

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Scalby School**

Scarborough

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121677

Headteacher: Mr David Pynn

Reporting inspector: Dr K C Thomas  
3390

Dates of inspection: 18 - 22 September 2000

Inspection number: 223743

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	11 to 16 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Fieldstead Crescent Newby Scarborough North Yorkshire
Postcode:	Y012 6TH
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Elizabeth White
Date of previous inspection:	9 October 1995

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Kenneth C Thomas (OFSTED No: 3390)	Registered inspector		What sort of school is it?
			What should the school do to improve further?
			How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements
			How well are pupils taught?
			How well is the school led and managed?
Geza Hanniker (OFSTED No: 9184)	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
John Morrell (OFSTED No: 23308)	Team inspector	Music	
Janet Flisher (OFSTED No: 19414)	Team inspector	English	
		Drama	
Alan Brewerton (OFSTED No: 10905)	Team inspector	Science	
John Brigden (OFSTED No: 8520)	Team inspector	Art	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to students?
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
Derek Cronin (OFSTED No: 11838)	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages	
Allan Paver (OFSTED No: 12118)	Team inspector	Geography	
Anthony Pearson (OFSTED No: 19451)	Team inspector	Physical education	
David Lee (OFSTED No: 11548)	Team inspector	Mathematics	
Ronald Cohen (OFSTED No: 18447)	Team inspector	Religious education	

John Hunt (OFSTED No: 12885)	Team inspector	Information technology	
Andreas Markides (OFSTED No: 10715)	Team inspector		Equal opportunities
			Special educational needs
Patricia Mitchell (OFSTED No: 12328)	Team inspector	History	
Allan Pemberton (OFSTED No: 22660)	Team inspector	Design and technology	

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Scalby School is a mixed comprehensive school for pupils aged 11-16 in Scarborough, which is in the North Yorkshire Local Education Authority. There are 1048 pupils in the school, making it bigger than other comprehensive schools without a sixth form, and slightly more boys than girls. Pupils enter in Year 7 from as many as 14 primary schools situated in Scarborough and the surrounding villages. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is close to the national average. A very small number of pupils speak English as an additional language and all of these pupils speak English fluently. The attainment of pupils coming into the school, although wide-ranging, is slightly above the national average overall. The proportions of pupils with special educational needs, at 21 per cent, and those with statements, at 2.6 per cent, are both about the same as the national average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. The school also accommodates pupils with visual and hearing impairments as well as pupils with mobility difficulties. Links with other schools, colleges and the youth service are good and the school provides community education courses in the evenings.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Scalby School is an effective school providing a good quality of education for its pupils. The school is well led, standards are above average and there is an increasing commitment to continuous improvement and raising standards. Good teaching enables pupils to make the most of the opportunities the school provides. Financial management is good and the school offers good value for money, within a supportive context.

#### **What the school does well**

- Everyone is valued and there is a high commitment to success.
- Pupils have positive attitudes, behave well and make good progress because of good teaching.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Support and guidance for pupils are very good, as is provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- A wide range of extra-curricular activities enriches pupils' learning and personal development.
- Good support for pupils' learning from links with parents, the community and other schools and colleges.
- The governors are very supportive and understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

#### **What could be improved**

- Monitoring and evaluating the work of faculties.
- Standards of information and communications technology and the number of computers available for teaching.
- Religious education at Key Stage 4.
- The school does not meet the requirement to provide a daily act of worship.
- Information about the progress of pupils with special educational needs is not readily available to those who need to know.
- Some of the accommodation for special educational needs, humanities and the performing arts is unsatisfactory and resources are inadequate in the humanities and music.

*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 1995 and, overall, has made good improvement since that time. Standards of attainment in the National Curriculum tests, taken at the age of 14, show a rising trend up to 1999 that is broadly similar to the national trend. The school's 2000 National Curriculum test results are significantly higher than those obtained in 1999. GCSE results have been consistently above the national average. Although they show a slight decline over the period from 1996 to 1999, they have been consistent with the standards of attainment of pupils at the start of their GCSE courses. GCSE results rose in 2000 and are above those obtained in 1999. The quality of teaching

has improved and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection. Provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved significantly. There have been improvements in management and the school has made progress on most of the key issues identified in the last report. In consultation with the LEA suitable targets for improvement have been set. The school is well placed to make further improvement.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 14 and 16 year olds based on average point scores in GCSE and A-level/AS-level examinations.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
GCSE examinations	A	B	B	C
A-levels/AS-levels				

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

Pupils' overall attainment in the 1999 National Curriculum tests taken at the end of Year 9, was above average when compared with all schools and average when compared to similar schools. Standards in English and mathematics were above the national average, while those in science were close to it. In comparison with similar schools, attainment in English, mathematics and science was average. The results of the tests taken in 2000 and standards of work seen during the inspection, are well above the standards achieved in 1999. Inspection evidence shows standards in design and technology, geography, history, music and religious education are above national expectations by the end of Year 9. Standards in art, drama, information technology and modern languages are broadly consistent with national expectations for 14 year olds.

Overall attainment in the GCSE examinations taken at the age of 16 in 1999 was above average when compared to all schools and average when compared to similar schools. The overall results in 2000 are above those attained in 1999. Results in English, mathematics, and science were above the national averages in 1999 and pupils gained higher results in 2000. Results in design and technology, drama, geography and religious education are all above the 1999 average, while results in history in 2000 show a substantial improvement after a period of decline. Results in art dipped below the national average in 1999 but rose in 2000. Results in modern foreign languages have tended to fluctuate. Although still below the national average, GCSE results in physical education improved substantially in 2000, while results in music are consistently above average. Standards in information and communications technology are below the standards expected nationally of 16 year olds. Most pupils with special educational needs achieve at least one GCSE grade. Pupils achieve very good standards in extra-curricular activities. Inspection evidence indicates that the improvement shown in 2000 is being sustained and that pupils achieve well in relation to their standards of attainment at the age of 14.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good in lessons and around. Most pupils are courteous, respectful and friendly and there is little inappropriate behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Very good and a strength of the school. Pupils respond well to the many opportunities to show initiative and to take responsibility.



Attendance	Satisfactory at just above the national average. Nevertheless, the school continues to make strenuous efforts to improve attendance.
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## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 11-14 years	aged 14-16 years	aged over 16 years
Lessons seen overall	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.*

Teaching was good or better in 79 per cent of lessons and very good or excellent in 33 per cent. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. Teaching in English is good in Key Stage 3 and very good in Key Stage 4. Teaching in mathematics is good and in science very good, at both key stages. There are examples of excellence in teaching in English, science and design and technology at Key Stage 3, and in English, music and personal, social and health education at Key Stage 4. Teaching of this quality has a significant effect on pupils' achievement. Teachers have very good subject expertise and use varied, interesting and challenging teaching methods, which stimulate pupils' interest and commitment to learning. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to develop their reading, writing, speaking, listening and numeracy skills. However, there is no system for identifying and sharing the good literacy teaching strategies that are evident in many subjects and there is no school numeracy strategy. Although marking in most subjects provides pupils' with clear information on the standard of the work and what must be done in order to improve, marking in science and modern foreign languages often lacks the constructive comments needed to enable pupils to improve. Homework is well used to consolidate and extend pupils' learning in most subjects. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. The teaching of hearing-impaired pupils in the resource base is very good.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Broad and balanced at both key stages and there are good opportunities for pupils' personal development but information and communications technology and religious education do not meet statutory requirements at Key Stage 4. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are fully integrated into the school community, are confident and feel secure.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The very few pupils with English as an additional language have no language difficulties that require additional support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision for pupils' spiritual development and very good for moral, social and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good arrangements for monitoring pupils' academic and personal development. The school takes its responsibilities for child protection and pupils' welfare very seriously and promotes good behaviour very well. Health and safety procedures are satisfactory. A supportive environment in which to learn.

The school has made satisfactory progress in its curricular provision since the last inspection. The structure of the teaching day has been changed and teaching time is used more effectively. This is

having a positive effect on pupils' levels of achievement. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is more effective and better use is being made of the expertise of specialist teachers and support assistants. There are limited opportunities for the majority of older pupils to use information and communication technology for their GCSE subjects and other courses. The school is not meeting the requirement to provide a daily act of worship. Religious education at Key Stage 4 is not given sufficient time for the specialist teachers to cover fully the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The head provides good leadership. The senior management team are supportive and the quality of leadership provided by heads of department is good except in information and communications technology.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are very supportive and fulfil most of their statutory responsibilities. They provide a great deal of expertise to the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory overall. Good procedures for monitoring and evaluating examination results and the work of form tutors, but insufficient rigour in monitoring and evaluating the work of faculties and subjects.
The strategic use of resources	The school development plan provides a clear framework for spending priorities. Good use is made of the school's resources. Non-teaching staff provide valuable support.

There is a positive ethos in the school and an increasing commitment to the raising of standards. However, there are not enough computers and insufficient use of information and communications technology in many subjects at Key Stage 4. Pupils with physical difficulties cannot access the upper floor of the humanities block and the acoustics in classrooms reduces the effectiveness of pupils' hearing aids.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school expects pupils to work hard and achieve their best.</li> <li>The progress their children are making.</li> <li>The school is helping their children become mature and responsible.</li> <li>The good teaching.</li> <li>The range of extra-curricular activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The closeness with which the school works with parents.</li> <li>The amount of homework pupils are given.</li> <li>The information the school provides.</li> </ul>

Parents are very supportive of the school and inspectors endorse parents' positive views. Some parents had mixed feelings about the closeness with which the school works with parents and the information the school provides. Inspectors found that the school strives hard to involve parents. The quality of information provided is very good. Homework is set regularly in most subjects and homework tasks are generally used to consolidate and extend pupils' learning.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. Pupils' overall attainment in the 1999 National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 9, was above the national average. There were differences between subjects, with standards in English and mathematics being above the national average, while those in science were close to it. In comparison with similar schools overall attainment in English, mathematics and science in 1999 was average. Again there were differences between subjects with attainment in English being above average, while attainment in mathematics and science was average. Examination of results over the four years from 1996 to 1999 shows that performance was consistently above the national average. Over this four-year period, girls consistently outperformed boys in English while the performance of boys and girls in mathematics and science was broadly similar. However, in all three subjects, girls tended to exceed the national averages for girls by greater margins than boys exceeded the national averages for boys. The rising trend in the school's test results over this period was similar to the rising trend observed nationally.
2. The results of the National Curriculum tests taken in 2000 show that pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science in 2000 is well above the standards attained in 1999. The percentage of pupils gaining the expected Level 5 or above shows a significant rise in all three subjects. As in previous years there were no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls in mathematics and science, while for the first time the performance of boys and girls in English was broadly similar. Year on year comparisons of the standards of attainment of pupils on entry to the school with the results obtained at the end of Year 9 show that pupils' levels of achievement are consistently good. This is confirmed by inspection evidence which shows that the good progress pupils are making is linked to good teaching and the regular monitoring of pupils' performance as they move through Years 7 to 9. The 2000 results show that pupils at Scalby School made about a half a term's more progress in science, just over a term's more progress mathematics and just over two terms more progress in English than pupils did nationally. Work seen during the inspection shows that design and technology, geography, history, music, physical education and religious education are also strengths. Standards in these subjects are above national expectations by the end of Year 9. Standards in art, drama, information and communication technology, and modern foreign languages are broadly consistent with national expectations for 14 year olds.
3. The 1999, results in the GCSE examinations show that 55 per cent of pupils achieved five or more A\* - C GCSE grades, compared with the national average of 46 per cent, and 95 per cent of pupils achieved five or more A\* - G grades, compared to 91 per cent nationally. Although the percentage of pupils achieving five or more A\* - G grades has been relatively stable over the past four years, the percentage of pupils achieving the higher five or more A\*-C grades has declined from 1997 to return to the percentage achieved in 1996. As a consequence, although the average GCSE points score per pupil has been consistently above the national average, the trend in the average scores over the past four years is below the national trend. The general tendency is for the average points scores of girls to be higher than that of boys. The 2000 results show an increase of eight per cent in the number of pupils achieving five or more A\* - C grades compared with 1999.
4. Results in the 2000 GCSE English and English literature examinations are above those obtained in 1999, when the results were significantly above both the national average and those obtained in similar schools. A feature of the 2000 results was a marked improvement in the performance of boys as a consequence of the introduction of a number of teaching strategies within the English faculty to make the curriculum more attractive and accessible to boys. Inspection evidence indicates that these improvements are being sustained. The standards reached by pupils in mathematics in the 1999 GCSE examination were above the national average. Observations of lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work indicate that these standards are being maintained and that there is little significant difference between the achievement levels of boys and girls. However, the percentage of pupils achieving the higher

A\* - C grades in 2000 was slightly below the percentage achieving these grades in 1999. This is largely explained by the absence of two members of staff at a critical time in the year, which disrupted the teaching and learning of two classes. Overall standards of attainment in science by the end of Year 11 are well above the national average, although there is a tendency for girls to outperform boys. The percentage of pupils achieving A\* - C grades in 1999 was well above the national average with all pupils entered for the examination gaining at least a G grade. The GCSE results in 2000 are above those obtained in 1999.

5. Inspection evidence indicates that by the time pupils leave school at the age of 16, standards in most subjects are above average. This is confirmed by the GCSE results, which show that in art, with the exception of 1999 when the results dipped to be below average, the percentages of pupils gaining A\* - C grades have been above average in recent years. This percentage rose substantially in 2000 with almost three-quarters of pupils gaining A\* - C grades and all pupils exceeding the targets set for them. Standards in design and technology have improved since the last inspection, when they were judged to be about the same as the national average, to now be above the national average. In 1999, 61 per cent of pupils achieved A\* - C grades and this percentage rose to 65 per cent in 2000. Over the past four years, girls have done better than boys, despite action taken by the department to improve the performance of boys. Analysis of the most recent GCSE results shows that food technology and textiles, for which high proportions of girls opt, have slightly better results than resistant materials, graphics and systems. Standards of attainment in drama, although broadly consistent with national expectations at the age of 14, rise through Years 10 and 11, so that they are above average by the age of 16 and this is reflected in the above-average GCSE results in drama.
6. After a period in which standards of attainment in history showed a gradual decline, changes in the teaching of the subject have brought about a substantial improvement in 2000 with a 21 per cent increase in the proportion of pupils achieving A\* - C grades. The decline in standards was largely a result of the underachievement of boys, whose performance in the GCSE examination was well below the national average. However, the 2000 results show a rise in the achievement levels of both boys and girls, with the rise in the performance of boys being such that their performance now matches that of girls. Standards achieved by the majority of pupils in information and communications technology at the age of 16 are below those normally expected for pupils at this stage of their education. The school does not offer a GCSE course in information and communications technology or a related subject. A small proportion of pupils opt for a course leading to a GCSE in systems and control. Standards achieved relating to information and communications technology on this course are mostly consistent with national expectations and sometimes above. GCSE results in modern foreign languages tend to fluctuate and, although in 2000 they are lower than those obtained at the time of the last inspection, it is not possible to determine any clear trend in the results over the past four years. The results in French at the higher A\*-C grades in 1999 were well above the national average but in 2000, the results declined sharply, especially for girls. Results in German in 1999 were well below the national averages for both boys and girls but rose in 2000 to be above the 1999 national average. In Spanish, results in 2000 are similar to those obtained in 1999 when they were above the national average. Standards in music continue to be above average in comparison with national figures. Eighty per cent of pupils consistently achieve A\* - C grades and in most years all pupils achieve A\* - G grades.
7. By the time pupils leave school, their attainment levels in physical education are generally in line with national average expectations. The results of the first group of pupils to be entered for the GCSE examination in 1999 were well below the national average in the A\*-C range. However, the results improved substantially in 2000, although they still remain below the 1999 average. All pupils achieved a grade in the A\*-G range, which is above the national average. In both years, girls' results were better than boys' results and by a greater margin than found nationally. Standards of attainment in religious education have been rising over recent years and results in the GCSE examination are above average. Inspection evidence indicates that this improvement is being sustained and pupils in Years 10 and 11 are achieving standards that are above the expectations set in the Locally Agreed Syllabus.
8. The overall standard of attainment of pupils on entry to the school is just above average by national standards. Comparisons of pupils' performance in National Curriculum tests taken at the

age of 11 with the performance of the same pupils at the age of 14 show that levels of achievement as pupils move through Years 7 to 11 are good. Similarly, comparisons of pupils' performance in National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments made at the age of 14 with the performance of the same pupils in the GCSE examinations taken at the age of 16 shows that the levels of achievement of pupils as they move through Years 10 and 11 are also good. The school has exceeded the targets agreed with the LEA for 2000 and the targets agreed for 2001 are appropriate.

9. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is consistently very good in relation to the targets contained in the pupils' individual educational plans. Most of these pupils make very good progress both in their lessons and over time. The school has a six-place resource base for hearing-impaired pupils. At present it caters for 12 pupils, two of whom have unilateral hearing loss and the remainder have moderate to profound bilateral hearing losses. Although the attainment levels of the hearing-impaired pupils, in most subjects of the National Curriculum, are below national expectations for all pupils of the same age, these levels are generally consistent with the targets set in their individual educational plans. The attainment of some hearing-impaired pupils, however, compares very well with the attainment levels of their hearing peers. This represents very good achievement by these pupils.
10. Standards of literacy are generally above average. Pupils read widely and with good understanding and use books and texts for learning and as information sources. However, they have less confidence when reading aloud and need to be given more opportunities in all subjects to develop and practise this skill. On such occasions, for example in history and personal, social and health education lessons, pupils are keen to contribute and they listen attentively to what others have to say. Pupils reach high standards in their writing. They write in a range of appropriate styles and with good technical accuracy. Most can organise their writing in logical and coherent forms. This is largely because of the thorough way in which English teachers teach the skills of drafting, editing and proof-reading and because of the emphasis on examining the process of writing, both in pupils' own work and in the writing of other authors. Almost all use fountain pens and this has a very beneficial effect on pupils' handwriting and on the presentation of their written work. In many subject areas pupils are given the opportunity to explore their ideas in small groups and this enables them to clarify and deepen their understanding before they start to write. When pupils are participating in small-group discussions such as these or answering questions, they appear more confident than when speaking in formal situations such as reporting back to the class.
11. Pupils' standards of numeracy are generally consistent with national expectations. The recently revised schemes of work in mathematics make provision for the development of basic numerical skills and there is an emphasis on improving numeracy skills in mathematics lessons in all years. In subjects other than mathematics pupils are able to apply their numeracy skills in a satisfactory way. In geography, for example, pupils use co-ordinates and interpret six figure grid references accurately. They are also able to use their skills for simple representation of data, such as bar, line and pie charts. In art, pupils make sound judgements about size and proportion of objects. However, there is at present no school numeracy strategy with the consequence that numerical skills are not developed in a systematic way in all subjects. This is particularly the case in science and design and technology, where skills of measuring and calculation are fundamental to success in the subjects. The absence of a whole school approach to this basic skill needs urgent attention, particularly in view of the national drive for improving numeracy.
12. By the age of 14, the standards in information and communications technology of the majority of pupils are generally consistent with the national expectation. Pupils' skills are developed through the discrete information and communications technology lessons, which are taught in Years 7 to 9. However, only limited use is made of information and communications technology to support pupils' learning in other subjects and there are no discrete information and communications technology lessons in Years 10 and 11. As a consequence the standards of attainment of the majority of pupils are below national expectations by the age of 16.

## **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

13. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils are good. Those of pupils with special educational needs are very good. The substantial majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated that their children enjoy coming to school and this is confirmed by pupils who, when interviewed, say so openly and without hesitation. This enjoyment is evident in most lessons and particularly in the active and practical subjects such as the performing arts, science, design and technology and physical education. It is also evident in the calm and purposeful manner in which pupils arrive at school and the way in which they conduct themselves during the school day. Pupils show that they are keen to learn and make very good efforts to achieve their learning goals. They sustain concentration, respond well to challenges and are prepared to persevere when work is difficult. This high level of perseverance is evident, for example, in Year 11 pupils' attendance at after-school mathematics sessions to try to improve their predicted GCSE grades.
14. Pupils' personal development and the quality of the relationships amongst all groups are very good and a strength of the school. Pupils work, study and play well together and are prepared to listen to and show respect for the views of others. This was particularly evident, for example, in a Year 10 personal, social and health education lesson where the sensitive issues surrounding teenage pregnancy were being discussed in a mature and responsible way. The preparedness of pupils to listen to, and show respect for, the viewpoints of others was also very apparent in a Year 11 lesson on Christian attitudes to death and the afterlife. Pupils had sufficient trust and confidence in their peers to be able to give moving descriptions of their feelings when watching a video of young people with terminal illness coming to terms with the inevitable consequence. Boys and girls readily collaborate with each other and work well together in, for example, physical education, English and personal, social and health education lessons. Pupils are very supportive of each other and pupils with special educational needs are well integrated with their peers. Parents attending the pre-inspection meeting commented very favourably on this aspect of school life. Pupils also form very good relationships with adults, and the vast majority reciprocate the courtesy and respect they receive. The use of the tutor period has improved considerably since the last inspection. This time is now used productively to support pupils personal development, through such things as electing representatives, discussing items on the agenda for the year councils and planning social and charitable events.
15. The behaviour of the vast majority of pupils both in lessons and around the school is good. Most pupils are courteous, respectful and friendly and there are few incidents of inappropriate behaviour. Pupils generally observe the school rules and respond positively to the system of rewards and sanctions. Pupils' behaviour and conduct improve as they get older and older pupils provide good role models for younger pupils. They show good self-discipline and although there is a little jostling as pupils move between lessons this is generally the result of large numbers of pupils moving along quite narrow school corridors. The corridors and other public areas are well supervised by teachers and prefects at break and lunchtimes. The school makes strenuous efforts to support and avoid the need to exclude pupils. These efforts include the introduction of a supervised withdrawal room, which is proving to be an effective means of managing pupils whose behaviour is challenging, and participation in the Scarborough Behaviour Improvement Initiative which aims to reduce the incidences of challenging behaviour by improving teachers' behaviour management skills. As a consequence the rate of exclusions has been falling. Nevertheless, the behaviour of a small number of pupils is such that it inevitably leads to exclusion from school. As a result, during the last school year there were 52 fixed period exclusions and three permanent exclusions. Both of these figures are broadly in line with the number of exclusions found in secondary schools of similar size. The school has a clear anti-bullying policy and takes a serious view of any such incidents. Pupils interviewed during the week of the inspection reported that while there had been occasional incidents of bullying, these had been dealt with effectively by the school. They were confident that any future incidents would also be dealt with effectively.
16. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to show initiative and to take responsibility for themselves and for others. Pupils look after their musical instruments very well and handle computers and scientific equipment with care. The corridors remain litter free all day and the pupils make good use of the litter boxes provided out of doors. Team captains and vice-

captains take responsibility for ensuring the teams turn out in the appropriate kit. In the music department the pupil ensemble section leaders take sectional rehearsals and look after their sections during tours. Nearly all the older pupils take responsibility as prefects or monitors. They help to supervise other pupils in a wide range of situations, for example in the dining room and on the school buses. Pupils show trust in the trained peer counsellors who listen to the problems of others. The newly introduced 'buddy' system encourages the older pupils to support to younger pupils and to help some with their reading. The school and year council members take their responsibilities seriously and are given real responsibilities. For example, the Year 9 council were observed planning a drugs awareness evening and deciding how the substantial budget allocated for this purpose could best be used. Pupils organise charity events successfully and raise significant amounts of money. They distribute the produce collected at the Harvest Festival to senior citizens locally.

17. The attendance rate is satisfactory and has been at or just above the national average since the last inspection report. Nevertheless, the school makes strenuous efforts to improve attendance. The school analyses group and individual attendance patterns and works closely with the education social worker and other specialists to provide additional support for persistent absentees. Although the lateness of some school buses makes some pupils unavoidably late at the start of morning school, most pupils are punctual at the start of morning and afternoon sessions and most lessons start on time. Punctuality at the start of lessons is helped by the allowance of five minutes movement time between lessons, which helps to ensure that the maximum amount of time is available for teaching and learning.
18. The school has sustained the good attitudes and behaviour noted in the previous report and pupils make very good progress in their personal development.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

19. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good at both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. This finding endorses the view of over 90 per cent of the parents who responded to the questionnaire. In all of the 195 lessons observed, teaching was satisfactory or better. At Key Stage 3, teaching was good or better in three-quarters of lessons and very good or excellent in one-third of lessons. Teaching was slightly better at Key Stage 4, where just over four-fifths of lessons were good or better and one-third of lessons were very good or excellent. Teaching is very good in science and music, and good in mathematics, history, physical education and religious education and good in design and technology, at both key stages. In geography teaching is very good at Key Stage 3 and good at Key Stage 4. Teaching in English is good at Key Stage 3 and very good at Key Stage 4. Teaching in art and modern foreign languages is satisfactory at Key Stage 3 and good at Key Stage 4. Teaching in information and communications technology is satisfactory at Key Stage 3 and, in the lessons where information and communications technology is taught, at Key Stage 4. There are examples of excellence in teaching in English, science, design and technology at Key Stage 3, and in English, music and personal, social and health education at Key Stage 4. Teaching of this quality has a significant effect on pupils' achievement.
20. Teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach and draw on this effectively to plan their lessons, provide clear explanations and give appropriate guidance to pupils. In science, teachers make use of their very good subject knowledge to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding by providing clear explanations and by asking questions, which challenge or assess pupils' knowledge and understanding. In art, teachers use their subject knowledge skilfully to introduce pupils to the work of artists and to new ideas or themes. A particularly effective feature of teaching in design and technology is the way in which teachers' strong subject knowledge enables them to plan and present lessons in ways that inspire pupils to do their best. This has a very positive effect on pupils' learning. The excellent subject knowledge of music teachers enables them to plan lessons with a range of progressively more challenging activities which promote very good levels of pupil achievement. In modern foreign languages teachers use the foreign language in lessons to develop pupils' listening skills, reinforce learning and foster positive attitudes in oral work. Specialist information and communications technology teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the

subject and use this well in planning their lessons. However, some non-specialist teachers have limited information and communication technology skills and lack confidence in using information and communications technology within their subjects. This has an adverse effect on pupils' learning, particularly at Key Stage 4.

21. There are good examples of the teaching of basic skills in most subjects. A very good foundation for the development of literacy skills is laid by the English faculty and, following an in-service training day devoted to literacy, most faculties and subjects have begun to develop a literacy strategy. Subject-specific key words are displayed in many classrooms and pupils are encouraged to use the technical language of the particular subject. In design and technology, for example, lists of words displayed in classrooms support pupils' use of the appropriate technical language. Good attention has been paid to the development of literacy skills in physical education, where well-designed prompt sheets enable pupils to use the appropriate terms when discussing performance in range of physical activities. Reading is also developed in many subjects and pupils often read in pairs or groups or read aloud to each other. However, there is as yet no system of monitoring the literacy initiative so that the good teaching strategies that are evident in the school can be identified and shared. Pupils develop their numerical skills in many subjects. In mathematics teachers regularly include activities to improve recall and pupils' mental agility in their lessons to develop numeracy skills. Numeracy is also developed through measuring and judging proportion in art and design and technology, and in interpreting data in geography and science. However, there is at present no school numeracy strategy with the consequence that numerical skills are not developed in a systematic way in all subjects.
22. Lesson planning is good, Teachers plan their lessons effectively and in many cases share their objectives with pupils. As a result most pupils are clear about what they are doing and are fully involved in their learning. In science, for example, the identification of appropriate and challenging learning objectives, coupled with good support for pupils' learning, enables pupils, throughout the school, to make good progress in improving their knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts and information. In art, for example, good demonstrations provide pupils with the steps they need to complete lesson tasks. In modern foreign languages, the best lessons are planned to include a range of activities covering all skills with work well matched to the attainment levels of all pupils. In a Year 11 French lesson on making complaints at a hotel, for example, pupils practised oral situations, listened to cassette recordings of exchanges at the reception desk, and wrote a letter about their own negative experiences; all of this consolidated their knowledge of the relevant vocabulary and structures whilst challenging them to think creatively. However, in some modern foreign languages lessons, especially in Key Stage 4 where all groups are of mixed attainment levels, teachers find it difficult to match tasks to individual learning needs so that higher attaining pupils are not always stretched, while lower attaining pupils find that some of the tasks are beyond them. The close matching of activities to the attainment levels of pupils is very good feature in the planning of lessons in music. Activities are carefully prepared to extend the higher attaining pupils and adjusted so that average and lower attaining pupils are also fully engaged in the lesson. This has a positive effect on pupils' levels of achievement.
23. Teachers have high expectations, which are communicated clearly to pupils. This leads to good progress and above average levels of achievement in most subjects. In English, for example, the high expectations of pupils were well illustrated in a Year 8 poetry lesson when pupils were able to sustain and enjoy an intellectual discussion on the ambiguities and hidden meanings in a poem by Gerard Manley Hopkins. The high level of challenge was also seen in GCSE poetry lessons where pupils were sufficiently confident to offer their own interpretations of some quite difficult modern poems. The best teaching in mathematics is characterised by high expectations and lessons that proceed at a good pace. This, together with the skilful mix of probing questions, discussion and increasingly challenging activities, underpins the standards that are being achieved by these pupils. Teachers in science have high expectations that all pupils will work hard and behave well. Nearly all pupils respond positively and concentrate on their work with the consequence that good progress is made in the development of pupils' planning and practical skills. However, a very small number of pupils, mainly in Years 9 and 10, are at times inattentive which means their work is not as good as it should be. In modern foreign languages, teachers' expectations of behaviour are always high. However, in a few lessons in Key Stage 3 and in Year 10, insufficient use is made of the foreign language.



24. Teachers use a good range of strategies to enable pupils to learn and develop skills. Paired and small-group work is used well in many subjects. For example, in modern foreign languages pupils benefit from regular opportunities to work with different partners in oral work. In mathematics, the most effective learning occurs in lessons where pupils are actively involved, through discussion and paired and group work as in a Year 9 lesson where pupils were investigating the outcomes from an experiment using two dice. Small-group work is used effectively in English, to undertake investigations in science and to discuss ideas and solve problems in geography and history. Group discussion was used effectively in a Year 8 music lesson where pupils listened to a section from 'Peter and the Wolf' depicting the grandfather and discussed the points about the music which help to aurally portray this character. In religious education, pupils' personal development is enhanced by the discussion of a range of ideas about their own and other people's values and beliefs. Group work is also used effectively in science, physical education and in personal, social and health education to increase pupils' levels of understanding.
25. Classroom management and organisation are usually good at Key Stage 3 and very good at Key Stage 4. Relationships between pupils and their teachers are very good. For example in English, geography, history and personal, social and health education lessons teachers create a very supportive atmosphere where all pupils, including those with special educational needs, feel secure enough to be able to offer suggestions, take risks and not be afraid of making mistakes. In science, very effective classroom management and organisation lead to most lessons being conducted at a good pace with learning tasks well matched to the needs of pupils. In design and technology and physical education, lessons are well organised, with concern for safety, and conducted in a manner which encourages pupils to participate. However, in a few lessons in design and technology, science, and religious education, weaknesses in planning led to a lack of involvement and unsatisfactory behaviour by a small number of pupils. This behaviour was most likely to occur at Key Stage 3.
26. Teachers make good use of a variety of resources to stimulate pupils' interest and to make explanations clear. For example, teachers use the overhead projector and video clips well when making demonstrations and to illustrate ideas. This underpins the development of new knowledge and skills and encourages progress. In art, effective use is made of examples of artists', pupils' and teachers' work to illustrate teaching points and stimulate pupils' thinking. Visiting speakers are well used as part of careers education lessons. The careful selection of resources to suit the learning needs of individuals is a feature of geography lessons, this ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are fully engaged in learning activities for the duration of the lesson. In English, good use of is made of information and communications technology for pupils to draft, edit and refine their work. In a Year 7 mathematics lesson, pupils successfully used a computer programme to create a spreadsheet to carry out calculations to do with solid shapes. However, insufficient use is made of information and communications technology as a resource for learning in most subjects and this has an adverse effect on pupils' learning, particularly at Key Stage 4. In the majority of lessons teachers make good use of time and set deadlines for tasks to be completed. This provides an appropriate challenge to pupils and helps to maintain a good pace in lessons.
27. The marking of pupils' work is well used in several subjects to give pupils clear information on the standard of their work and on what they have to do in order to improve it. Pupil self-evaluation and peer assessment are features of teaching in English. In art at Key Stage 4, teachers regularly refer to GCSE art assessment criteria to give pupils clear guidance on how to consolidate and improve the standard of their work. Assessment is well used to raise standards in design and technology by providing pupils with accurate information on the standards they are achieving and to set targets for the next assignment. Teachers' careful analyses of pupils' performance in physical education lessons help pupils to improve the quality of their performance and provide them with criteria against which they can evaluate their own performance. However, although the marking of pupils' work in science, modern languages and the GCSE physical education course is regular and generally encouraging, it often lacks the constructive comments needed to enable pupils to improve. Although 20 per cent of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that pupils are given insufficient homework, inspection evidence indicates that homework is well used to consolidate and extend learning in most subjects. In English, for example, the high expectations that teachers have of

their pupils are also apparent in the nature of the tasks set for homework, and the homework set in geography often provides pupils with the opportunity to investigate topics on their own.

28. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. These are generally taught in normal classes. In most of these lessons, teachers are aware of the targets in pupils' individual education plans and take account of these in lesson planning. A feature of the teaching of pupils with special educational needs is the sequencing of small, inter-connected steps, supported by frequent revision, which facilitates learning and promotes good levels of achievement. As a consequence, most pupils with special educational needs are confident and often ask thoughtful questions in lessons, which help to consolidate their own understanding of the work being undertaken. The individual and small group teaching of hearing-impaired pupils in the resource base is very good. The specialist teacher and support staff show a high level of commitment and provide very good support both within the resource base and in mainstream classes. The teaching of hearing-impaired pupils in mainstream classes is also very good. The majority of subject teachers are well informed about the learning needs of these pupils and support the integration programme well. However, some teachers lack the practical skills relating to the special teaching strategies needed to cater for the complex learning needs of hearing-impaired pupils in their lesson planning.
29. The school has made good progress in improving the quality of teaching and learning since the previous inspection report. The quality of teaching was then judged to be sound, with much that was good in most subjects. The strengths identified in the previous report have been sustained, while improvements have been made in the areas of weakness. The overall quality of teaching is now good with much very good and some excellent teaching and none that is unsatisfactory. Teachers now make effective use of questioning and homework is now well used to consolidate and extend pupils' learning. The need to ensure that work is matched more closely to the abilities of all pupils was identified as a key issue for action in the last report. There is evidence of good progress having been made with regard to this issue in most subjects. However, this remains a weakness in a few subjects and there is a need to identify and share the good practice that is evident within the school in order to continue to raise the quality of teaching and learning. The teaching of information and communications technology was identified as a weakness in the previous report and, although the quality of teaching in the discrete information and communications technology lessons at Key Stage 3 has improved, the use of information and communications technology in most other subjects remains a weakness, particularly at Key Stage 4. Several weaknesses in the teaching of pupils with special educational needs were identified in the last report. These related to deployment of specialist teachers and the use by subject teachers of pupils' individual education plans. These issues have been tackled effectively and to the extent that the teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs are now a strength of the school.

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

30. Overall, the school provides a satisfactory curriculum. The curriculum is broad and balanced at both key stages and there are good opportunities for pupils' personal development. All the National Curriculum subjects are taught and, with the exception of information and communications technology and religious education at Key Stage 4, the school complies with statutory requirements. All the hearing-impaired pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. They receive nearly all their education in mainstream classes with occasional additional support, on an individual or small-group basis, in the resource base. The integration arrangements are good and well planned to support the learning of these pupils.
31. The school has made satisfactory progress in its curricular provision since the last inspection. The structure of the teaching day has been changed with the consequence that the amount of teaching time has been increased and is now used more effectively. This is having a positive effect on pupils' levels of achievement. There have also been significant improvements in provision for pupils with special educational needs, with more effective use being made of the expertise of specialist teachers and special educational needs support assistants. However, there are limited opportunities for the majority of older pupils to use information and

communication technology for their GCSE subjects and other courses and the school is not meeting the requirement to provide a daily act of worship. Religious education, at Key Stage 4, is organised as a part of the personal, social and health education programme but it is not given sufficient time for the specialist teachers to cover the Locally Agreed Syllabus in sufficient depth. The weekly teaching time of 25 hours in both key stages is consistent with government recommendations.

32. At Key Stage 3, the curriculum is satisfactory and builds on very good links with the main partner primary schools. All National Curriculum subjects are taught, together with personal, social and health education and the performing arts. A learning skills course is also taught in Year 7, which provides a useful foundation for the development of pupils' independent study skills. Mathematics and English are taught in sets based on attainment levels from Year 7, and in Years 8 and 9 setting is introduced in modern foreign languages, science and the humanities. This arrangement suits the needs of most pupils. Pupils take one modern foreign language in Year 7 and parents can indicate a preference for the language their children should choose. In Years 8 and 9, the school selects pupils to take a second language in an intensive course in one of their three subject lessons. Although around a quarter of pupils have access to a second language, the majority is restricted to the option of one language at Key Stage 4 based on a choice made in Year 7.
33. Because standards of literacy are good, the school has not seen the development of literacy raising strategies across the school as a priority, but following the recent government initiative a literacy working group has been set up and the school is developing a literacy policy. This has raised teachers' awareness of the importance of literacy and there are some effective developments now beginning to permeate classroom practice. Many classrooms have wall displays of key words and in some subjects, notably English, physical education and history, marking is used to show pupils how to improve their work. The school has not, as yet, begun to develop a policy for numeracy. However, in order to continue to raise standards, the mathematics faculty is including a range of strategies for the development of these skills in the curriculum plans for the subject.
34. Curriculum provision at Key Stage 4 is also satisfactory. Pupils benefit from a broad core of English, English literature, mathematics, a double award science, a modern foreign language, a design and technology subject, personal, social and health education, physical education and a humanities or creative arts option. Drug awareness and sex education are covered effectively in the personal, social and health education programme. Pupils also select subjects from a 'further studies' option that includes business studies. The time given to subjects at this key stage is generally satisfactory, although the time allocated to physical education is below that found in most similar schools. The curriculum is generally effective in helping to prepare pupils for the next stage of education or for employment. However, pre-vocational courses are offered only to a small minority of pupils for whom the full range of academic subjects is considered to be inappropriate. Limited progress has been made in this respect since the last inspection. The school's curriculum committee is aware of this and is currently planning to broaden the curriculum by the inclusion of General National Vocational Qualification courses, such as travel and tourism and manufacturing. The pastoral curriculum is extended in this key stage to build on the self-awareness and life skills programme introduced in Key Stage 3. The pastoral curriculum is used very effectively to contribute to and help pupils complete their records of achievement.
35. Curriculum planning across the school is good in most subjects and it is very good in English, science, design and technology and personal, social and health education. Schemes of work have been revised to ensure that they conform to recent changes in the National Curriculum. A high priority is given to pupils' pastoral care and to increasing their interest and involvement in school life. Registration, assemblies and tutor times at both key stages are well organised as a part of a very good pastoral system. Homework is set and marked regularly to support or extend learning in most subjects and for all pupils. Each pupil has a homework diary that is also used to record subject targets; teachers and parents are expected to check diaries on a very regular basis. Through a home school agreement, parents are actively encouraged to work in partnership with the school to support their children's learning.

36. Careers education is good and benefits from the effective use of the school's well established links with careers advisers, local colleges, training providers and employers. Through these links, for example, some pupils opted to take National Vocational Qualification Modern Apprenticeship courses on leaving school. Pupils in Years 9, 10 and 11 are interviewed by careers advisers and parental involvement is strongly encouraged through parents' evenings. Provision for careers education is very well planned and based on the importance of pupils acquiring the skills to manage their own lifetime learning and career development. Work experience is well co-ordinated and provided for all pupils in Year 11. These aspects, together with other vocation studies which are included as part of the personal, social and health education programme, help most pupils to set well-considered goals for their future and to cope well with the transition to the next stage of education or employment.
37. There are very good relationships with local schools and colleges and these contribute to the quality of the curriculum and to pupils' learning. The school is actively involved in the Scarborough cross-phase liaison group to ensure that pupil transfer procedures are co-ordinated effectively. Close links with the primary schools help to ensure continuity between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3. This is particularly good in English, where the literacy strategy bridges the two key stages. Other examples of close co-operation include initiatives led by the mathematics, science and music departments, and the school has organised a conference attended by all schools in the locality to focus on improving pupils' literacy skills. Strong links with Scarborough Sixth Form College and the Yorkshire Coast College include college staff contributing to the vocational curriculum and pupils attending link courses and 'taster' courses. The school also works closely with initial teacher training courses, including those at the Universities of Hull and York. These initiatives contribute to teachers' professional development, enabling them to consider from another perspective issues related to the curriculum and to teaching and learning.
38. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities in which a large number of pupils participate. Parents recognise extra-curricular provision as being a strength of the school. These activities not only considerably enrich the curriculum, but also extend the range of pupils' cultural experiences and opportunities to achieve. Pupils respond well to these opportunities and standards are high. They are introduced to drama as part of the performing arts course and large numbers of pupils take part in performing arts clubs at lunchtimes. At least one major drama production is staged each year and in recent years these have included 'Romeo and Juliet', 'Macbeth', 'The Caucasian Chalk Circle', 'Seven Brides for Seven Brothers' and 'Guys and Dolls'. The school also makes good use of the local community and the last three productions were performed at the Stephen Joseph Theatre in The Round in the town. Music features very strongly in the school's extra-curricular provision and the school orchestra, choir, concert bands and jazz and string groups rehearse regularly at lunchtimes and after school. There are frequent performances and tours, and in 1998 the school musicians performed at the Epcot Centre in Florida. High standards are achieved by the school's musicians and the school has, for example, won several regional and national concert band competitions. There are numerous trips and visits to theatres together with geography and history field trips, Duke of Edinburgh's Award expeditions and an exchange visit to France. There are also visits to Belgium, Germany and Spain. A high proportion of pupils take part in some form of extra-curricular sport. The vast majority of boys take part in house football competitions in Years 7 and 8 and there are thriving lunchtime leagues. The school is able to produce both 'A' and 'B' teams in most areas of competitive sport against other schools and achieves a good level of success. The standards achieved by older girls' netball teams are such that they play, with some success, in local adult leagues. Individual pupils achieve representative honours at district, county and sometimes national level. There are also numerous clubs, such as the chess club, Christian Union, art club, and homework club, which support pupils' learning and personal development.
39. The school's aims show a clear commitment to developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness, and overall provision is very good. It is underpinned by the work of the spiritual awareness committee, which includes the headteacher, staff, governors and local clergy. This committee influences the school's curriculum planning for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the outcome is much in evidence in the general school ethos. The school is a caring community in which all pupils feel secure, valued and respected.

40. Provision for spiritual development is good. It is fostered in areas of the curriculum such as art, English, history, music and religious education, where topics dealing with some of the fundamental issues of life arise and are treated in a way that helps to develop spiritual awareness in a personally meaningful way. However, although there are good examples of pupils' spiritual development being promoted in many subjects, there is a need for a greater awareness of opportunities to explore both religious and non-religious aspects of spirituality, such as human achievement, and the mystery and wonder of the natural world. The school is aware of this need and intends to tackle the issue through faculty meetings and staff development in order to ensure that opportunities to explore these aspects of spiritual development are taken in all subjects. The school does not have an area large enough to accommodate all pupils. Consequently, a different year group attends morning assembly on each day of the week. The assemblies include a collective act of worship and the themes for the assemblies are centred on a thoughtful programme, which includes a theme for the week. This theme for the week is intended to be taken up in morning registration and form time for year groups not in the assembly. However, this programme is not followed in all tutor groups with the consequence that the school does not comply with the statutory requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship.
41. Provision for the moral development of pupils is very good. The school encourages a sense of right and wrong. Pupils are expected to conduct themselves sensibly in class and to behave with care and consideration for others. The school has a clear set of rules, which are known to all pupils. The rules are underpinned by a system of rewards and sanctions, which are regarded as fair and reasonable and supported by parents. Staff provide good role models and pupils understand what is expected of them in terms of behaviour and respect and consideration for other people and for their property. The work covered in religious education plays a significant part in pupils' moral development, providing opportunities for pupils to study the impact of religious ideas on moral behaviour. They are encouraged to examine their own moral codes. Provision for pupils' moral development is very much at the heart of the very good programme of personal, social and health education. Pupils' moral development is also supported in subjects such as history, for example, where pupils are encouraged to consider the moral questions associated with such diverse topics as the slave trade and of the clauses of the Treaty of Versailles after the end of the First World War. Moral development is also promoted through the large number of charitable activities in which pupils participate throughout the school year.
42. Provision for pupils' social development is very good and a strength of the school. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to develop self-confidence and self-esteem, and to show initiative. These opportunities feature regularly in lessons and include not only such things as role play in English, drama and history, but also through service on the year and school councils and participation in the bullying counselling service. Aspects of the personal, social and health education programme also develop pupils' awareness of social issues such as teenage pregnancy, drug-taking and alcoholism. Many other issues of social consequence are covered across the curriculum. For example, the impact of environmental issues on people's lives is tackled in science and geography and the social consequences of lowering production costs are covered in business education. Pupils are offered numerous opportunities for social development through community work, work placements and the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school. Pupils are given every opportunity to relate positively to one another and to teachers and visitors to the school. A particularly strong feature of pupils' social development is the consideration that is shown towards pupils with hearing and other physical impairments and the good quality of relationships that exist between these pupils and their peers.
43. Provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. The school strives to develop in pupils an appreciation of their own cultural traditions in many subjects of the curriculum and most obviously through English, drama, music, history and art. This work is well supported by educational visits to places of diverse cultural and historical interest. For example, Year 7 pupils visit Rievaulx Abbey and Year 8 pupils visit the Manchester Science Museum. In Year 9, pupils visit Haworth and in Year 10 pupils visit Stratford-upon-Avon. Pupils also learn about some of the diversity and richness of other cultures and this is particularly important in a school where there are very few ethnic minority pupils. For example, in religious education pupils learn

about a range of religious festivals and customs such as Pesach and Eid. Work in art, on the theme of 'shrines' helps pupils to understand the importance of symbolism in many cultures. The curriculum in music makes a significant contribution through the exploration of culturally and geographically diverse music from Africa, India and America. Similarly, the English curriculum draws on literature from other cultures and the wide range of dramatic productions includes the work of authors of different cultural backgrounds. The school's provision for pupils' cultural development is well advanced and makes a significant contribution to the preparation of pupils to live in a culturally diverse society.

44. Overall, provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development shows considerable improvement since the last inspection. The development of the school's detailed policy on spiritual development, although not yet finalised, is already having a positive effect. The moral, social and cultural opportunities offered to the pupils have improved and are now strengths of the school.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

45. The school takes its responsibilities for child protection and pupils' welfare very seriously and complies with the procedures recommended by the area child protection committee. The school provides a supportive environment in which to learn, and responsibilities for child protection are clearly defined. All new staff are introduced to the school's policies and practices and these are included in the staff handbook. Staff are reminded of the lines of responsibility at the beginning of the school year and, in addition to the names of the designated persons, the names and addresses of the appropriate authorities are also included in the staff handbook. Teachers are alert for any behaviour changes that may give cause for concern and refresher training for recognising and dealing with potential incidents of child abuse is planned to take place later this school year. Links with the relevant child protection agencies are good and a multi-agency approach to help pupils with problems is developing well. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities for health and safety. Regular checks are carried out and the governing body is well informed on all matters relating to health and safety.
46. Continuity in care is a feature of the school pastoral system, which is built on the role of the form tutors. Pupils are in contact with their form tutors every morning for registration and form time and for their weekly personal, social and health education lessons. In addition the school has introduced a 'pastoral interview week' during which form tutors have the opportunity for an extended interview with the pupils in their forms. This interview has proved to be a good opportunity for the review of progress and the setting of targets, and is appreciated by both pupils and parents. The opportunity for form tutors to engage in these extended reviews is particularly important in view of the recent extension of the form tutor's role to include the monitoring of pupils' academic progress in addition to their pastoral concerns. Form tutors move with their groups from Year 7 and change at the end of Year 9. This arrangement promotes continuity in care through Years 7 to 9 and through Years 10 and 11 and enables tutors to develop a very good knowledge of individual pupils and their particular social and educational needs. This knowledge underpins the school's provision for pupils' personal development, which is a strength of the school. Heads of year also play important roles in ensuring continuity in care and provide good support for form tutors. In order to provide support for the work of form tutors and year heads, and to ensure greater continuity across the key stages, the school has created the posts of head of lower school (Years 7 to 9) and upper school (Years 10 and 11). Continuity at the time of transfer from the primary schools is ensured by the head of lower school additionally holding the post of head of year for each group entering the school in Year 7. This allows the head of lower school to build up close links with the primary schools and both parents and heads of primary schools believe that this is an effective arrangement and that the school induction procedures, for both pupils and parents, are very good. Continuity at the time pupils leave school is ensured by the head of upper school additionally holding the post of head of Year 11. This allows the head upper school to build up close links with post-16 institutions, the careers service and local employers. Again, this is an effective arrangement and these links are very good. However, heads of school have to devote a considerable amount of their time to the pastoral concerns of the year groups for which they are responsible and this is making it difficult for them to give time to the

development of form tutors' and year heads' roles in the monitoring of pupils' academic progress.

47. Overall, procedures for assessing pupils' progress and attainment are good. A good system is used to collect a range of assessment information about pupils' attainment on entry to the school. This assessment information includes end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum test results, the results of NFER tests in English and mathematics, reading scores and cognitive ability tests. This information is collected centrally and shared with all faculties and subject departments. Assessment policies for separate subjects have been written to include the use of marking schemes linked with National Curriculum and GCSE standards, and careful records are kept of pupils' attainment and progress. Pupils' progress is now being monitored by form tutors through twice-yearly reviews and interim reports of the standards of their work. Feedback to pupils in their subject lessons includes a system for self-assessment, which is better developed at Key Stage 4 than at Key Stage 3. Pupils write their own targets, which are recorded in their homework diaries, to help them plan how to improve the standards of their subject work. In all GCSE subjects, older pupils are given target grades that they can strive to achieve or exceed. At Key Stage 3, pupils in some subjects are not always clear about the criteria associated with National Curriculum levels. This issue was identified in the last inspection report. In the majority of subjects there are procedures at Key Stage 3 for ensuring that marking is used and applied in a consistent way and to make reliable judgements about standards. The school is meeting statutory requirements for reporting pupils' assessments at the end of Key Stage 3. Procedures for the identification and assessment of pupils with special educational needs are very good and well documented. However, there is no central point at which all of the assessment information which is held on pupils with special educational needs is collected. As a consequence, this information is not readily available for those most directly concerned with the support of these pupils. Statements of educational need are in place and reviewed annually. Individual educational plans are well targeted, especially on the linguistic and personal needs of the pupils. They are reviewed on a termly basis, but sooner if required. Both parents and pupils are involved in setting targets and in monitoring progress. This is good practice. Individual records of achievement are comprehensive, covering all National Curriculum subjects.
48. Overall, the use of assessment information to inform teaching and planning is satisfactory. At a whole school level there is a good system for analysing assessment information. This information is used at Key Stage 3 to place pupils into four monitoring bands based on their present and predicted attainment levels. These monitoring bands provide a useful basis for the twice-yearly reviews carried out by form tutors and help them to gauge the progress pupils are making and to identify any areas of underachievement. However, the bands are less helpful to subject teachers who need to match the work they set pupils to National Curriculum subject levels and to develop a picture of the standards pupils might achieve by the end of the key stage. A whole school approach to target setting at Key Stage 3 is not yet in place, although subjects like English are well advanced in this respect. At Key Stage 4, the YELLIS scheme is used together with Key Stage 3 National Curriculum test results, to set pupils' GCSE targets. The school also uses this information to provide a satisfactory way of measuring the value that different subjects add to pupils' progress and attainment.
49. There is noticeable variation in the consistency and quality of assessment practice across the school. Good use is made of assessment information in English, history and design and technology. In English very careful targets are set for pupils at both key stages and a careful system of monitoring is used to identify any pupils who may be underachieving. Again in English and in history, there is a systematic approach to pupils' end of coursework unit assessments. Careful mark schemes are closely matched to National Curriculum attainment targets and there are firm intentions to use assessment information to review and adjust planning and teaching so that all pupils make at least satisfactory or better progress. In English and design and technology very detailed analyses of coursework assessments, tests and examination results help subject teachers to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of their work. Assessment information is used efficiently to prepare reports for parents as a part of each pupil's Record of Achievement. Although reports to parents are satisfactory, there is variation in the usefulness and clarity of information in some subjects. Where reports are good, teachers' comments provide a precise indication of a pupil's subject strengths and weaknesses, how

these relate to National Curriculum levels or GCSE grades and what needs to be done in order to improve the standard of their work. The school is developing good mechanisms to monitor and support pupils' academic progress. The twice-yearly reviews of pupils' progress enable pastoral and subject teachers to intervene and provide additional support and mentoring where this is necessary. Parents are informed about any problems and are encouraged to play an important role in helping to support their children's progress and improvement. The school makes good use of other agencies in cases where pupils' progress is seriously affected by marked behavioural or other learning difficulties. The school has provided very helpful assessment training and guidance for middle managers and has made good progress in developing procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. Less progress has been made since the last inspection to evaluate the impact of subject assessment work or to share good practice to ensure that there is effective and consistently good practice across the school.

50. The school has a well-understood system of rewards and sanctions to recognise pupils' achievements, promote positive attitudes to learning and support pupils' behaviour. The rewards and sanctions are seen as aids to fostering self-discipline and the creation of a good atmosphere for teaching and learning. The school rules are clear and simple and pupils understand them very well. Diligence awards are used to encourage and support good behaviour. The school bullying policy is rooted in one of the stated aims of the school, 'to create a happy and secure environment in which all members of the community respect and care for each other and their surroundings'. The school makes a commitment to take action when any pupil threatens, intimidates or attacks another pupil verbally or physically. A detailed record of all incidents is kept. The pastoral teams review the record regularly and governors are kept well informed. Parents are also informed about the imposition of sanctions. Participation in the 'Scarborough Behaviour Management Project' and the introduction of a withdrawal room for pupils exhibiting challenging behaviour has led to a marked decline in the number of fixed term exclusions over the past three years.
51. The school places great emphasis on the need for pupils to be in regular attendance and is making strenuous efforts to improve pupils' attendance. Parents are contacted immediately a pupil is absent without notification. Parents are also informed about the attendance rate of their children in the interim and end-of-year reports, and in the Record of Achievement. Good attendance is recognised as part of the school system of merit awards. The school has maintained and enhanced the good standards of care provided for pupils noted in the previous inspection report and this is having a positive effect on pupils' learning.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

52. The school has built up a good partnership with parents, and parents provide good support for pupils' learning. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire and comments made at the pre-inspection meeting with parents show that the majority of parents have very positive views of the school. In particular, parents feel that the school expects pupils to work hard and achieve their best and that this, together with good teaching, is helping their children to make good progress. Parents also feel that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.
53. The school has good links with most parents, and teachers know pupils and their families well. This provides a considerable support to pupils' learning. Nevertheless, the school recognises the importance of strengthening these links and this is included in the current school development plan. Links with parents of pupils with special educational needs are good. Regular meetings with parents are organised and all are invited to contribute to the setting of targets in the individual education plans of their children.
54. The school is welcoming to parents and, in response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, the majority of parents expressed satisfaction about the approachability of the school and the way in which the school deals with questions or problems, although a few are not always satisfied by the outcomes. A number of parents expressed dissatisfaction with the information the school provides, the amount of homework and how closely the school works with parents. Inspection evidence shows that the school provides good quality information to parents. This information is



both academic and organisational in nature. The governors' annual report to parents is informative and complies with all statutory requirements. The school prospectus is well produced and provides parents with much useful information when their children are transferring from the primary schools. Through pupils' homework diaries, newsletters, reports and parents' evenings they are kept well informed about school events and their children's progress. Newsletters contain information on such things as National Curriculum test and GCSE results together with other notable pupil achievements, the availability of study support for pupils preparing for the GCSE examination, extra-curricular clubs, community education programmes and youth activities. There are regular consultations on pupils' progress at open evenings and parents are contacted at an early stage if their children cause any kind of concern. They are also informed when their children achieve particularly well and parents appreciate this initiative. Several heads of departments have adopted the practice of writing personal letters to the parents of pupils who achieved above or below expected examination results. The records of achievement at the end of the academic year contain many good features, although there is inconsistency in the quality of information provided in some subjects. While pupils' strengths are generally recognised insufficient guidance is provided on how pupils can improve or how the parents can help.

55. The school endeavours to consult the parents through the parents' consultative committee. All parents are urged to become members and to attend the meetings. It acts as a forum to exchange opinions and to debate school issues. The views of the committee are taken into account when formulating school policy. For example, from the beginning of the second half of this term the school uniform rules are being changed to allow girls to wear trousers. Other issues discussed with the consultative committee include raising the achievement of Year 7 and 8 pupils, post-16 developments, and the role of the form tutors. A drugs awareness evening is planned to take place later this term. Parents contribute to their children's learning well. Through the 'Music Parents' Working Party' they raise funds to support the work of the music department. The parents' finance committee also raises funds for the provision of such things as metal lockers, display-boards and climbing equipment. Parents also make contributions towards the cost of materials used in art and design and technology.
56. The school has made satisfactory progress in its partnership with parents since the last inspection. The good links with parents noted in that report have been sustained and through these links the school and parents are working together to improve the quality of education the school provides.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

57. The overall management of the school is good. The head and senior management team provide good leadership and a clear educational direction for the school. The school has a positive ethos and provides a well-ordered learning environment in which there is an increasing commitment to raising standards. The effectiveness of this is evident in standards of attainment, attitudes, and behaviour as well as in pupils' personal development and relationships, which are very good. Development planning reflects the school aims and all development plans identify relevant priorities and cover both medium and long-term goals. Plans are costed effectively and have clearly defined targets, tasks, success criteria, staff responsibilities and timescales. The development plans of departments are well linked to the school development plan. Both the school and departmental development plans serve as effective working documents.
58. The school has made substantial progress over the past two years in the collection and use of assessment information and satisfactory use is made of this information to monitor and evaluate its work. A comprehensive assessment database has been established and detailed analyses of assessment information are carried out. This information is presented to heads of faculties, subject leaders and heads of years, who are expected to use it in planning teaching and learning and in providing support for pupils. Procedures for the monitoring and evaluation of examination data, for example, are good. Heads of faculties and subject leaders analyse examination results and provide the headteacher with reports on results in their subjects. Many of these reports, such as the reports provided by the English and science faculties for example,

contain a detailed analysis of the results, seek to provide explanations of differences and trends in performance and identify target areas in order to raise standards. However, a number, such as that of the mathematics faculty, are mainly descriptive and give no indication that possible causes and consequences of any differences in the results have been considered.

59. Heads of school and heads of year closely monitor the use that form tutors make of assessment information to identify any areas of underachievement by individual pupils and set targets for improvement. This monitoring is facilitated by clear lines of reporting with the result that there is a good awareness, at senior management level, of the effectiveness with which form tutors are using assessment information and where additional support needs to be provided. Procedures for the monitoring of teaching and learning within faculties and subjects have also been introduced. It is intended that monitoring should be carried out by heads of faculty and subject leaders, with reports made to the curriculum committee, which is chaired by the deputy head. The deputy head then provides the line management link to the senior management team. However, it is not possible for the deputy head to maintain a close monitoring role with regard to all of the faculties and subjects in the school. The consequence is that the good practice that is evident in many areas of the school is not being identified and shared in a systematic way and agreed school policies are not being implemented consistently in all faculties and subjects. There are, for example, weaknesses in the management of the school's literacy strategy. Although there are examples of good practice in several subjects there is no strategy as yet to monitor these developments and to evaluate their effectiveness in raising standards.
60. The overall quality of management provided by heads of department is good. The quality of management in leadership in English is exemplary and the continuous monitoring and evaluation of work within the faculty is having a significant effect on standards. The science faculty is very well led by a competent and dedicated head of faculty. However, his effectiveness is impaired by the number of other management responsibilities he holds within the school. Leadership in design and technology is very effective and the head of faculty has been at the forefront of initiatives to make the best use of assessment information in the school. The head of history, who took up post at the start of the present school year, is already giving a clear direction for work in the subject. Management of information and communications technology is unsatisfactory. The overall responsibilities for leadership in the subject are unclear and this is impeding the improvements that are required and having an adverse effect on standards. The leadership provided by the head of music is excellent and well complemented by the organisational skills of the second in the department. The management and co-ordination of special educational needs is good and there is a strong sense of teamwork amongst all concerned with the teaching of pupils with special educational needs. The requirements of the Code of Practice are clearly understood and provision has significantly improved since the last inspection. The governing body is kept well informed on special educational matters.
61. The governing body is effective and supportive. With the exceptions of the provision of information and communications technology and religious education at Key Stage 4, and the provision of a daily act of collective worship, it meets its statutory responsibilities. Governors take a keen interest in the work of the school and provide the school with a substantial amount of specialist help and advice. Positive relationships exist between the governing body and the senior management team. Governors receive regular detailed reports from the head and other senior members of staff, and have a satisfactory level of awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The quality of financial planning is good and all additional funding received by the school is used for the intended purposes. Governors are actively involved with the head and the senior management team in financial planning and monitoring and are given good support by the school finance officer. The school has effective procedures to ensure that the principles of best value for money are applied in the use of its resources. Action has been taken to attend to the issues raised in the most recent auditor's report.
62. Arrangements for the professional development of staff are very good. The senior teacher with responsibility for staff development has paid close attention to the identification of individual teacher development needs and how these can be matched to school development priorities. As a consequence there have been significant improvements in procedures and practice since

the last inspection. As part of the improvement process the school is working towards the award of 'Investor in People' status. Arrangements for the support and professional development of both newly qualified teachers and students undertaking initial teacher training are very good and highly valued by participants, as are the induction arrangements for all new members of staff.

63. Subject teachers are appropriately qualified in their main teaching areas and support staff make effective contributions in lessons. A significant proportion of subject teachers lack the information and communications technology skills necessary to be able to incorporate information and communications technology into their subjects with confidence. This is having an adverse effect on standards. The school is aware of this issue and the development of teachers' information and communications technology skills is included in the school development plan. As the full-time information and communications technology technician is on long-term sick leave there are deficiencies in the level of information and communications technology support available in the school. The number of specialist teaching and non-teaching staff is sufficient to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs. Specialist provision for speech and language therapy and for physiotherapy is adequate for the present number of pupils with these needs. The skilled and experienced secretarial and clerical staff provide a welcoming school office and contribute very effectively to the administration and organisation of the school.
64. The overall standard of the accommodation for teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. Although there have been extensive modifications to the accommodation to cater for pupils with hearing and other physical impairments since the last inspection it is not possible for pupils with physical difficulties to access the upper floor of the humanities block. Also, the acoustics in the resource base and the classrooms in which hearing-impaired pupils are taught is such that it is not possible for pupils to use their hearing aids effectively in these rooms. The mathematics faculty is based in seven mobile classrooms. Two of these rooms are in a poor state and another is badly positioned against a high hedge, so that it is necessary to keep lights on for most of the day. The distance of these mobiles from the rest of the school also causes problems with security and toilet provision. A number of subjects are also disadvantaged by the fact that teaching takes place outside specialist teaching rooms, making access to resources difficult, and this affects teaching and learning. For example, history and geography are taught in 15 different rooms. Some music lessons are also taught in a classroom some distance from the main teaching room. As a consequence, all of the instruments, cassette players and other resources used in lessons have to be carried to and from the room at the beginning and end of lessons. This lessens the amount of time available for teaching and learning. Plans are in hand to build a small number of replacement classrooms but these will be insufficient for the needs of the school.
65. The overall provision of resources to support learning is unsatisfactory. Although there is a good range of resources to support teaching and learning in English, science and art, there are deficiencies in many other subjects. In geography and history there is a shortage of textbooks. In music there is a shortage of percussion instruments, which means that the department cannot fully cover all programmes of study. Pupils in almost all departments have inadequate access to appropriate information and communications technology resources. The current ratio of pupils to up-to-date computers is approaching 15:1 and this is significantly worse than the national average for similar schools. The learning resources centre including the library provides a well-furnished and pleasant environment for pupils to study. However, it is not currently being fully exploited as a resource for pupils' independent learning. The range of books provided in a number of subjects is restricted and some of the book stock is out of date. The library is closed for part of the lunch hour and this restricts pupils access during the lunch period, although homework clubs allow access in the evenings. Pupils have only limited access to the Internet.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

66. In order to raise standards and the quality of education provided, the governors, senior management and staff of Scalby School, should:

- Ensure that members of the senior management team and middle managers clearly understand and implement line management responsibilities for:
  - identifying and sharing good practice within and between faculties;
  - monitoring and supporting development work in faculties and subjects;
  - ensuring that agreed school policies and plans are implemented consistently in all faculties and subjects.  
*(paragraphs: 12,21,46,49,58-60,86,97,114,124,140,148,157)*
- Raise standards in information and communications technology by:
  - complying with the statutory requirements for the provision of information and communications technology at Key Stage 4;
  - providing appropriate training to raise the levels of skill of all teachers in order to include the use of information and communication technology in their subject teaching;
  - ensuring effective planning for the teaching of information and communication technology in all subjects;
  - increasing the number of computers available for teaching and learning.  
*(paragraphs:6,12,20,26,29-30,60-61,63,92,97,113,125,129,135-41,147,158,171)*
- Ensure that provision of religious education at Key Stage 4 meets the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.  
*(paragraphs:30-31,170-171)*
- Ensure that all information on the progress that pupils with special educational needs are making is centrally located and immediately available to those who directly support these pupils.  
*(paragraph: 47)*
- Improve the accommodation and resources for teaching and learning by:
  - enhancing the acoustic environment in the resource base and the classrooms in which hearing-impaired pupils are placed;
  - reducing the number of lessons taught outside specialist teaching rooms;
  - improving the resources available for teaching and learning in the humanities and music.  
*(paragraphs: 28,64-66,75,125,127,159)*
- Comply with the statutory requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship for all pupils.  
*(paragraphs:40,61)*

In addition paragraphs: 27,47,112,164 (*marking*); 11,21,33,81,92,113,124 (*numeracy*); 25,111 (*behaviour*); 34 (*vocational courses*); 48,171, (*target setting*); 49 (*assessment*); 54 (*reports*); 149 (*modern foreign languages*), include weaknesses which have not formed the basis of 'Key Issues' identified above; the school should consider including these in the governor's post-inspection action plan.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	195
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	65

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	29	46	21	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils on the school's roll	1048	
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	115	

Special educational needs	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	27	
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	220	

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.1
National comparative data	7.9

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
National comparative data	1.1

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

### Attainment at the end-of-Key Stage 3

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	110	95	205

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	90 (62)	77 (74)	68 (61)
	Girls	88 (81)	81 (65)	85 (59)
	Total	178 (143)	158 (139)	153 (120)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	86 (70)	75 (69)	74 (59)
	National	(63)	(62)	(55)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	48 (31)	46 (41)	40 (19)
	National	(28)	(38)	(23)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	85 (58)	81 (82)	70 (61)
	Girls	76 (82)	80 (70)	73 (50)
	Total	161 (140)	161 (152)	143 (111)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	77 (68)	77 (74)	68 (54)
	National	(64)	(64)	(60)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	44 (37)	51 (44)	44 (28)
	National	(31)	(37)	(28)

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

### Attainment at the end-of-Key Stage 4

Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	86	118	204

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	50 (54)	78 (109)	83 (115)
	Girls	79 (60)	114 (90)	117 (93)
	Total	129 (114)	192 (199)	200 (208)
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	63 (55)	94 (95)	98 (100)
	National	(46.3)	(90.7)	(95.8)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	40.3 (40)
	National	(38)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	3
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	4
White	1040
Any other minority ethnic group	0

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	52	3
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y11**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	59.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.5

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Education support staff: Y7 – Y11**

Total number of education support staff	16
Total aggregate hours worked per week	435

#### **Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y11**

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	79.9
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#### **Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y11**

Key Stage 3	23.6
Key Stage 4	20.3

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	2,477,095
Total expenditure	2,474,626
Expenditure per pupil	2,371
Balance brought forward from previous year	42,749
Balance carried forward to next year	45,218

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	1048
Number of questionnaires returned	219

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	32	56	9	2	1
My child is making good progress in school.	47	47	4	2	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	29	58	5	1	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	20	58	17	3	1
The teaching is good.	30	62	3	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	31	51	14	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	49	41	8	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	38	4	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	29	46	19	2	4
The school is well led and managed.	41	48	5	2	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	38	54	4	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	36	54	7	2	1

### Other issues raised by parents

*Written comments were included with 12% of the questionnaires returned. Several of these comments expressed strong support for the school and praised the way in which the school is helping pupils to become mature and responsible young people. A small number of parents' comments related to general standards of behaviour and the way individual cases of poor behaviour had not, in their view, been followed up thoroughly enough.*



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

### **ENGLISH**

67. Pupils' attainment in English is above average at the ages of 14 and 16 when compared to national standards. In the 1999 National Curriculum Key Stage 3 tests and in the 1999 GCSE examinations in English and English literature both boys and girls achieved standards which were above the national average and better than those achieved by pupils in similar schools. In the 2000 tests and examinations standards have risen even higher. In 2000, 17 per cent more pupils achieved Level 5 or above and 17 per cent more pupils achieved Level 6 or above than in 1999. Also, for the first time boys and girls achieved similar standards.
68. In the 2000 GCSE examinations the boys' performance showed a marked improvement on the 1999 results after the faculty had introduced a number of strategies to make the curriculum more attractive and accessible to boys. This was illustrated in a lively Year 11 lesson where pupils were studying the language of football reporting. It is also worth noting that, although the proportion of pupils with special educational needs is similar to the national average, almost all of these pupils are entered for GCSE examinations in both English and English literature. Fewer pupils than is the case nationally are awarded the lower grades and this indicates that low attaining pupils achieve standards that are higher than expected. These high standards are reflected in lessons and in the work of pupils of all levels of attainment.
69. Pupils enter the school with slightly above-average standards of literacy and during their five years in school make good progress in most aspects of English. The writing skills of pupils of all levels of attainment show good improvement. This is largely because of the thorough way in which English teachers teach the skills of drafting, editing and proof-reading and because of the emphasis on examining the process of writing, both in pupils' own work and in the writing of other authors. Most pupils are willing and enthusiastic readers and teachers ensure that they have plenty of opportunities for the silent reading of both fiction and non-fiction. However, many pupils are less confident when asked to read aloud and few are able to read with the expression and liveliness to hold an audience. This is a skill which needs to be taught and practised. Linked to this is the observation that many pupils are less confident when speaking in formal situations, such as reporting back to the class than, when they are participating in small-group discussions or answering questions. On these occasions most pupils are keen to contribute and they also listen attentively to what others have to say.
70. The generally high standards are achieved partly through the quality of teaching and partly because of the very positive attitudes that pupils display towards their English lessons. The quality of teaching is good in Years 7, 8 and 9, and very good in Years 10 and 11. Pupils are inspired and enthused by lively, well-paced and energetic teaching but teachers also recognise the need to build in opportunities for pupils to reflect on their work and to consider the moral and spiritual aspects of the topics or texts they are studying. Teachers have high expectations of the quality and quantity of pupils' work. This was well illustrated in a Year 8 poetry lesson when pupils were able to sustain and enjoy an intellectual discussion on the ambiguities and hidden meanings in a poem by Gerard Manley Hopkins. Teachers use questioning techniques which challenge pupils to think for themselves, as in two lessons on the set poetry texts for GCSE when the teacher led the pupils through careful stages to a point when they were sufficiently confident to offer their own interpretations of some quite difficult modern poems.
71. The quality of pupils' learning in these lessons is good and often very good. They deepen their understanding of literature and the process of writing because they are expected to think for themselves and take responsibility for their own learning. Pupils of all levels of attainment make real intellectual effort, concentrate well and enjoy their work.
72. Almost all the lessons observed during the inspection exhibited these good features. There were, however, a very small number of lessons which fell short of these high standards for various reasons, the main one being too much teacher talk. The consequence was that pupils became passive learners dependent on the teacher to tell them what to think.

73. The pupils' high standards of attainment have been promoted by a faculty which continues to monitor and evaluate its own practice. Several years ago GCSE results were showing a downward trend and the head of faculty took it upon himself to analyse the results in great detail. This analysis, together with a wealth of assessment data on pupils' progress, now underpins very good systems for identifying and supporting underachieving pupils and provides information to support planning of the curriculum. The curriculum offers a very good experience to all pupils. Particular strengths are the use of information technology for research and to improve presentation, the use of texts from other cultures and traditions to extend pupils' understanding of Britain's multi-cultural society and the excellent extra-curricular opportunities. The prevailing atmosphere of the faculty is one of intellectual rigour and cultural enrichment.
74. The leadership and management of the English faculty are excellent. The head of faculty knows where he wants to take the faculty and, more importantly, how he will achieve his aims. He leads a united and committed team of teachers by his own hard work and exemplary teaching. Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. The quality of teaching has improved and this is having a significant effect on rising standards in the subject.

#### Drama

75. Drama is taught within the performing arts faculty as part of an integrated music and drama course. Attainment at the age of 14 is consistent with national expectations for pupils of this age, but by the age of 16 it is good, with pupils showing very good improvisational skills. This is reflected in the above-average GCSE results. Despite these results the accommodation for drama limits the quality of what can be achieved. Drama is taught in very large groups in the hall which is much too large and impersonal. The acoustics are poor and it is uncarpeted. Although teaching, particularly in Years 10 and 11, is good, the limitations imposed by the accommodation prevents the pupils from experiencing the full impact of performance, which is an essential part of the drama curriculum.

### **MATHEMATICS**

76. The standards achieved in mathematics by 14 year olds in National Curriculum tests have steadily improved over the last four years and at a faster rate than that observed nationally. The 1999 results for the school were above the national average at both the expected Level 5 and the higher Level 6, although average in comparison with similar schools. The performance of boys and girls is very similar at all levels. In the most recent tests taken in 2000, the proportion of pupils gaining Level 5 has increased, as has the proportion of pupils gaining higher levels. Comparison of standards of attainment on entry to the school with the results in the tests taken at the end of Year 9 show that pupils' levels of achievement are good.
77. The evidence of the inspection, indicates that achievement by pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 is above the national expectation. Higher attaining pupils, that is those with a particular gift or talent in mathematics, are achieving well across all attainment targets. These pupils are challenged by the work they are given and provided with a wide range of opportunities to apply their mathematics in different situations. An example of this was seen when a group of Year 9 pupils were investigating the outcomes from a probability investigation. Their challenge was to predict and interpret results from throwing two dice a given number of times. Other pupils in a Year 8 class were equally challenged by calculating values of algebraic expressions that involved negative numbers. The large majority of pupils are able to apply their mathematics in a variety of situations and achieve high standards. The attitude, behaviour and sustained concentration in lessons by pupils make a very positive contribution to standards and progress.
78. In the GCSE examination in 1999, the proportion of pupils achieving grades A\*-C was above the national average. Nearly 98 per cent of pupils gained an A\*-G grade. In the 2000 GCSE examination, achievement at the higher A\*-C grades was below the 1999 figure, but the absence of two members of staff at a critical time in that year adversely affected the performance of pupils in two classes. Since the last inspection in 1995 the proportion of pupils attaining these grades has fallen slightly, but the four-year trend remains above that achieved nationally. The predicted attainment percentage for 2001 is appropriate and similar to the 2000 figure.

79. The work seen during the inspection indicates that higher attaining pupils are being challenged and stretched by their teachers. All teachers have good subject knowledge, which is effectively used through exposition, demonstration and questioning of pupils. As a consequence, pupils develop very good knowledge and understanding of the various aspects of the subject. For example, pupils in a Year 10 group were observed rearranging parametric equations very confidently to form new algebraic expressions with powers and roots. Another Year 11 group coped extremely well with finding solutions to a pair of simultaneous equations. Both sets of pupils set out their written work in a careful and logical way, demonstrating their confidence and understanding when dealing with complex topics. The quality of pupils' coursework for GCSE is of a particularly good standard and demonstrates their ability to apply their mathematics successfully to new situations. The attendance at an additional after-school session for Year 11 pupils is an indication of their determination to improve on their predicted grades, build up their confidence and improve their examination techniques.
80. Most pupils with special educational needs make good progress with their learning. These pupils gain confidence with basic mathematics, such as using and applying the four rules of number in the early years. They continue to develop these skills in a variety of situations and all are entered for the GCSE examination. Those pupils with hearing impairments make equally good progress. The support that all pupils with special educational needs receive in class is a significant factor in the standards that they achieve.
81. The department is evolving a policy to develop pupils' numerical skills through application and opportunities within mathematics. The recently revised schemes of work make provision for the development of these basic skills. In subjects other than mathematics pupils apply their numeracy skills, in a satisfactory way, but generally these skills are not systematically developed, particularly in science and design and technology. They understand co-ordinates and interpret accurately six-figure grid references and data presented graphically in geography. In art pupils make sound judgements about size and proportion of objects as part of the preparation for a piece of drawing. The absence of a school approach to this basic skill needs urgent attention, given the national drive for improving numeracy.
82. The quality of teaching in mathematics is good and often very good. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. This is an improvement on the last inspection report. Teachers work hard at planning interesting lessons to motivate and challenge pupils. This is having a positive impact on the quality of pupils' progress and their levels of achievement. In the very good lessons teaching is characterised by well-planned and structured activities that move on at a brisk pace, where expectations are high and pupils succeed well, making good gains in knowledge and understanding. For example, a Year 11 lower attaining set learnt about square and cube numbers through using multi-link cubes formed into regular shapes. They went on to calculate successfully the values of such numbers. In another Year 10 higher attaining group, pupils confidently expanded algebraic expressions with two brackets and several were able to reverse the process, successfully factorising the expression. In a Year 7 class pupils developed their information technology skills through successfully using a computer programme to create a spreadsheet to carry out calculations to do with solid shapes. The skilful mix of probing questions, discussion and a range of challenging activities, underpins the standards that are being achieved by these pupils. A further feature of these lessons is the use of tasks that are well matched to the range of attainment levels within the teaching group. Where teaching does not reach this standard, the pace of the lesson is insufficiently brisk to extend learning by moving pupils on to more challenging work. In order to continue to improve the overall quality of teaching there is a need to ensure that the very good teaching methods that are evident within the faculty are shared and used more generally by all teachers.
83. The high expectations that teachers have for their pupils are most noticeable in the excellent way pupils record their work in their notebooks. The department has established very high standards in this respect. Teachers share the purpose of each lesson with the pupils at the start, and readily use responses from them to stimulate ideas and develop approaches to the learning of the topic. This was seen in a Year 9 class looking at different units of measurement where pupils freely displayed their knowledge of the different units used in measuring length, capacity and weight. Pupils in a Year 8 class very competently calculated the values of algebraic expressions formed into a game by working independently and in pairs. These pupils

gained confidence and further developed their mathematical knowledge and skills. The very positive relationships that have evolved between pupils and teachers ensure that a purposeful working atmosphere is created in lessons. Some of the most effective learning occurs in lessons where pupils are actively involved, through discussion, paired and group work and have a clear understanding of what they are expected to do. In these situations pupils learn to express their ideas, deepen their knowledge and develop a greater sense of the power and value of mathematics. This was, for example, seen in the Year 9 lessons where pupils were investigating the outcomes from an experiment with two dice.

84. The attitudes and behaviour exhibited by pupils in virtually all lessons seen are good. In these lessons pupils are focused on their work and sustain concentration and interest throughout the lesson. On the few occasions where attitudes and behaviour fall below this standard it is largely because the lessons are too teacher-directed and the work insufficiently challenging, particularly for the higher attaining pupils.
85. The introduction of more frequent and rigorous assessment of pupils' work, alongside the comprehensive performance data that is available in the faculty, has provided teachers with additional evidence about the learning and progress being made by individual pupils. It is intended that this will be used to enable teachers to adjust their teaching strategies and inform their planning for the next phase of work. The marking of work is systematically undertaken and pupils receive good feedback from teachers on how they can improve. The introduction of self-assessment by pupils, following a unit of work, ensures that the targets they set are realistic and achievable.
86. The faculty is effectively led and ably supported by a team of dedicated and enthusiastic teachers. The working practices of the team are of a high standard. The monitoring and sharing of good practice enhances the professional dialogue that occurs throughout the day. There is a strong team ethic that has effectively supported and sustained new members of staff. Responsibilities for management of the faculty are shared appropriately. The faculty has made good progress with the issues arising from the last inspection. The faculty is housed in portable accommodation some distance from the main school buildings, which causes some loss of teaching time at the start of lessons. The condition of two of these rooms is unsatisfactory and there is no immediate access to computers. Insufficient use is made of information and communications technology in the teaching of mathematics across all the five years. The arrangement that some classes receive lessons in information and communications technology and others do not is unsatisfactory. The school development plan includes the introduction of a school approach to development of numerical skills. The faculty needs to take the lead with this initiative and build on the school audit that was carried out recently. There is considerable capacity within the faculty to take forward the issues raised in this report.

## **SCIENCE**

87. The 1999 National Curriculum test results for 14 year olds were close to the national average, with 59 per cent of pupils obtaining Level 5, or above, and 19 per cent Level 6 or above. By comparison with similar schools, results were close to the national average for Level 5 or above, but below the national average for Level 6 or above. There was little difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Since the last inspection, the overall trend in science results has been rising at about the same rate as the national trend. However, the 1999 results were not as good as those obtained in 1998. The 2000 results show a significant improvement on those for 1999. Seventy-four per cent of pupils obtained Level 5 or above and 40 per cent of pupils obtaining Level 6 or above. The reason for this improvement is that the school now attaches far more importance to the National Curriculum tests taken at the end of Year 9 than it has in previous years and has developed teaching and learning strategies to raise pupils' standards of performance.
88. On entry to the school the attainment of pupils is only slightly above average. At the end of their first year in school, however, attainment is above average. Higher attaining pupils understand that all substances are made up of particles, understand the laws of reflection of light, can describe the relationships between predators and their prey and can draw conclusions to

science investigations based on evidence obtained during an experiment. Lower attaining pupils are less secure in their understanding, but can, for example, describe a food chain and understand that, for a stationary object, forces are balanced.

89. Inspection evidence shows that, by the age of 14, pupils of all abilities have learned new skills, increased their knowledge of scientific facts and their understanding of scientific concepts and have made progress in investigative science. For example, high attaining pupils can recall that neutrons and protons are contained in an atomic nucleus which is surrounded by orbiting electrons and that elements are arranged in groups corresponding to the number of electrons in the outermost electron orbit. They are also able to track the energy pathway from the sun via plants and coal and power stations, to the heat and light energy released from an electric light bulb. Lower attaining pupils are able to indicate the position and the function of organs in the human body, such as the liver, understand that heat energy is lost more quickly from the body of a small animal than a large one and that, hence, small animals often need more fur than larger ones living in similar environments. Significant progress has been made since their entry to the school and this represents good levels of pupil achievement in science by the end of Year 9.
90. In 1999 the results of examinations for GCSE were well above average with 61 per cent of pupils gaining grades A\* to C. All pupils entered for the examination gained at least a grade G. The number of grades achieved at the highest level, A\*, was less than the national average. The performance of girls was better than that of boys. The results in science were better than those for English and mathematics. The trend since the previous inspection was downward. By comparison with the results, which these pupils obtained at the age of 14, these results represent good added value. The GCSE results obtained in 2000, show a significant improvement on the 1999 results with 72 per cent of pupils obtaining grades A\* to C. In these examinations the number of pupils obtaining the highest grades has also increased and boys results are better than those for girls. By comparison with the test results obtained when these pupils were aged 14, the GCSE results show that pupils are making good progress through Years 10 and 11 and achieving standards that are well above expectations.
91. Inspection evidence shows that standards, overall, at the beginning of Year 11 are high. However, attainment in lessons at the beginning of a new academic year does not yet reflect the very high level of examination performance obtained by pupils in the most recent GCSE examinations. Nevertheless, high attaining pupils, at the start of Year 11, are able to understand that DNA is a very large molecule which has a three-dimensional helical structure consisting of four bases surrounded by sugars. Pupils whose attainment is in the middle of the range, have a good understanding of magnetism and can explain that electric current is a flow of electrical charge. The lowest attaining pupils do not now follow the normal GCSE course. Rather, they follow a course, called 'Science Plus', which leads to a recognised certificate of achievement and which, if pupils obtain sufficient marks during the course, may lead to accreditation equivalent to a lower GCSE grade. These pupils, for example, whilst appreciating the differences between series and parallel electrical circuits, have little understanding of current flow. Overall, pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in science.
92. All attainment targets are well covered and investigative work is well integrated into the teaching programme. Pupils are encouraged to make hypotheses and to explain results in scientific terms. The standard of literacy is, overall, good. Higher attaining pupils cope well with extended writing. They use scientific terms with confidence and spelling is good. Less able pupils are less confident and tend to be more restricted in the range and extent of their written work, often limiting their writing to short sentences in which spelling and the use of scientific terms are less secure. Standards of numeracy, whilst good overall, are a weakness among lower attaining pupils. The use of information and computer technology to support learning is still far from satisfactory. This was highlighted as a weakness in the previous report. Reports issued to parents provide useful information on attitudes and progress, but give limited details about levels of attainment and do not provide focused, subject-specific, strengths and weaknesses nor targets for improvement.

93. Throughout the school the quality of teaching is very good. In Years 7 to 9, teaching was at least good in all but one lesson observed. In most, teaching was very good and, in one lesson, it was excellent. In Years 10 and 11 teaching was at least good in all but one lesson, in which it was satisfactory, and in many it was very good. Teachers make use of their very good subject knowledge in providing very effective explanations and in asking questions, which challenge or assess pupils' knowledge and understanding. They give clear objectives which pupils understand, classroom management and organisation are very effective, and the pace of lessons matches the needs and tasks of pupils. Lessons are, on the whole, very well planned. There are a very few lessons, however, in which planning needs to be more focused so that the pace of the lesson is maintained. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and homework either consolidates or extends class work. Teachers manage pupils very well and time is rarely wasted during lessons. A small minority of lessons, however, are over-directed and there is insufficient opportunity for independent learning. Whilst books are always marked and comments are often made, marking rarely indicates the level at which pupils have performed nor does it indicate how pupils can improve.
94. The identification of appropriate and challenging learning objectives coupled with good support for pupils' learning, enables pupils, throughout the school, to make good progress in improving their knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts and information. In the majority of lessons pupils work hard and at a good pace. When given the opportunity to do so, pupils work well independently and in groups, think out problems for themselves and concentrate hard. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of very good support by classroom assistants and because teachers have a good knowledge of their individual education plans.
95. The behaviour of pupils and their attitudes to science are both good. Pupils listen well to their teachers, respond positively to the various activities and show interest and enjoyment. Most pupils answer and ask questions well and have the confidence to discuss scientific ideas and experimental results with their teachers and with other pupils.
96. The science curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. While the allocation of curriculum time in Years 7 to 9 is adequate, curriculum time for Years 10 and 11 is low at only 75 per cent of the national average. This has an adverse effect upon the opportunity for revision time toward the end of the course and puts additional pressure on teachers.
97. The science department is very well led by an able and dedicated head of faculty who is supported by a very able deputy. However, his effectiveness is impaired by other, additional, management responsibilities within the school. Curriculum planning is very good, but planning for the integrated use of information and communications technology in lessons is unsatisfactory. Procedures for assessment are well established and are used effectively to monitor progress, identify and support underachievement, and improve attainment. While some monitoring of teaching takes place within the department, there is no formal monitoring of teaching on a regular basis. Even though the number of laboratories is adequate, the size of some laboratories leads to overcrowding with some larger groups of pupils. Teaching staff are well qualified, their number is sufficient to provide adequately for the curriculum and they are effectively deployed. Technical support for the department is good. Resources, in terms of books and scientific equipment, are generally good. However, the provision of up-to-date computers and appropriate software, is poor.
98. Improvement since the last inspection is good. Attainment, described as sound or better in the previous report, is now good. Learning, then described as being sound with some good features is now good and teaching, previously sound or better, is now very good.

## **ART**

99. Standards at the end of Year 9 are generally consistent with those expected of 14 year olds. Teacher assessments show that in 1999, the majority of pupils were meeting or exceeding national expectations. Girls' performance was significantly better than that of boys. Pupils use their sketchbooks effectively to record visual information and to develop their artistic ideas. All

pupils can use a range of two and three-dimensional materials and techniques such as drawing, painting, collage, textile work and ceramics to communicate their ideas. By the end of Year 9, drawing skills of most pupils are well developed. The study of artists is used to help them develop interesting ideas and approaches for their own work. Year 9 pupils use their study of the Art Nouveau style to develop designs for printmaking. Pupils use technical words and phrases accurately to talk about their own and others' work. They can analyse their own artwork and plan how to improve the methods and techniques that they are using. Satisfactory use is made of pupils' numeracy skills when they draw from observation and need to judge the size and proportion of natural and made objects.

100. The standards reached by 16 year olds at the end of Key Stage 4 are above the national average. Over the last three years, with the exception of 1999, the percentage of pupils gaining the higher GCSE A\* - C grades have been above national averages. In 2000 almost three-quarters of the pupils entered for the examination gained a high grade and the majority achieved or exceeded the grade expected of them. The performance of girls was better than that of boys. In lessons and in the work seen higher attaining pupils produce thorough preparatory studies. When pupils use craft skills such as batik, mixed media or textiles their work is often of a higher standard. Pupils produce striking and skilful work in textiles based on their studies of natural forms. They respond well to the themes that are designed to enable them to explore environmental, social and cultural issues. A Year 10 pupil produced a highly imaginative but well modelled ceramic sculpture based on the study of Japanese art. When work is not of this standard, pupils tend to use a narrow range of visual ideas or lack the technical skill to show how ideas can be explored, developed and presented. Standards are high when interesting images are combined with the control of materials and techniques. The standards of work of pupils with special educational needs are generally consistent with previous levels of attainment, and a small but significant number of these pupils attain high standards in art
101. Pupils' achievement at Key Stage 3 is satisfactory. Pupils make satisfactory or better progress as a result of developing a knowledge of the steps needed to produce a successful piece of art and design work. Pupils' learning is also advanced by the study of artists to develop visual ideas. They benefit from the use of ideas from different times and places, such as examples from nineteenth century European and Native American art. Their evaluations skills develop to the extent that they become able to judge whether practical work is successful and to set themselves targets for improvement. Pupils' achievement at Key Stage 4 is good. Higher attaining pupils acquire the study skills necessary for planning, organising and improving the standard of their work. Most pupils make rapid progress because GCSE standards are made clear to them and support is provided to help them meet or exceed their targets. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good.
102. In art, pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour are good throughout the school. They are interested in the subject and are enthusiastic when given the opportunity to develop their art, craft and design skills. They are keen to succeed, listen to teachers carefully and use the advice they are given to improve the standard of their work. Pupils work diligently and are capable of extended periods of concentration and sustained effort. Most pupils are conscientious, helpful and courteous.
103. Overall teaching in art is good. At Key Stage 3 it is mostly satisfactory and at Key Stage 4 it is nearly always good. Teachers are skilful in the use of their subject knowledge to introduce pupils to the work of artists and to new ideas or themes. Lesson planning and preparation are good and specific learning objectives are set and shared with pupils. Pupils are motivated by skilful practical demonstrations of drawing, watercolour and clay techniques. Teachers' use of probing questions, praise and encouragement helps to sustain pupils' momentum during art lessons. Good use of resources includes examples of artists', pupils' and teachers' work. Teachers know the strengths and weaknesses of their pupils and they use this knowledge effectively to help pupils adapt and refine their work. Homework is set and marked regularly to support and extend class work. In Key Stage 3, teachers plan to meet the needs of all pupils, including those on the special educational needs register. Attention is given to showing pupils of different attainment levels how to structure their approach to a task but this method should be more widely used. Teachers encourage pupils to review the progress of their artwork but

regular references should be made to National Curriculum levels to remind pupils about standards in art. At Key Stage 4, teachers use GCSE art assessment criteria regularly in their talk with pupils and give them practical advice to consolidate or improve the standard of their work.

104. Art teachers work well together as a team, are committed to promoting the status of the subject and to raising standards. The department analyses pupils' performance and 'action targets' are set and used with pupils at Key Stage 3 but these need to be more closely linked to the National Curriculum art levels that pupils are striving to achieve. A useful plan to monitor pupils' progress at Key Stage 4 is now being implemented to help those who might not otherwise reach the standards expected of them. Given the range of media, subject initiatives and priorities that have to be managed the amount of art technician time available is insufficient. The department has made very good use of its many links with the community, for example, the production of a millennium tapestry produced for a local church. This helps to enrich pupils' learning in art and makes an important contribution to the cultural life in the school and the community.
105. At Key Stage 3, standards have been maintained since the last inspection. At Key Stage 4, standards have fluctuated, although with the exception of 1999, they have remained above the national average. Observational drawing is now given greater emphasis and pupils at both key stages have a sound knowledge of the work of the established artists. Accommodation has been improved and, overall, the department has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

106. By the time pupils leave the school at the age of 16, they achieve standards in design and technology, which are above the national average. Results in the subject are slightly better than in other subjects that are studied by all pupils in the school. This is a good improvement since the last inspection, when standards were judged to be close to the national average. In GCSE examinations in 2000, 65 per cent of pupils gained grades A\*-C, which was above the national average. These results were an improvement on 1999. Both sets of results form part of a gradual improvement since the time of the previous report. Throughout this period, girls have done better than boys, despite action taken by the department to improve the performance of boys. Analysis of most recent results shows that food technology and textiles, for which high proportions of girls opt, have slightly better results than resilient materials, graphics and systems. It is difficult to know what more the department can do to improve the performance of boys, beyond the existing tracking of the progress of pupils expected to perform around the GCSE D/C grade boundary.
107. At the age of 14, attainment in all aspects of the subject is above expectations. This represents good progress from the time pupils enter the school at the age of 11, when skills and understanding in the subject are mainly below what is normally expected.
108. Inspection evidence confirms above average standards for both 14 and 16 year old pupils. Very good standards in Year 11 result from the way pupils consolidate and use the design process. For example, in systems control, they are imaginative and creative in making mechanisms which transport a man and deliver him at a particular point. Learning is good in graphics, resilient materials, textiles and food technology because pupils plan their own work. Higher attaining pupils are very good at gathering and analysing information, though the questionnaires they sometimes devise are not always in a suitable format and they give insufficient attention to some of the questions they include. Pupils present and finish their products to high standards. This is because they work accurately to their patterns when sewing fabrics to make good quality period costumes. In food technology, they apply their good knowledge and understanding of diet and foods to prepare dishes for particular purposes. From their understanding of the properties of materials, pupils make appropriate selections when, for example, they make garden seats and specialised furniture. Knowledge of how the body works means pupils who work in childcare understand the importance of preparing for parenthood.



109. Throughout Years 7, 8 and 9, pupils learn how to plan, make, test and evaluate a wide range of products. The benefits of this are seen when they produce moisture testers, pasta meals, toys using cam mechanisms and ties in fabrics. By Year 9, pupils select suitable materials or ingredients and methods for making products. Pupils are good at using tools and equipment and finish their work to a high standard. Some pupils are not as successful at evaluating their work. This is because they do not always link their conclusions with the specifications which they have drawn up with care.
110. The quality of teaching is consistent throughout all year groups. Most is good, some is very good and there are occasional examples of excellence. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. This represents a good improvement since the last inspection, when teaching was sound in most lessons.
111. An effective feature of teaching which has a good impact on pupils' learning is in teachers' strong knowledge of the subject. This enables them to plan and present lessons which inspire pupils to do their best. Teachers have high expectations that all pupils will work hard and behave well. Nearly all pupils respond positively, concentrate on their work and make good gains over time in their planning and practical skills. A very small number of pupils, mainly in Years 9 and 10, are sometimes inattentive which means their work is not as good as it should be. Teachers support individual pupils very well; as a result, lessons move along briskly and the work of pupils with special educational needs is often indistinguishable from that of other pupils. This is achieved in all aspects of the subject by making very good use of the skills of staff who support the learning of these pupils. Good classroom management means that pupils can always get on with their work and work safely.
112. Teachers' assessments of learning and attainment at the end of topics are accurate and lead to targets for the pupils' next topic. Regular use of homework extends pupils' knowledge and understanding. Like topic work, homework is always marked, but not enough opportunities are taken to challenge pupils through continuous feedback.
113. Progress in the use of information and communications technology since the last inspection is limited, largely because pupils do not have easy access to equipment. Computers are rarely used in Years 7, 8 and 9 and this restricts the progress of many pupils. In Years 10 and 11, some pupils use computers to help their learning when designing and presenting their folios. Nevertheless, these instances are too few. Better, but still insufficient, progress has been made in the development of literacy. Although teachers use banks of words displayed in classrooms and accurate terminology in lessons, pupils do not benefit from planned opportunities to develop their writing and speaking skills. The same is true for numeracy, where teachers miss chances to improve pupils' skills of measuring, quick recall and estimation.
114. Leadership and management of the department are very good. Teachers work well as a team and identify strengths and weaknesses of their work. This is done through very thorough analysis of coursework and examination results. There is a high level of co-ordination of planning but the monitoring of teaching is not rigorous enough.
115. The department is in a strong position to move forward with the integration of information and communications technology into teaching and to develop aspects of monitoring the work of teachers. Together with the commitment and expertise of staff, this means the department is well placed to maintain and extend the high quality of work being produced.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

116. GCSE results in geography are consistently above the national average. They were significantly above the national average in 1999 and rose again in 2000. Girls tend to perform better than boys, although both groups achieve standards that are above the national averages for boys and girls. Pupils also tend to achieve higher standards in geography than in the other subjects they take in the school. Geography is the most popular option subject at the age of 14

and the school regularly enters well over 100 candidates for GCSE. Boys score less well than girls at coursework at both tiers of the examination. The improvement of coursework marks, particularly for boys, has been identified as an early target for raising standards, as has extending those pupils who are capable of achieving the highest, A\*, grade. The GCSE course is very well organised with a clear and progressive focus from the beginning of Year 10 on the written papers of the GCSE examination and inspection evidence indicates that standards are being maintained.

117. Standards of attainment at the age of 14, are well above national expectations. Girls attain higher standards than boys. Evidence from the inspection confirms the accuracy of teachers' estimates of attainment. These are based on a rapidly improving system of monitoring from Year 7 and on setting targets for pupils that they understand and can achieve. This system provides a good support for pupils' progress but it is not being implemented consistently by all who teach the subject.
118. The overall quality of teaching is good and it is very good at Key Stage 3. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. The full-time subject specialists have very good command of their subject so that the organisation of their materials, the marshalling of information and the clarity of their delivery ensure that pupils develop a good knowledge and understanding of the subject. However, in a few lessons which fell below the generally very good standards of teaching at Key Stage 3 the lack of subject specialism of some of the teachers deployed to teach the subject sometimes slowed the pace of delivery of lessons and consequently slowed pupils' progress.
119. Teachers' planning is very good and is based on a good scheme of work at Key Stage 3 and the examination syllabus at Key Stage 4. Varied teaching and learning materials are prepared in advance of lessons so that teaching and learning are continuous and little time is wasted. Pupils respond well to the visual stimulus of very good video materials that are well supported by word frames to guide learning as, for example, in a very successful lesson to a middle attaining group in Year 9 on the rain forests. Teachers habitually reinforce good learning skills and careful annotation of good diagrams receives praise. Pupils become very good analysts of photographs, maps, text and statistics and, by the beginning of Key Stage 4, are capable of organising their materials well and extracting information from different sources effectively. They become very competent learners.
120. The careful selection of materials to suit the needs of individuals is a substantial strength of teaching and learning. Those of high prior attainment are supported by the use of texts that extend their learning, for example, in the higher attaining groups in Year 9. Extension material is regularly provided in Year 7 to extend those who finish tasks early. Provision for those with low prior attainment is very good. In two lessons in Year 7, very good teaching and effective support for the hearing-impaired pupils allowed them to take a full part in the lesson and they made good progress as a consequence. Most teachers make their learning objectives for lessons very clear so that pupils know what they have to do and why. This helps pupils to maintain a clear focus on their work throughout the lesson.
121. Lessons are generally conducted at a good pace. Rapid questioning is a particular strength of teachers because it draws out and develops knowledge and understanding: for example, in a very good lesson on soil erosion in Year 11, the teacher linked what they had learned previously from a number of case studies to focus on soil erosion and established a clear link between over-population in Kenya and Nepal with the loss of topsoil and showed how careful soil conservation measures in the more economically developed American dust bowl could manage the problem. Pupils are skilfully and firmly directed to expected outcomes and well-planned homework gives pupils the opportunity to investigate topics on their own at home. Support for individual pupils is very good and in one Year 7 lesson, for example, two pupils who were unclear about the use of grid references were skilfully helped to transfer their theoretical learning about grid references to find points on an Ordnance Survey map.
122. Linked to good and very good teaching are good and very good pupil learning and good progress. Pupils enter the school slightly above the standards expected of all pupils nationally.

- By the end Key Stage 3 they are well above the national average. Progress across Key Stage 3 is very good for all levels of prior attainment. Similarly at Key Stage 4, progress is very good.
123. Pupils' behaviour is usually good and often very good; no unsatisfactory behaviour was seen. This contributes significantly to the standards being achieved.
  124. The department is very well led, organised and managed, with a strong focus on maintaining and improving high standards. Development planning is good and linked closely to the school development plan. The teaching of basic skills, however, is unplanned and has some weaknesses. Numerical skills are used regularly so that numeracy is constantly reinforced. However, there is no strategy to develop literacy skills and, whilst outcomes are good, the range of pupils' writing is narrow. Fieldwork at Key Stage 3 is being redeveloped to reinforce course work at Key Stage 4, but at the moment no fieldwork is planned for Year 9.
  125. The use of information and communications technology in the geography curriculum at both key stages is an acknowledged weakness and the department is not meeting the requirement that part of the geography curriculum should be taught through the medium of information and communications technology. Resources for learning are unsatisfactory because there is a shortage of basic textbooks; the need for pupils to share books sometimes slowed the progress pupils made in lessons.
  126. The team of seven geography teachers includes four who hold senior management posts in the school. Between them they teach 13 per cent of the timetable. At times their whole school duties do not allow sufficient time for the preparation and the organisation of materials for teaching and learning. The carefully prepared resource base eases this problem substantially but does place additional demands on the head of department.
  127. Difficulties beyond the department's responsibility have impeded progress since the last inspection. In particular, well over a third of lessons are taught outside the specialist rooms. As a consequence, teachers have to carry lesson resources around the school and this causes additional wear and tear on soft backed books and makes it difficult to make full use of the subject's audio-visual resources. Nevertheless, this is a very good and effective department.

## **HISTORY**

128. The department is lively, purposeful and improving. Inspection evidence indicates that attainment at the age of 14 is above expectations, with some pupils achieving standards that are well above this level. Pupils acquire and consolidate information, successfully fitting new knowledge into an historical context. The recall of earlier work is good. A Year 7 class quickly sorted out the difference between fact and legend; another developed good skills of observation and historical deduction from the study of broken pottery. In lower attaining groups, pupils' knowledge and understanding of history is often at a higher standard than their ability to write about it.
129. In the 1999 GCSE examination, the percentage of pupils who achieved A\*-C grades was close to the national average. The proportion of pupils achieving A\*-G grades was above the national average. In 2000 there was a substantial improvement over the 1999 results and those obtained in the previous three years. Inspection evidence confirms standards of attainment to be above expectations. In the GCSE classes at the beginning of the Year 10, many pupils show good potential. One Year 10 class, for example, demonstrated good understanding of the difficulties of statesmen at the end of the First World War as they role played the position of negotiators. Coursework is detailed and the best is very good. Specific plans are in place for the use of information and communications technology as a tool for history but are delayed because the suite of computers is not yet operational. Great efforts are being made to develop basic skills through the teaching of historical and general vocabulary, and spelling is usefully tested. Pupils need to be encouraged to make use of the new words they are learning in their writing.
130. Teaching is a major strength. Pupils respond well to interesting work, orderly classrooms and good class management. There is a tradition of hard work in the department. Behaviour is very

good. Pupils come to lessons expecting and prepared to work. Many pupils are engaged by the topics studied. There are healthy signs of enquiry and teachers make time to listen to the questions and comments of pupils. A characteristic of history teaching is that the specialist teachers believe in the value of their subject and this is reflected in their enthusiasm for it. This is often infectious and has a strong impact on pupils' learning. All teachers prepare lessons thoroughly and present work to their classes in a variety of ways. Many source sheets are of high quality and teachers are careful to train pupils to research from books as well. Tasks are well set to match the needs of pupils and these include extension work for quicker workers. In a Year 7 class, dramatisation and good story telling were well used to reinforce learning. This provided a good example of the art of story telling to fire pupils' imaginations. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated in lessons and achieve standards that are good in relation to their previous levels of attainment. Cross-curricular links are made with English and art, as in the study of poetry and pictures from the First World War, and with geography in extensive map work from Year 7.

131. Pupils' learning is good. From Year 7 pupils learn how to tease out historical information from a wide variety of written, pictorial and video sources. Issues of stereotyping are well addressed, such as in the study of the black peoples of the Americas. Learning through empathy is a strength in the subject and resources are used effectively to promote a deeper understanding of historical issues. A Year 9 class, for example, were clearly moved by the spoken accounts on audiotape of life in the trenches by men who had experienced the horror and degradation of the First World War. Artefacts from the fields of Flanders were used well to enhance pupils' learning. Rigorous demands are made on higher attaining pupils. All who have chosen the subject as an option are expected to achieve high levels of concentration and personal involvement in the work.
132. The head of department took up post only two weeks before the inspection. He has an initial development plan with important emphases, for example, on less prescriptive schemes of work, on the development of expeditions and on the introduction of more prescriptive extended writing. He is already giving a clear educational direction to work in the department and is committed to continuous improvement. Attainment targets are built in to a new assessment cycle. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' social and cultural development, and ways of increasing spiritual awareness through history are being explored.
133. There are many colourful historical displays in the two specialist rooms, which help to create a good learning environment for the subject. Many pupils do not gain benefit from this because many history lessons are taught outside the specialist rooms. Textbooks are in short supply and books have to be shared in Years 7 and 9.
134. The department has made good progress since the last inspection. The only area in which little progress has been made is that of accommodation. Teaching has greatly improved. There is now a good variety of activities in lessons. More opportunities are provided for pupils to speak and oral skills are encouraged. Pupils are also given clear guidance on how they can improve the quality of their written work.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY**

135. The standards achieved by pupils in information and communications technology at the end of Key Stage 3 are at the nationally expected level. In 2000 in the formal assessments at the end of this key stage 91 per cent of Year 9 pupils were judged by the school to have achieved Level 5 or above. This compares with a national average of about 60 per cent. Girls did better than boys in these assessments. Inspection evidence showed that the current cohorts of pupils are not meeting these high standards. At the end of Key Stage 4, standards achieved by the majority of pupils are below those normally expected. The school does not offer a GCSE in information and communications technology or a related subject. A small proportion of Year 10 and 11 pupils opt for a course leading to a GCSE in systems and control. Standards achieved relating to information and communications technology for the pupils on this course are satisfactory and sometimes good.

136. In the lessons and work seen at Key Stage 3, standards were mainly in line with the national expectation and sometimes higher than this. In one Year 8 class, for example, pupils made effective use of a graphics package to design and draw a board game. In another Year 9 class the majority of pupils made satisfactory progress in designing a logo, though the exercise being undertaken was relatively straightforward. Some good work was seen that had been undertaken by recent Year 9 pupils using software for presentations. However, overall standards at this key stage and at Key Stage 4 are adversely affected by the limited opportunities for pupils to consolidate newly acquired information and communications technology skills by their use in subjects across the curriculum. In particular there is a lack of opportunities for pupils to develop and use skills relating to spreadsheets and databases. Pupils also have limited opportunities to use the internet for research.
137. When given the opportunity pupils have positive attitudes to information and communications technology. Attentiveness in classes, with a few minor exceptions, is good. Most pupils are able to sustain concentration and complete the tasks that are set. A few pupils lack confidence in using the information and communications technology hardware and software and require much support in order to make further progress. Behaviour in classes is good. Relationships between pupils and with teachers are positive and supportive. In the larger classes in Key Stage 3 pupils deemed competent in the task being undertaken are identified as information and communications technology consultants and provide support for other pupils when this is required. However, the majority of pupils throughout both key stages are given insufficient opportunities to use computers independently. This means that many are not progressing sufficiently towards becoming autonomous computer users.
138. Teaching and learning in discrete information and communications technology lessons are always at least satisfactory and sometimes good. However, the overall effectiveness of lessons is reduced by inadequate access to computer resources for the pupils. Specialist information and communications technology teachers plan their lessons well and have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject. Some non-specialist teachers, however, have limited skills and also limited confidence in using them appropriately within their subjects. The management of pupils is effective and high standards of discipline are maintained. Discrete information and communications technology lessons during Key Stage 3 contain an appropriate range of activities, with pupils working in groups and on an individual basis. Teachers in some classes had difficulties in effectively meeting the widely varying needs of the pupils. Homework is regularly set, accurately marked and returned to the pupils. Expectations of pupils during lessons are appropriate. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into the various teaching groups. Effective additional support is provided by support assistants in many of the classes.
139. The statutory requirements of the National Curriculum are met at Key Stage 3. Pupils' information and communications technology skills are progressively developed throughout this key stage mainly as a result of the discrete provision for the subject. Only limited opportunities are provided for pupils to use appropriate information and communications technology in their other subjects at this key stage. Statutory requirements of the National Curriculum are not met at Key Stage 4. During this key stage there is no discrete information and communications technology provision for the majority of pupils and only very limited opportunities for its use to support subjects. Use of information and communications technology in almost all subjects is very patchy and lacks overall planning and co-ordination. Good, planned use of information and communications technology is made in English and some good use of spreadsheets is made to support aspects of the mathematics work. Design and technology also make good use of control to support the work, though several opportunities for the further use of information and communications technology in this subject are being missed. Elsewhere very little use is made of information and communications technology; the main constraints are poor access to resources and a lack of information and communications technology skills and confidence among the teachers involved.
140. Management of information and communications technology in the school is unsatisfactory. Overall responsibilities are unclear and this is impeding necessary progress and improvements. An information and communications technology co-ordinator is responsible for co-ordinating developments at KS3 and another teacher is responsible for these aspects at Key Stage 4. A

further member of staff is responsible for the purchase and deployment of the information and communications technology resources and for the technician. At the time of the inspection there was a lack of a shared vision for the subject, its development and the resources required to support these developments properly. Monitoring and review of the department's work include class observations and some sharing of good practice. Although the main information and communications technology teachers know and understand the subject well, a significant proportion of the non-specialist teachers are not skilled or confident enough to be able to incorporate appropriate information and communications technology into their subjects. The long-term absence of the information and communications technology technician also means that much of the required support cannot be provided. There are not enough general purpose computers to support information and communications technology work properly in the school. Those that are available support a good range of up-to-date software but the ratio of pupils to modern computers at the time of the inspection was approaching 15:1. This is much less favourable than is now found in most schools. Very limited opportunities are also provided for pupils to access the internet.

141. The school has made limited progress in meeting the issues identified at the last inspection. An appropriate discrete information and communications technology course has been developed for Key Stage 3. However, there are continuing weaknesses. In particular, there is a need to improve the level of information and communications technology resources and pupils' access to them, the skills and confidence of the non-specialist teachers and the extent to which information and communications technology is integrated into most subjects.

## **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

142. The attainment of pupils at the age of 14 is consistent with national expectations. Teacher assessments indicate a falling trend, with girls doing slightly better than boys. Pupils listen well to the teachers' consistent use of the foreign language and identify key details in short extracts, whether spoken or written. In oral work they imitate with reasonably good pronunciation and can express ideas and opinions in brief exchanges. Pupils in top sets in Years 8 and 9 are beginning to write creatively and in a range of tenses, though most written work is limited to adapting a model. A good deal of inaccuracy reflects pupils' difficulties in mastering basic grammatical concepts such as number and gender. Pupils have limited opportunities to read for their own enjoyment and rarely use computers to assist their learning. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in appropriate sets.
143. At the age of 16 standards of attainment remain broadly consistent with national expectations. Results at GCSE at the higher A\*-C grades were well above the national average in French in 1999. Boys' attainment was below the national average for boys, while the performance of girls was above the national average for girls. In 2000, results declined sharply, especially for girls. Results in German were well below the national average in 1999, for both boys and girls, though results in 2000 were well above the national average for 1999. In Spanish, results in 1999 were above the national average, with both boys and girls above their respective national averages. Overall results in 2000 were similar but there was a decline in boys' results, with girls remaining above the national average for girls. Pupils did slightly worse in 1999 in all three languages than they did in other school subjects. There is no clear trend in results, though they are lower than those achieved at the time of the last inspection.
144. In lessons and in work seen during the inspection, pupils maintain satisfactory standards in comprehension skills. Speaking skills also improve, though pupils are not confident in extended conversation. Pronunciation and intonation tend to be weak and many pupils continue to make basic errors. Progress in writing is much better, and pupils are given far more opportunity to write creatively. Accuracy in writing remains very variable, though content is good. There are good examples of personal writing in coursework in a range of tenses and registers. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, especially in listening and reading.
145. Attitudes to learning a modern foreign language are nearly always positive. Pupils say they see a value to learning a subject which is different and might be useful in their future. Behaviour in lessons is good. There is very little passivity and pupils concentrate well over the long 60-

- minute lesson. Pupils work well with each other in pairs, though there is some reluctance to volunteer answers in whole-class situations. Learning is enhanced by the good relationships, between pupils and with teachers, which characterise lessons.
146. Teaching is good. It is best where pupils are placed in sets according to levels of attainment. There is some very good teaching in French, and teaching is consistently better in French and Spanish than in German. Most teachers offer two languages. They have good subject knowledge and use the foreign language consistently in lessons to provide appropriate models and foster positive attitudes in oral work. Planning for individual lessons is good. In the best lessons there is a range of activities covering all skills, conducted at a good pace and matching work to the abilities of pupils. In a Year 11 French lesson on making complaints at a hotel, pupils practised oral situations, listened to cassette recordings of exchanges at the reception desk, and wrote a letter about their own negative experiences; this work consolidated their knowledge of the relevant vocabulary and structures whilst challenging them to think creatively. In some lessons, especially in Key Stage 4, where all teaching groups are of mixed attainment levels, teachers struggle to match individual needs so that gifted pupils are not always stretched and lower attaining pupils find some tasks beyond them.
147. Expectations of behaviour are always high, though the challenge in tasks varies and is not always adequate in lessons in Key Stage 3 and early in Year 10. As a result, though pupils occasionally use the foreign language in class situations, this feature is not embedded. Pupils benefit from regular opportunities to work with different partners in oral work. The quality of learning is enhanced by effective use of humour. Teachers make good use of overhead projectors, cassette recordings and worksheets, but a lack of computers and only occasional use of video and reading schemes somewhat limit the range of learning experiences. Marking is generally helpful in Key Stage 4, as pupils prepare for GCSE, but is less satisfactory in Key Stage 3, where there are few comments and little attempt to provide points of reference to improve future work. Homework is set regularly and usually complements work done in class.
148. A strength of the faculty is the provision of three modern languages from entry in Year 7. About 50 pupils in Years 8 and 9 take a second language and can continue with both in Key Stage 4, though very few do. The time for studying the second language is inadequate, as at the previous inspection. It is now taken from time allocated to the first language, so that progress in both languages is inhibited. After pupils are placed in attainment groups in Years 8 and 9, they are back in mixed groups in Key Stage 4, and this causes problems for both teachers and pupils. Procedures are weak for assessing pupils' work and for using assessment information to guide pupils and set targets for them. Some monitoring of the work of the faculty takes place, for example, through lesson observation, but this is not followed up systematically to have an impact on teaching and learning. The faculty is thoughtfully led, as a result of which these weaknesses are being addressed in development planning, but there need to be more drive and shared commitment across the three languages in order to convert planning into effective action. Accommodation and resources are generally satisfactory, with minor weaknesses. Display in classrooms assists learning through the provision of key words and phrases.
149. Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. In many ways standards in skills and in teaching remain similar to those reported at that time. Criticisms of the limited time allocation for a second language and of assessment procedures still apply. Standards of attainment in GCSE have fallen; far more pupils, especially from the lower end of the attainment range, are now entered as a result of language study in Key Stage 4 becoming compulsory.

## **MUSIC**

150. According to formal teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 3 in 1999, standards in music were above national expectations. There are no teacher assessment results available for previous years. In work observed during the inspection, standards in music at Key Stage 3 are about the same as national expectations. This is due to the teaching of music alongside drama in Years 8 and 9, consequently diluting the coverage of the National Curriculum. The benefit from including drama in these lessons, however, more than compensates for this omission. Pupils in Year 7 begin their music lessons in the school with a variety of previous

musical experiences. So far in Year 7 they have listened to a variety of compositions and discussed the reason why composers compose. Pupils in Year 8 have listened to a section from 'Peter and the Wolf' depicting the grandfather and observed the points about the music which help to portray this character aurally. Discussion includes the use of some musical vocabulary and confident reference to the musical elements. Pupils in Year 9 have started a project on music and the media. They are also able to use some musical vocabulary confidently and recognise instruments of the orchestra from a passage played on a CD.

151. The GCSE results for music in 1999 were above both the school and national averages and show a continuation of the high standards achieved since the last inspection. Eighty per cent of candidates regularly achieve grades in the A\* - C range. Inspection evidence indicates that these standards are being maintained and that pupils' work is generally above expectations. Pupils follow the performing arts course during Year 10, spending more time on their discrete subjects in Year 11. Pupils in Year 10 look into the activities of the 16th century Commedia dell'Arte in drama with a view to using in their compositions the knowledge gained about the related music. Pupils in Year 11 have composed a set of theme and variations and are exploring other forms of music in the compilation of a varied portfolio of compositions.
152. Learning at Key Stage 3 is good. Pupils in Year 7 listen to pieces of music and describe what they hear in terms of the elements of music. No specific music lessons were observed in Year 8, but the drama work contained the sustained development of a character, for which the pupils will write suitable music in their next lessons. Pupils in Year 9 listen to five excerpts from film music, work out to which genre the pieces belong and discuss the characteristics to be found in music of that particular genre. Learning at Key Stage 4 is very good. Pupils in Year 10 are using the techniques of the 16th century composers to write music suitable for use with a drama scene from that period. Pupils in Year 11 concentrate on the requirements of the music GCSE examination. To add a contrasting composition to their portfolio, they are exploring the construction of a pop song, and have listened to 'Don't pay the ferryman' and an arrangement of 'It ain't necessarily so' to contrast the different composition techniques used.
153. Work that is carefully matched to the needs of pupils features strongly in the planning of all lessons, with activities prepared for extending the higher attainers and suitably adjusted resources and demands arranged for lower attainers. Pupils with special educational needs are not given any extra support but work alongside their peers, and, with their assistance, achieve good results. This was particularly obvious with two hearing impaired pupils who, through technical assistance and the support of their friends, showed clear enjoyment in the lesson and made good progress as a consequence. Progress made by gifted and talented pupils is very good.
154. Attitudes and behaviour in music are good at Key Stage 3. Pupils are very enthusiastic and settle down to tasks quickly. During questioning they contribute constructive ideas, raising their hands to answer questions and address the teachers politely. Pupils listen attentively to the teacher and participate well in lessons. During performances to the remainder of the class, the listeners attend to the performance quietly, listening for the points of focus outlined earlier by the teacher. Good relationships exist among the pupils and between the pupils and staff. Pupils also work well in groups, collaborating well to produce a worthwhile result. Attitudes and behaviour at Key Stage 4 are very good. Displaying all the characteristics noted at Key Stage 3, they are more confident and mature in their approach. This is largely due to age, but also to the experiences gained from the drama component of their lessons and the opportunities presented by the school to perform regularly in public and national competitions.
155. Teaching at both key stages is very good in the majority of lessons. The teachers have a friendly but professional manner with the pupils, to which the pupils respond positively by settling down to their work quickly, listening attentively or contributing sensibly to the discussion. New concepts are explained clearly so that the pupils understand how the new concept relates to the previous work, and how the previous learning can be used as a foundation for the new. Tasks are also clearly explained so that the pupils are able to start the task knowing what they have to do and how to do it. Teachers have excellent knowledge and understanding of the subject, and this enables them to plan the lessons with a range of progressively more challenging activities. Questioning is used effectively at the beginning of



the lessons to aid recall of the previous lesson, and during the lesson to check that the pupils have understood what is being taught, and to keep them focused on the task. The lessons are planned to make the most of the time available, and time also plays an important part when tasks are being set, as realistic goals are used to help the pupils concentrate on the end result. During practical work, the teachers circulate offering encouragement and helpful advice in an attempt to enable the pupils to achieve to the best of their ability. Homework extending the work covered in class is set regularly.

156. The department is managed by the head of music, who is also head of performing arts, and a second full-time teacher, both of whom are well-established teachers and excellent practitioners. Instrumental teaching is provided for 20 per cent of the school population. The department runs a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Ensembles have participated in national competitions, played in concerts both in the locality and in major cities in England, and have also undertaken trips to New York and Disneyworld where they were guest artists. Another trip to America is being proposed for February 2002. An annual production is held at a local theatre in which a large majority of all the backstage workers as well as performers are pupils from the school.
157. The department has an effective system for monitoring and assessing pupils' achievement, but the means of using the results of assessment to guide curriculum planning need more rigour. There is no central assessment policy and consequently no common system of assessment and no agreed system of reporting to parents. Similarly the use of target setting requires more consistency and formality. There is no opportunity for the head of department to formally observe the lessons of either the other classroom teacher or the instrumental teachers.
158. The department is hampered by a lack of up-to-date computers and the lack of facility to connect keyboards to the computers in the main computer centre, prohibiting the Year 10 and 11 pupils from accessing the composition software on the main system. The failings in computer provision were highlighted in the last report.
159. Accommodation is unsatisfactory, with some lessons being taught in a classroom some distance from the main teaching room. Teaching in this particular classroom involves importing all the necessary instruments and CD/cassette players and returning them after the lesson, as other subjects require the room. The journey is partly outside and the steps to the classroom are not user friendly when it is wet. Resources are insufficient to meet the needs of Curriculum 2000 as non-pitched percussion instruments and adequate computers are limited.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

160. Pupils' attainment in physical education by the end of Year 9 is above national expectations. This is due to consistently good teaching and because pupils have very positive attitudes towards learning. Pupils are grouped in some activities according to their prior attainment and this is reflected in the standards observed. For example, lower attaining boys achieve standards in football, which are below average, and higher attaining girls achieve above average standards in hockey. However, pupils in all groups understand techniques and are able to talk to each other about their work and suggest improvements. They know that it is important to prepare for strenuous physical activity and confidently suggest and lead appropriate warm-up activities. They have a good understanding of the effects of exercise on the body.
161. By the time that they leave school, pupils' overall attainment is in line with national expectations. The results of the first group of pupils to be entered for the GCSE examination in physical education in 1999 were well below the national average in the A\*-C range and these results were well below the standards achieved in their other subjects. In 2000, standards were still below average but had improved substantially on the previous year. In both years, girls' results were better than boys' results and by a greater margin than found nationally. Examination performance has been thoroughly analysed and measures for improvement put in place although more attention is still required in order to improve the achievement of boys. Inspection evidence indicates that the overall attainment of pupils currently in Year 11 is

broadly consistent with expectations for their age. Where pupils have substantial previous experience, for example in football, they achieve above average standards. A significant number of pupils achieve good standards in extra-curricular activities at local, county and sometimes national levels and this makes a good contribution to the overall standards in physical education throughout the school.

162. Pupils make good progress up to the end of Year 9. Good teaching ensures that basic skills are quickly acquired and that pupils learn to work productively with one other. In a Year 7 lesson, boys made very good progress in learning a basic gymnastic vocabulary of movement in which quality of performance was well emphasised. Good attention was also paid to the development of their literacy skills through the use of appropriate technical vocabulary. Well-designed prompt sheets gave pupils the confidence to talk to each other knowledgeably as they practised forward rolls. Similarly, girls in Year 7 made good progress in developing their basic racquet skills. They paid careful attention to their teacher's good explanations and demonstrations, which enabled them to concentrate on key features such as body position and height of bounce when helping each other to learn a forehand shot. As they progress through to Year 9 pupils are motivated by challenging and interesting activities. In a football lesson in Year 8, where pupils were improving their ball retention skills, higher attaining boys made good progress because the teacher skilfully adapted the activity in order to increase the demands made on them. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because teachers know them well and make good use of their individual education plans. Pupils following the GCSE course are also making good progress as a consequence of demanding and challenging skills practices. However in theory lessons work is not always sufficiently well matched to the needs of lower attaining pupils so that they do not always complete their written tasks.
163. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. Participation rates are very high and standards of kit are good. They work well together in pairs and groups and show good levels of concentration, even when not directly supervised by the teacher. Behaviour is uniformly good. Levels of sporting behaviour are high and good play is appreciated and applauded. Pupils respond well to the opportunities provided to exercise responsibility. These occur within lessons and in extra-curricular activities where, for example, pupils act as timekeepers and scorers in basketball matches or help to coach younger pupils in netball as part of their commitment to the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. A high proportion of pupils choose to take part in the very good programme of extra-curricular activities.
164. The quality of teaching from specialist teachers of physical education is good and sometimes it is very good. The small amount of non-specialist teaching in Years 10 and 11 is well supported. Teachers use their subject knowledge well in explanations, demonstrations, and in analysing pupils' performance. Lessons are well planned to meet National Curriculum and examination course criteria and take into account pupils' previous experience and achievements. Activities are demanding physically and teachers make pupils think hard about their performance when composing sequences of movement and devising tactics. In most lessons they challenge pupils progressively through the lesson. Competition is used well to maintain interest and increase motivation. Teachers have a relaxed and friendly manner with pupils, which encourages their involvement in activities yet maintains an underlying discipline. The small number of non-participant pupils in lessons are provided with suitable learning opportunities Teachers' analysis of pupils' performance in lessons is good, and is well used to help them improve or provide them with cues which enables them to evaluate their own performance. Marking of work in pupils' GCSE exercise books is regular and helps them to improve although it does not always give them a clear idea of the standard which they are achieving in relation to examination criteria.
165. Subject management is very good and has a positive impact on standards and the quality of provision. There has been very good improvement in response to the issues which were identified at the time of the previous inspection. Assessment procedures are now very good and schemes of work are well linked to the subject's attainment targets. The provision has been further improved by the introduction of an examination course in Years 10 and 11, and there is now a better balance between games and other parts of the curriculum. The introduction of dance for boys also enhances the curriculum. However, since the previous inspection there has been a reduction in the time made available for core physical education in Years 10 and 11

which, compounded by the time inevitably lost in travelling to the school playing fields restricts the amount of progress which can be made by these pupils. The subject is well placed to implement Curriculum 2000 though further work is still required to ensure that all schemes of work are updated. All specialist teachers give their time generously to extra-curricular activities and are supported by a small number of non-specialist colleagues.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

166. Standards of attainment in religious education in the GCSE examination have been rising over the last few years and are above those normally found in similar schools. This level of attainment in public examinations is borne out by the levels of attainment achieved by pupils in the lessons and other work observed during the inspection. Pupils following the GCSE course understand how conceptual beliefs of Judaism and Christianity attempt to provide answers to the fundamental questions of life. For example, Year 11 pupils can relate with sensitivity and poignancy to the Christian concept of the afterlife as a means of spiritual solace and comfort for young people who were in a hospice for the terminally ill.
167. Standards attained by pupils by the end of Year 9 are above national expectations. Pupils not only know the central beliefs and practices of Christianity, but also those of other major world religions. They also understand and are able to use the appropriate language concerning these customs and practices. For example, Year 9 pupils, in their study of Sikhism, make correct use of terms such as 'langar' and 'Karah Pashard' to describe the communal meal at the end of a service in the 'Gurdwara' and the special food served at that meal. Pupils show good analytical ability in the appreciation of concepts such as the application of prayer as an act of devotion and a good knowledge of fact is demonstrated through the recall of information about artefacts used in religious ceremonies and customs. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 build upon the acquired knowledge and skills at the end of Year 9 and pupils are able to organise their knowledge so that they can complete a task effectively. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well at all stages between Years 7 and 11. However, higher attaining pupils are not always fully stretched.
168. In all years, the response of the vast majority of pupils is good. Pupils show application to their work and fully engaged in lessons. Most show pride in their work and present it well. Pupils' personal development is enhanced by study and discussion of a range of ideas about their own and other people's values and beliefs, to which they demonstrate sensitivity and tolerance.
169. Teaching is good overall and occasionally very good; no lesson observed was less than satisfactory. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject. Lessons are well planned to support pupils' learning. In the best lessons, planning is augmented by the use of a range of teaching resources, which stimulate the pupils. However, in the few lessons that did not reach this standard, effectiveness was limited a lack of variety in teaching methods. These lessons tended to be over-directed by teachers, with the consequence that pupils were insufficiently involved and lacked motivation as a consequence. Homework is set and marked regularly and well used to consolidate and extend learning.
170. Curriculum planning for religious education is good in Key Stage 3 and promotes pupils' learning throughout the key stage. The Locally Agreed Syllabus is followed and this meets the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. At present, there is not enough time in Years 10 and 11 to ensure full and effective coverage of the Locally Agreed Syllabus, with the consequence that statutory requirements are not met. This was an issue raised in the last inspection report. Religious education contributes very effectively to the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by effectively providing pupils with knowledge and insight into concepts of right and wrong and asking them to apply those concepts to the range of fundamental issues which confront them in real life, such as the application of some of the Ten Commandments to their own lives, or the bereavement of someone close, and they are particularly effective in discussing how religion offers answers or solace to such issues. There is some study of other faiths, which teaches pupils to appreciate the diversity of those faiths.

171. The department is managed quietly but efficiently. There is particularly good support to the newly qualified teacher and a clear vision for the development of the subject. Since the last inspection, there have been some improvements, particularly in establishing a team of religious education specialists and a suite of rooms dedicated to religious education. However, there are gaps in the provision of detailed assessment against the criteria of the Locally Agreed Syllabus and target setting has not yet been fully established. Insufficient use is made of information and communications technology to support pupils' learning and there are too few opportunities for pupils to visit places of worship of the range of religions which they study.