching are the progression of skills development, pupils' involvement in questions and in strategy decisions, especially at Key Stage 4, and the management of pupils to motivate the less enthusiastic. Teachers use their knowledge and understanding well to add interest to the lessons, with good use being made of current national and international events. Weaker features are the limited use of peer evaluation and the lack of specific guidance in gymnastics. There is also a need to present the pupils not taking part in a lesson with some purposeful activity. Pupils of all abilities make progress at an equal rate.

133. A variety of activities is offered to pupils at Key Stages 3 and 4, so the planned programme meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. There is a bias towards games, and facilities at the school mean that coverage of all the requirements for indoor activities is difficult. Very little use is made of information technology. Activities seen during the inspection included football, rugby, hockey, gymnastics and a video of a

swimming assessment. Extra-curricular activities are available for all team games, with practices being available for all those interested; these enable pupils to improve their performance, and experience competition. The school has gained a number of successes locally in inter-school events, including a biathlon, and the school team won the under 15 Rugby Union Tournament in 2000.

134. Leadership of the department is satisfactory, with some good aspects. Teachers work very well together with a shared commitment to improve. They make good use of the available resources. Overall accommodation is poor, although the school makes good use of the local facilities and has a good resource in the Welton Centre. The facilities on site restrict what can be provided and the time taken to travel to the off-site facilities reduces the amount of time available for physical activity. The implication of timetabling Key Stage 4 pupils on alternate weeks reduces the application of health and fitness requirements of the courses. Pupils are often set by ability for physical education, and are assessed at the end of each module, with class targets being given to the pupils. Pupils are aware of their level of attainment, and revisions are currently being undertaken to bring assessment in line with the new levels of the National Curriculum.

135. The strengths noted in the last inspection have been maintained, and significant improvement has been made in other areas. The use of specialist staff has a positive impact on teaching and learning. No disruptive incidents were seen, and strategies for supporting pupils of all abilities are in place. However, the indoor accommodation noted as inadequate in the last report has not been improved, and is still causing severe restrictions to the quality of learning and pupils' attainment.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

136. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 is below that expected at the age of 14, as outlined in the Hull agreed syllabus for religious education which the school uses. Some pupils are able to recall basic facts about the various religions studied, but several do not have a clear understanding of the differences between the religions. Pupils are able to express an understanding of the problems that people of different faiths encounter, as seen in the work on Judaism. When given the opportunity, pupils are quite willing to discuss various points of view, but very few are forming their own balanced views on spiritual issues. There is some indication that the current Year 9 pupils are more aware of these issues, and that standards are rising.

137. At Key Stage 4, pupils follow a short half GCSE course that fulfils the requirements of the agreed syllabus. The present Year 11 is the first group to follow that course and so no figures are available for comparison, but the work seen is currently below the expected level. Pupils are not answering the questions in sufficient depth, and they often fail to give reasons for their answers. Their knowledge of different world religions is also weak. Although pupils consider the contribution of religion to the world, they do not in general develop their own views about spiritual issues.

138. Four lessons were observed. Two were taught satisfactorily and the other two unsatisfactorily. When also considering the work in pupils' books, the evidence shows that teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 3 but unsatisfactory at Key Stage 4. Strengths within teaching are the use of a variety of resources and methods; structure and pace of lessons that

enable pupils to build on their base of knowledge; questioning that challenges pupils to consider an issue in depth. Weaker elements are when the structure and timing of the lesson do not take into account those working faster or slower than most of the pupils, and where there is lack of challenge, with too much teacher led work involving listening or copying. Pupils have a satisfactory attitude to the subject. They are willing to participate in lessons and they work well on their own, and in pairs and in small groups. They are prepared to listen to the differing opinions of others, but the lessons do not provide sufficient opportunities for this to happen through discussion and debate. Most pupils take a pride in the presentation of their work and talk positively about the subject. The pupils' books are marked regularly. Written comments often highlight what needs to be improved but rarely give advice on how this can happen. Teaching could be improved if pupils' attainment and progress were assessed rigorously.

139. Pupils in the Sixth Form do not study religious education, and in this respect the school is not fulfilling its statutory requirements. For all other pupils, the areas studied fulfil the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus in the breadth of areas studied, although greater depth is required at Key Stage 4. Use is made of information technology, and care is taken over literacy within lessons, and in pupils' written work; however, numeracy is not developed within the subject. The learning process is enhanced by occasional visits, with Year 9 visiting an exhibition on Judaism.

140. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory, with some weaker elements. Since the last inspection, departmental documentation has been completely rewritten, and schemes of work written in line with a revised agreed syllabus. Resources available are now satisfactory, with a range of new textbooks that present the material in a lively interesting way, suitable for pupils of all abilities. A good supply of artefacts enables a clearer understanding of different world religions. However, the resources in the library are not suitable, particularly for the Key Stage 4 course.

141. Satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection. At that time, standards were well below the expected level, resources were almost non-existent and no examination course was available for pupils. So that the department continues to move forward, the depth of work produced by the pupils needs improving, the assessment scheme needs to be brought in line with the agreed syllabus requirements, and the resource base needs to be enlarged.

OTHER SUBJECTS

142. All pupils take nautical studies at Key Stage 3, and, since 1999, some have been entered for the GCSE examination at the end of Year 10. No comparisons with national figures can be made, but about 60 per cent of the groups achieved A*-C grades in 1999 and 2000. The practical elements of their studies take place at the school's sailing centre. This was not seen during the inspection, but informal discussion with pupils indicated sound knowledge. Observation of two classroom lessons confirmed that pupils have an appropriate level of understanding, and that they respond well to the topic and activities by asking pertinent questions and giving the teacher full attention. Their number skills are good, enabling them to deal successfully with subject-related calculations. The lessons were taught satisfactorily, with sufficient pace and secure subject knowledge to ensure that pupils made progress. The teaching did not, however, provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to contribute, and there was little stimulus to enliven the topic. For instance, despite learning

about the different materials used in ropes, there were no examples in the classroom. Furthermore, opportunities to build on pupils' learning in mathematics are not taken. The teaching room lacks visual stimulus, such as displays of pupils' work or photographs, to serve as a learning resource.

143. Business studies has been offered as a GCSE subject since the last inspection. The results have been below average, and sometimes well below, with the exception of the first examination year, when they exceeded the national figures. However, results in 2000 rose to a position in line with other schools and slightly above boys' results. The groups currently in Years 10 and 11 are achieving at a level that indicates that the improved results can be maintained. They benefit from satisfactory and good teaching, within a solid learning ethos based on mutually respectful relationships. Pupils respond well to clear explanations and when a brisk pace is set. Video material is used well to require pupils to extract relevant information. In contrast, laboured input which repeats points unnecessarily when understanding has already been checked causes pupils to lose concentration. Small numbers take A Level, but results in the past have been poor. Limited evidence of the current Sixth Form group shows them to be attaining at a higher level than in the past. They respond well to the good teaching, which lays out key discussion points, and they express their ideas clearly and assertively.

144. The teaching of lessons in personal and social education and careers education reflects the standard of teaching in most other subjects. Four lessons were seen, and all were at least satisfactory. Lessons are well planned, with clearly expressed learning objectives. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good, and particularly good when experiencing very good teaching, as was the case in a Year 9 careers lesson. A good mixture of activities and a lively approach, supported by a wide range of relevant resources, ensured that the teaching achieved its objectives. Pupils also learnt well in a Year 10 lesson where the teaching was good.