

INSPECTION REPORT

WOODLANDS COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Southampton

LEA area: Southampton

Unique reference number: 116465

Headteacher: Mr Richard Martin

Reporting inspector: Mr David Jones
8197

Dates of inspection: 12 –16th November 2001

Inspection number: 218113

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Secondary
School category:	Comprehensive
Age range of pupils:	11 -16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Minstead Avenue Harefield Southampton Hampshire
Postcode:	SO18 5FW
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body.
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Peter Rees
Date of previous inspection:	08/11/1999

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31135	Mrs Rachel Hobson	Team inspector	English Drama	
15268	Mr John English	Team inspector	Mathematics	
2711	Dr Alan Jarvis	Team inspector	Science	
22491	Mrs Lorraine Small	Team inspector	Design and technology Information and Communication Technology	
27666	Mr John Dockrell	Team inspector	Modern Foreign Languages	Accommodation and Resources
29212	Ms Melanie Smith	Team inspector	Spanish	
30427	Ms Felicity Shuffle-Botham	Team inspector	Religious Education History	Spiritual, Moral, Social and cultural education
15606	Mrs Christine Hill	Team inspector	Art and Design	Curriculum
22590	Mr Bob Castle	Team inspector	Physical Education Geography	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Smaller than the average secondary school with 623 pupils. Woodlands is a mixed 11-16 community school serving the eastern side of Southampton and will soon occupy a new 12 million pound building currently under construction in its grounds. The school's intake comes mainly from local authority housing. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average and the percentage of pupils speaking English as an additional language is low. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is very low. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs, including statements, is well above the national average and the percentage of pupils with statements of special educational need is broadly in line with the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a rapidly improving school with a number of significant strengths. Inspected in 1999, the school was found to have serious weaknesses, but the improvements made since that time, have been judged to be very good. The overall effectiveness of the school is very good. The attainment of pupils on entry is very low but standards are rising because of good teaching. Although their attainment remains well below the national average they make very good progress during their time in school. GCSE results obtained in 2001 show pupils made good progress. The governing body is very effective and the leadership and management of the headteacher and senior staff are excellent. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching and the management of pupils.
- The procedures for monitoring attendance and behaviour.
- The quality and range of the curriculum offered, including the equality of access and the use of assessment to guide planning and inform teaching
- Vocational education, personal and social education and the moral and social development of pupils.
- The very effective work of the governing body
- The monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance and the action taken.
- The strategic use of resources and the pursuit of best value.
- The leadership of the Headteacher and senior staff

What could be improved

- Standards of attainment in all year groups, including pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.
- The achievement of a minority of disaffected pupils whose attendance is unsatisfactory.
- The spiritual and cultural opportunities offered.

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 October 1999 and was found to have serious weaknesses. Since that time significant improvements have been made, including the appointment of a new senior management team and the strengthening of the governing body. The key issues for action given at that time included: action to improve staffing, monitor pupil progress and improve behaviour. The school was also required to improve curriculum provision and raise standards of attainment. Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. Standards are rising; in the national tests at aged 14 and the 2001 GCSE results the percentage of pupils who attain 5A*-G grades and one A*-G grade is very high when measured against the progress they have made since the national test at aged 14 in 1999. Staff retention and development are very good, as are the quality and range of the curriculum and the use of assessment to inform teaching and curriculum provision. The procedures for monitoring attendance and behaviour are excellent. The school no longer has serious weaknesses.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
	All schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
GCSE examinations	E*	E*	E	C	

The school sets challenging targets at all levels and in the last two years it has exceeded four of the eight major measures of performance and made significant progress against the others. Standards of attainment on entry to the school are very low compared to the national average. In the national tests at age 14 in English standards of attainment remain below average and those in mathematics and science well below the average for all schools nationally but had improved noticeably in the last two years. Achievement in years 7-9 is good, particularly when measured against pupils' attainment on entry. Performance at GCSE remained below that of similar schools but when measured against prior attainment it was found to be well above average. By the same measure the percentage of pupils achieving either 5A*-G grades or one A*-G grade placed the school's performance in the top 5 per cent nationally. Achievement in years 10-11 is good.

Standards of attainment are generally higher in years 7-9 (Key Stage 3) than in years 10-11 (Key Stage 4). They are average in art and design, design and technology and information and communication technology (ICT) in both key stages, in geography and history in years 7-9 and in the recently introduced vocational courses for older pupils. However in physical education they are average in Years 7-9 and above average in Years 10-11. They remain below average in English, mathematics, science, modern foreign languages, music and religious education at the end of both key stages.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to the school are satisfactory in all years groups
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in the school is satisfactory, a considerable improvement since the last inspection.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development and their relationship with other pupils is satisfactory, their relationship with staff is good.
Attendance	Attendance has improved considerably and is now close to the national benchmark but remains unsatisfactory.

Whilst the school has a large number of personable and mature young people, whom it is a real pleasure to meet, a minority do not exercise sufficient initiative or personal responsibility in their work and around the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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 link between teaching and learning is strong, as good teaching is consistently having a positive impact on pupil achievement and behaviour. Teaching in English is good in all years, with some very good and excellent teaching seen during the inspection. Teachers have a good command of their subject. In mathematics teaching is good in all years and often better, staff have successfully adopted many of the techniques of the national numeracy. The teaching in science was good in years 7-9 and satisfactory overall in years 10-11.

Teaching is good overall and satisfactory in better than nine out of ten lessons. Three out of every four lessons in years 7-9 were good or better and some two thirds of lessons seen in years 10-11 were graded good or better. Learning is good in all subjects in years 7-9, except modern foreign languages and music where it is satisfactory. Learning is good or better in years 10-11 in English, art and design, design and technology, ICT and physical education. It is satisfactory in all other subjects except religious education.

The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is always at least sound and often good. Teachers work very hard to include all pupils with educational or behavioural difficulties who are managed effectively on most occasions. Learning support assistants are well-deployed in lessons and systematically support pupils' learning. Literacy skills are well taught in all subjects but pupils' skills in reading, writing and speaking in formal situations are lower than one would expect to find nationally. Numeracy skills are well taught in mathematics, design and technology and in physical education but the majority of pupils do not have fluent numerical skills and this limits the progress they can make in mathematics and other subjects. The effort the school puts into providing inclusive learning suitable for the individual is very good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. Strong inclusive policies provide access for all pupils. The development of vocational education is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision is good with strengths in the range and quality of learning support provided. The individual access provided in years 10-11 is very good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision is good, with opportunities to take examination courses in mother tongues
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for spiritual development is unsatisfactory but that for moral and social education is very good. Cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The care of pupils is good with strengths in patience and firmness.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory and most parents are positive about all aspects of the school. Overall, parents' views of the school are satisfactory and the school has the confidence of its local communities.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The work of the new management team, appointed after the last inspection, is excellent and it has taken the school forward significantly. In this effort they have been well supported by strong middle managers. The quality of teaching, standards of attainment and the curriculum opportunities provided have all been improved.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	This dedicated governing body fulfils its responsibilities very well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of the school's performance is excellent. Systematic performance management is applied to all aspects of the school's provision.
The strategic use of resources	The strategic use of resources to improve the educational provision is excellent. The provision of appropriate ICT facilities has been developed from a very low base in less than two years.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory but the school will soon occupy a new 12 million-pound building currently under construction in its grounds.

The leadership of the senior management team ensures clear educational direction and they have an excellent shared commitment to improvement and capacity to succeed. Their collective vision is based on high expectations that are supported by very good systems. These have had a very good impact on achievement, pupil behaviour and the quality of teaching. The school's efforts to seek best value are excellent and the school gives good value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents believe that their children like school • Teaching is good • Their children make good progress • Range of activities outside of lessons that the school provides 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour • Homework

The inspection team agrees with the positive views expressed by parents. The school has been very successful in improving behaviour since the last inspection but more would be possible with greater co-operation from some parents. Homework is used appropriately in all subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards of attainment on entry to the school are very low when compared to the national average placing the school's intake in the bottom five percent of schools nationally. They are well below that for the local education authority and have been so for at least five years.
2. In the national tests at age 14 taken in 2001 standards of attainment in English remain below average and those in mathematics and science well below the average for all schools nationally but had improved noticeably in the last two years. Performance in the 2001 GCSE examinations remains well below the national average but has risen significantly in the last two years. When measured against the pupil prior attainment data published by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) the 2001 GCSE results are seen to be in line with other schools. The percentage of pupils who achieve 5A* - G grades at GCSE is above the national average for all schools and the percentage of pupils achieving 1 or more A* - G grade places the school in the top five percent of schools nationally.
3. Standards of attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science in Key Stage 3 (years 7 to 9) have been on a rising trend for three years but still remain below the national average. Standards at the end of year 9, when compared with those found in similar schools, are above average in English as is their performance in science. Their performance in mathematics remains well below the average for similar schools.
4. Standards of attainment in the foundation subjects at the end of Year 9 are in line with national expectations in: art and design, design and technology, geography, history and ICT. They are above national expectations in physical education but below that level in modern foreign languages, music and religious education. When pupil's attainment on entry is considered their achievement is satisfactory in modern foreign languages and music. Achievement is good in English, mathematics, science, geography, history and physical education. It is very good in design and technology and information and communication technology where challenging work and very effective use of modern resources is organised by good teaching. Achievement at the end of Year 9 is satisfactory in modern foreign languages and music. No judgement on either standards of attainment or pupil achievement could be made in religious education as insufficient Key Stage 3 lessons were available during the period of the inspection.
5. The 2001 GCSE results show a third year on a rising trend. These pupils entered the school with standards of attainment amongst the lowest in the country. In 1999, when they were entered for the national tests in English, mathematics and science, their performance was very low when compared to schools nationally and well below that of similar schools. However, even this limited performance was a mark of satisfactory progress from their point of academic entry to the school. When their GCSE results are measured against their prior attainment in the national tests at age 14 their achievement was above average. The strength of these results lies in the percentage of pupils achieving either five A*-G grades, which is above average when compared with all schools nationally. Also significant is the percentage achieving one A* - G grade, when compared with all schools nationally the result places the school in the top five percent of schools nationally against this measure. The performance of the 2001 cohort of pupils when measured against prior attainment shows achievement having been raised from one end of the spectrum to a significant point of credit at the other.
6. GCSE results remain at least below and often well below the national average in all subjects but when measured against prior attainment they are in line or marginally above expectations. In English language as the result of an unsuccessful appeal GCSE results remain well below but standards of attainment seen during the inspection indicate the school had good reason to expect stronger results. The same pupils entered for the English literature examination improved their

performance noticeably. Standards in drama remain below expectations but are also rising. In mathematics standards are well below expectations but the percentage of pupils achieving an A* - G grade has now reached the national average. Standards in science are also well below the national average but when measured against prior attainment they are in line with expectations.

7. Results in art and design are the strongest in the school; they are in line with national expectations with an improving percentage attaining the higher grades. In the design and technology courses standards of attainment are below national averages with those in resistant materials the strongest. Standards in the newly instigated GNVQ information and communication technology courses are in line with expectations. Standards of attainment in both geography and history remain below expectations but on a rising trend. The attainment of pupils studying the GNVQ ICT courses introduced last year is in line with expectations. Standards of attainment in modern foreign languages and physical education are below the national average. No pupils have followed examination courses in music or religious education in the last two years.
8. Many pupils with special educational needs gain at least one GCSE grade and college linked vocational courses have proved successful in giving pupils an insight into the world of work and an additional incentive to do well. A work-related course for Year 9 pupils dis-applied from modern foreign languages has also been introduced and is proving very effective as another inclusion strategy employed by the school. Those pupils with hearing impairment have good support in school and from the local authority services and make good progress.
9. The progress made by gifted and talented pupils is good. The school's analytical use of its assessment database has allowed it to identify a number of talented pupils and refine the range of courses available whilst setting challenging targets for them. Many pupils in years 8-10, previously in the lower groups for English and mathematics have been moved to more demanding classes and learning support has been provided to assist with behaviour management. The standard of work of the most able groups in these subjects was often found to be above the grade C boundary early in the first term of year 11. Those pupils with English as an additional language make good progress. They achieve at least as well as the rest of the school population. One pupil in particular has made excellent progress by gaining an A* grade in Arabic in less than two years.
10. In all subjects, pupils' skills in reading, writing and speaking in formal situations are lower than one would expect to find nationally, and low standards in literacy do continue to depress standards overall, although there is a rising trend over time. Listening is generally quite good, even though some pupils have rather short concentration spans. When, however, their attainment levels are in taken into account on their entry to the school, it can be seen that the majority of pupils make good progress in acquiring literacy and oracy skills. The school has a written policy to raise literacy that offers good advice and teachers have had some training in introducing the Key Stage 3 literacy strategy. More is planned. Most subjects make positive contributions through highlighting key specialist words, stressing accurate spelling and encouraging pupils to read aloud. In history, Year 10 pupils write in a variety of styles and for different audiences. They explore the different points of view of prohibition in the United States and produce pages from newspapers and brochures using a desktop publishing package. In religious education teachers use a range of writing to stimulate pupils to reflect on religious issues and in a physical education lesson seen, the teacher explored psychological factors affecting performance, stressing appropriate technical language. The English department is starting to use the Key Stage 3 literacy strategy techniques effectively in Year 7, and it has a programme to develop these throughout the key stage. Some Year 7 pupils attend progress lessons for literacy. These are very well taught and they enable pupils to improve their skills well.
11. Standards of numeracy are well below average. Only the highest attaining sets in each year group have the knowledge and skills to be able to progress confidently in the rest of the mathematics curriculum and in other areas of the curriculum. The majority of pupils have inadequate fluency in basic knowledge, such as number bonds, multiplication tables, and decimal place value. Skills, such as a range of strategies to work out numerical problems in their heads, or the ability to check that an answer is approximately what they would expect it to be, are limited. There are promising signs that pupils in Year 7 and 8 are showing a better degree of numerical facility. In several

subjects some good opportunities for the applications of numeracy were seen. In physical education pupils had to multiply their readings on a stopwatch in order to calculate pulse rates. In a Year 7 geography lesson, pupils were asked to estimate height and scale from the examples visible from the classroom window, and in design and technology the pupils measured objects, and used data collecting and recording techniques.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Most parents believe that their children like coming to school and discussions with pupils confirmed this view. Most pupils are happy coming to school. There are some pupils who attend without much enthusiasm for their lessons or learning; although even here the school's attempts to engage such pupils with more relevant provision and through outreach work are achieving successes. There are also some pupils who have a negative attitude to their education and who sometimes avoid attending. Many pupils do not have an overtly positive attitude to their education – they go along with it. Many pupils do take advantage of the very good range of after school clubs on offer. Their attitude in lessons is very dependent on the quality of the teaching they receive and whether they find the content interesting. In lessons that have a fast pace and which provide a stimulating learning environment, most respond well and participate well. In lessons where they can get away with chattering and not working, on occasions they will. Within the wide variations seen, pupils' attitudes are satisfactory overall.

13. The last inspection noted that the behaviour of a significant minority of pupils was a cause for concern. A key issue was identified to improve pupils' behaviour in the corridors and stairs, especially when they were moving from lesson to lesson and at break times. The school has responded positively to this issue, particularly by physically doing away with long corridors on the first and second floors of the main building and also by the adoption of a "continental day" with a very short lunch break, one advantage being a reduced chance of boredom and misbehaviour. During this inspection, pupils' attitudes and behaviour were judged to be good in a high proportion of lessons, with only a few where they were unsatisfactory. Good behaviour is related closely to good teaching, which delivers interesting and fast moving lessons. For example, in a year 11 lesson on isometric drawing, pupils responded well to the high expectations of the teacher and displayed good attitudes to what was a pleasurable lesson for them. Similarly, another example was a Year 8 ICT lesson where pupils were producing a computer-generated presentation. Here they were displaying a good relationship with the teacher and were beginning to show an independence in their work, both contributing positively to their behaviour. In a Year 7 French lesson, pupils had good attitudes because they were involved and their efforts were valued. There are many other examples that could be quoted. Positive behaviour is not something that comes naturally to these pupils. Year 7 pupils, who had attended the school for just over half a term at the time of the inspection, can be challenging. For example, in a Year 7 drama lesson, immature attitudes from some boys resulted in silly improvised work. In another Year 7 lesson, designing and making a shelf in DT, several found the task uninteresting, and a couple of pupils responded by screwing up paper and throwing it on the floor. Older pupils can also display unsatisfactory behaviour. Pupils are aware of the school's expectations but there is a small minority that quite simply chooses not to follow them on occasions. In addition, a proportion of pupils is ready to take advantage of any perceived weaknesses on the part of the teacher. It is to the credit of the school's behaviour management procedures, and the professional way that teachers apply them, that the school is generally orderly.

14. Pupils' behaviour in corridors and around the school sometimes lacks consideration for others and basic good manners. There is much jostling and occasional incidents of horseplay as pupils move around the site, with limited regard by some pupils for the walk on the left rule and relatively few pupils prepared to hold doors open for a following adult, yet alone another pupil. This behaviour is thoughtless rather than ill intentioned, but a corridor full of big noisy Year 11 people can be very scary when you are Year 7 and recently moved from junior school. Conversely, these same noisy pupils can at times behave very well in lessons, they can sit attentively and quietly in an assembly, and when it really matters – in a very overcrowded hall when everybody is trying to have a quick midmorning break – they can show an easy tolerance of what could be a fraught situation. Bullying does occur in the school, although the staff treat incidents very seriously and pupils are confident

that it is dealt with speedily. Pupils generally respect each other's and the school's property, although the problem with the amount of litter identified in the last inspection still remains.

15. There is a high number of short fixed term exclusions for a school of this size, and many of them are of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Last year there were no less than 184 fixed term and two permanent exclusions, for a range of justified reasons. This year exclusions are running at a comparable rate, with 51 fixed term and two permanent exclusions up to November 15th. It is a measure of the school's commitment to educational inclusion and the efforts it puts in to support such pupils that some of them are racking up multiple fixed term exclusions rather than being permanently excluded. Indeed, other schools had already excluded some of these pupils before they came to Woodlands. Overall, behaviour in the school is a mixed picture, with the generally good response in lessons sometimes marred by incidents involving a significant minority of pupils; thus behaviour overall is sound.
16. Pupils' personal development and relationships are satisfactory. The school has a large number of personable and mature young people whom it is a real pleasure to meet, but at the same time some individuals can be quite offhand. At times they can understand the impact of their actions on others, at others they can still charge past on the stairs. Nevertheless the school's efforts in this area have led to improvement. There is a range of opportunities for those capable of taking initiative and showing personal responsibility in their work and around the school. The school's programme for personal and social education contributes well to pupils' personal development. Some lessons are directed too much by the teacher to allow pupils full scope to take responsibility for their own learning. The School Council meets monthly and the system of prefects is useful in giving older pupils a taste of responsibility. Where they are given responsibility, pupils often rise to the occasion. For example, the pupils who had volunteered to help on the school's reception desk were providing a useful service and a good advertisement for the school. After school provision helps the individuals involved to mature. Older pupils fulfil a valuable role in assisting younger pupils under the "Helping Hands" scheme.
17. Relationships in the school are satisfactory. The system whereby form tutors stay with the same group of pupils as they progress up the school means that they are able to build a closer relationship with them, and where it works well, it contributes to mutual respect and partnership in learning. Pupils' relationships with other teachers inevitably do depend on the individuals involved, most teachers developing a productive relationship with many of their pupils. Pupils often value each other as individuals but at times there is petty and senseless friction. Some pupils do not empathise well, but overall, their understanding of the impact of their actions on others is satisfactory. In group work, pupils can share resources and co-operate with each other, respecting each other's beliefs, although in an RE lesson there was sometimes a "its nothing to do with me" attitude. Low and high attaining pupils are often able to work constructively together. Boys and girls usually work together unselfconsciously. Pupils show some respect for the school's property, except in the matter of litter, and they are trusted by teachers to use school resources and facilities. There is a limited amount of graffiti around the school and little vandalism.
18. Improving attendance was identified as a key issue at the time of the last inspection, and the school has made strenuous efforts to meet this objective. Levels of attendance have improved, the official May to May figures having gone from 85.2% in 1998-9 to 89.2% in 2000-1. Despite this, pupils' attendance remains unsatisfactory, being just below the national average for a school of this type. The improvement has been achieved through addressing the number of recorded unauthorised absences. The attendance figure recorded so far for the current school year 2001-2002 is only 88.9%. This year, 110 pupils have attendance rates below 80%, and for this large number of pupils in particular their poor attendance is adversely affecting their attainment and progress. Attendance tends to be best amongst pupils in Years 7 and 8 but declining in Year 9 before improving again with the older pupils. No particular group of pupils can be identified as having a different rate of attendance. Absences are for a variety of reasons. Some pupils do go on family holidays in term time, although no more than in many schools. There is evidence that the local population does suffer more genuine health problems than the national average, which will clearly affect attendance. When interviewed, pupils in Year 9 speak of the way that some of their number stay away from school after getting up late, to avoid bullying, to avoid particular lessons or to miss the tutor period

when sanctions are arranged. Older pupils however, speak of the improvement in all these issues achieved in the last two years. The school's monitoring procedures are now successful in limiting the level of actual truancy by pupils. Equally, internal truancy, which was noted in the last inspection of the school, is now much less common due to the vigilance of staff.

19. The general standards of pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development have improved since the last inspection of the school in 1999.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

20. The quality of teaching is one of the strengths of the school. Teaching is adding measurable value between Years 7 and 11. The section of this report on standards notes good pupil achievement when measured against pupil prior attainment.
21. Teaching is good overall. It is satisfactory or better in more than nine out of ten lessons. Three out of every four lessons in Years 7-9 were good or better and in the same year groups three out of every ten lessons seen were found to be very good or excellent. In the classes for older pupils some two thirds of lessons seen in Years 10-11 were graded good or better and one in four lessons were found to be very good or excellent. The strongest teaching was found in Years 7 and 8 with eight out of ten lessons found to be good or better. Even with the most demanding groups in Year 11, six out of ten lessons were found to be good and 9 out of 10 of all the Year 11 lessons seen were found to be satisfactory.
22. Teaching was found to be good in all subjects except music in Years 7-9. In Years 10-11 teaching was very good in art and design and history, good in English, mathematics, design and technology, ICT, modern foreign languages, physical education and vocational education. It was satisfactory in these older year groups in science, geography, religious education and music.
23. The link between teaching and learning is strong, as good teaching is consistently having a positive impact on pupil's achievement and behaviour. Lessons were found to be well paced, demanding and well focussed on the needs of the individual. Teachers used the school's well-organised behaviour management strategies to deal effectively with challenging behaviour. In the small number of unsatisfactory lessons inexperienced or non specialist staff struggled to engage pupils in their own learning. Learning is good in all subjects in Years 7-9 except music where it is satisfactory. Learning is good or better in Years 10-11 in English, art and design, design and technology, ICT and physical education. It is satisfactory in all other subjects except religious education.
24. The use of ICT to enhance teaching in subject areas was inconsistent. Two years ago the school had virtually no modern computers so the demand for access to the computer suites raises some issues that will hopefully be addressed when the new building is completed. Very good use of information and communication technology was seen in a range of design and technology lessons. Teaching is being significantly enhanced by an excellent link with the Southampton Education Training Agency (SETA) to provide opportunities for pupils to design products. By using industry standard computer software networked across an ICT suite, pupils direct the manufacturing process over a video conferencing link to computer aided milling machines and lathes at the local college. The finished product forms part of their coursework. This is 'leading edge' teaching. In English, history, science and mathematics good opportunities are taken to use Excel, Word and PowerPoint from the Microsoft suite of programmes to improve presentation and analysis. Teachers using the computer suites are always willing to let individual pupils complete internet based research on unused machines.
25. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is always at least sound and often good, and teacher's work very hard to include all pupils with emotional or behavioural difficulties who are managed effectively on most occasions. Learning support assistants are well deployed in a significant number of lessons and systematically support learning. Literacy skills are well taught in all subjects but pupils' skills in reading, writing and speaking in formal situations are lower than one

would expect to find nationally. Numeracy skills are well taught in mathematics, design and technology and physical education but the majority of pupils do not have fluent numerical skills and this limits the progress they can make in mathematics and other subjects. The effort the school puts into providing inclusive learning suitable for the individual is very good.

26. Teaching has improved since the last inspection when just over half of the lessons seen were good or better and just over eight out of ten lessons overall were judged to satisfactory or better. In the 1999 inspection the weakness in teaching related to the status and experience of staff with six out of ten of the lessons taught by newly qualified and supply teachers found to be unsatisfactory. In almost all cases the lessons were unsatisfactory because the teachers found difficulty in controlling the behaviour of a significant minority of pupils and this had an adverse effect on the progress of the other pupils. The senior management team's induction procedures for staff new to the school are excellent as is their monitoring and evaluation of teaching. Much of the in-service training provided has been targeted successfully on improving the quality of teaching and the use of level related assessment in Years 7 –9, although more could be done to enhance departmental understanding of current GCSE requirements. Performance management strategies put into place in the last 18 months are very good and targeted on the need to improve teaching. The match of teaching staff to the demands of the curriculum is now good.

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

27. The school offers a very good quality curriculum with a strong inclusive structure and innovative learning opportunities available. It is broad, balanced and relevant to the learning needs of all pupils including those with special needs. Since the last inspection there has been very good development of GNVQ courses and work related learning that includes excellent links with the college and local employers to move pupils into work.
28. In modern foreign languages at Key Stage 3 very good use is made of dis-application to successfully rekindle pupils' motivation and to provide additional opportunities to improve basic skills. The curriculum is enriched by a range of additional features; there is extra language provision at Key Stage 3, a drama club with annual productions, the breakfast club includes a 'catch up' group for Key Stage 3 pupils and sporting activities in which one fifth of the school takes part. There are summer schools for literacy and numeracy for pupils from the school and its feeder establishments as well as a gifted and talented summer school that attracts both Woodlands pupils and other from the surrounding area. In Year 8 the blocking of curriculum time for art and design, dance, drama and music presents issues of continuity. However, this is a trial situation for one term that makes best use of staff expertise and increases curriculum opportunity for dance. In Year 9 modern foreign languages, single sex groups have been successfully introduced that are raising attainment and are much appreciated by the pupils. These curriculum innovations are well monitored and thoroughly evaluated. The introduction of the 'Aim High' programme, that promotes the advantages of further and higher education, has been successful in raising the stay-on rates to further education by ten per cent in two years
29. At Key Stage 4, the curriculum is better balanced than at the last inspection. Through a clear vision for developing the curriculum, the co-ordinator for the work related curriculum is successfully moving the school towards a combined pathway. A more flexible, balanced programme, with additional support for lower attainers, has been successfully introduced. The certificate of achievement is available in English for lower attaining pupils, who are also dual entered for GCSE to give them the same opportunity as other pupils to gain a GCSE. The school has introduced three GNVQ courses and a vocational access course. The work related curriculum and the personal and social education programmes provide pupils with excellent opportunities that meet their aptitudes and interests.
30. The governors are actively involved in reviewing and developing the curriculum and receive regular reports on all subject areas. They scrutinise outcomes carefully through the Curriculum Committee and Attendance and Discipline Committee to ensure that the school successfully operates an inclusive culture that values all individuals. The school recently employed an Inclusion Worker to focus on the needs of the most vulnerable and challenging pupils.

31. The provision for ICT in both key stages meets statutory requirements. Its use to inform and support pupils' learning is not consistent across all subjects but satisfactory when the available facilities are considered. The innovative use by design and technology of the internet to provide a link to the local college's computer aided manufacturing facilities is an imaginative enhancement of the curriculum. The school's excellent personal, social and health education programme, that includes sex and drug education, is a significant strength of the school, as is the excellent provision at both key stages for careers education with its particularly strong links with external agencies and the local college.
32. The requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education are not fully met in Years 10 and 11 where time constraints pose some difficulties. There is a whole school policy and schemes of work for religious education planned to be delivered through the personal and social education programme but the time allowed is insufficient to deliver the Agreed Syllabus.
33. The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. There is a whole school approach for meeting the needs of pupils experiencing difficulties and staff are aware of the learning support systems that are in place. Meetings with subject departments raise awareness of issues and there is good in-class support from a team of learning support teachers and assistants. Early identification is an important part of the school's strategy and close liaison exists with the main feeder primary schools to gather information prior to pupils transferring to their new school. Efficient testing in basic skills takes place in Year 7 and extra help is targeted where needed. Pupils make progress through one-to-one reading, reading with other pupils and computer assisted learning. The good liaison between subject areas and the special needs team has had a positive impact on pupils' learning and this is a great improvement on the last inspection.
34. The Code of Practice works well and pupils with a formal statement of educational need get good provision. Targets are reviewed regularly with pupil and parent or carer and the local agencies are fully involved. Good documentation is kept and regulations regarding the conduct of annual reviews are met. The school's commitment to inclusion is emphasised through the behaviour support programme recently introduced where pupils at risk of exclusion are given extra support. A full-time inclusion worker has been appointed this term and anger management, friendship groups and emotional literacy strategies are being developed to support pupils and families and to raise self-esteem. A volunteer counsellor is also available for short periods of time to give support and guidance when needed.
35. Although the whole school policy for Gifted and Talented pupils still requires further development a number of good strategies are already in place. There is challenging work for gifted and talented pupils taking place in many departments and a successful two-week summer school in 2001 attracted pupils from Woodlands and other local schools. The special educational needs co-ordinator and the team of learning support assistants work closely together. All have a delegated area of responsibility and the larger subject departments have attached support assistants who attend departmental meetings, which gives them a broad overview of syllabus requirements. Some support assistants already hold higher qualifications in other disciplines. The work of the learning support department is characterised by teamwork, sharing of good practice and effective monitoring and evaluation.
36. The governors and teaching staff support this philosophy and it has brought about co-operation and understanding in supporting pupils with learning difficulties. The policy and development plan set out achievable targets to move the learning support programme forward. Identification and assessment are in place with the stages of the Code of Practice clearly set out.
37. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress because the learning support assistants available are well briefed and staff provide differentiated support materials. Examination courses are provided for individuals in their mother tongue with support from LEA personnel.

38. The overall quality of the School's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Assemblies follow themes and those seen during the inspection provided for good moral and social development however they do not always provide opportunities for reflection or prayer. The hall and gym are used for Assembly and do not provide adequate space for all the school to have a daily act of worship. At present they have two per week. As a result they do not comply with the statutory requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship for all pupils.
39. Provision for the spiritual development of pupils is unsatisfactory. Some subjects are providing good opportunities. In science pupils are encouraged to focus on the 'big picture' and opportunities are presented for pupils to reflect upon it. A good example was seen in a lesson on energy. In geography pupils considered the power and impact of a volcanic eruption, and its effect upon the local inhabitants. Good use was made of silence and music in PE during 'cool down' and 'warm down' sessions where pupils developed a profound sense of well-being. A very good opportunity for spiritual development is provided when pupils visit the war graves in Normandy and pay their respects to those who died in the first and Second World Wars, representing their local community. Religious Education has developed modules of work that will provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on what is sacred and what it means to be human, however these are yet to be delivered. Pupils consider through the module on the glass cupboard, what is involved in a religious belief. Teachers ensure resources, for example a view of the world from space, provide good opportunities for reflection and wonder at the universe. However, this is an area that is still in development.
40. Provision for the moral development of pupils is very good. The school has made a commitment to raising standards of effort and behaviour. In collaboration with the pupils a clear code of conduct and system of rewards and sanctions has been put in place. The opportunity for pupils to benefit financially through the system of translating merits into education-based financial support reinforces pupils' understanding of the importance placed upon good effort, by the school. Teachers in all departments place clear emphasis on good behaviour and the school's expectations are clear. Most departments identify moral issues that can be developed through their work, for example pupils consider the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse in their personal, social and health education lessons. This understanding has been extended through the pupils' involvement in the 'Rock Challenge' where pupils present this issue through the medium of music, drama and dance. Religious Education in Years 10 and 11 focuses on personal responsibility for the planet and on the destructive nature of prejudice and discrimination.
41. Provision for the social development of pupils is very good. Pupils are encouraged to take part in the organisation of their school through the work of the School Council, which is used as a means of two-way communication and meets regularly. A 'Victim and Bully' conference brought together off site under the very positive auspices of the emotional literacy co-ordinator produced the new Anti-Bullying Ladder as an extension to the school's behaviour management strategies. Pupils in Year 8 undertake a day of work experience in the school's office and are expected to fulfil the role in a professional and mature manner. The 'helping hands' group in Year 9 and the paired reading scheme in Year 11 provide very good opportunities for pupils to support the younger members of their community, and the numbers of pupils willing to fulfil the roles is a good indicator of its success. A range of team building and activity opportunities are provided, for example all Year 7 tutor groups attend a day of activities designed to build confidence and friendships. Many subjects such as music, maths and English enable pupils to develop their social skills through the use of group and paired work. In history pupil in Years 9 and 10 benefited from their meetings with elderly local residents who joined their classes to talk about their experiences in wartime England. Other groups of pupils provided refreshments and supported the organisation of this event. For those pupils who need additional support in order to develop their social skills the school has made a considerable commitment through the inclusion officer who works with individuals and groups enabling them to develop positive attitude and behaviour.
42. The school makes satisfactory provision for the cultural development of its pupils although opportunities to prepare for life in multi-cultural Britain are limited. The drama department is very active and opportunities for pupils to perform and support theatre productions are very good. Pupils have the opportunities to visit theatres, art galleries and museums as well as benefiting from visiting theatre groups who perform at school. Opportunities for overseas experience are offered, for

example pupils visit France in support of their studies in science and French, as well as part of their work in history. Pupils are excited about a planned trip to America later this year that is designed to support their GCSE history studies. Opportunities to experience the multi-cultural nature of Britain are more limited. The library holds bi-lingual books and in music, religious education and art the schemes of work include the study of other cultures. Some links have been made with the mosque in Southampton however this is an area for development. Since the last inspection the school has been successful in providing an inclusive and motivating curriculum for all pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43. The senior management team and teachers at all levels make considerable efforts to address the welfare of individual pupils when they need it. Pupils believe that the staff are approachable and that they do their best to resolve any problems they have. The school's provision allows pupils to concentrate on their learning. The school's procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. The school provides a caring and supportive environment in which pupils can feel safe and valued. The teacher responsible for child protection has received suitable training and liaises with the local social services department as necessary. She attends case conferences as required. Adults in the school are made aware of their child protection responsibilities and proper records are kept. There is good provision within the programme for personal and social education to help pupils to take responsibility for their own safety. The school site generally provides a safe environment and routine health and safety procedures and testing are in place. Safety will be a particularly challenging issue over the next months whilst the new school is being built alongside the existing premises. No unsafe practice was seen in lessons during the inspection, except for some pupils with their eyes too close to computer screens because of the layout in the computer suites.
44. All teachers are active in the pastoral care of their pupils. Form tutors know their pupils well, particularly when they have progressed up the school with the same tutor group. The year heads also move through the school with their year groups and provide good support. Pupils are confident that support is available to them when they need it. Heads of year and form tutors provide good advice to pupils and long term monitoring for those pupils who find it difficult to meet the school's expectations. Throughout the school, most teachers know their pupils well and successfully meet their individual needs both in lessons and in a wider context. They are effective in supporting them when they need it. The monitoring of pupils' personal development is good, with clear procedures in place. The tutors often treat each pupil as an individual. Teachers appreciate the good support they get from the on call member of school management when they need it. Form tutors keep satisfactory records on pupils' personal development; pupils themselves are encouraged to maintain personal targets in their personal planners. Tutors regularly review these. The school has recently appointed an emotional literacy co-ordinator to develop a range of ways to help pupils become mature and responsible individuals, potentially a very good facility that is helping these pupils to cope better with the challenges they are facing in life. This is an important feature of the school's procedures on inclusion. The personal and social education curriculum contributes well to pupils' development, helping pupils grow into responsible adults through sensitive handling of issues such as sex education and drugs education. The school is pro-active in helping pupils settle into the school when they arrive from the primary phase.
45. The school has excellent procedures to monitor attendance and encourage pupils to attend regularly. These have improved levels of attendance considerably in the last two years but they still remain just below the 90 per cent national benchmark. Unauthorised attendance is now better than the national average. The school funds the employment of an attendance officer to monitor and deal with attendance issues, involving form tutors and heads of year as necessary. There are appropriate systems in place to identify problems with attendance as they emerge, based on good use of the computerised attendance figures to spot problems and trends. The school follows up attendance problems and involves the Educational Welfare Officer, who comes to the school twice weekly. Morning registration periods and the calling of registers in the afternoon are efficiently conducted. Lateness after the registers have closed is noted and the appropriate code used when

the absence has been authorised. There is a good range of certificates and rewards for good attendance, whilst lateness can result in an after school detention.

46. There are very good and comprehensive procedures and policies to monitor and promote good behaviour. Form tutors, supported by heads of year, carefully monitor and record problems and identify emerging trends, taking preventive actions before they become serious, for example, by getting more detailed monitoring procedures in place through the “on report” cards. This addresses a key issue identified in the last inspection report. A particular strength is the way that all pupils are totally familiar with the systems, and the rewards and sanctions that apply. Various levels of “on report” are used well to help pupils think about their own behaviour, whilst the “internal exclusion” system by which pupils have to work outside a manager’s office separately from their class is a good way of motivating pupils to behave properly and to limit the number of actual exclusions. Pupils particularly appreciate the way they can collect merits to receive very worthwhile rewards, such as gift vouchers – this reward system is proving to be highly motivational. The “on call” system whereby a senior manager is always available to support and respond to incidents works well. It is appreciated both by staff but also by motivated pupils; by dealing effectively with troublemakers it creates a less-interrupted working environment for the rest of the class. When pupils are excluded from school, the inclusion officer has good procedures to help them re-integrate on their return.
47. Procedures for dealing with oppressive behaviour are very good. The bullying nine step ladder approach is displayed all over the school and is understood and appreciated by pupils. The anti-bullying policy is in the process of being updated. It clearly outlines the school’s approach and the responsibilities of individuals for its implementation.
48. Arrangements for assessing the pupils’ academic achievements are good, being effective in all subject areas except for music. The assessment policy of the school is well thought out and coherent, and practice does not depend too greatly on individual teachers. Assessment is integrated into normal classroom activities, and is well-linked with self-assessment by pupils of their strengths and weaknesses. A wide range of tests is used, including reading age, Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) results and Cognitive Ability Tests (CATs) scores. A particular strength is the way that pupils know what level they are on and also what they need to do to reach the next National Curriculum level. This process is considerably assisted by the way that the school has broken SAT levels down into 3 sub-levels, allowing finer monitoring of attainment and better celebration of progress. Pupils do know what to do to help them improve. The school’s assessment policy and practice are significant factors helping to raise attainment in Years 7 –9.
49. The use of assessment to guide curricular planning is very good and has allowed the constructive use of dis-application to provide individually focussed work related learning and GNVQ courses for under performing pupils in modern foreign languages and design and technology. However target setting for GCSE has not received the same attention in the last two years as that in Key Stage 3 and proved to be inaccurate in recent years with English and history appealing against the GCSE results provisionally awarded. Senior managers and heads of department have reviewed the situation and some syllabus changes have been implemented. Targets in foundation subjects are based on pupils’ prior attainment in core subjects, a system that Ofsted is moving towards in its measurement of ‘value added’. For this to be successful heads of department need to understand the impact of pupils’ positive or negative core skills (literacy, numeracy and ICT) on the demands of their examination course and this is not always the case in all departments. Where it exists, this professional moderation further refines an already strong process. Overall, procedures to monitor and support pupils’ academic progress are good.
50. Assessment information is being used very well to plan the curriculum for individual pupils. Dis-application from particular subjects is being used intelligently to keep pupils motivated and to ensure that the work they are doing is both matched to their abilities and to their interests. A range of GNVQ courses has been developed to provide appropriate choices for pupils. In addition, the local Vocational Access Scheme, run by schools in conjunction with Southampton City College, is providing motivational work that is helping those assessed to benefit from it to gain a head start in the world of work. Assessment data is also used well for setting pupils in maths, science and

English. Its use to identify pupils in Literacy withdrawal groups is excellent. Another particular example of good practice is DT, where the modular approach to the syllabus, combined with individual pupil targets, serves pupils well. The school is also flexible in other ways, for example, helpful academic support allows a fluent Arabic speaker the opportunity to take a GCSE in the subject within the curriculum framework. The school is currently carrying out single sex teaching of modern foreign languages and assessing the results.

51. The school has maintained its good provision for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils since the last inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

52. Just over a tenth of the parents took the opportunity to express their views of the school through the parents' questionnaire or the parents' meeting. Based on this small sample expressing a view, the majority was positive about all aspects of the school. In particular, parents believe that their children like school, that the teaching is good and that their children make good progress. They particularly appreciate the range of activities outside of lessons that the school provides. A significant minority of parents was critical of the standards of behaviour in the school and the amount of homework set for their children. Some parents believe the school should keep them better informed. Overall, parents' views of the school are satisfactory and the school has the confidence of its local communities.
53. The quality of information the school provides for parents is sound. The prospectus and annual governors' report to parents are both well-written documents that give a good flavour of the school. There are two forms of written reports on pupils' progress. The interim version provides information on progress against National Curriculum or GCSE grades. The full annual written report has standard paragraphs for each subject on curriculum coverage, to which teachers add their own grades and comments on individual pupils. There are appropriate arrangements for parents to discuss their children's progress with teachers. There is an interesting regular newsletter on the life of the school and regular letters home on specific issues.
54. The student personal planner provides a good way for parents to keep track of homework and also to communicate in an informal way with form tutors. The planners are being used and taken seriously by students and most staff. The form tutor or parent is signing most planners. The school's behaviour policy places considerable emphasis on involving parents when a pupil is having problems conforming to the school's expectations, and this approach is often productive in getting a good partnership to support the individual; at times, however, support from parents is not forthcoming. There is no school association and there is very limited involvement of parents in the school. There is a home school agreement in place, which has had little practical effect. The parent governors do make a good contribution to the school's governing body. Despite this, the contribution of parents to children's learning at home and at school is unsatisfactory overall.
55. The quality of the partnership with parents is satisfactory, unchanged since the last inspection of the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. The leadership and management of the head teacher and key staff are excellent. Their leadership ensures clear educational direction. As a senior management team they have an excellent shared commitment to improvement and capacity to succeed. This close and effective team is supportive and protective of each other. They have a collective vision based on high expectations that is supported by very good systems, and these have had a very good impact on pupils' achievements, behaviour and the quality of teaching. The reflection of the school's aims and values in its work is very good because the senior management team vision has reached many areas of provision.
57. The appropriateness of the school's priorities for development, which focus on the consistently inter-linked enhancement of teaching, behaviour and standards, is excellent. The progress made is epitomised by the development of vocational courses and the positive use made of the curriculum

dis-application regulations to provide appropriate opportunities for disaffected individuals. Focused on pupil's individual educational need, the success of these priorities for action is having a positive impact on behaviour and achievement.

58. Induction of staff new to the school and effectiveness of provision for training of new teachers are excellent. The mentoring/ monitoring of newly qualified staff and new teachers to the school include peer group observation and support, professional development opportunities and line manager supervision. This excellent provision has allowed the school to identify talented learning support staff and support their training as part of the Graduate Teacher Programme run with Chichester University.
59. The delegation to and the contribution of staff with management responsibilities is very good. The quality of middle management is strength of the school. Middle managers are allowed to experiment with classroom methodology and curriculum provision whilst working with senior managers on a thorough review process. This collective strength is a reflection of the school's success in achieving `Investors In People` status in the first 11 months of being declared a school with serious weaknesses, an unusual feat.
60. The governing body is very good at fulfilling its responsibilities. Its effectiveness at fulfilling statutory duties is good. Excellent curriculum enhancements have been built around vocational courses, and other world of work related developments have been encouraged in design technology where industry standard facilities have been developed because of the excellent liaison established with further education providers. The school does not currently meet the statutory requirements to provide an act of collective worship. Although effectively used and developed from virtually zero at the time of the last inspection, the statutory use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support enhanced educational opportunities in all subjects remains unsatisfactory in a number of areas despite considerable efforts.
61. The governing body's role in shaping the direction of the school and its understanding of its strengths and weaknesses is excellent. Governors are dedicated to taking the school and the local community forward. The quality of questioning and debate in evidence in the minutes of both sub-committee and full governing body meetings tells a story of clear and effective action to support the headteacher and his senior managers.
62. The monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance and the effectiveness of the action taken is excellent. The improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection is directly related to the monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching planned as part of the school's performance management strategy. Excellent staff development work on teaching in challenging circumstances and consistent senior management support available in every lesson by the very well organised `on – call` system has improved pupil behaviour and allowed teachers to teach. A strong programme of support and development for staff has included visits to other schools to see best practice, and team teaching. A significant programme of specialist consultancy work from the local education authority (LEA) has included excellent guided self-evaluation support for the senior management team. Excellent use of information technology has been instrumental in developing the quality of the school's target setting agenda. Detailed data base analysis by the senior management team has helped middle managers monitor and support pupil achievement. Subject managers have used the National Curriculum schemes of work available on-line to sub divide levels of attainment and thereby provide better guidance to pupils.
63. The action taken to meet the school's targets has been very good. Excellent systems have been put in place to monitor and improve both attendance and behaviour. The improvement in the quality of teaching has been significant and this has allowed the school to make good progress towards its 2000 and 2001 LEA targets. The recently published 2001 GCSE results show standards of attainment as measured against their prior performance as well above those of similar schools.
64. Excellent budgetary monitoring and decision making has allowed the support of enhanced educational opportunities for pupils, whilst the budget has been stabilised. The school's excellent

pursuit of the principle of best value is built on day-to-day financial efficiency that seeks the best educational value within a balanced budget. The school gives good value for money.

65. The strategic use of resources is excellent. Specific grants are used effectively for the designated purpose with a very strong focus on the priorities of the school improvement plan. In addition to the investments made in developing teaching methods and curriculum provision significant resources have been allocated to enhancing the provision of learning support assistants to reduce behaviour issues. The provision of both a full time inclusion worker and an attendance officer is part of an excellent strategy to improve standards and attendance.
66. Accommodation is satisfactory, as it was at the time of the last inspection. The prospect of a brand new building inevitably means that improvement to the existing accommodation has been sensibly limited but renovation and modification has supported the school's focus on improving behaviour. However, many of the drawbacks remain, such as the limitations imposed on some specialist areas such as physical education, science and design and technology in terms of delivering a full curriculum. There have been improvements in the ICT rooms. The toilets remain very unsatisfactory in terms of quantity and quality. The building starts clean in the morning but litter becomes an issue and staff work hard to clear this during the day. Movement between lessons across the site is prompt because of staff monitoring. The library, though small, also includes space for pupils to access computers; it is a good learning resource and an attractive environment for work. Opportunities for the whole school to meet are limited because the hall is not big enough to accommodate the whole school comfortably at the same time.
67. A brand new school complex was under construction in the school grounds during the inspection. Part of a twelve million pound private finance initiative negotiated with the local authority by the governing body, the new provision will provide a very significant boost to the community. Currently staffing, accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory with some limitations in the curriculum material available despite considerable investment. Very good use is made of the limited but well maintained facilities available in the existing building but there is evidence that limited accommodation and resources are inhibiting standards in science and in the use of ICT across the curriculum. The match of staff to the demands of the curriculum is satisfactory with shortages in music, geography and science the subject of considerable recruitment efforts that have recently borne fruit.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

Those paragraphs marked with an asterisk * already feature in the school improvement plan.

- Provide further opportunities for improved standards of attainment in all year groups by further developing pupils literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects. *(Paragraphs: 1-6, 10-11, 88,)
- Further improve the achievement and attitudes of a minority of disaffected pupils by identifying and addressing recurring factors that result in temporary exclusions that impact on their attendance. * (Paragraphs: 15, 18)
- Improve the spiritual opportunities offered by providing the curriculum time needed to more successfully deliver the statutory requirement of the locally agreed syllabus for all pupils and by providing a daily act of collective worship. (Paragraphs: 32, 38, 39)
- Improve the breadth of pupils' cultural experience by providing further opportunities for celebrating the diversity and cultural richness of the city. (Paragraph: 42)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	133
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	200

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	31	63	28	7	0	0
Percentage	3	24	47	21	5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y7 – Y11
Number of pupils on the school's roll	623
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	169

Special educational needs	Y7 – Y11
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	344

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	60
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	44

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	10.3%
National comparative data	7.7%

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.87%
National comparative data	1.1%

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	2001	56	53	109
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National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	28 (23)	27 (36)	31(30)
	Girls	34 (23)	21 (25)	23 (23)
	Total	62 (46)	48 (61)	54 (53)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	57 (26.8)	44 (27.7)	50 (26.2)
	National	64 (63)	64 (65)	59 (66)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	20 (6)	15 (6)	17 (7)
	National	29 (28)	41 (42)	31 (30)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	23	36	30
	Girls	23	25	23
	Total	46	61	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	42 (32)	55 (46)	48 (31)
	National	65 (64)	68 (66)	64 (62)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	10 (5)	23 (13)	18 (8)
	National	31 (31)	42 (39)	33 (29)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 4 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	69	61	130

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	14	65	69
	Girls	17	57	61
	Total	31	122	130
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	24 (21)	95 (81)	100 (88)
	National	49.8 (47)]	88.8 (91)	94.5 (96)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	29.5 (25)
	National	39.1 (38.4)

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

Vocational qualifications		Number	% success rate
The school has yet to enter its first cohort of pupils for examinations.			
Number studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all those they studied	School	0	0
	National		

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	4
Black – African heritage	3
Black – other	6
Indian	3
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	2
White	599
Any other minority ethnic group	4

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	12	0
Indian	5	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	165	2
Other minority ethnic groups		

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 – Y11

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	37
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15

Education support staff: Y7 – Y11

Total number of education support staff	15
Total aggregate hours worked per week	374

Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y11

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	73.7
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Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y11

Key Stage 3	22.6
Key Stage 4	18.4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
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	£
Total income	2095572
Total expenditure	2150083
Expenditure per pupil	3258
Balance brought forward from previous year	67264
Balance carried forward to next year	12753

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

623

Number of questionnaires returned

68

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	32	59	4	3	1
My child is making good progress in school.	38	46	3	1	12
Behaviour in the school is good.	18	50	12	6	14
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	44	13	7	9
The teaching is good.	25	52	1	4	16
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42	33	13	3	9
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	54	38	4	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	37	4	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	36	39	13	3	9
The school is well led and managed.	37	39	10	1	12
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	37	43	9	1	9
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	47	6	1	13

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

ENGLISH

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

Strengths

- Pupils achieve well and this is having an effect on rising standards
- Assessment of pupils' work is making a good contribution to pupils' knowledge of their own learning
- Teaching is good, with teachers having very good subject knowledge and strategies for managing behaviour
- The department is very well led and managed

Areas for improvement

- Develop a wider variety of teaching and learning methods to enable pupils to make even better progress in lessons
- Develop further strategies to help pupils to speak more confidently in formal situations
- Continue to work on the Key Stage 3 literacy strategy to ensure that all teachers are confident in employing the techniques.

68. In the National Curriculum tests for 14 year olds in 2000 in English, results were well below the national average. They were similar to the results in science and better than those in mathematics. In 2001, results were significantly higher, and in line with similar schools nationally. There has been a rising trend in attainment since 1997, with the exception of the 2000 results. When pupils come into the school their attainment levels in English are well below the national average, so this means that they achieve well during their first three years. The attainment gap between boys and girls was similar to the national picture, with girls outperforming boys.
69. In the English GCSE results in 2000, the proportion of pupils achieving an A*-C grade was well below the average, although the percentage of pupils attaining a grade G or higher was a little better. In English literature in 2000, the gap between attainment in comparison with the national average was narrower. The school has unsuccessfully appealed against the 2001 GCSE results in English, which dropped significantly from 2000. Evidence of work seen during the inspection, however, shows that pupils are currently working at levels closer to the national average than the 2001 results suggest. The 2001 results in English literature rose by 15 per cent. GCSE results have fluctuated over time, but work seen suggests that standards are rising, and when compared with pupils' prior attainment, pupils are achieving well. More girls attain a grade C or better than do boys, which is the picture nationally.
70. Standards of work seen during the inspection confirmed the National Curriculum tests for fourteen-year-olds in 2001, and were below national averages, but in line with results of schools with a similar intake of pupils. By the end of Year 9, higher attaining pupils perform above national expectations, and their writing is accurate, imaginative and, usually, detailed. The majority of pupils write shorter, less-developed pieces, drawing on a more limited vocabulary, although technical accuracy is often good. All pupils are introduced to the skills of literary analysis and are able to make straightforward judgements about writers' intentions. The majority of pupils can express their ideas orally quite confidently in lessons, however their language is often fairly informal.
71. Analysis of GCSE work seen shows that standards in general are below the national average, although highest attaining pupils are on target to attain high GCSE grades. These pupils write well-developed, detailed and accurate pieces for a variety of situations and audiences. They can analyse literary texts successfully and can explain why writers choose to use certain literary effects. Some particularly good work was seen on 'Of Mice and Men' and 'Animal Farm'. Middle and lower attaining pupils can also analyse texts, although in less depth, and their writing is less developed. The majority of pupils listen well. They can express their ideas clearly in discussion, although most do not adopt a more formal tone and register when the situation requires it. Those

with special educational needs make progress in line with others, from entering the school until they are sixteen, and there are no differences in learning between any groups of pupils.

72. Teaching and learning in English at both key stages is good, with some very good and excellent teaching seen during the inspection, and on the whole pupils like the subject. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Teachers have a good command of their subject, and they use their knowledge to challenge pupils to think deeply and to make connections between the use of language and writers' intentions. They also teach literacy well, using some of the national literacy strategy techniques successfully. Literacy skills are reinforced in other curriculum areas. Most subjects use key words and stress correct spelling. For example, in a Year 11 geography lesson seen during the inspection, the teacher stressed the use of the terms 'saltation', 'suspension', 'solution' and 'traction' and in drama lessons the teacher wrote technical terms on the board to remind pupils of correct spelling. This is a developing area for the school.
73. In the best English lessons, teachers manage potentially difficult behaviour very well. In one excellent lesson seen, a group of Year 7 pupils with very short concentration spans was managed expertly by the teacher. She had high expectations of how the pupils should behave, and she used a variety of techniques, including praise and positive reinforcement, to keep pupils on task and maximise the time available in the lesson. Teachers prepare and plan lessons well, often incorporating a period of paired or group work and an opportunity for pupils to write independently. Where lessons are less successful, whilst still satisfactory, the pace of learning is a little leisurely because the best use of time is not always made. Some lessons also tend to be very teacher dominated, with pupils not taking enough responsibility for their own learning, and there are times when pupils would benefit from a wider range of stimuli to help them understand quite difficult abstract concepts.
74. Pupils show positive attitudes to the subject through their volunteering answers to questions and their enthusiastic participation in group and whole-class work. In a Year 8 lesson seen, pupils were learning research skills. They were keen to answer questions and join in discussion and these positive attitudes contributed to good learning in the lesson. In a Year 10 lesson in which pupils were working on analysing characters in 'Great Expectations', the pupils concentrated well and were engaged with the narrative. They shared ideas well in groups. These attitudes, together with very good teaching, enabled them to learn a lot in the lesson. There are opportunities in all years for pupils to use computers both to help them learn and to improve presentation of work, and teachers plan to develop this further.
75. The department analyses performance data carefully to assess how both individual and groups of pupils achieve. Teachers use the information that they have very well to monitor trends and to set individual targets for improvement. Pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 have a clear idea at which National Curriculum level they are working and teachers regularly mark work using levels. The division of each level into three smaller chunks is very helpful in breaking down how well pupils are doing and how they can improve. Teachers mark pupils' work thoroughly giving helpful development points and recognising good work. In years 10 and 11 pupils usually know which GCSE grades they are aiming for, their current performance level, and targets for improvement.
76. The department is very well led and managed. The head of department has a reflective, analytical approach to considering how well pupils are doing and in identifying areas for improvement. She uses test and examination data effectively to pinpoint underachievement and then addresses problems that she has identified systematically. The whole department works well together as a team. They support one another and are open to ideas and challenges. There is a systematic programme in place for monitoring teaching, and the head of department gives appropriate feedback and is involved in setting teachers' targets. This process is having a positive effect on learning and achievement.
77. The department has made very good improvement since the last inspection. Standards have risen at the end of both Key Stages and the quality of teaching has improved. There is now no unsatisfactory teaching. In the majority of lessons, teachers have high expectations of what pupils can do and achieve, as well as how they will behave. Behaviour management strategies are much

more successful in enabling teaching and learning to be more effective. Key Stage 3 schemes of work have been rewritten and data is used much more effectively to set targets, raise teachers' expectations of how pupils can achieve and track individual progress. The department has made a good start in implementing the new literacy strategy and is well placed to improve even further

Drama

There is good provision in drama.

Strengths of the subject are:

- Pupils achieve well and standards are high in comparison with other subjects.
- Teaching is good, with high expectations of what pupils can do.
- The department is very well led and managed.

Areas for improvement are:

- The attitudes of some groups of younger boys.
- Fine tuning behaviour management techniques to ensure that a minority of pupils do not affect the quality of learning.

78. The GCSE results in drama in 2000 were below the national average. This represents good achievement when taking into account the fact that pupils come to the school with very limited experiences of drama. In 2001, the numbers of pupils attaining a grade C or higher rose. Standards are rising over time.
79. Standards of work seen in drama were a little below national average at the end of Key Stage 3. Pupils have a basic understanding of drama terms and techniques. Given the fact that when they enter the school, many pupils have had very little experience of drama, this represents good progress through their first three years in the school. Lower attaining pupils, particularly boys, have difficulty in always taking the drama seriously and they still blur the boundary between drama and 'play'.
80. Standards at the end of Year 11 are below the national average overall, although higher attaining pupils are on target to obtain high GCSE grades at the end of the course. Pupils can employ a variety of dramatic and theatrical techniques to portray character, show emotion and tell a story. They understand and can use technical terms such as 'genre', 'realism' and 'role' and they can improvise in groups effectively. Higher attaining pupils can use drama methods in quite sophisticated ways. A particular feature of the schemes of work for all year groups is the way in which pupils are introduced to, and gain experience of, theatrical techniques such as sound, lighting, props and costume.
81. Teaching at both key stages is good overall. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Strengths include the teacher's excellent specialist subject knowledge, the level of challenge to pupils to produce successful work and the good pace in lessons, which makes effective use of available time. In a Year 11 lesson seen the teacher's excellent subject knowledge enabled him to explain, encourage, challenge and draw out good work from pupils. As a consequence they learnt very well in the lesson. They concentrated on performance work successfully and also learnt a lot from the teacher's commentary and feedback. Where teaching is satisfactory rather than good, a few incidents of poor behaviour from a minority of pupils is not dealt with quickly enough and this means that concentration of all pupils suffers.
82. Assessment procedures for monitoring pupils' attainment and progress are very good. In Years 7, 8 and 9, work is assessed using level descriptors and appreciative comments. GCSE work is marked using examination grade descriptors. The teacher gives very helpful, targeted feedback during lessons and he encourages a climate of self and peer evaluation.

83. The head of department provides very good leadership and management of the subject. He has a clear vision of the way he wants the subject to develop and has been instrumental in planning for the new building. The department is using assessment levels well to monitor pupils' progress and set improvement targets. A particular strength is the emphasis on theatrical techniques and experience, and pupils regularly get the opportunity to take part in productions. The department made good improvement since the last inspection and it has a high profile among the pupils.

MATHEMATICS

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

Strengths

- The quality of teaching: the teachers are good mathematicians, able to teach clearly so that pupils can understand them. They are particularly successful in Key Stage 3
- The achievement of pupils in Key Stage 3 is good
- Telling pupils how well they are doing and how to improve
- Keeping comprehensive records of pupils' attainments, and using them to check on their progress
- The behaviour and attitude of the majority of pupils is good
- The department is very well led and organised

Areas for improvement

- Standards of attainment in both key stages, including standards of numeracy
- Use of problem solving and information and communications technology for learning
- Assessment of learning during lessons
- Control of pupils whose behaviour is challenging

84. Standards in mathematics on entry to the school are very low. Standards at the end of Year 9 remain well below the national average. In the year 2000 national tests 36 per cent of pupils scored level 5 or above, compared to the national average of 65 per cent. There is no significant difference between the performance of girls and boys. Standards in terms of the average points score per pupil compared with national averages in mathematics are not as good as those in science or in English, but the improvement of the pupils over the course of the key stage are in line with those in English and better than those in science. In the 2001 tests, the proportion of pupils scoring levels 5 and 6 increased on those obtained in 2000 by close to 10 per cent.
85. In the GCSE examinations at the end of year 11 in 2000, the proportion of pupils gaining a grade A*-C was well below the national average, with 20 per cent gaining one of those grades compared with the national average of 47 per cent. The proportion gaining a grade A*-G was below the national average at 88 per cent, compared to 97 per cent. The girls were slightly more successful in gaining grades A*-C than were the boys. Compared to other subjects in the school, mathematics was one of the least successful taken by pupils. In the 2001 examinations 13 per cent of all the pupils entered obtained a grade A*-C, but a higher proportion than in the previous year obtained at least a grade A*-G, at 92 per cent. When pupil's prior attainment was considered standards of attainment at GCSE was in line with expectations.
86. In lessons seen during the inspection, the higher attaining sets in Key Stage 3 are working at standards in-line with national expectations, but with a significant number of pupils in each of these sets above the national average. The middle attaining sets are broadly below average and the lowest attaining sets well below average. In Year 8 pupils in a top set were seen exercising their ability to convert readily between fractions, decimals and percentages, and were developing a good understanding of the underlying principles of decimal place value. A Year 7 high attaining class was able to add and subtract fractions with different denominators with a good degree of fluency. Progress in these lessons was very good, because the pupils were all very well engaged with the lesson and because of the pace and variety of what they were asked to do. Middle and lower attaining sets generally achieve satisfactorily. Pupils were able to add fractions with the same denominator, and other pupils were seen able to write the probabilities of given simple events although a number of them were unsure exactly what these figures represented. The other areas of

the mathematics statutory orders are covered adequately, although with priority given to number skills. Most pupils find that their progress is limited by their lack of numerical capability. Very few of them know their multiplication tables, and the least able are unable to use number bonds to avoid counting down on their fingers as the only way of subtracting in their heads. They lack confidence in their numeracy; if asked a question, to which they don't immediately know the answer, they tend to give up rather than seek a strategy. Pupils with special educational needs vary in the progress that they make. The majority make good progress, helped by the setting arrangements and the availability in most lessons of skilled individual help from learning assistants. A minority of pupils exhibit behavioural difficulties, such as extreme attention seeking, and an inability to concentrate, keep still or be quiet, which inhibits their progress. Taking into account all the work seen in this key stage, pupils achieve well during the course of the 3 years, particularly in high attaining sets.

87. In Key Stage 4, standards overall are well below average, and are only in line with expectations in the two highest attaining sets in each year. Pupils in the highest attaining year 10 set seen during the week were able to write down the equation of a straight line whose graph was given and therefore have made good progress. Middle attaining pupils were able to read information from a distance and time graph, with a reasonable degree of assurance. Pupils in a low attaining class accurately plotted coordinate points on a graph. Each of these groups, including pupils with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress when their prior attainment is considered. In the case of a minority of pupils it is inhibited by an inability to listen consistently to the teacher in order to be able to understand the concepts that are being taught. Other parts of the curriculum are covered appropriately to prepare the pupils for the GCSE examinations. Standards of numeracy are very poor, except in the highest attaining sets in each year. The majority of pupils do not know their multiplication tables, and lack strategies to work things out in their heads. Over the course of the key stage, taking into account all the work seen, the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress from a low base line.
88. Standards of numeracy on entry are very low and the majority are still well below average by the end of Year 9. Only the highest attaining sets in each year group have the knowledge and skills to be able to progress confidently in the rest of the mathematics curriculum and in other areas of the curriculum. The majority of pupils have inadequate fluency in basic knowledge, such as number bonds, multiplication tables, and decimal place value. Skills, such as a range of strategies to work out numerical problems in their heads, or the ability to check that an answer is approximately what they would expect it to be, are limited. There are promising signs that pupils in Year 7 and 8 are showing a better degree of numerical facility. In several subjects some good opportunities for the applications of numeracy were seen. In physical education pupils had to multiply their readings on a stopwatch in order to calculate pulse rates. In a Year 7 geography lesson, pupils were asked to estimate height and scale from the examples visible from the classroom window, and in design and technology the pupils measured objects, and used data collecting and recording techniques. Generally, however, more needs to be done to develop pupils' numeracy skills in all subjects.
89. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour vary from very good to unsatisfactory. In Key Stage 3 it is good or very good in most lessons, and in Years 10 and 11 it is generally good in the higher and middle attaining sets, but unsatisfactory in the lower attaining sets. The best groups show an interest in the work, listen carefully to the teachers and are able to contribute appropriately without disturbing the flow of the lesson. Most of them organise their work carefully in their books, taking a pride in their work. This is not always the case, and a minority of pupils, mostly boys, are careless in their presentation, so that sometimes they make unnecessary mistakes, and even deface the front cover and some inside pages, showing little pride in what they are producing. There is a significant minority of pupils, particularly in Years 10 and 11 who lack the skills and the temperament to take part in whole class lessons because they are unable to listen, keep quiet and resist the temptation to disrupt the proceedings. In most cases, because they are well handled by the teachers, they only disrupt their own education, but in a small minority of classes this affects the progress of the whole class.
90. Teaching is good overall and has helped raise pupil achievement to satisfactory levels based on their prior attainment. Of the 15 lessons seen, all were satisfactory or better. Five, all in Key Stage

3, were very good, 5 were good and the rest satisfactory. In the first three years, the teachers have adopted many of the techniques of the Key Stage 3 strategy and are using it very successfully to inject pace and variety into the lesson, which engages the pupils' attention and enhances their understanding of the key underlying concepts. It is particularly evident that standards are rising in the early years in a way that promises well for the future. In Key Stage 4 the quality of teaching in all the lessons seen was good and although standards when measured against national expectations remain well below average, they are in line with what should be achieved against when compared to their prior attainment. In both key stages, lesson planning is very good, and teachers benefit from working together to produce high quality teaching materials in the form of overhead projector slides and worksheets. In all lessons teachers tell the pupils what they will learn in the lesson, and review this at the end of the lesson, in order to check exactly what they have learned. In the best lessons the teachers also and they tell the pupils what they will learn in the next lesson. They keep good order in most classes, although there are some very challenging pupils with whom they have not yet been able to establish an effective working relationship, free from the continual need to correct interruptions. Marking is excellent. Pupils are given a summary of what they have learned about every two weeks, together with targets for improvement.

91. The curriculum is covered in all aspects, although information and communications technology is just beginning to be used as a tool to improve learning. There is little use of open-ended problem solving as part of the process of teaching and learning, although pupils are given enough guidance to be able to complete coursework at the end of Key Stage 4. The department is very well led and efficiently organised. The staff all work very hard and are fully committed to raising standards. Since the last inspection there has been an improvement in attainment in the National Tests at the end of Year 9. rates of achievement are now satisfactory in Key Stage 4 when comparing their GCSE results with the results obtained when pupils were in Year 9. Pupils' behaviour overall is better. Finally teaching has significantly improved, and the impact is beginning to be felt, although it has yet to work through to the public examinations. To improve further, the department need to continue to focus on improvement in the standards of numeracy, behaviour and in-class assessment and other techniques to involve the pupils more in their own learning.

SCIENCE

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

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The way in which teachers use interesting ways to teach the big ideas in science through the use of models, highlighting key vocabulary and well chosen practical work • Marking (which is exemplary in some cases) that gives pupils a clear understanding of how well they are doing and helps them identify what they need to do to improve • The systems for tracking pupils' progress • Good emphasis that is given to science in everyday life • Very good leadership of the department <p>Areas for improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The systematic use of information and communication technology • The emphasis given to investigations in Years 7 –9. • The shortages of books, equipment and availability of specialist staff

92. In 2001, standards in the national tests for 14 year olds were well below the national average for all schools, but there was a reversal in the worrying decline with the percentage reaching the expected standard increasing from 29 per cent in 2000 to 51 per cent in 2001. The increase in teaching time, which has been put in place, is a key factor in this improvement. Standards were below average compared with schools with pupils of similar backgrounds but the proportion reaching the higher level was average, because of effective teaching. Boys do slightly better than the girls at this key stage. Standards in science are stronger than those in mathematics and a little better than English. These results show that pupils in 2000 were roughly two years behind the performance expected of their age. Results in 2001 have improved significantly with standards of attainment only

two terms behind the national average and showing good progress. The standards seen in 2000 and 2001 show that pupils achieved satisfactorily between the ages of eleven and fourteen.

93. Standards reached in the GCSE examinations have also been well below the national average in the last two years; they showed slight decline between 2000 and 2001 because fewer specialist teaching staff were deployed. However, pupils reached standards that were above average when compared with schools where pupils' prior performance was similar at age fourteen; in 2001 they were average. These and other indicators show that pupils' achievement was satisfactory in their GCSE course with boys and girls performing equally well. In 2000 the results in science were better than was expected from their results in other subjects, but in 2001 the difference was less marked.
94. Standards of work seen in Years 7 –9 during the inspection are better than those previously published national tests results, although they remain below average. Improvement is especially marked in Years 7 and 8 and in the standards seen by the higher attaining pupils in Year 9. Achievement has improved and is now good and standards of attainment seen in lessons are rising because of widespread good teaching at this key stage that challenges and interests pupils of all abilities. Performance in physics, chemistry and biology are equivalent in standard but stronger than those in experimental and investigative science. This is because pupils do not have enough experience of whole investigations; not enough of these are planned but there are also shortages of equipment and below average levels of technical support. Pupils' capabilities as scientific investigators are stronger in Years 7 and 8 than in Year 9 for their age but overall there are too few opportunities for pupils to turn their own ideas into testable investigations. Pupils are able to think about and discuss their scientific understanding much better than they can write about it. For example, in a Year 9 chemistry lesson, higher attaining pupils took part in a lively discussion in which they jointly came up with a plan of how to measure the increase in mass which occurs when magnesium is burnt in air. However, their written plans varied considerably in quality with the best being concise and accurate but with many others writing using weak sentence construction to describe and explain and drawing diagrams with a lack of precision. Higher attaining pupils show good knowledge and understanding at an appropriate level but with a few errors in their thinking. For example, they show a good understanding of chemical reactions and can balance simple equations but are unsure about the difference between mass and weight and why some compounds such as "Magnesium Oxide" have the chemical formula they do. In a Year 9 lesson, pupils confidently described a variety of energy transfers but were less sure of the difference between kinetic and potential energy. Average and lower attaining pupils have many gaps in their knowledge and understanding across all areas of science; their written work is marred because it is not always completed and has many spelling errors.
95. Standards at age sixteen remain well below the national average although again there are signs that they are improving in line with the national trend. Pupils have made satisfactory progress from age fourteen, have settled well into the GCSE course and are achieving satisfactorily. Standards of experimental and investigative work are much better than at Key Stage 3 because work closely follows the course rubric and whole investigations are systematically developed. Higher attaining pupils score well in all areas of investigations and for example, use lines of best fit when plotting results, identify anomalous results and give good reasons why the predictions they made at the start of an investigation fit the evidence or not. Lower attaining pupils do not do nearly as well and tend to be much weaker in analysing and evaluating experimental data.
96. The use of scientific models in teaching continues to have a positive effect on standards; for example, pupils were using particle diagrams to further develop their understanding of how gases diffuse through air and how the rate of chemical reactions change as you increase the temperature. Higher attaining pupils in Year 10 showed that they could devise a method of modelling how nutrients pass out of the small intestine into the bloodstream when constructing a model gut from plastic tubing and chemical solutions and use the correct chemical tests to identify how the nutrients have moved. Higher attaining pupils in Year 11 are on course to do well in their GCSE examinations and, for example, in a lesson seen on vegetarianism show they understand how pyramids of biomass help describe food chains. They talk confidently about the moral consequences of humans eating or not eating meat as part of their diet. The work seen in books of

the higher and most average attaining pupils indicates that they are getting through a satisfactory amount of work and generally presenting their written work neatly. However, many lower attaining pupils show gaps in their written work and weak presentation, which reflects in some cases sporadic attendance, which is a factor which is negatively impacting on their standards.

97. Pupils' books and classwork show good attention is paid to developing pupils' vocabulary and understanding of key terms. However, less emphasis is given to improving the use of key scientific sentence structures to help pupils' describe, explain, predict, or evaluate experimental observations. Writing frames are widely used at Key Stage 3 to help pupils write about their investigations; only the most able can confidently write about their investigations in their own prose. At Key Stage 4 many more pupils are confident in writing up their own investigations and in this respect good progress is made in encouraging individual writing skills. Numeracy is less systematically developed than literacy, under-represented in written work. There are particular weaknesses in drawing graphs and carrying out simple calculations. However, a small number of high ability pupils in Year 9 showed that they could predict the percentage increase in mass that would occur if magnesium were burnt in air. Some pupils use word processors to help write up their science investigations; on occasions they use the internet to gather information and data loggers to gather data. However, overall there are too few computers in the laboratories and pupils class work has very few examples of information and communication technology being used as a tool for learning.
98. The teaching and learning seen were good at Key Stage 3 and satisfactory overall at Key Stage 4 where more non-specialist teachers are deployed. This is an improvement on the last inspection. A minority of teaching is very good; some is unsatisfactory because the teachers are not science teachers and are unable to sustain learning at an appropriately challenging level. Much teaching works well because teachers emphasise what is to be learnt at the start of the lesson, identify key vocabulary, use a range of bite-sized learning activities that interest pupils and manage behavioural difficulties effectively. Examples of best practice were seen in two lessons where the teacher included two learning objectives which were directed at developing both pupils' investigative skills and scientific understanding; in most other cases one objective was evident which focused on developing knowledge and understanding. The ends of lessons are less successful because insufficient time is set aside to focus on re-enforcing the key points that have been learnt and gain feedback to help pitch the next lesson well. However, overall the clear structure to lessons allows pupils in most lessons to use time well and work productively, particularly at Key Stage 3.
99. Marking is a strength; through this teachers give pupils a good self-knowledge of their learning which in turn feeds into pupils' scientific targets for improvement. In some cases it is exemplary where for example, it was done very regularly, accurately annotated in accordance with the school's policy and evaluations helped the pupils gain an excellent view of where they were going wrong and what they needed to do to get better. Well chosen activities help pupils learn well, especially when the teachers encourage pupils to make 3-dimensional models or to represent the theories being discussed using diagrams that show what is going on. For example, pupils in Year 7 enjoyed making simple plant and animal cells using plastic bags, jelly and runner bean seeds, work on display shows pupils using particle diagrams to explain a variety of phenomena. In Year 9, pupils constructing maps of their understanding of the concept of energy and Year 10 pupils preparing a poster of the way satellites move around the planets in the solar system. Learning in some lessons at Key Stage 4, was adversely affected by the poor behaviour of some pupils, which was not effectively managed by teachers because the teacher's weak subject and course knowledge was a major contributory factor to their ability to pitch work in an interesting and challenging manner.
100. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is always sound and often good, teachers work very hard to many those pupils with emotional or behavioural difficulties who managed effectively on most occasions. Learning support assistants are well deployed in lessons and systematically support pupils learning. At age sixteen almost all pupils are entered for the double award science course, which is much higher proportion than average; this reflects the high importance given to the subject. This approach suits nearly all pupils and provides them with a very good opportunity to study the full national curriculum.

101. Departmental leadership is very good and has helped to counteract a lack of specialist staff, poor accommodation and the need to induct new staff and deficiencies in teaching resources. The head of department has monitored the work of his staff very effectively and has an accurate knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching, the curriculum and other provision. He provides first class leadership in the philosophical direction that he is taking the department and is managing and developing a team of staff that are in tune with best practice. Standards are helped because the curriculum is well rooted in the National Curriculum and made interesting by the constant focus on the everyday applications and “big ideas” of science. More external visits, such as to the science museum in London, are planned to further develop this aspect.
102. The teachers know the standards reached by the pupils very well and use very effective methods of tracking their progress. Very good plans are in hand to further refine departmental schemes of work. The use of non-specialist teachers, which has affected standards too often in the past, is being tackled well; the specialist teaching staff will be further strengthened in January when a new member of staff joins the department. However, steps still need to be taken to provide support to the remaining non-specialist staff. Insufficient availability of computers, texts which are suitable for the full range of pupils at Key Stage 3, shortages of basic and specialist science equipment and poor accommodation remain additional obstacles to further improving provision. Good progress has been made since the last inspection in improving provision and standards and the department is poised to further build on their strengths with the plans it has made for the future.

ART AND DESIGN

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

Strengths

- Very good improvement, especially in standards, since the last inspection.
- Stable staff with very good subject knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn
- Very good teaching resulting in pupils making very good progress.
- The rising standards especially the results in GCSE examinations.
- The department’s commitment to improve and the capacity to succeed
- The department is very well led and managed.

Areas for improvement

- Levels of literacy to better support pupils’ research and investigation skills
- The use of ICT to support and inform pupils’ learning
- Review the curriculum for art in the light of curriculum 2000

103. The overall standards of work are in line with national averages, a significant improvement on the standards reported in the last inspection. The results for Year 11 in the 2001 examinations show significant improvement on the 1999 results, especially at the higher A*-A grades. The average for grades A* - C was significantly above the school average. Of the thirty-eight candidates entered, all passed and twenty-three gained results above their target grade. The results for 14 year olds mirror this improvement in standards to attain levels that are in line nationally. This is an improvement on the last inspection when a significant minority attained levels below the national average.
104. On entry to the school pupils’ standards in art and design are well below average. As a result of very good teaching that focuses on learning the basic skills, pupils make very good progress especially in Years 7 and 9. In Year 8 the pupils have half the curriculum time of each of the other two years and this affects progress especially in the development of drawing skills. All pupils use drawing skills and are competent with the media and materials they use. As they progress through the years they learn to use the higher levels of drawing skills and increase their levels of competence across a broad range of media and materials. They learn about the work of other artists and designers and use it to inform their own work. However, for some pupils, the low levels of literacy affect the quality of written work. They can combine different styles and patterns researched from the work of other artists.

105. Developing their understanding of the use of colour, they use layering effects and materials to create textures and special finishes to their work. They use clay to create 2D and 3D work but there are no opportunities for pupils to learn how to create 2D and 3D work by interpreting and manipulating images on the computer.
106. The observation of work during the inspection confirmed this. At the end of both key stages pupils' achievements are very good with some pupils showing substantial achievement in comparison with their previous attainment. There is no difference between the achievement of boys and girls and pupils with special needs make very good progress. One special needs pupil achieved excellent progress in Year 7. Older pupils use sketchbooks well. There is clear direction to their work developing ideas, exploring media, linking ideas to other artists work to inform their style and presentation. They make very good use of modelling and digital photography to show a range of different aspects of their work. One pupil, working on the theme of 'Work' made frequent references in his sketchbook to the work of Edvard Munch as he developed his portrait of the 'Unemployed'. The teacher, monitoring and supporting from a distance, noted how the pupil was working with clear responsibility for his own learning. Younger pupils can develop a personal idea from their understanding of the standard head and model it in clay. They recall previous 2D clay work, especially when it comes to joining the clay, and develop confidence as they mould and shape the material.
107. Teaching is very good overall as it was at the last inspection. Basic skills are taught to a consistently high standard, behaviour is very well managed and expectations are high. Planning is well thought through and what pupils are expected to learn is made very clear. Opportunities to refine work are built into the planning and there is a strong emphasis on concentration to improve the quality of pupils' work. Resources are limited but presented and used well by teachers and pupils. On the occasions when there is one to one tuition this is very effective because teachers show good knowledge of individual pupil's strengths and weaknesses and plan activities geared to their individual needs. Learning needs are well met because of the accurate scheme for assessing what pupils' know and can do. Pupils are given the depth of knowledge and the learning is assessed and monitored. Artists-in-residence are used and there are planned visits to galleries to extend pupils' knowledge of art and design. Pupils respond positively to the teaching, use the time well especially when they are well resourced with information and given more responsibility for their own learning. High levels of concentration are maintained through carefully thought out prompts to keep them focused; like 'Key elements to expand', 'Remember annotation gives the examiner a better insight to your work'. They understand a good range of art vocabulary but the standard of literacy skills does not match their art skills and this inhibits some pupils' flair when writing about their work and their confidence for free expression. Weaknesses in literacy skills hampered research skills at the last inspection.
108. The management of the department is very good and is evident in the increase in standards and the added value in the subject at both key stages. There is a team approach to all aspects of leadership in the subject that works to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities in art and design. The staffs have very complimentary styles that benefit pupils' learning. Monitoring and evaluating the subject's performance and taking effective action is priority. An example of this is the decision to reorganise the timetable for art for one term in Year 8 to make better use of the available curriculum time in order to improve standards and progress. Assessment used to inform the teachers' planning and to monitor pupils' progress is very well managed in the department. Department documentation is yet to be reviewed in the light of the most recent curriculum developments for art and design and opportunities for using ICT.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Overall, the quality of provision in design and technology is **very good**

Strengths

- The GCSE results in design and technology are improving

- Management of the department is very good and the head of department has established a good team where teachers make a positive contribution to the subject
- Curriculum Planning has improved and this is having a very good impact on the achievement of individual pupils at all levels of attainment

Areas for improvement

- Not all pupils do a design and technology subject in Years 10 and 11
- The overall achievement of boys is not satisfactory where limited strategies to engage them fully in lessons sometimes results in poor behaviour

109. In 2000, the proportion of pupils achieving GCSE grades A* to C were below the national average. Girls outperformed the boys. Results in 2001, have increased with girls continuing to outperform the boys. Pupils achieved better results in design and technology in 2000, compared to most other subjects. Pupils also achieve better result in resistant materials than they do in other examination options in design and technology. Not all pupils in Year 10 and 11 study a design and technology subject and those not doing the subject are guided to follow GNVQ courses. Teacher assessment for pupils at the end of Year 9 in 2000, indicates that pupils are working below the national average with girls outperforming the boys. However, the level of work seen during the inspection showed improvement in standards and pupils were working broadly in line with the national average.

110. In work seen during the inspection, attainment of pupils at the end of Year 9 is broadly in line with the standard expected of pupils nationally. This represents very good achievement when compared to the very low levels of attainment when pupils enter the school. In years 7 to 9 pupils are introduced to a range of materials and develop basic skills in designing and making products in food, graphics, resistant materials, textiles and electronics. They develop a good range of knowledge to underpin and increase their understanding of the products they design. Pupils are taught a range of two- and three-dimensional drawing skills and apply these skills well to their work in other specialist areas within technology. All pupils in Years 7 to 9 gain a good foundation in electronics. They use a specialist ICT program to design and test electronic circuits and assemble their own printed circuit boards.

111. Pupils design and make products for particular commercial purposes. In all specialist areas, pupils research consumer preferences and apply the results of this research well to the development of their products. They use a good range of hand and machine tools safely when making products in all material areas. At the end of Year 9, all pupils experience the use of computer aided design and computer aided manufacture. The school has established an excellent link with the Southampton Education Training Agency. This enables pupils to successfully design products such as electronic timing devices and engineering extrusions using industry standard computer aided design software and then control the manufacturing over a video conferencing link. This use of information technology to enhance pupils' work in design and technology is at the leading edge of current provision in secondary schools nationally. In all specialist areas pupils use numerical data well to plan and produce products and models which are often designed to scale. They accurately present the results of surveys in the form of charts and graphs.

112. In the work seen of pupils in Years 7 to 9, including those with special educational needs, achievement is very good at the end of Year 9. This is very good when compared to the levels they achieve when they enter the school. Pupils use the full design process in some projects, although it is underdeveloped in others, which does not always enable pupils to analyse a wide enough range of commercially, produced products. This would enable them to use some of the ideas and materials to influence their own designing. Pupils are now beginning to work more independently. They are guided by the structure that teachers provide in the lessons. This is often in the form of structured worksheets and guidance notes which includes opportunities for self assessment and an ability to set targets of how to improve the overall quality of their work. Design portfolios show evidence of a growing standard of planning. Pupils use a suitable range of isometric and assembly drawings to communicate the development of their ideas. In food technology pupils work at a good level and demonstrate a good range of skills, involving market research techniques, product testing as well as product development skills.

113. In the work seen during the inspection, attainment of pupils in Years 10 and 11 is broadly in line with the level expected of pupils at this stage nationally. This is reflected in the rise in GCSE results achieved by pupils in 2000 and 2001. This improvement on standards in 2001 is a part of the work started within the department to raise standards. Teachers provide examples of work to enable pupils to ensure they cover all aspects of the examination assessment criteria. All pupils use a wide range of investigation and research skills, and evaluate strengths and weaknesses effectively as they progress with their design ideas. They develop work of good quality, including a range of making skills that involve them in considering large-scale manufacturing processes. Pupils develop a good range of drawing skills and work methodically through each stage of the design process. They explain, using drawings and annotation to show how decisions have been made at each stage of the products development. Their work is detailed and well presented, using ICT well to process data and to present the supporting information well.
114. In the work seen of pupils in Years 10 and 11 achievement overall is good. Pupils increase their skills in using the design process to produce good quality coursework. The work pupils do in resistant materials is of a particularly high standard. The department has recognised the need to improve the achievement of boys and has begun to review a range of strategies used to develop the quality of work produced by boys. There is a good mix of constraints, which enable pupils to follow standard processes and at the same time give them enough opportunity to include features of their own design ideas. Folders show a good level of graphic skills in all areas of the subject. The work is well annotated with explanations and details of specific features and processes to be included in the work. Pupils use a good range of presentation techniques and the application of rendering to apply colour and texture to both 2-D and 3-D drawings. Higher attaining pupils work accurately. They produce well-developed plans and their work is guided by detailed specifications. Folder work includes the testing and modelling of products at the various stages of development in all material areas. Lower attaining pupils design products well suited to the courses and are supported by their teachers to produce work that reflects the basic requirements of the examination.
115. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 7 to 9 and Years 10 and 11 was good overall. Some very good lessons were seen. In lessons where teaching was good, teachers provided a good structure to the lesson with clear objectives to guide and support pupils. Teachers plan their lessons well which ensures good learning. They work well together as a team and have consistently high expectation of their pupils. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are supported on a one-to-one basis and they achieve well in lessons. Teachers prepare a very good range of resources that support individual pupils to achieve and progress with tasks well matched to their attainment levels.
116. Teachers use a range of strategies to enable pupils to develop the technical vocabulary associated with the subject. They also prepare guidance resources, which enable lower attaining pupils to structure their writing; this is having a positive effect on the development of the pupils' literacy skills. This is developed further when pupils are required to write in a variety of styles such as making notes, writing work in sequence, when they give instructions of how to make their products and when evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the products they make. They use the internet to research information in all year groups. ICT is used well in food technology where pupils use spreadsheets to process information and present this in a range of charts and graphs. They calculate the nutritional value of the food products they develop. In resistant materials and systems and control, teachers encourage the use ICT as part of designing and manufacturing products. This was particularly well used in a Year 9 lesson where pupils were designing electronic timing devices. They had used a specialist ICT program to design and test the circuits and the teacher supported pupils in producing a standard casing, which speeded up the process of making and included a realistic mass production process.
117. Good numeracy skills are evident in both practical and written design tasks, when pupils measure and mark out the dimensions they require during the making process. Pupils form good relationships with their teachers and work hard for them. Teachers have a positive approach with all pupils and as a result all pupils are included well in all the learning activities. They generally behave well because they know what standards are, and are not, acceptable.

118. The management of the department is very good. The head of department has focused on raising standards. Schemes of work are well developed and up to date. There is very good leadership and a strong departmental team. All staff contributes well to the effectiveness and efficiency of the department. There is an appropriate system in place to monitor and record the attainment of pupils and targets are set to help them improve. The high standard of planning and good teaching within the department has ensured the very good progress made by pupils in the subject. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection. Achievement is now very good and teaching overall is good. Although the video conferencing link enables pupils to observe the manufacture of their products, they do not gain hands on experience of the processes within the school. GCSE results have improved over the last three years.

GEOGRAPHY

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

Strengths

- Marking is good; it assists pupils to move forward in their learning
- Pupils in years 7, 8 and 9 make good progress over time
- Good planning of work ensures that teachers work to a common syllabus; this ensures continuity and helps pupils' progress

Areas for improvement

- Teachers need to further extend the range of tasks and learning activities in order to meet the needs of all pupils with assessment informing planning at all levels.
- Fieldwork away from school and on site needs to be developed; pupils need first hand experiences in order to involve pupils directly in their learning.
- Lessons need greater pace, expectations and challenge
- Access to ICT is limited; this constrains the investigative elements of geography and presentation of work.

119. Geography is taught in Years 7 and 8 as a humanities programme; geography, history and religious education rotate in half termly blocks. A consequence of this rotation means there are periods of time when no geography is taught; this inhibits the continuity of pupils' learning. A limited range of geography lessons was available for observation; no Year 8 lessons were observed, though Year 8 books were well scrutinised. In Year 9 geography, history and religious education are taught throughout each week, which ensures continuity.

120. In the work seen during the inspection, pupils' attainment at the age of 14 is average; the 2001 teacher assessments do not always confirm this, indicating some lack of understanding of national curriculum assessment. Pupils aged 16 demonstrate standards that are below average, which is confirmed by the 2001 GCSE examination results; the trend shows that results have recently declined over the last three years. However, this represents a satisfactory level of achievement for these pupils, whose levels of attainment were well below average when they joined the school. There is no difference between the performance of boys and girls.

121. In Year 7, pupils come to school with basic geographical skills and knowledge. Work seen in Year 8 exercise books shows that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have a good understanding of Italian culture, agriculture and industry. Year 9 pupils, as a result of being asked to combine map making and graphical data know the areas of the United Kingdom that have a surplus or deficiency of water supplies. In Year 9 pupils begin to have an understanding of the issues related to conservation and the potential for conflict between different countryside users. They successfully compare renewable and non-renewal resources. Overall all by year 9 pupils, including those with special educational needs, have made good progress in their learning.

122. Year 10 pupils study issues related to the location of a new caravan site; they consider the different view points of local residents, park ranger, council representative and site developer; however, pupils are unable to draw up the main points successfully in order to evaluate the advantages and

disadvantages. Pupils show basic knowledge of an ecosystem and that it requires water, temperate temperature, light and air to sustain it. They show a secure knowledge of weather recording related to wind speed, temperature, rainfall and pressure. They know the different instruments that are used to measure rainfall, pressure, temperature and wind speed. High attaining pupils have an understanding of Global Warming. A minority of Year 11 pupils understand rural push and urban pull and give examples related to China and California.

123. Overall pupils in Year 10 and 11 have difficulty evaluating and analysing data. This was well seen during the scrutiny of pupils' books; most pupils were unable to give the advantages and disadvantages for urban and rural migration. Pupils compare locations of flood control with places without flood control; they consider the cause and effects of the Lynmouth disaster; however, many of the low attaining pupils struggle with cause and effect. In Year 11 pupils studying river erosion; orally many use the technical words correctly, for example, saltation and traction when talking about transportation of material down stream.
124. High attaining pupils successfully distinguish between transportation of material and the different types of erosion of the riverbed and sides. However, most pupils have difficulty in giving reasons for steep sided banks or meanders. Many have difficulty in linking different aspect of physical, human and economic geography. A minority of higher attaining pupils successfully makes evaluations and summarise their work; however, many find this hard. Overall, lack of literacy constrains understanding; limited examples of extended writing and use of computer work is seen in pupils' work. Numeracy supports learning as pupils plot temperature and rainfall; limited use is made of computers to illustrate work or for investigative purposes. This is a consequence of access at specific times. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are well-integrated in to lessons and receive good support by teachers and learning support assistants. The scrutinised sample of work and work seen in lessons shows Years 10 and 11 make satisfactory achievements in relation to pupils' prior attainment.
125. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. In Years 7, 8 and 9 teaching is good; it is satisfactory in Years 10 and 11. The instances when the teaching was unsatisfactory are linked to staff on short term contacts. This was more apparent in Years 10 and 11 than in Years 7,8 and 9. Teachers have satisfactory expectations of pupils' behaviour but at times, unsatisfactory behaviour and inappropriate action by the teacher constrains learning. This was seen in a Year 10 lesson on ecosystems. Lessons need greater pace, expectations and challenge, for example, a Year 9 lesson on supply and demand for water. Planning of the geographical elements of the curriculum is a good feature and gives consistency and helps all staff that teach geography. Pupils are encouraged to ask and answer geographical questions in some detail; this further enhances their understanding, as seen in a Year 7 lesson on volcanoes. Year 9 pupils make effective use of technical words, like erosion, traction and corrasion when studying rivers.
126. Scrutiny of pupils' books shows that they use simple well-drawn diagrams, and sketch maps are usually labelled appropriately; maps have keys relating to scale, direction and symbols. The quality of marking is good; books are marked regularly and it shows geographical accuracy, spelling, grammar and punctuation. Teachers' comments are both congratulatory and evaluative; useful comments and targets are given which enable pupils to make improvement. Marking also shows teachers have high expectations of presentation and insist that pupils good use of the basic geographical conventions, for example, titles and annotation. Homework is set regularly mainly to consolidate but some examples to develop learning. Overall, pupils' behaviour, attitudes and relationship are good. These features underpin the learning environment. However, teachers need to further extend the range of tasks and learning activities in order to meet the needs of all pupils. However, they are sufficiently flexible in their teaching, as they circulate about the classroom, to help and support pupils in order to meet the individual needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs.
127. Since September 2001, there has been an acting head of geography; she is providing satisfactory leadership for the subject and geography staff. Areas have been identified for development. Fieldwork away from school and on site is under developed; pupils need first hand experiences in order to be involved more directly in their learning. Marking and assessment procedures are good;

however, assessment now needs to better inform curriculum planning. Improved access to computers constrains the investigative elements of geography and presentation of work.

128. The progress made since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory, as insufficient progress has been made; it is only this term when there has been progress. Since the last inspection there has been a complete change of geography staff. An acting head of department was appointed in September 2001; she has identified areas for development of the subject but has had insufficient time to implement them. She is already having a positive impact and has a clear vision on how to improve the subject.

HISTORY

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

Strengths

- Teaching challenges pupils to develop their responses and to maintain interest and enthusiasm
- The use of ICT provides a stimulus and support for all pupils, especially those who find writing difficult.
- Assessment ensures that pupils know how well they are achieving and how to improve
- Departmental leadership is good in years 7-9 and very good in years 10-11.

Areas for improvement

- Planning of lessons for lower attaining pupils should be reviewed to ensure that they achieve clear targets through appropriately challenging work
- Continue to develop methods that encourage pupils to think about what they have learned and make reasoned judgements about it
- Continue to develop the knowledge and understanding of non-specialist teachers

129. Teachers' Assessments at the end of Year 9 in 2001 indicate standards in line with the national average. Work seen during the inspection supports this assessment. There has been a steady improvement since the last inspection. Boys and girls are achieving equally well. Results in the GCSE examination in 2000 were well below the national average for grades A*-C, however all pupils gained a grade A*-G. Results in 2001 have risen but are likely to have remained well below the national average. Results have been rising over the last four years. Boys and girls gain similar results and the number of pupils choosing to follow the GCSE course is rising steadily. Pupils attain well in GCSE history when compared to most other subjects in school.

130. In work seen during the inspection, pupils attain average standards by the end of Year 9. This represents good achievement given their very low levels of attainment on entry to the school. By the end of Year 9 pupils use different types of source material to select relevant information in response to questions, and to form opinions as to the views of the people of the time. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to question the reliability of some sources and to consider the motives behind them. For example the contrasting reports on factory conditions by a friend of a mill owner and a survey that interviewed workers. They can recognise the pressures that led to men enlisting to fight in the 1st World War and higher attaining pupils understand why recruitment was so effective. Many pupils fail to consider whether their own answers 'fit the question' and lower attaining pupils do not develop their responses with explanations. Pupils have a vivid understanding of the slave trade, in particular the journey to America. With the support of writing frames pupils write lengthy essays containing detail and good explanation of the trade. The majority of pupils have a simple understanding of the effects of slavery. Higher attaining pupils recognise the significance of the loss of freedom to the individual and the slave trade to the economy in England. All pupils can give an opinion about slavery, higher attaining pupils provide evidence to support their judgement. Pupils present their information in a variety of forms, for example in a letter to King Henry V111 reporting on the growth of poverty in England. They write confidently, however their written work is often marred by weak literacy skills.

131. The standards of 16 year olds are below average. Although a significant minority of pupils are attaining higher standards. When supported by the skilful questioning and prompting of teachers, pupils attain a higher level than might be expected. Pupils have a secure understanding of America in 1920's and display this knowledge in attractive 'tourist brochures'. They make links between the circumstances that led to the 'Wall Street Crash' and higher attaining pupils can explain the significance of these links and evaluate their importance. Most pupils recognise that not all people benefited from the 'Boom' period and identify differing views of the society towards it. Higher attaining pupils identify the effects of prohibition on the rise in crime, and suggest reasons for its repeal. Pupils demonstrated good research skills in their investigation into life in wartime England, and they recognise differing views toward the evacuation of children from the cities. Views are sometimes simplistic and generally pupils do not consider shades of opinion. Pupils use ICT with confidence, for research, presentation and as a database. A very good example is the brochure produced to encourage visitors to the USA.
132. The quality of teaching is good and very good in the GCSE course where history specialists teach it. In the best lessons teachers plan well to ensure that a range of activities are used to stimulate pupils' interest, and that the pace of lessons is brisk. All lessons begin with clear lesson targets and the practice of pupils writing them down on entry to the class ensures an immediate start to the lesson. Teachers' skilful use of questioning prompts pupils to develop and explain their responses. As a result some pupils achieve well. Relations between teachers and pupils are good which supports a sense of partnership in learning. The good use of review at the end of the lesson enables pupils to reflect on what they have learned and develop a sense of progression. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and as a result pupils work well. Where teaching is less successful, resources used by non-specialist teachers fail to sustain pupils' interest and the overlong time given to complete the tasks set allow the pace to flag. Lower attaining pupils are well supported through appropriately levelled information sheets, however the pace of lessons for these pupils lacked challenge and a sense of urgency.
133. The leadership and management of history is very good. Energetic management provides a good range of learning opportunities from visits to the Normandy battlefields to the excellent local Heritage Project on Harefield House. Pupils appreciated the memories and opinions of local elderly residents who joined their lessons on wartime Britain. As a result of such activities pupils become excited and involved in their learning. Assessment is very good and enables teachers to identify progress in all the key history elements, and to identify targets for the pupils to work towards. Pupils have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve. ICT is well established in the department and pupils develop their skills in the use of the database through their history lessons. History is part of the Humanities Faculty and is delivered by humanities teachers in Years 7 and 8. Pupils receive a term of history lessons then move on to lessons in geography and religious education. Although this does enable a concentrated period of study, time is curtailed which affects the depth of study of the National Curriculum. The long period between history topics affects the development of key skills and the sense of continuity.
134. Since the last inspection the provision in history has continued to improve. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and teaching of the GCSE course is now very good. The quality of leadership has improved and the use of ICT has been developed and is assessed.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Overall, the quality of provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **very good**.

Strengths

- The school has invested in a new computer network which is having a good impact on improving standards
- Good planning ensures that pupils cover a good range of ICT skills in specialist ICT lessons.
- Good relationships between staff and pupils which creates a good learning ethos
- Teachers provide good individual support for pupils at all attainment levels
- Pupils now attain levels which are broadly in line with national expectations

Areas for improvement

- Increase the range of strategies used to challenge and improve the achievement of boys

135. Standards in ICT are broadly in line with the national average both at the end of Year 9 and at the end of Year 11. The school has not offered ICT as a GCSE examination option in previous years. Since September 2001 however, all pupils follow courses in either a GNVQ course at Intermediate or Advanced level. All pupils experience a Key Skills Course. Standards are satisfactory as a result of the basic skills pupils cover in specialist ICT lessons in Years 7 to 9 and within the examination courses. ICT is less well developed however in subjects across the curriculum. The school has invested heavily in the development of a new whole school computer networked system, which has benefited the development of ICT skills of all pupils. Achievements over time are very good in all year groups.
136. The teacher assessment of pupils at the end of Year 9 indicates that standards are below the national average. However, in the work seen during the inspection pupils were working broadly in line with the national expectations. Achievement by students in Years 7 to 9 over time is very good when compared to the well below average levels students achieve when they join the school. In Year 7 students are introduced to a broad range of ICT skills including word processing, editing text, combining graphics and text for desktop publishing. In years 8 and 9 students increase their knowledge of using databases and spreadsheets when creating multi-media presentations using specialist software. They research information using the Internet and are able to modify and present the detail for a chosen audience.
137. By the end of Year 9, pupils at all levels of attainment including those with special needs, achieve competence in the basic ICT skills of desktop publishing, use the internet, spreadsheets, databases, multi-media presentations and a range of electronic resources such as scanners and digital cameras. Higher attaining pupils show more independence in the way they work and complete tasks faster than others, showing depth of knowledge and good understanding of the work they do. A small minority of boys however are less focused and need to be more challenged by the tasks. Teachers generally provide a good structure to the tasks in the form of guidance booklets, which enable pupils to show the level they have reached. Lower attaining pupils covered a good range of basic techniques with good individual support from teachers. All pupils now have a specialist ICT lesson in each year groups and this has increased the opportunities for pupils to increase their range of ICT
138. In work seen during the inspection, standards in Years 10 and 11 are broadly in line with the national expectations. Pupils, following the GNVQ Intermediate and Key Skills courses, use ICT to research their work and use a range of skills to process and present their coursework. Folder work contained good evidence of students using spreadsheets, desktop publishing to process and present data and show greater depth in their understanding in using these skills. Many pupils used ICT effectively in their GNVQ coursework. Pupils used spreadsheets to process data and then presented the results in the form of graphs and charts, noting the changes and trends. Pupils are taught to use specialist information technology software to prepare presentations on chosen subjects for various audiences. In preparing the information, pupils are guided to select the most important points and to structure their presentations.
139. Achievement is very good in Years 10 and 11. Pupils who do the GNVQ and Key Skills courses in Information Technology make very good progress in covering the course content. Pupils in Year 11 progress well with their coursework assignments. Evidence in their folders show that tasks are completed with care showing a good level of knowledge in the depth needed to achieve successful grades at GNVQ level. Pupils explain their work using a good range of technical vocabulary, which they apply accurately.
140. There is a good learning ethos in the department. Students generally show mature attitudes to their work. They form good relationships with their peers, the teachers and other adults they work with within the department. This has had a good impact on the learning. Students work in a mature way and ask their teachers for help when they need it, both in lessons and outside lesson time. The ICT

rooms are well organised and students show a business like approach when using the range of resources available within the department.

141. The quality of teaching and learning of ICT in the school is good. Teachers show a good level of planning and preparation and are well organised. In lessons where the learning was good, the teachers set clear objectives, which gave the students an opportunity to assess what they had to do and this enabled them to work more independently. Learning was good when teachers structured the lessons. Teachers used interesting methods to capture the interest of the pupils and at the same time structured the activities to include a good range of basic ICT skills. An example of this was seen in a Year 8 lesson where pupils were preparing a presentation of the weather conditions for a particular event for example a golfing week in America, skiing, sky diving or fishing. Pupils chose their own activity and then accessed the BBC weather station to gain the information from databases to modify and include in their presentations. The teacher provided a good structure for the tasks, both in the work, as well as guiding students to use the software. All pupils managed to access and modify the data they needed and mastered the basic skills of using the software.
142. Pupils use the correct technical vocabulary when talking about their work and teachers use a range of methods to ensure students develop a wide range of words and knowledge in ICT specialist lessons. This is particularly important for pupils with lower than average reading skills; as this helps them to secure a wide and relevant vocabulary. They also read from a range of text when using books, CD ROM's and the Internet when researching their work.
143. Teachers demonstrate good knowledge of their subject and in the main use questions effectively to assess how much pupils understand and retain. In most lessons, pupils show good levels of concentration as a result of this active questioning which challenges them to extend their thinking and to increase their participation. Teachers have high expectations and the pupils respond well to this when they work in the department. Teachers have good relationships with the students and include students effectively in the learning activities in the classroom.
144. Management of the subject is good. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is good and the information shared has supported the development of teaching well in the department. There has been some considerable investment to upgrade the level of computers, which is now in line with the national average. The technician support is very good and he has had a very positive impact on the department as well as supporting pupils in clubs and lessons. Progress since the last inspection is good. The increase in the number of computers has enabled better access for pupils. Teaching and learning in specialist ICT lessons is now good. The use of ICT in other subjects across the curriculum with which to raise standards further remains an issue for development.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Provision for information technology across the curriculum is **unsatisfactory**.

Strengths

- The innovative use of information technology in design and technology.
- Information technology is used effectively to enhance teaching and learning in history, science, English and mathematics.

Areas for improvement

- In the remaining subjects, although information technology is being written into schemes of work, there is insufficient consistency of practice to ensure that all pupils make full statutory use of information technology.
- The confidence of all teachers needs to be increased by training to the extent that they can plan useful activities and can teach them using computers.

145. The use of computers across the curriculum was inconsistent. In some subjects there was some good use of information technology (ICT).
146. Very good use of ICT was seen in design and technology where pupils used spreadsheets to organise and present information about surveys they did to gain marketing information about the products they designed. Pupils used a range of digital resources such as digital cameras and scanners as well as the internet to research information.
147. As part of the school's significant focus on work-related learning the design and technology department has established an excellent link with the Southampton Education Training Agency (SETA) to provide opportunities for pupils to design products. By using industry standard computer software networked across an information technology suite pupils directing the manufacturing process over a video conferencing link to computer-aided milling machines and lathes at the local college. The finished product forming part of their coursework.
148. In English, pupils edit and draft their work using word processing. They do an advertising project creating images. In Year 8, pupils draft their essays and in Year 9, pupils create the front page of a newspaper. In science, pupils in Years 7 to 9, use desktop publishing to present their investigation work, use databases for work on molecules, health and microbes. In Years 10 and 11, use computers to model their work on photosynthesis and pond life. In mathematics, there is good use of word processing and the use of ICT to develop skills in numeracy. Pupils studying the rise of prohibition in the USA during the 1920's used Publisher to create newspapers that argued the different perspective identified from historical sources.
149. There is some evidence of using ICT evident in pupil books in geography and religious education although religious education was not seen taught in lessons. The special needs department is using an integrated learning programme on trial for three months and is also evaluating the 'Successmaker' package as an aid to improving pupils' learning. There was no evidence of using ICT in music.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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

Strengths

- The leadership of the department is very good
- The teaching and good relationships with pupils
- The quality of marking and target setting
- The shared commitment to raising standards

Areas for improvement

- The opportunities for pupils to participate more in oral work
- Teachers' use of the target language
- The use of information and communications technology (ICT)
- The variety of teaching strategies

150. By the time pupils are aged 14 the standards of work seen in French lessons and scrutiny are below national expectations. In Spanish where there are only groups in Years 7 and 8 the standards are also below national expectations. Good teaching enables pupils of all abilities to attain levels at least in line and often above their prior attainments.
151. Pupils' attainments are best in those lessons where the teaching is largely in the foreign language. This is because pupils become accustomed to the pronunciation and hear common speech patterns repeated. As a result pupils in a Year 7 class are able to listen to a recording of French speakers and pick out the key information. Higher attaining pupils are able to read a long text with fluency and good pronunciation. In these groups pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, understand simple questions and can give short replies with good accents.

These pupils are confident in speaking. At the end of one lesson a pupil turned the tables and asked the teacher in French whether she had a dog.

152. Middle and lower ability pupils' speaking skills are weak. They do not reply spontaneously in common situations and their pronunciation is poor. This happens where they start written work before vocabulary and pronunciation has been thoroughly practised. In written work teachers adapt tasks to different attainment levels. Visual materials and prompt sheets to compensate for poor literacy skills often support tasks for lower attaining pupils. This enables pupils to have some success. Higher attaining pupils are expected to write with fewer support materials and to produce fuller answers. Pupils in Year 9 are able to write about past events such as holidays and give opinions but their writing is largely limited to patterns given by the teacher. Much written work is poorly presented. Pupils find grammar work difficult. This, together with their low levels of literacy, limits their attainments.
153. By the time pupils are aged 16 standards of work seen in both French and Spanish are below national averages and generally in the range of lower GCSE grades, but they are making progress in line with their prior attainments. Many of these pupils have been disadvantaged by earlier staffing problems, their oral skills are poor and have difficulty recalling basic vocabulary. This is because teachers do not challenge enough in the foreign language and revert too quickly to English to explain tasks. As a result pupils are very dependent on the teacher for guidance in all aspects of their work. In the written work of some higher attaining pupils there are some more complex sentences and they write about past and future events. In the best work seen there is evidence of redrafting and a good extended report of a pupil's work experience. Average and lower attaining pupils benefit from the teachers' expertise in preparing for the GCSE. Their written work communicates the right message but often shows word for word translation and elementary errors of grammar. For some pupils the work in their books is not sufficiently well organised to be of any use for reference when revising.
154. Teaching in both languages is never less than satisfactory but more often good or very good. A feature of all the teaching is the support and encouragement offered to compensate for pupils' low self-esteem and poor literacy skills. Teachers show tolerance and understanding of pupils with emotional and behavioural problems. As a result pupils form good relationships with teachers and behaviour in lessons is generally good. Pupils are not reluctant to volunteer or ask for help. There is a tendency for teachers to over-compensate for pupils' learning difficulties by using English rather than the foreign language. Lesson planning is a strength of teachers' work. There are clear learning objectives, different work is prepared for pupils of different abilities and there is a clear sequence of lessons across each topic. Pupils in a Year 8 Spanish group enjoyed acting out a restaurant scene and there is some satisfactory pair work in French. Generally there are too few strategies to engage all pupils actively in speaking. Homework is regularly set and the issue of homework books in Year 7 saves time in lessons and ensures that pupils have good reference materials at home. Marking of written work is very good and incorporates targets for the pupils. Teachers talk about National Curriculum levels and pupils understand and are challenged by this to raise their standards.
155. The work of the department shows good improvement since the last inspection. Staffing problems have been resolved and as a result progress is now satisfactory. In Years 7 and 8 where pupils have benefited from this stability progress is more frequently good. GCSE standards are rising.
156. The head of department shows very good leadership through her own commitment and by personal example in her teaching. Lessons for GCSE revision were offered during the Easter holiday. Systematic monitoring of teaching, planning and homework is raising standards. The department has adopted very good schemes of work to support lesson planning, but has not yet integrated ICT into their teaching. Increasing use is being made of results analysis and the information about pupils' attainments to monitor pupils' progress. The other teachers share the commitment of the head of department and the improvements made over the last two years have raised the profile of the subject in the school. A proposed trip to France is over-subscribed. The department has identified areas for development and shows the capacity to address these issues and to continue to raise standards.

MUSIC

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

Strengths

- The music teacher has good subject knowledge
- Teaching in Years 10 and 11

Areas for improvement

- Standards of teaching and learning in Years 7 - 9

157. Teacher assessments of pupils' attainment at the age of 14 are well below national expectations although inspection evidence suggests that standards are improving slowly. The last GCSE entries were in 1999 and standards were well below the national expectations with only four of the nine pupils passing the examination. In the past year, more pupils have started to choose music and there is now a GCSE class in each of Years 10 and 11. All groups including those with English as an additional language and pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
158. In the work seen during the inspection, pupils' attainment at the age of 14 is below average. This represents a good level of achievement for those pupils whose levels of attainment were well below average when they joined the school. Most pupils are improving their knowledge and understanding of musical topics they have studied but are still below the standard achieved by similar schools. All pupils have equal opportunity to develop their musical skills and boys and girls work equally well together. Work seen in Years 10 and 11 suggest that standards continue to be low.
159. Music plays a part in the school productions and there is also a singing group and rock band being developed. As yet only a small number of pupils have instrumental lessons. There is one gifted and talented pupil who plays recorder to a very high standard and is in the Southampton recorder consort
160. The quality of teaching and learning is good in a third of the lessons in Years 7 – 9 with the balance being unsatisfactory. The teacher's practical skills impact well on pupils' musical understanding and this was seen in a well-planned Year 8 lesson, which developed good singing tone through well-structured breathing and vocal exercises. Here pupils worked at a Jamaican song and added an independent xylophone part, which demonstrated careful listening, counting of beats and pleasure in doing well. Pupils with special educational needs successfully coped with this work and made progress. When lessons lacked pace and clear structure pupils became bored and switched off as in a Year 9 lesson on music and media. Some pupils were off task whilst the video was being set-up and after viewing the extract a few times others became bored, fidgeting and working to their own agenda because they were not sure of the next step.
161. Two lessons in Years 10 and 11 were observed where the teaching and learning was good in one and satisfactory in the other. Although standards are below average, the teacher's high expectations and constant reinforcement of basic musical conventions achieved a better rate of learning. Pupils used musical language effectively when talking about the development of the blues and reinforced their learning by improvisation on the blues scale. Most of the group intends to play keyboards or sing for their performance work in the GCSE examination but as yet few have started making recordings.
162. Music is part of the performing and visual arts faculty. Individual subject management remains unsatisfactory, the previous head of department developed into the role and provision improved with her. A new head of department has been appointed for Easter 2002. The music teacher, who is in her first year of teaching, has good subject knowledge and this impacts well on pupils' learning. Although a scheme of work is in place, assessment, monitoring and recording of the pupils' work is still in the early stages of development. Programmes of study are covered but as yet there is no composing being done using ICT. The teaching room is large and has good up-to-date displays

including key words and there are four good practice rooms. Resources are adequate but some instruments are in need of repair or replacement. There is a small collection of music books in the school library. Standards in music have fluctuated since the last inspection.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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

Strengths

- The subject is well led and managed
- All the physical education staff are good role models.
- Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject
- Teachers of physical education show very good enthusiasm for the subject; they work well together as a team with a commitment to raising standards
- Staff receive good support from the department and from the school

Areas for improvement

- Assessment and moderation procedures need to be refined in years 7 –9.
- Alternative courses need to be considered for some low attaining pupils in Years 10 and 11 in order to replace GCSE.
- New strategies are required in order to improve participation levels of older pupils in physical education.
- Pupils need greater access to computers in order to improve investigative elements of examination work

163. The 2001 teachers' assessments of the pupils' attainments at the end of Year 9 show standards for both boys and girls are above the national averages. Evidence gathered during the inspection confirms that the standards pupils attain by the end of Year 9 are above the level expected for pupils of the same age nationally. Overall, the standard of physical education in Years 10 and 11 is average. Evidence from the inspection shows that standards in Year 11, within the core physical education programme are average. Results in the 2000 and 2001 GCSE examinations are both well below the national average; the 2001 results show very significant improvement. Literacy levels severely constrain the overall levels of attainment in the written aspect of the examination; the levels of practical performance are good. Although standards of attainment are well below average in the examinations, pupils do as well in physical education as they do in their other subjects. Boys and girls reach good standards in competitive sport in a range of extra curricular and inter school sport. No significant differences were observed between the performance of boys and girls.

164. The above average standards reached by the end of Year 9 represent good achievement by pupils compared with their standard on entry. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, show competence in a range of activities such as dance, gymnastics, netball and football. In games activities, pupils have a sound knowledge of the rules, conventions and appropriate skills to enable them to participate successfully. In a range of games pupils apply rules fairly, accepting the decisions of those who officiate. By the end of Year 9 all groups of pupils know the effect of exercise on the body and understand some of the simple physiological changes that occur during warm-up. Many pupils effectively lead class warm up sessions. High attaining pupils understand that the reasons for stretching are to minimise injury and maximise performance. Year 9 pupils understand the importance of warm up for arms and legs as both have a vital role in gymnastic performances. High attaining pupils show a good range and good quality of stylistic movements, like the high dive forward roll and the Arab spring round off; talented pupils obtain height out of the movements which gives scope for additional movements. Pupils show through aerobic lessons their understanding of the importance of both warming up and warming down. Both boys and girls are fully involved in lessons. Planning, performing and the skills of observation, analysis and evaluation are successfully developed in the majority of lessons. The development and reinforcement of the pupils' literacy is successfully developed through key words and good use of technical language. All pupils in Years 7 to 9 achieve well learning the basic skills of different aspects of physical education; achievement is good.

165. In the work seen during the inspection, standards reached by pupils in Years 10 and 11 are at the level expected of the same age nationally. These standards are enhanced for many pupils through their involvement in extra curricular activities. Year 11 pupils, following a GCSE course, show good knowledge and understanding of the circulatory and skeletal systems and the effect that physical exercise has on the systems. Insufficient use is made of computers to enhance presentation of examination work. All but the lowest attaining pupils show a basic knowledge of sports injuries and the principles of treatment. Pupils successfully develop their understanding and expertise in both theory and practical aspects working along side one another. For instance in a Year 11 lesson, pupils begin to understand how anxiety, stress, personality and other psychological factors may effect athletic performances giving either positive or negative enhancement; they begin to look at good illustrations from a range of sports.
166. Within the GCSE examination course literacy levels severely constrain the overall levels of attainment in the written aspect of the examination. Pupils' listening and speaking skills show good levels of understanding; the level of practical performance is also good. For example, Year 11 pupils in football show good use of control and make effective use of one and two touch controls in order to outwit an opponent. Most pupils make good use of width and depth in both attacking and defensive situations; high attaining pupils use good skills to screen the ball and call for the ball when in space. Skills and concepts are beginning to be developed and applied successfully within a game. In aerobics, pupils understand the fitness triangle and the different rates of physical work needed for aerobic work and that an increased work rate is needed for effective training. Overall, pupils make good progress and are achieving well in relation to their prior attainment; they build on the basic skills learned in Years 7 to 9. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are well-integrated into lessons and receive good support by teachers, classroom assistants and their peers. Achievement is good in Years 10 and 11.
167. The quality of teaching and learning is good at both key stages. Teachers show good knowledge and understanding and, at times, very good knowledge of physical education. They apply this very successfully; this has a positive impact upon the pupils' learning. For example, in a Year 11 GCSE theory lesson, very good knowledge of sports psychology challenges pupils in their thinking; this extends their understanding about motivation and anxiety. Teachers have high expectations of both effort and behaviour of pupils, as shown in a Year 8 dance lesson where insistence on quality and work on one motif produced a very good introduction to a dance. The result of these high expectations is that pupils are keen to do well, and learn rapidly. Most pupils work hard and maintain their efforts and concentration, as seen in a Year 9 football lesson where they persevere, working on simple dribbling and control activities in order to improve. Pupils work successfully in small groups, challenging and competing with one another constantly improving their performance as seen in a Year 7 football lesson.
168. Teachers make good use of questions and answers to reinforce the pupils' knowledge and understanding at the start of most lessons. This was well exemplified in a GCSE theory lesson on motivation. Overall planning and organisation are good; they ensure progression and continuity in lessons and from year to year promoting good learning. On going teacher evaluation is very good and as a consequence pupils are at times able to make very good progress; teachers evaluate, analyse and act in order to improve individuals' skills and group learning. Overall, very good assessment, good subject knowledge, effective planning and good relationships combine to ensure all pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make good progress in their learning. Teachers know their pupils well; they make effective use of the information from individual educational plans and, in most cases, adapt their teaching strategies to meet the needs of individual pupils. In all lessons throughout the age range, pupils with special educational needs are well-integrated and make good progress in line with their peers. Overall, pupils show good attitudes and behaviour in physical education lessons; this underpins and enhances learning.
169. The head of department shows good leadership and management of the subject; he gives good clear educational direction and receives good support from his colleagues. Staff receive good support from within the department and the school. Physical education staff act as good role models for their pupils. Staff are well deployed and this promotes good learning. The physical

education curriculum embraces the changes made by the curriculum 2000 update. Further updating of assessment procedures and moderation are needed to secure better assessment of national curriculum levels and inform curriculum planning. Curriculum planning needs to look at alternative courses to suit the needs of lower attaining pupils in Years 10 and 11. This would replace their GCSE physical education course. Strategies are needed to improve participation levels in physical education of older pupils.

170. Good use is made of a range of technical words in lessons, which helps to enhance literacy levels. Numeracy supports learning; for example, in aerobics and fitness training, pupils successfully measure changes in heart rate using multiplication to work out heart rates per minute. Access to computers is difficult; computers are not sufficiently used within the examination courses for the pupils' investigative work. The department offers a good and varied range of seasonal extra-curricular activities for all pupils and about a sixth of pupils regularly participates. This enhances the curriculum and provides opportunities to extend the more gifted and talented pupils. The last inspection report shows facilities for physical education to be unsatisfactory; this is still true. Facilities continue to constrain the curriculum and consequently pupils' learning. However, building of a new school has started which will shortly address this issue; this will enhance provision of both outdoor and indoor facilities.
171. The department has made good progress since the last inspection; the issues identified in the last inspection report have been successfully addressed. There has been improvement in teaching and learning; as a consequence, standards have improved. The curriculum has been reviewed and action has been taken to ensure improvement. New facilities are now being built; shortly they will have a very positive impact on standards. The department is very enthusiastic and works very successfully as a team; it is strongly committed to the raising of standards still further.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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

Strengths

- Religious Education is now taught by an identifiable team of teachers within the humanities faculty
- Schemes of work have been redesigned to provide appropriate and relevant topics for investigation
- Resources have been improved

Areas for improvement

- Pupils are underachieving because of inadequate knowledge and understanding of the teaching and beliefs of the faiths studied
- Insufficient use of first hand experiences of faith communities
- Review the time allocation in Years 10 and 11 to bring it in line with the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus

172. No lessons of religious education were being taught to Years 7 to 9 at the time of the inspection. There is insufficient work available to enable a reliable judgement to be made about the standards that pupils' achieved last year, as much work was not recorded in pupils' books. No religious education has been taught so far this year to Years 7 to 9.
173. In work seen pupils demonstrate an overview of the life of Jesus, and higher attaining pupils use a writing frame to explore the different aspects of his life, for example how he influenced people. Lower attaining pupils use a similar framework, but limit their work to recording some of the facts. Projects on the life of Christ demonstrate good research and attractive presentation, but little understanding of the purpose of his life and death. Pupils re-tell a parable and a miracle with little understanding of the Christian beliefs that they demonstrate. Pupils consider the evidence for the resurrection, but they do not generally consider the evidence except at face value, for example suggestions that the disciples hid the body are accepted, but not why the disciples would go on to die for their beliefs that he rose from the dead. Pupils investigate the concept of symbolism and reflect on the symbolism of the candle and barbed wire. Higher attaining pupils provided sensitive

descriptions of the possible meanings. Pupils consider the creation of the world through the concept of a man-made belief. Through this they identify key features of religion, such as a central belief, place of worship and ritual. Most pupils have not yet investigated places of worship or considered the function that they play in the lives of believers. Pupils have investigated the festivals of Divali and Chanukah and the rituals that take place during the celebrations.

174. Standards in Years 10 and 11 are very low. Pupils entered the school with standards well below average and the unsettled nature of the department over recent years has resulted in these pupils failing to develop an understanding of religious concepts and practice. As a consequence the knowledge and understanding through which they should view the moral issues under investigation is very limited. A new scheme of work has been designed that should enable pupils in Years 7 to 9 to explore the major faiths and so prepare for their studies in years 10 and 11. Two topics have been devised that enable pupils to consider two significant contemporary issues. In work seen, pupils consider the damage that people have done to the planet and the importance of individual responsibility for it. They have a sound understanding of the causes of damage and some recognition that religious teaching supports responsible care for the earth. In Year 10 pupils consider the meaning of prejudice and identify the variety of people who suffer from it. Pupils used ICT to research into attitudes towards women in other cultures, but their responses demonstrate little understanding of the customs and beliefs they found.
175. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Years 10 and 11. No teaching was observed in Years 7 to 9. In the very limited number of lessons available teachers worked hard to involve pupils in the work of the class. Good opportunities are presented for pupils to consider their own views and to express them. In a Year 11 class pupils had the opportunity to work together and the activity provided enabled them to recognise the concept of strength in co-operation. Lessons are generally well planned although sometimes teachers are over ambitious, seeking to explore issues in depth when pupils have only a superficial understanding of the concept involved. Teachers treat the views of their pupils with respect, however on some occasions weak pupil management results in a minority of pupils failing to show similar respect. In a Year 10 lesson a minority of pupils lacked consideration and motivation. As a result the flow of the lesson was interrupted several times and the progress of the majority of the class who were not involved in the disruption was reduced. The scheme of work has been well designed to be relevant to the pupils and to enable them to identify with the issues involved. Teachers use carefully chosen material to encourage pupils to reflect on their place within the universe and to wonder at the beauty of it. A very good example is the astronauts' view of the world from space. Assessment tasks have been designed for all years that should enable teachers to monitor progress in the key targets of the Agreed Syllabus. The very limited time allocation in Years 10 and 11 however, one lesson a week for 12 weeks a year, means that opportunities for pupils to develop knowledge and understanding of the effects of belief on moral decisions is very limited.
176. The leadership and management of religious education is satisfactory. The school has made a real commitment to develop religious education. Attempts to appoint a specialist head of department have failed and the subject has now become part of the humanities faculty. Additional resources have been purchased to support the teaching of non-specialists and the head of department is working with the county inspector to design an appropriate scheme of work. Time is very limited for Years 10 and 11, less than half the minimum time recommended for delivery of the Agreed Syllabus. The schemes were introduced in Year 7 and 8 last year and all year groups will follow them this year, taught by members of the humanities faculty. Some pupils in Year 9 visited a mosque last year, however there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to gain first hand experience of places of worship and to meet members of faith communities at present.
177. At the time of the last report the department was without a head of department and standards were very low. Standards are still low. Recent actions taken by the school to develop appropriate schemes of work, provide clear assessment and delivery through an experienced team of teachers have not yet had time to bring results, however they are securely in place. Improvement since the last report is satisfactory.

VOCATIONAL COURSES

Overall, the quality of provision in vocational courses is **very good**.

Strengths

- High quality liaison with partner organisations
- The targeting of course provision to pupils' individual need.

Areas for improvement

- Monitoring the variations in teaching in vocational courses

178. The school offers a range of vocational courses, including General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs), the local Vocational Access Course delivered in conjunction with Southampton City College, and an ASDAN Youth Award Scheme. Lessons in these subjects were visited as part of the inspection, but there is too little evidence to give an overall evaluation of the standards reached by pupils in them.

179. Two lessons in GNVQ Leisure and Tourism were sampled, one of which was satisfactory and the other unsatisfactory. Non-specialist teachers teach the course and there is a need to improve monitoring to ensure that appropriate techniques are deployed and that there is sufficient challenge and pace in the lessons. Standards of work seen were average. Pupils can understand the mix of shops to be found in a modern shopping centre, but cannot analyse the underlying reasons for it. They understand ideas of communication and how we use formal and informal language in different circumstances, including the idea that staff will greet in different ways depending on the establishment, and that aspects such as tone of voice and body language are as important as what is said. Pupils are heavily dependent on the teacher for ideas and materials.

180. One lesson in Health and Social Care was sampled, about an illegal drug "case study". This lesson was very effective in providing information and guidance in a way that pupils could understand, was related to their own lives and hence was relevant to them. This enabled them to see clearly the choices available to them. Pupils' understanding of the issue was average; they knew about commonly available illegal drugs and some of the effects they can produce.

181. One lesson taught in school for the Vocational Access Certificate course was sampled. This was providing pupils with good guidance on how to read a bank statement and was delivered in a way that was relevant to their needs. The pupils understood the basics of reading a bank statement and why it is necessary to do so. An afternoon spent by the pupils at college was also sampled, talking to their lecturers, the pupils themselves and seeing their work. This provision is well organised and is meeting their needs very well. All pupils had gained in self-esteem and confidence and believed it had benefited them. A student following the catering module produced a tasty sweet consisting of poached pears on a bed of rice pudding covered with a chocolate sauce, learning in the process various cooking techniques and commercial kitchen routines. Equally, the student studying hairdressing was gaining a good understanding of the business, but, encouraged by the teacher from the school supervising the course, is also starting to realise the relevance of chemistry to understanding shampoos and other products. Similarly, the three students following the engineering module had to apply maths in a real situation, measuring and calculating to produce their components to the required specification. All three are enjoying the course and are motivated by it. For all these students their courses are building their self esteem and helping them to achieve something worthwhile, giving them confidence and providing them with a head start if they achieve their ambitions of entering these trades through a modern apprenticeship. Pupils were able to measure and cut a metal shape from a template, finish it off, and were in the process of accurately measuring holes prior to drilling. They are acquiring skills in using specific tools, but just as important, picking up general workshop practice.

182. Discussions with pupils about their visit to an army "taster day" during the inspection week suggested that they found this experience challenging but valuable. The teacher from the school

supervising the activity was again very active in ensuring that the lessons from the experience, such as the importance of team working, were not lost on the pupils. Even so, having to do ten press-ups for having your hand in your pocket was a shock to the system for some pupils.

183. Discussions with staff and pupils on the ASDAN Youth award Scheme highlighted the value of this course to them in terms of practical application of skills and working together. They also received an unplanned and tough lesson about life when their creation, a brick-built barbeque, was subsequently vandalised.
184. Overall, the school's vocational provision is successful in meeting the needs of the pupils following the courses provided, helping them to develop self-confidence and remain committed to their schooling, and in many cases helping them towards their choice of future career.