

INSPECTION REPORT

BOROUGHBRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL

Boroughbridge

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121699

Headteacher: Ms E Dixon

Reporting inspector: D Klemm
2049

Dates of inspection: 20 – 24 November 2000

Inspection number: 223827

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 students:	11 - 18
Gender of students:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr B E Dooks
Date of previous inspection:	16 – 20 October 1995

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			Management
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			Care for students
			Partnership with parents
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1340 D Wigley	Team inspector	Music	
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The Registrar
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The Office for Standards in Education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Boroughbridge High School is an 11-18 comprehensive school with 705 boys and girls on roll. The school draws its students from over thirty primary schools across a wide geographical area and many have considerable distances to travel to school. The number of students eligible for free school meals is below the national average but at 7.7% is above the figure at the last inspection. There are 2.4% of students with statements which is in line with the national average and 14.3% on the SEN register which is below. The number of students from ethnic minority backgrounds is very low. The number of socially advantaged students is around the national average.

On entry to the school attainment levels are around the national average with students representing the whole range of attainment. In 2000 69% of Year 11 students chose to continue their education at the school or a neighbouring school or college. Fifty nine per cent of Year 13 students in 2000 continued their studies in higher education. The school is working in partnership with a large comprehensive school which has received Technology College status.

Since the last inspection a new headteacher has been appointed who has been in post for just over two years and the school started post 16 education in 1996.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a satisfactory education for its students. Teaching is good although there are weaknesses in some lessons. The leadership of the headteacher is good. Standards of attainment are satisfactory and students are well cared for. Although the school's sixth form is not cost effective and some classes in Year 8 are too large the school overall provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pastoral support for students.
- A high quality personal and social education programme including careers education.
- Good teaching in most subject areas.
- The positive leadership of the headteacher.
- The creation of an ethos which promotes the good behaviour and positive attitudes of students.
- Very good provision for the moral development of students and good provision for their cultural and social development.

What could be improved

- Curriculum planning and resource allocation across the school to ensure that finances are distributed equitably and post 16 provision is cost effective.
- Teaching in some English, art and modern foreign languages lessons and the management of the English department.
- Boys' attainment.
- The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and development of a wider range of teaching strategies.
- Provision for RE and ICT at Key Stage 4.

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 when it received an outstanding report. Standards of attainment have been maintained but have not improved in line with the national trend. Teaching was very good at the last inspection with few unsatisfactory lessons and it continues to be good although there is some unsatisfactory teaching in a small number of lessons. Provision for ICT remains unsatisfactory at Key Stage 4 and the school is not meeting legal requirements with regard to a daily act of collective worship. The amount of support for students with special needs has increased considerably and the quality of this provision is good. The school day has been re-organised and time is used more effectively now. The size of some teaching groups at Key Stage 3 continues to be high particularly in Year 8 and the provision of differentiated work for students at varying levels of attainment needs to be developed further.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
GCSE examinations	C	C	C	D
A-levels/AS-levels	C	C	C	

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

Standards in the 2000 national tests for 14 year olds were above the national average in mathematics and well above in science but were well below in English. They were well above average for similar schools in science but below in mathematics and well below in English. Boys' attainment is significantly weaker than girls in English and below that of girls in mathematics.

At GCSE standards overall are around the national average but are below average in comparison with similar schools. There has been some improvement in attainment over the last few years but not as much as in most schools nationally. Girls' attainment is very much stronger than boys. In 1999 results were good in French, geography, RE and science but were weaker in English, English literature and design technology.

At post 16 numbers entered for A Level examinations are small and comparisons with national figures need to be treated cautiously. Standards are around the national average in lessons and in examination results in 1998 and 1999. At GNVQ all students passed their advanced business and finance course in 2000.

Attainment overall is satisfactory but there are now significant weaknesses in English and boys' attainment is well below that of girls. The school has set for 2001 realistic and achievable targets for individual students and overall school examination results.

STUDENTS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Most students enjoy school and work hard. They take pride in their work and are keen to succeed. Many are attentive and concentrate hard and they care well for school equipment. Participation in extra curricular activities is good.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in lessons is usually good although a small number of students occasionally become disruptive, especially where classes are very large. There is a civilised atmosphere around the school which is a friendly and orderly community. The number of exclusions is very low although some boys have been temporarily excluded this term.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships among students and with staff are very good. Students show respect and concern for others, work well together and develop mature and responsible attitudes. Bullying is rare and is dealt with swiftly when it occurs.
Attendance	Attendance is good but is not as high as at the last inspection. Punctuality is sometimes unsatisfactory, mainly due to the late arrival of buses.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of students:	aged 11-14 years	aged 14-16 years	Aged over 16 years
168 lessons seen overall	Good	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 overall is good although there are more unsatisfactory lessons than at the last inspection. During the inspection week 69% of lessons were good or better and 24% very good or excellent. In 7% of lessons teaching was unsatisfactory. Teaching is good in most subject areas and is very good in RE and music. In science and mathematics teaching is good. There is some unsatisfactory teaching in English and modern foreign languages and teaching at Key Stage 3 in art is unsatisfactory. There are no subjects where teaching overall is unsatisfactory. Effective classroom management enhances learning in music and the use of a good variety of teaching methods in RE promotes intellectual challenge. Learning is slower in art at Key Stage 3 because there is insufficient challenge and in some English lessons at Key Stages 3 and 4 where the pace of learning is slow. There is a need across the curriculum for teachers to set more precise targets to assist students to learn more effectively.

Numeracy skills are taught well in mathematics but there is a need to develop the teaching of these skills across the curriculum. Literacy is taught satisfactorily in English and there is good practice in history, RE, science and mathematics. Oral skills are weaker than other aspects of literacy. Students with special needs are taught well in small groups and when supported in lessons make good progress. They are given appropriate learning tasks in science and music but the work set in art is sometimes inappropriate.

Learning was good or better in seven out of ten lessons and strengths in learning include the brisk pace of learning in many lessons including music and mathematics. Good planning skills in science and students' ability to learn from each other in geography are particularly strong features. There are some weaknesses in the pace of learning in art at Key Stage 3. Students do not make as much progress in the development of oral skills in English as they should.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum at Key Stage 3. At Key Stage 4 there is a good choice of subjects although insufficient time is allocated for the study of RE. Statutory requirements are not met both with regard to ICT and RE. At post 16 there is a good range of subjects at A Level and some good quality vocational provision. The quality of curriculum provision at Key Stage 3 is satisfactory and is good at Key Stage 4 and post 16. Extra curricular provision is good.
Provision for students with special educational needs	The amount of provision for students with special educational needs has increased since the last inspection although in some subjects there is a need for more support. The quality of support for these students is good.
Provision for students' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The quality of personal, social and health education is very good. Provision for students' social and cultural development is good and very good with regard to moral development. Spiritual provision is unsatisfactory.
How well the school cares for its students	Pastoral support for students is good. Students are well cared for and staff do their best to solve any problems they have. Assessment practices have improved but the use of data to improve attainment is still in its infancy.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership. She has a clear vision for the school and her strategic management skills are good. She is well supported by her senior team who ensure that the school operates effectively on a day-to-day basis. The pastoral care system works well and many heads of department provide effective leadership although there are some weaknesses particularly in English. There is a need to develop further the strategic management skills of some senior and middle managers.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body provides the headteacher with positive and critical support. Governors monitor and evaluate well the implementation and the effectiveness of policies and are linked to individual departments. They are not meeting legal requirements with regard to providing a daily act of collective worship, provision of RE at Key Stage 4 and post 16 and ICT at Key Stage 4.

The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is now starting to analyse assessment information and use the results to set students targets. This information is not being used across all subjects to plan lessons and to give students more detailed information on what they need to do to improve. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching is under developed.
The strategic use of resources	Financial resources are managed effectively on a day-to-day basis. Post 16 provision is not cost effective. The size of some teaching groups at Key Stage 3 and the amount and quality of learning resources in some subject areas need to be improved.

The school's accommodation is just sufficient for present needs although classrooms are small for some teaching groups. Corridors are narrow and are often congested. Learning resources need to be improved in some subjects although they are good in mathematics. Staffing is sufficient to meet curricular needs and is deployed effectively.

The school works hard at getting best value for money but needs to review carefully the cost of its present provision at post 16 and how this affects provision at Key Stage 3.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children are happy at school. • The very good relationship between students and between students and their teachers. • The openness and friendly atmosphere and the fact that the school is approachable. • Students are made to work hard and make good progress academically and socially. • The good induction programme for Year 7. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some find reports confusing and are not sure about the progress their children are making. • They would like classes set from Year 7 and homework given according to students' attainment. • Some feel that the school does not work closely with them. • The range of out of school activities is too limited particularly with regard to boys' PE activities.

The inspection team agrees with parents that the school is a civilised learning environment where students can make good progress both academically and socially. This report confirms the views of parents about the school's strengths and weaknesses although the inspection team feels that the school tries very hard to work closely with parents. The issue of setting appropriate work for all students is an area for development at Key Stages 3 and 4 in both setted and mixed attaining groups and not just in Year 7. Out of school activities are good although there is a limited number of team games for boys. The number of parents' questionnaires returned to the Registered Inspector was 112 and 26 parents attended the consultation evening.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. On entry to the school students' standards of attainment are in line with the national average although standards do vary from year to year and there is some evidence of a decline since the last inspection. By the end of Year 9 in the 2000 tests standards were above the national average in mathematics and well above in science but below average in English. In 2000 the results in comparison with similar schools were well above average in science but below average in mathematics and well below in English. In English standards have declined over the last few years and boys' attainment is significantly weaker than that of girls.

2. In mathematics results have been similar over the last five years with some improvement in 2000 when standards were above the national average. Results overall are in line with national averages but are below average for similar schools and boys are not achieving as well as girls. In science students' results have been similar to those in mathematics but in 2000 results were above the national average. In other curriculum subjects standards at the end of Key Stage 3 are in line with national averages although standards in music, DT and geography are above average.

3. In 2000 54% of students achieved at least five GCSE passes at A*-C. This was above the national average but below average for similar schools. The average points score was in line with the national average and below average for similar schools. The number of students achieving 5 A*-G grades was well above the national average. Since the last inspection there has been no improvement in boys' attainment and girls are now achieving significantly higher results. There has been some improvement in standards since the last inspection but not as much as in most schools nationally. In 1999 results at GCSE in comparison with other subjects in the school were good in French, geography, RE and science but were weaker in DT, English and English literature. Results in English have been below the national average although there was some improvement in the 2000 results and in mathematics standards have been around the national average with improvement in the 2000 examination results. Standards in science are higher than in English and mathematics and are just above the national average. The school has set a target for 59% of students to achieve five GCSE grades A*-C and for an average points score of 36 in 2001. This is a realistic and achievable target.

4. At post 16 results at A Level have been close to the national average. In the majority of subjects the numbers entered are small and comparisons with national figures should be treated with care. Standards are good in most lessons except in art where standards are average. At GNVQ all eight students passed their advanced business and finance course.

5. As students progress through the school the majority make satisfactory progress. Girls are now achieving significantly better than boys in most subjects. In English lessons some high and middle attaining students at both Key Stage 3 and 4 read fluently and demonstrated a good understanding and knowledge of vocabulary but in other lessons where teaching was weaker high attaining students had a limited understanding of the poetry they were reading. Some low attaining students are not reading as well as could be expected for students of their age. At A Level standards of written work are about average and students develop skills in analysing texts. In mathematics at the end of Key Stage 3 students can use and understand a wide range of concepts including estimation and algebraic formulae. By the end of Year 11 most students understand indices and percentages and higher attaining

students also understand the concepts of trigonometry, irrational numbers and the use of surds. At A Level attainment is good. In science students make good progress at Key Stage 4 and post 16. All students develop good planning skills but low attaining students have weak investigative skills. The ability of students to recall scientific facts is better than their ability to use this knowledge in new situations.

6. In art students achieve satisfactory standards in drawing and painting but three-dimensional work is weaker. Progress is better at Key Stage 4 than at Key Stage 3 and at post 16. Attainment in DT is above the national average with particular strengths in practical work across the various courses. In geography there is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls at GCSE and standards at both key stages are above the national average. Students in Year 7 can use maps accurately and at Key Stage 4 the standard of written work is above average. In history and modern foreign languages standards are satisfactory at Key Stages 3 and 4. At Key Stage 3 students do not acquire sufficient historical knowledge although at Key Stage 4 students develop good skills in interpreting evidence. Standards in history at A Level are good. In French boys do as well as girls at both key stages. High attainers have a good understanding of grammatical terms and listening skills are more developed than speaking skills. In music standards of composition are good at Key Stage 3 as are listening skills at Key Stage 4. Standards of performance at post 16 are good. In RE standards at Key Stage 3 are around the national average. In the 2000 GCSE examinations all students who were entered achieved an A*-C grade. Standards in ICT are around the national average at Key Stage 3 but there are no systems in place to assess standards at Key Stage 4. At post 16 standards of ICT observed in vocational lessons were above the national average.

7. Students with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school. When students are withdrawn from lessons to work in small groups or individually their progress is accelerated because the teaching is of a high quality. In most subject areas students make progress because teachers are aware of their needs and plan teaching and learning carefully. When support is available for individual students in the classroom they make good progress as the support is well directed and is used effectively. Gifted and talented students make satisfactory progress across the curriculum with particular strengths in art and music but with weaknesses in history. There is a need to develop across the curriculum appropriate work for these students.

8. The school has recently appointed a literacy co-ordinator who has just started to develop strategies aimed at improving students' skills in reading, writing and speaking and listening. Boys' attainment in English is significantly weaker than girls. The standard of presentation of written work in history, geography and RE is good. In history and RE students are taught how to plan and structure their work. Listening skills are well developed but students do not express their ideas clearly in oral work. Attainment in numeracy is around the national average. In geography students demonstrate confidence in using map scales and analysing statistical graphs and tables and standards of numeracy are sound in science where higher attaining students use their mathematical skills confidently to solve problems.

9. Since the last inspection standards in external examinations and tests have been maintained but have not improved in line with the national trend. In science, geography and music standards are still good and there have been improvements in RE. Standards have declined in English and there are still weaknesses in some art lessons and in ICT at Key Stage 4.

STUDENTS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

10. As at the time of the last inspection the vast majority of students have positive attitudes to school. They are happy to be at school and most are enthusiastic, interested learners who are attentive, concentrate well, and persevere. They co-operate and collaborate well and show a willingness to help each other as observed in drama, ICT and other practical group work. Most show a high degree of commitment and take pride in their work and are keen to succeed. They look after school equipment and use it safely and sensibly. Apart from a few disaffected students, poor attitudes to learning were observed in lessons where teaching was unsatisfactory.

11. Students with special educational needs have a good attitude to school. They are enthusiastic, involved in lessons and work hard. In lessons where they are withdrawn for small group or individual tuition they are well focused and work with energy, maintaining a good pace of working and are well behaved.

12. Behaviour in lessons is usually good and often very good. On the occasions when it is unsatisfactory, as in some large Year 8 classes, it is as a direct result of cramped learning conditions and when several students with emotional and behavioural difficulties are together in one class. Behaviour in and around the school is good. Students are polite and friendly. They are attentive in assemblies and there is a civilized atmosphere in the dining room where students queue patiently for their meals. Reported incidents of bullying are few and are dealt with quickly and effectively. The number of temporary exclusions is very low in comparison with national figures although it has already been necessary to exclude several boys on a fixed short term basis since September.

13. Relationships between students and between students and staff are very good. A number of post 16 students become trained student counsellors and their help is much appreciated by younger students. Students show respect and concern for the feelings of others, for example by raising money for charities. There are fewer opportunities for younger students to take on formal responsibilities but a well planned PSE programme encourages personal development and parents are content that the school is helping their children to become sensible and mature young people. The school council provides an excellent forum for developing students' sense of responsibility but elections have not taken place so far this year and the council has yet to prove fully effective. Post 16 students have been involved in a range of activities such as running the tuck shop, painting their common room, organizing Christmas parties for local senior citizens and providing valuable learning support to younger students. By the time they reach the sixth form the vast majority of Boroughbridge students are mature and responsible young people who take responsibility for their actions and are sensitive to the needs of others.

14. Although attendance is good and above the national average there has been a slight deterioration since the last inspection when it was very good. Unauthorised absence is very rare but punctuality can be a problem. This is mainly due to the regular late arrival of three coach loads of students which can be very distracting especially during assemblies. There is also a small number of students, mainly from the upper school, whose punctuality is poor without good reason.

HOW WELL ARE STUDENTS TAUGHT?

15. During the inspection week teaching was good overall. In 93% of lessons it was at least satisfactory, was very good or excellent in 24% and was good in a further 45%. At the last inspection teaching was judged as good with few unsatisfactory lessons. Now teaching is good in most subject areas and is very good in RE and music throughout the school. There is some unsatisfactory teaching in English and in modern foreign languages and teaching in art is unsatisfactory at Key Stage 3. Overall teaching in English is satisfactory and is good in science and mathematics. Since the last inspection a new headteacher has been appointed and 18 new members of staff.

16. Numeracy skills are taught effectively in mathematics and there is good liaison with primary schools. There is a need to develop numeracy skills across the curriculum and the school has appointed recently a teacher with responsibility for developing a whole school policy. Literacy skills are taught satisfactorily in English. In history students are taught how to plan and structure their writing; in science they are encouraged to read aloud and in mathematics they are taught key concept words. Oral skills are less well developed than other aspects of literacy. The new school literacy co-ordinator has started to introduce class libraries and the use of writing frames in Year 7. Work has started on developing a whole school spelling policy.

17. In many lessons teachers' knowledge about their subjects and the quality of their planning are major factors in successful learning. In geography teachers explain ideas clearly and lessons have clear objectives and in DT teachers confidently introduce students to new skills through good explanations and effective demonstration. However, there are some English lessons where objectives for lessons are not made clear to students and the pace of learning is slow. There are weaknesses in some art lessons where expectations for students are low and a limited range of strategies are used. In RE a good variety of teaching methods are used well, the pace of learning is brisk and there is intellectual challenge. In the best science lessons concepts are taught well because learning is carefully structured and in PE students learn new skills and improve existing ones.

18. Classroom management is good in the majority of lessons and is especially strong in mathematics, music and science. There are a small number of lessons across the school where low attaining boys can be disruptive. In some modern foreign languages and art lessons students lose concentration because they are insufficiently challenged. Homework is set regularly across subject areas and is generally satisfactory in terms of length and content. However, marking is insufficiently diagnostic although there is good practice in history, RE and geography. There is a need to use assessment information to set more precise targets for students using as a model the 'Cool Targets' devised by the learning support department.

19. The quality of teaching for students with special educational needs is good both in small groups and individually. Teachers are well prepared and organised and have a detailed knowledge of individual students which ensures that work is well matched to their needs. These lessons are well structured with a variety of activities and are conducted at a brisk pace so students make good progress. In subject areas teachers have a sound knowledge of the needs of the students and teachers in all departments are familiar with students' Individual Education Plans. The match of work to students' needs and the amount of in-class support varies across subjects. It is very good in music but is much more limited in science and art. The support assistants from the special educational needs department working alongside students in lessons provide good quality support. They ensure that the students they work with learn well and make good progress.

20. The majority of students with special educational needs learn well. They work hard, at a good pace, and maintain focus especially when they are withdrawn from lessons to work in small groups or for individual tuition. Their progress is limited in art when they do not receive additional support. The number of gifted students who achieve A* GCSE grades is inconsistent across the curriculum and procedures for identifying and providing curriculum enrichment for these students have not yet been addressed although in music they are given more demanding classroom tasks.

21. Learning was good or better in 70% of lessons and was unsatisfactory in 5%. In all subjects except art at Key Stage 3 learning is at least satisfactory. At Key Stage 3 learning is good in ICT, mathematics, modern foreign languages and physical education. At Key Stage 4 and post 16 learning is good in geography. Learning is good and sometimes very good throughout the school in music, DT, science, history and RE.

22. Strengths in learning include students' concentration in lessons and their evaluation of their learning in DT. At post 16 students work hard, develop independent learning skills and are well aware of their strengths and weaknesses. In science students develop good planning skills and in geography they work well in groups and learn from each other as well as the teacher. Students are highly motivated to do well in many history lessons and in PE lessons they acquire good skills in cricket and gymnastics. The pace of learning is brisk in music and mathematics but is slow in art at Key Stage 3 and post 16. In English oral skills are not well developed and poor behaviour in one modern foreign languages lesson affected the quality of learning. The quality of learning has been maintained since the last inspection.

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

23. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The time allocated to RE at Key Stage 3 is in line with most schools nationally although below that provided for other humanities subjects in the school. At Key Stage 3, all students have a period each week of drama and PSE and ICT are taught as discrete subjects. All students take French and high attaining students also take a taster course in German in Year 9. Students are taught in mixed attaining groups in Year 7 but are loosely grouped according to attainment from Year 8 in English, science and mathematics. Teaching groups in some subjects in Year 8 are large.

24. The Key Stage 4 curriculum is enriched for all students through the PSE programme. There is a very strong careers programme and additional time is found for health education. Nearly all students are entered for English literature and all do double science and a humanities subject. The DT department offers a range of courses including food, graphics, electronics and resistant materials. A small number of students are disapplied from French at Key Stage 4 and follow the GNVQ foundation course in leisure and tourism. RE is offered as an option in Key Stage 4 and about 20 students choose to take this examination course. There is no discrete provision at Key Stage 4 for RE, which is delivered through modules within the PSE programme; insufficient time is allowed and statutory requirements are not met. The work related ASDAN course offers key skills and ICT and is popular with students. About 15 students attend twilight sessions for GCSE PE but although this covers the theoretical side of the course there is not enough time for practical work. Statutory requirements for the provision of ICT at Key Stage 4 are not being met. This provision relies heavily on cross-curricular opportunities for ICT and systems are not in place for monitoring and reporting on the work which students do.

25. The school has had post 16 students for a relatively short time and constantly strives to sustain the wide subject choice required to attract students to post 16 study. Students' needs are carefully monitored and provision is very responsive to their requirements - teaching groups are very small. A good range of subjects is offered at A Level including theatre studies, music and economics. General studies is taught through PSE. There is accreditation for key skills in Year 12 as well as GNVQ single and double business award. Post 16 provision for ICT is good and the two groups are heavily subscribed with students at varying levels of attainment. Good quality residential learning activities enrich the curriculum for post 16 students.

26. Currently numeracy is formally taught only as part of mathematics although numeracy skills are used elsewhere in the curriculum. Students use map skills confidently in geography. They analyse statistical graphs and tables accurately – a skill that is extended to history lessons. Numeracy is also evident in science where higher attaining students show confident skills. Straight-line graph work, however, is not fully understood and lower attaining students find problems with graph scales and lines of best fit.

27. A literacy co-ordinator has been appointed and a school working party is leading developments to improve provision for the teaching of literacy skills. There is variable practice across the curriculum with regard to literacy but all departments are beginning to teach the use of key words in Year 7. The school has made a significant investment in literacy through the purchase of dictionaries and books for class libraries in Year 7 as well as finding time to support staff development in this important area.

28. The school meets the requirements of all students on its Code of Practice Special Educational Needs Register. Individual Education Plans for students reflect their needs and are shared with students and reviewed at least twice each year. The targets set, however, are not sharply focused enough for subject teachers to address consistently. A system of 'Cool Targets' for students in Year 7 with specific learning difficulties has been introduced successfully ensuring that students are well focused on the targets they are trying to achieve.

29. Support for students with special educational needs is well organised with a policy of maintaining support for students in mainstream classes through the deployment of support assistants working in lessons. This deployment is appropriate and is focused specifically on the core subjects, humanities and modern foreign languages. Although this support has been increased since the last inspection and support is adequate in English, mathematics, and music, there is not enough to provide effective support in other subjects of the curriculum. Arrangements for the withdrawal of individual students with specific needs for intensive individual tuition are appropriate and successful.

30. The school is currently improving its use of data from various sources including primary schools and internal tests to identify students with academic talents. It is intended that this information will be used to provide curriculum enrichment for high attaining pupils within the classroom although procedures for achieving this are not yet in place. Currently the number of students attaining A* grades at GCSE is erratic across the curriculum and this needs to be addressed. There are extra-curricular opportunities for talented students with music provision being especially noteworthy.

31. The school has policies on race and gender which were written some years ago. There is no policy on disability. In some areas of the curriculum such as music and RE there are opportunities to explore non-European cultures but these are relatively few. The school promotes equal access and opportunity for all students although there are some setted groups particularly in English where boys are in low sets for behavioural rather than academic reasons. These boys often underachieve and the small numbers of girls in these

groups find it difficult to learn. The school needs to reconsider its policies and practices in this area.

32. The school has developed very good links with the local community and with other schools. Links with business and industry are also very good and help students to have a clearer understanding of society, citizenship and the world of work. Relationships with partner primary schools were well established at the time of the last inspection and remain close and supportive. In addition to a very thorough and enjoyable induction programme for Year 6 there has been some liaison with primary schools on literacy and further work in numeracy and ICT is planned. The school has many on-going links with local employers including students' work experience and these links have a very positive impact on students' social and personal development. A link with Boroughbridge Communicare also enhances social development with, for example, students organising an annual party for senior citizens. The recent appointment of a full-time community education manager indicates the importance school gives to the needs of the community. The programme of evening classes is being extended and post 16 students are participating in and benefiting from some of these opportunities. This is an area which has considerable potential for meeting the wider needs of the community for life long learning provision.

33. There is a good range of extra curricular activities which provide enrichment for students at all attainment levels in many subject areas. There are particular strengths in music and drama with a good range of musical activities including a fifty-piece band, various ensembles for strings, recorders and jazz and choirs. There are annual major music and drama productions which are well supported by students, staff and parents. Students are able to develop their interests and improve their language skills on annual visits to France where they are involved in house stay schemes. Further opportunities are available to Year 7 students with short visits to northern France each year. There is an active Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme and students in Years 11, 12 and 13 are able to take a Junior Sports Leaders Award at lunch times. A range of other activities is available to students both during lunchtime and after school. These include homework, art, drama, Italian, environmental and computer clubs. There are residential revision programmes in mathematics, a Year 9 outdoor residential course, field visits and educational trips in a wide range of subjects. Students are able to take part in various sporting activities which include badminton, squash, soccer and netball. There are some opportunities for higher attaining students to play in competitive fixtures in a limited range of school teams. There are two whole school activity days in the summer term.

34. Personal, social and health education is taught to all students. Tutors teach their own groups working to guidelines to ensure a comprehensive programme. There has been considerable training to support teachers in this role. Overall the quality of teaching is good. Teaching is complemented by specialist outside speakers for such aspects as sex education and careers. At Key Stage 3 students work to an accredited scheme leading to the award of a certificate. This aspect of the curriculum is very well and enthusiastically managed. The time allocation, accreditation opportunities and financial support given to this subject reflect its status in the school and are matched by very positive student response.

35. Careers education is integrated into the programme for personal, social and health education. The careers officer supports the teaching programme and is available for interviews and guidance. There is an attractive and well-resourced careers library which is easily accessible and there are good links with the local business education partnership which supports individual mentoring for some under attaining boys in Year 11 as well as a mentoring scheme for all students at post 16. The school work experience co-ordinator organises a two-day careers and industry conference and local business people lead the groups and direct the work of students. Parents are invited to careers evenings and in

addition students have recently attended a local careers convention. All students in Year 10 participate in a well-structured work experience programme. There are further links with the world of work through vocational courses and a special programme for lower attaining students in Year 11. Students speak highly of the quality of provision and this is confirmed in the formal accreditation by the careers service.

36. The school clearly sets out its prime aim as the personal development of students incorporating the academic, spiritual, moral, social, cultural and physical dimensions and overall the opportunities for this are good. However, although there is much good practice, co-ordination and explicit departmental planning the spiritual dimension of school life is inadequate. Assemblies are weekly gatherings of year groups led alternately by the senior management team and the heads of year. Strong themes are provided for moral and social development, and also on some of these occasions there is opportunity for a brief prayer. During inspection week these occasions were not enlivened by music or drama nor were students themselves involved. The brief slot at the beginning of the day is a difficult one for a high quality assembly as several school buses arrive late each day and there is a steady stream of students arriving in the hall throughout this time. Apart from these occasions the school remains in breach of its statutory obligation to provide a daily act of collective worship.

37. There are some opportunities for spiritual development in the annual carol concert but there are few other opportunities except in RE, music, in some art lessons and poetry lessons in English. Overall opportunities for spiritual development are too limited. Commitment to moral development is strong and clear and stems from a clear code of conduct and a behaviour policy which is accepted by the students who are courteous and well behaved, and backed by a balanced system of rewards and sanctions. Students' self-discipline on most occasions extends to being caring and considerate in many ways.

38. The school's strong charity programme encourages students to be generous and to try and 'make a difference' in the world. In the week before the inspection a number of students led by Year 11 took part in sponsored fasting and a range of other activities on behalf of OXFAM. Every year many boxes of Christmas presents destined for deprived children across the world are collected from the school. This instinct to care and be responsible is reinforced well in the curriculum by aspects of the PSE programme and the study of ethical issues in a number of subjects, notably geography, PE, RE, drama, science and history. In geography and science students study environmental issues and in PE they accept well decisions and understand the implications of foul play. In RE and history students consider injustice, prejudice and suffering as in the powerful Holocaust unit of study in Year 9 RE.

39. The small size of the school helps in promoting the sense of a real community which underpins the good opportunities available for students' social development. The PSE programme contributes strongly to this and the inclusion of the 'ASDAN Steps' in the first two years of PSE is clearly useful in this respect and marks the school's commitment to social education. The good range of extra-curricular activities including the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme for older students help students to mature. There is also a wide range of visits and expeditions including several expeditions to places such as South Africa and Ecuador. The students who participate in these events work hard to raise the finance for them.

40. Some subjects such as science, modern foreign languages, geography and history use group and paired work in class activities which encourages students to learn how to work well with each other and listen to the views of other people. A Level sociology gives good opportunities for older students to make presentations, and to discuss in the style of a university tutorial. In history Year 12 students were put in the 'hot seat' to take on the role of

Cardinal Wolsey and defend his policies. This worked well and students grew in confidence during the lesson.

41. There are also good opportunities for cultural development. Students gain insights into their own culture in modern foreign languages, music and drama, in art, history and RE. There is an excellent range of extra-curricular musical opportunities with bands, orchestras and ensembles. There are major annual productions of musicals, including this year 'The Boy Friend' and regular visits to theatres and concerts. The performing arts provide very good opportunities for cultural education. There are also French days and visits to France and there are opportunities to learn about other cultures in RE, geography, food technology and in the Indian music module. There has been a Chinese Day recently and in RE Year 8 students visit the Interfaith Centre in Bradford, a Sikh Gurdwara and a Hindu cultural centre.

42. Since the last inspection the school has started post 16 education and has introduced vocational courses at both Key Stage 4 and post 16. Time spent by staff on developing post 16 education has restricted opportunities for developments in other areas of the school. Students can now do both art and music at GCSE and links with industry continue to enrich the curriculum. Progress has been satisfactory although provision for RE at Key Stage 4 and a daily act of collective worship are still weaknesses. The recording of students' progress in ICT at Key Stage 3 has now been addressed but this is not being done at Key Stage 4.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS STUDENTS?

43. At the time of the last inspection standards of pastoral care were good. This year the pastoral team has been strengthened through the appointment of heads of year for each year group. Some of the provision for the care and support of students is very good including the induction programme for Year 7 which enables them to settle in the new school quickly and easily. The school nurse runs a weekly drop-in session for students with problems and the receptionist gives cheerful yet sensitive help and advice. Teachers and tutors know their students well and readily offer them support. The PSE programme is well planned, boosts students' self esteem and ensures that they are given the guidance which young adolescents need. Religious education makes a strong contribution to their personal development as does careers education which is very good and praised by the students.

44. No health or safety hazards were noted during the inspection and there is an appropriate health and safety policy. General risk assessment takes place termly. Electrical testing is the responsibility of the local authority and meets legal requirements.

45. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory. Attendance is appropriately registered and lateness is recorded in the register. The education social worker monitors attendance patterns and, when requested, lateness.

46. The behaviour policy is very effective and the school is very good at ensuring that any bullying or oppressive behaviour is kept to a minimum. Where there are serious concerns about the behaviour of individual students the Behavioural Support Service is used which is usually very successful in helping to re-integrate excluded students. This support has helped to ensure that no student has recently had to be permanently excluded.

47. Child protection procedures follow the North Yorkshire guidelines. Staff are vigilant and it is unlikely that cases will fail to be referred to the designated teacher. However, there is no information about child protection in the staff handbook and there is a need to ensure

that newly qualified teachers and all staff new to the school are given information and training about these procedures.

48. Policies and practices for assessing students' attainment and progress have improved since the previous inspection. Departments are now required to assess students' work in terms of National Curriculum levels and GCSE and Advanced Level grades. This information is given to parents on school reports. A common school marking policy has been introduced, which is now used consistently by the majority of departments, apart from modern foreign languages and physical education. Assessment procedures are accurate and applied consistently across departments except for physical education and English at Key Stage 3. Attainment and progress assessments are recorded clearly for all students in all subjects, although in design technology there is inconsistency in the recording of assessment between the different areas. Good use is made of a variety of assessment data in order to predict students' public test and examination grades. The use of assessment data to identify whether teaching has or has not been successful varies between departments. Good practice exists in geography, religious education and science.

49. The initial identification and assessment of the requirements of students with special educational needs is good, through the close relationships which are maintained with contributory primary schools. The system of assessment to provide a baseline of information and to measure progress is sound. Up to date records are maintained and are used effectively to review and monitor the progress of individual students. Annual reviews are conducted efficiently.

50. There is good support for students with emotion and behavioural difficulties from form tutors which is co-ordinated by the special educational needs co-ordinator. This is an effective arrangement. The Individual Education Plans are written by the heads of year and discussed with students to provide more focused targets for them. There is no systematic monitoring of the effectiveness of this system in subject areas or of the grouping of these students in particular sets and years.

51. Teachers use students' predicted national test levels and public examination grades and compare them with current assessment information in order to monitor progress. Heads of Year use assessment data to identify students who are underachieving in several subjects and a mentoring programme is then used to support these students in their learning. Adults from outside the school are involved as mentors. The North Yorkshire Business Education Partnership works with underachieving yet able Year 11 boys. Post 16 students are linked to mentors from a firm in Harrogate. The school has organised a parents' evening for Year 11 students to give parents information about successful revision and study habits. This helps parents to support their children's progress. Besides the school system of rewards, the science and geography departments issue subject certificates of achievement which help to motivate students to make good progress.

52. Marking is generally insufficiently diagnostic and students are not shown what to do next to improve their work. There is good practice, however, in history, religious education and geography. There is little use of self-assessment, apart from in science and geography. When this is used students improve their learning. An academic profile to track student progress is in the process of development and the school intends to use this to set learning targets for students in order to help them to make better progress.

53. Assessment is at an early stage of development in the school. There are strengths in some departments, notably history, geography, religious education, science, maths and design technology. Further work, as indicated in the school improvement plan, is needed in order to use assessment data effectively to improve achievement.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

54. As at the time of the last inspection most parents are happy with the school, its caring ethos and what it stands for. They feel welcome and are comfortable approaching teachers with any concerns. Most feel their children make good progress and almost all feel students are encouraged to work hard.

55. Parents of students with special educational needs are kept informed of their progress and give good support by attending annual review meetings. The link between the school and parents of students with special educational needs should be strengthened to involve parents more in their children's learning at home

56. There were some criticisms expressed by a minority of parents in the questionnaire and at the parents' evening who felt the range of extra-curricular activities was not very interesting and sporting opportunities, especially for boys, were limited. Inspectors did not find this criticism to be justified although the number of opportunities for competitive games is limited. The criticism that the school does not work closely with parents and that requests for information are ignored concern some parents. The school policy is that parents' telephone calls are responded to by the following day at the latest. Some parents feel they are not well informed about how their children are getting on and would appreciate more than one consultative parents' evening per year. Parents' meetings are well supported and the school contacts parents who cannot attend. Students' reports are confusing to some parents and the quality varies and some feel that not enough homework is given in the early years and that students of differing abilities should be set different work. Some parents at the consultative meeting said that they would like classes to be set from Year 7.

57. General information to parents is helpful and the prospectus is very clear and informative. Induction information for new parents is very good. The progress of students with special needs is made very clear to parents, almost all of who are very supportive of the school. Newsletters are very informative but somewhat infrequent.

58. Most parents make a very worthwhile contribution to their children's learning. Students' planners include a copy of the home/school agreement and are signed weekly by a parent/carer and by the form tutor. They give parents a clear idea of the amount of homework set and can be used as a means of home/school communication. The parent/teacher association is very active and well supported. As well as fund raising, members do refreshments for many well-attended school functions. Parents' interest and involvement in the work of Boroughbridge High has a positive impact on students' achievements.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

59. The headteacher has been in post for two years and has joined the school at an important stage in its development. She has a clear vision for the school which recognises the importance of preserving the values of care and concern for students and, at the same time, improving standards of attainment. This is expressed clearly in the fully costed school improvement plan which has been formulated after extensive discussions involving staff, governors and parents. It is a clear, cogent and realistic document which sets the framework for change within a climate of openness and debate. Parents appreciate what she has set out to do and she is well supported by the governing body. Her leadership and planning skills

are good and she is supported well by her senior team who work hard and give her excellent support. There is a need at both senior and middle management levels to develop further strategic management skills. The senior team is linked to departments and there is a need to develop this role to include the monitoring and evaluation of teaching.

60. The school now has detailed information on the progress and attainment of students. This needs to be developed so that all subjects set more precise and useful targets for students and to assist in the planning of lessons. The headteacher supported by local education advisers has embarked on a review of individual departments which is providing useful information about their strengths and weaknesses. This should be developed to involve all staff especially those with management responsibilities. There is a need to disseminate good practice and to eradicate unsatisfactory teaching. The school runs well on a day-to-day basis and the senior team leads by example. This has helped to create a civilised school where relationships are good and conditions are conducive to effective learning.

61. The governing body and the newly elected chairperson provide positive critical support to the headteacher. Through the sub-committee structure they monitor the implementation of policies and individual governors are linked to departments. They fulfil statutory obligations with the exception of a daily act of collective worship, provision of an adequate programme for RE at Key Stage 4 and post 16 and ICT at Key Stage 4.

62. The quality of support for students and form tutors from the pastoral team is good and the pastoral system is managed effectively. The quality of leadership and management is good in many departments and is very good in geography and science. There are weaknesses in physical education and a number of problems with the management and leadership of the English department. Most departments have now got good schemes of work which have been revised to accommodate recent developments in the National Curriculum. The quality of teaching is good in subjects such as science and geography because classroom observation is well established and teachers can share and develop good practice. Middle managers are now being encouraged to play a full part in whole school decision making. They should concentrate now on implementing whole school policies on raising boys' attainment and using assessment information to plan teaching and learning activities.

63. The school's systems for control of expenditure are sound and the school has acted upon the recommendations made in the last audit report. The use of information technology to reduce time on administrative tasks such as recording absence should be investigated. The school has started to cost all its developments including the current school improvement plan. The school uses well the information provided by the LEA on the costs and effectiveness of services and some of the principles of best value are being adopted.

64. The school has drawn up a financial plan which is linked to curriculum provision and this must be developed to ensure a good quality of education for all students within budget constraints. Planning should consider both short and medium term objectives with an ongoing dialogue about the long term strategic plan for the school. Post 16 provision is not cost effective and is heavily subsidised from the rest of the school budget. There are already classes in Year 8 which have unacceptably high numbers of students in them and where the quality of learning is affected. There are shortages of learning resources in some subject areas. The governing body has difficult decisions to make both for the next financial year and to guarantee a successful long term future for the school.

65. Staff development is linked to the school improvement plan and the school is committed to in-service training, in order to update the skills of staff and to help them to

develop their teaching strategies. Clear procedures are in place now to meet the training needs of all staff. There is a sound programme of induction for new staff and supply teachers who work in the school and arrangements for the support and induction of newly qualified teachers are good. The school is involved with initial teacher training. Some monitoring of teaching with classroom observation is taking place in a minority of departments, but there are no strategies for disseminating good practice across the school. There is no system for appraisal and the performance management policy is yet to be fully implemented.

66. There are enough teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum and the match between qualifications and subjects taught is good, except for RE in Years 10 and 11 where tutors teach the subject as part of the personal and social education course. The proportions of time teachers are in the classroom and the ratio of students to teachers are both average for the type and size of school. Most staff teach the full age range of students including post 16.

67. The number of staff and technicians who provide support for work in subject areas has improved since the previous inspection and is now sufficient in most areas including ICT. There is a lack of technician support in design and technology for food and textiles beyond the maintenance and repair of equipment and this results in teachers spending time on non-teaching duties and there is no co-ordination of technician support for audio visual equipment across the school. There are sufficient administrative and clerical staff who provide good support and contribute well to the efficient running of the school.

68. At the last inspection the number of support assistants working with students with special educational needs in subjects across the curriculum was inadequate and although the amount of support has improved it still does not meet fully students' needs. The co-ordinator has shown good leadership in organising the work of the special educational needs department, but would benefit from more time to support the needs of these students across the school.

69. The accommodation is modern, light, pleasant and well maintained. There are some stimulating displays, particularly in the English department, and general impressions are pleasing. Since the last inspection new facilities have been added for post 16 students and the new library enhances the quality of educational provision but in other respects little has changed. In some teaching areas space for the large classes in Year 8 is cramped. The facilities offered in the leisure centre are of very good quality but there is still a need for a gymnasium. The sports hall is not very suitable for gymnastics or dance. One of the ICT rooms and one of the laboratories are in need of refurbishment. Provision for drama is inadequate, especially for Key Stage 4 and post 16. Big classes in small rooms have an impact on teaching. Accommodation is adequate if somewhat restricted and there is a feeling of congestion in many areas, particularly the corridors. Classrooms were built to accommodate smaller numbers of students and some are now overcrowded as in a science class of 35 Year 8 students who have to learn in a laboratory built for 32.

70. Learning resources are unsatisfactory in some subjects. There is a lack of books in some curriculum areas for both Key Stage 3 and 4 students. Examples of inadequate provision were noted in English, history, religious education and geography. The art department lacks books and ICT equipment. The computers in one of the ICT rooms are dated but will shortly be replaced. Design technology would greatly benefit from CAD/CAM equipment and software and there are few computer workstations although other resources for DT are good. Mathematical resources are very good.

71. Since the last inspection the school has directed more resources at meeting the needs of students with special needs. Staff development has been expanded and the school is starting to monitor teaching. The school needs to address problems with the budget and the size of teaching groups at Key Stage 3 is still an issue. The school day has been re-organised but the school is still not meeting legal requirements with regard to a daily act of collective worship.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

72. The school should now seek to raise standards further and improve the quality of provision by:

- (1) ensuring that short and medium term financial and curriculum planning distributes resources equitably and efficiently across all year groups; (paragraphs 64, 107, 140 and 174)
- (2) improving the quality of teaching in some unsatisfactory lessons in English, art and modern foreign languages and the management of the English department; (paragraphs 81, 82, 83, 84, 113 and 154)
- (3) improving the attainment of boys at Key Stage 3 and 4 with a particular focus on developing standards of literacy; (paragraphs 5, 74, 83, 88, 100, 110 and 118)
- (4) implementing systems for monitoring the effectiveness of teaching and disseminating good practice across the curriculum. This should involve all members of the senior team working with heads of department; (paragraphs 60,83,96,124 and 125)
- (5) ensuring that legal requirements are met with regard to the provision of ICT and RE at Key Stage 4. (paragraphs 42,150 and 180)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	168
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and students	61

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	22	45	23	7	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 students

Students on the school's roll	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of students on the school's roll	614	91
Number of full-time students eligible for free school meals	54	1

Special educational needs	Year 7-11	Sixth form
Number of students with statements of special educational needs	17	0
Number of students on the school's special educational needs register	101	0

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of students
Students who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	39
Students who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	24

Attendance (1998-99)

Authorised absence	%	Unauthorised absence	%
School data	5.2	School data	0.0

National comparative data	7.9
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National comparative data	1.1
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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 students in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	60	55	115

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of students at NC level 5 and above	Boys	24	41	46
	Girls	38	41	47
	Total	62	82	93
Percentage of students at NC level 5 or above	School	54(70)	73(67)	81(63)
	National	63(63)	65(62)	59(55)
Percentage of students at NC level 6 or above	School	20(19)	39(40)	33(17)
	National	24(28)	38(38)	26(23)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of students at NC level 5 and above	Boys	23	42	34
	Girls	41	49	38
	Total	64	91	72
Percentage of students at NC level 5 or above	School	55(78)	78(67)	62(67)
	National	64(64)	66(64)	62(60)
Percentage of students at NC level 6 or above	School	26(39)	31(39)	34(29)
	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	66	64	130

GCSE results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A*-G	1 or more grades A*-G
Numbers of pupils achieving the standard specified	Boys	30	63	66
	Girls	40	64	64
	Total	70	127	130
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	54 (48)	98 (95)	100 (98)
	National	49 (47)	89 (91)	94 (96)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	41 (37)
	National	39 (38)

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

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

Attainment at the end of the sixth form

Number of students aged 16, 17 and 18 on roll in January of the latest reporting year who were entered for GCE A-level or AS-level examinations	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	18	24	42

Average A/AS points score per candidate	For candidates entered for 2 or more A-levels or equivalent			For candidates entered for fewer than 2 A-levels or equivalent		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
School	14	16.9	15.4 (16.4)	0	0	0
National	17.7	18.1	19.5 (17.9)	3.1	3.4	3.2 (2.8)

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

Vocational qualifications		Number	% success rate
Number in their final year of studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all those they studied	School	8	87
	National		N/A

Ethnic background of students

	No of students
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	698
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	8	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y13

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	43.4
Number of students per qualified teacher	16.2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y7 – Y13

Total number of education support staff	17.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	297

Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y13

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	76.6
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Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y11

Key Stage 3	26.4
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Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	1,882,917
Total expenditure	1,842,187
Expenditure per pupil	2,621
Balance brought forward from previous year	131,063
Balance carried forward to next year	171,793

Key Stage 4	19.4
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Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	705
Number of questionnaires returned	112

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	32	58	9	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	39	47	8	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good	21	52	8	2	18
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	60	13	4	2
The teaching is good.	24	54	11	0	11
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	26	51	17	5	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem	39	49	7	0	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	45	47	4	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	26	46	23	2	4
The school is well led and managed.	28	54	6	2	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	31	54	7	1	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	28	34	20	6	13

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

ENGLISH

73. When students enter the school in Year 7 attainment in English is broadly average. By the time students reach Year 9 standards in English observed in the classroom are broadly average but standards in the Key Stage 3 National Curriculum test have declined over the last three years. Test results for 1999 were broadly in line with the national average but when compared with the performance of students in similar schools were well below the national average. Girls did better than boys in line with the national picture although boys did less well than boys nationally. Results in the 2000 National Curriculum test were poor and worse than the previous year; the proportion of students achieving Level 5 or better was well below the national average and students did not achieve as well in English as in mathematics and science.

74. Performance at GCSE in English has declined steadily from 1997. In 1999, the latest year for which comparative figures are available, girls' results were broadly in line with girls nationally and girls did better at the highest grades than girls nationally. The performance of boys, however, was significantly lower than the national profile for boys. Overall students' performance was below the national average. Results for English literature were better than the national average. Girls performed much better than the national average and boys were in line with the performance of boys nationally. Examination results in English in 2000 have improved significantly although the wide gap between boys' and girls' performance remains. Literature results are similar to the previous year.

75. The department has entered students for English language and literature at A Level since 1998 and students have done quite well in the examination. Groups are sometimes too small to make useful comparisons with national data but generally nearly all students pass and the proportion obtaining the highest grades is broadly in line with the national average. Results in 2000 were equally strong.

76. Students reach standards at the end of Year 9, Year 11 and Year 13 which are broadly average. The progress students make is generally linked to the quality of teaching in lessons so that, for example, in Year 11 low attaining boys made very good progress in developing their ideas and understanding about a Ted Hughes poem in response to very challenging and focused questions from the teacher. Although written work was only brief and the grasp of spelling and punctuation quite limited students demonstrated a good level of understanding, enjoyment and empathy with the poem and gave perceptive answers. In another lesson where the teaching did not provide sufficient guidance high attaining students made much slower progress and demonstrated only limited understanding of the same poem. In a strong Year 9 lesson about the media high attaining students read fluently and were able to comment perceptively on various styles of news presentations. Some students in a low attaining group read at levels considerably lower than might be expected for their age and level of ability. These students make good use of writing frames but their grasp of spelling, punctuation and vocabulary is below average. Students with special needs make satisfactory progress. Some high and middle attaining students evidently enjoy writing and do so at length in both Key Stage 3 and 4. They are able to read quite fluently and have a good understanding and knowledge of vocabulary; they are perceptive and able to comment upon and analyse what they see and read and are capable of writing fluently, making notes and understanding the purpose of drafting. High attainers write at length and develop their ideas well, some achieving a very good standard. Students learn to look closely at text and to

comment on the development of character and narrative and the way in which language is used. In Year 11 some middle attaining students had a good understanding of the development of character in their writing about 'The Crucible' and were able to write about theme and structure in a comparison of two short stories. By the end of Year 9 some students are beginning to write about literature and some have produced discursive writing. Where opportunity is provided for students to participate in discussion they do so willingly and with enjoyment but generally students are rather reticent and lack confidence to develop their ideas orally.

77. Students reach standards in drama which, overall, are satisfactory. In a Year 8 drama lesson high attaining students had good oral skills and were able to build and sustain a character in their pair work and in Year 9 students worked co-operatively in groups to create a tableau. Students generally respond positively to drama and where teaching has clear objectives and lessons are well focused they develop good skills and understanding.

78. By the end of Year 13 standards in lessons are average. Students participate well in the exchange of ideas when given opportunities to do so and engage well with their reading tasks. They are developing skills in the close analysis of text and are building a repertoire of terms to describe language. Standards of written work are about average. Students are developing independent learning skills.

79. The school has a newly appointed literacy co-ordinator and discussion about strategies to improve basic skills across the curriculum is just beginning. There are already some promising initiatives underway such as the new emphasis on key words and writing frames for Year 7 and the development of a whole school spelling policy. New libraries of books in Year 7 classrooms and dictionaries in all teaching rooms support the literacy initiative. In some areas of the curriculum there is good practice, for example in science where reading aloud is encouraged and in mathematics where key words are displayed and used in lessons. In history and RE students are taught how to plan and structure their writing and the standard of presentation of work is good in the humanities generally. Spelling is considered weak in some subjects, for example art, but in science the new developments in literacy have had a positive impact through the teaching of specific terminology. Oral skills are not strong and although students listen and follow instructions they do not often challenge or question in history, geography and RE lessons.

80. Students generally respond well in lessons. They are well behaved, polite and sensible. They work hard and concentrate well even when they find lessons dull. They co-operate well in group work in both English and drama. Post 16 students are mature, work steadily and some are beginning to take a more active role in their learning.

81. The quality of teaching varies considerably in this department. There is some teaching that is very good and excellent and some that is poor; overall teaching is satisfactory. In the best lessons teaching is based on excellent knowledge of the subject. There are very high expectations of students at all levels of attainment and lessons have varied activities and very good pace. In such a lesson at Key Stage 4 students made very good progress in their understanding of the two poems 'Hawk Roosting' and 'Work and Play' because the teacher gave very clear explanations, asked very focused questions and drew all students into the exchange of ideas. In a Year 7 drama lesson progress was very good where the teacher built evaluation into the lesson. Following work in pairs the class looked critically at the work of one pair, before moving on to the next task. The teacher posed challenging questions so that learning was carefully structured and progressive and students had to observe and think hard. A good range of strategies is employed in lessons and tasks are presented clearly and with a sense of purpose and enthusiasm. The best lessons are carefully planned and as part of larger units of work. Students are well managed and lessons

begin and finish in an orderly way with a brief resume of what has gone before. Relationships in the classroom are usually very good and students are known and treated as individuals. Students are given very good feedback particularly in some drama lessons. The standard of display in some classrooms is very high. Some very effective support for students with special needs was seen. Overall teaching at post 16 is satisfactory although groups are small in size and it is difficult to generate sufficient pace and stimulus.

82. There are some English and drama lessons which have important shortcomings. In some lessons objectives are not made clear so that students are uncertain about what is expected of them. Pace is very slow, too much time is given to activities and these lessons have little structure and focus. Expectations, in particular of middle and low attaining students, are low. There is little evidence of planning and the range of strategies is narrow or occasionally inappropriate. Sometimes the teacher dominates the lesson without providing enough guidance. Marking, although positive in tone, often gives very general comment rather than clear targets for improvement. Many students' folders are badly organized and in poor condition.

83. The English department works well together and staff are supportive of each other. There have been some recent changes in the allocation of responsibilities within the department. Effort has been made since the last inspection in the introduction of the new A Level course but although the head of department is aware of the need for some key developments, very little has been done to support and develop central aspects of the work of this department at Key Stages 3 and 4. There are weaknesses in the management of the department and although teachers are conscientious and committed their efforts are not well focused. Curriculum planning at Key Stages 3 and 4 is poor. The department has no clear scheme which outlines and ensures progressive and balanced coverage of the National Curriculum, details what is to be assessed and how, and makes provision for students at all levels of attainment. As a result the range of activities particularly in Key Stage 3 is not well balanced. There is too little focus on the development of literacy skills; too much time is given currently to drama at Key Stage 3 and very little to activities involving the use of ICT. Sharing the best classroom practice which exists in the department would enhance the development of teaching and learning strategies alongside curriculum development. There are no clear and explicit departmental approaches to a range of core issues such as spelling and reading. The department should consider ways in which it might address the poor performance of boys. Boys with behavioural difficulties find themselves in low sets irrespective of their abilities so they do not make the progress of which they are capable. The department is well supplied with course books but other resources are well out of date and poorly organized. Steps should be taken to ensure that teachers' assessments at Key Stage 3 are accurate and that the monitoring of students' performance, particularly in the light of improved school data, is regular and thorough.

84. Overall the work of this department has deteriorated since the last inspection. Examination results have declined and the overall quality of teaching is not as strong. Students' oral skills are no longer a strength. The good management, sound planning and well-balanced curriculum are no longer evident. Resources are barely adequate although classrooms now have dictionaries. The department does not yet have policies and procedures in place to enable improvements to be made.

DRAMA

85. The department offers drama at GCSE and theatre studies at post 16. Results in drama in the 1999 GCSE examination were below the national average but there was some improvement in the proportion of students attaining A*-C in 2000. Advanced Level results were good. Standards observed in lessons at Key Stage 4 and at post 16 are good. Students make perceptive interpretations of situations in their group work and portray comic elements very successfully in their presentations. The work of post 16 students is of a very good standard. They understand the principles of Artaud and can adapt them successfully; they use dialect in the rehearsal of extracts from Shakespeare and reach a high standard in their work. Students at all levels of attainment enjoy drama lessons, become very involved in the work and consequently their learning is good. Drama plays an important part in developing the confidence of Year 11 students. Teaching is generally good at Key Stage 4 and very good at post 16. Where teaching is less than satisfactory, learning objectives are not clear and students sometimes behave inappropriately. The care taken to integrate students with learning difficulties into lessons and the very good extra-curricular provision are strengths. A successful large-scale production features prominently in the school every year. Accommodation for the subject is inadequate and adversely affects delivery of the curriculum especially for students taking examination courses.

MATHEMATICS

86. The mathematics department has five full time specialist teachers and one teacher who is part time. Two staff started teaching at the school at the start of the autumn term in 2000. The last inspection in 1995 reported that all teaching and learning in mathematics was sound or better. During the course of this inspection all teaching proved to be satisfactory or better. At both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 most teaching was good and sometimes very good. At post 16 all teaching was very good. Learning was good in all years as a result of this good teaching.

87. Attainment at Key Stage 3 has remained about the same over the last five years – in both 1995 and 1999 attainment in Key Stage 3 examinations was broadly in line with national averages. Examination results at Key Stage 4 have declined slightly over the last five years. In 1995 52% of students achieved a grade C or better at GCSE (with the national average being 42%); in 1999 46.3% of students achieved a grade C or better (with the national average being 45.6%). Results in 2000 examinations were above those achieved in 1999 at both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 and at Key Stage 3 were above the national average. When the school is compared with similar schools examination performance at both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 is below average. Attainment at post 16 is good; the department offers a variety of courses at A and AS Level including further mathematics. Group sizes are small but standards are generally above the national average although results in 2000 were below those in 1999

88. In 2000 girls outperformed boys by about 10% in GCSE examination results. Over the last few years the difference between boys' and girls' performance has followed no obvious trend; the mathematics department continues to monitor the situation carefully.

89. In most lessons teachers create a calm and purposeful learning environment. As a result teacher-student relationships are very good. Most Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 lessons follow similar patterns – lessons are tightly structured with many question and answer sessions which allow students to show what they have learned. This strategy works well, leading to effective management of students and gaining positive responses in class.

Teaching at A Level is very good; teachers are well prepared and know both the subject and students well. As a result post 16 students make very good progress and generally do well in their exams. The hour long lessons are used effectively with teachers often planning a range of activities in order to retain students' concentration. The pace of lessons is usually brisk and appropriate for the age and attainment of students. There are some lessons, however, which only use textbook exercises and alternative mathematical methods are not fully explored. Independent work is only used when students are working on Attainment Target 1 (using and applying mathematics) which is a part of the syllabus where students make good progress through the school.

90. During the inspection Year 9 students were working on Pythagoras' theorem and showed a good understanding of the principles. Their exercise books indicated that students understood mathematical concepts such as estimation, approximations, knowledge of plane shapes and related mensuration formulae and algebraic formulae derived from flow charts. Year 11 students were revising for their mock GCSE examinations. Their exercise books indicated that students understood the ideas of indices, standard form, straight line graphs and percentages. Higher level GCSE students also understood the concepts of trigonometry, irrational numbers and the use of surds.

91. Students' attitudes to the subject are very positive. They work hard in lessons and take a pride in their work and their positive attitudes and good behaviour are major factors in their good attainment. Students are mature, polite and respond well to questions. There are regular informal and formal tests which, along with teacher assessments, are used to place students in sets. Students are well aware of the level of their work and at Key Stage 4 are aware of the tier of their exam entries. Their test results and teachers' comments on both classwork and homework keep them informed about their progress. Homework is usually used to consolidate classroom work and is regularly set and marked - marking follows detailed departmental guidelines. Although diagnostic written comments are not always present students usually have their mistakes rectified by the teacher to illustrate where they have gone wrong.

92. Progress made by students with special educational needs is good when they receive extra classroom support. Setting arrangements ensure that lower sets are small enough so that these students receive appropriate attention.

93. There is a weekly lunchtime mathematics club for Year 7 students which aims to support low attainers. The department makes use of extra-mural revision sessions for high attaining year 11 students (for a whole day) and year 13 A Level students (for two or three days). High attaining Year 9 students will be entered for the Leeds University mathematics challenge this year. High attaining Year 10 students will study GCSE statistics concurrently with GCSE mathematics. Both of these last two projects are recent innovations and have yet to be evaluated.

94. There are five specialist classrooms of good size with access to natural light. Good behavioural standards promoted by the staff results in an impressively neat and tidy area. Students clearly respect the mathematics environment. Ventilation can be poor if the windows are kept closed and this can be a problem in cold weather. Mathematics classrooms and the corridor that links them have pleasing displays of students' work as well as other relevant information including mathematical terminology in the form of key words.

95. This is a very strong department, which has benefited from the recent appointment of two specialist teachers. A very well organised head of department runs the team efficiently. The assessment of students and recording of their progress is very good although target setting for students is only just beginning. The scheme of work is very detailed and the

excellent supply of textbooks ensures that lessons are well resourced. Learning resources overall are very good and there are additional resources available in terms of alternative textbooks and good quality printed resources. Contact with parents is in line with whole school policy for reporting. Reports do contain some helpful comments but lack clarity in terms of explaining setting procedures and the meaning of grades.

96. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching of the subject requires attention. The department does discuss teaching methods in departmental meetings and there are regular reviews of students' work with the aim of improving classroom practice. The procedures for the professional development of newly qualified teachers are followed properly and effectively. However, procedures for the monitoring and appraisal of experienced staff have not been fully implemented. Over the last two to three years there have been lesson observations by senior staff but currently there are no fixed and formalised procedures.

97. Use of new technology is under developed. The scheme of work makes clear that computer technology forms a part of teaching at both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 but none was seen during the inspection and there was little relevant work to review. The current computer facilities are inadequate and obsolete equipment is due to be replaced soon. Post 16 students and some main school students make good use of graphical calculators. Some Year 13 A Level students make good use of the Internet by accessing a website that provides help with a pure mathematics module.

98. Numeracy is taught effectively in mathematics lessons. The mathematics department liaises well with the school's main primary feeder school and there are reciprocal visits by mathematics staff. However, there is a need to expand the teaching and learning of numeracy to other areas of the curriculum. The school has recently appointed a member of the mathematics department to run a numeracy audit across all other departments. The documentation is still in its early stages but indicates that moves are being made in the right direction for the successful development of a whole school numeracy policy.

99. The departmental development plan concentrates solely on the new courses that are being implemented at Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4 and at post 16. There is a need to also consider: target setting, staff development, the use of a wider variety of teaching strategies, monitoring of teaching, the use of ICT and the implementation of the whole school numeracy policy. Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

SCIENCE

100. In 1999, results in the national tests at the end of Year 9 were in line with the national average for all schools but well below the average for similar schools. Students' results in science were similar to those in mathematics and better than those in English. Results in 1999 were lower than in previous years but in 2000 there was a significant improvement with results well above both the national average and average for similar schools. In GCSE in 1999, the percentage of A*-C and A*-G grades were in line with the national average. Standards in science were better than in mathematics and English. Results in 1999 were lower than in previous years but improved in 2000 and were slightly above the national average. Girls performed well above the national average for girls in the percentage of A*-C grades. Boys under performed compared with boys nationally. Advanced Level entries in biology, chemistry and physics are too few to indicate trends or to make meaningful comparisons with national standards.

101. The evidence from students' work and lessons indicate that current standards of attainment are consistent with the improving standards in the 2000 public tests and examinations. Students make good progress as they move through the school and attainment is good. Students' experimental and investigative work demonstrates a good grasp of the control of variables by students of all abilities. Planning skills are good, but analysis and evaluation skills need further development. Average and low attaining students are not sufficiently accurate in obtaining their experimental results and low attaining students have weak investigative skills. Carefully structured teaching enables students to develop their understanding of scientific concepts although the ability of students to recall scientific facts is better than their ability to apply this knowledge in new situations.

102. Development of literacy in science is good with an excellent emphasis on the correct use of scientific terminology. Numeracy skills are sound for most students but low attainers have weak graphical skills and have problems with scale and the line of 'best-fit'. Students are very confident in using computers to measure and analyse data. Students with special educational needs make sound progress but in spite of good teaching, they do not make as much progress as expected because of the small amount of in-class support and large classes in the lower part of the school. Gifted and talented students are identified but would benefit from doing different types of work. More problem solving exercises and the application of knowledge to new situations would provide additional stimulus for these students. Post 16 students have a good grasp of the relevant scientific knowledge but a narrow range of scientific reading limits the development of their intellectual skills.

103. Overall, the quality of teaching is good across the whole age range. Teaching ranged from sound in a quarter of the lessons, to very good in a quarter of the lessons observed. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. A strength of the teaching is the very good relationships between the teachers and students. Encouraging and supportive teachers engender in the students a very positive attitude and interest in their work in science. An example of this was seen in a Year 7 lesson on classification of invertebrates. The teacher's warmth and enthusiasm captured students' interest and motivated them to work well. This resulted in good learning. Very good subject knowledge and understanding is shown by the teachers' clear explanations communicated in a lively manner. In a very good Year 12 lesson on organic chemistry, students were revising their knowledge of isomers and skilful questioning by the teacher probed their understanding and extended their thinking. This was followed by a practical investigation of the breaking down of large alkane molecules to produce smaller molecules. The teacher's enthusiasm made chemistry fun. Teachers manage their classes very well and insist on high standards of work and behaviour, as in an effective Year 9 class, where lower attaining students investigated their reaction rates. The teacher's positive approach encouraged and supported students and increased their confidence in their practical skills. This led to very good learning.

104. In some lessons teachers do not make the learning objectives clear to the students and there is no review of learning at the end. Teachers' expectations are generally appropriately high but in some lessons teaching strategies encourage student dependency. Teachers need to challenge and extend students' thinking with more independent learning. In some lessons in the lower part of the school, teachers do not select the resources and activities which will meet the learning needs of the high attaining students. Marking is thorough but there are few comments to show students how to improve their work.

105. Good teaching motivates and engenders students' interest. Throughout the school students enjoy their science and co-operate well in group practical work. They generally have good listening skills, sustain concentration well and come to lessons prepared to work. However, some students lack confidence in their own abilities and do not readily volunteer

answers to questions posed by the teacher or ask many questions themselves. This restricts their progress.

106. The head of department provides very good leadership and management with a focus on monitoring and evaluating the work of the department in order to raise standards. The department has made good improvement since the previous inspection. Examination and test results are rising and the good quality of teaching has been maintained. The department has the capacity to improve further because of thoughtful and supportive leadership and a very positive team spirit and commitment to raising achievement by an extremely dedicated and hard working staff. Procedures for assessing students' attainment and progress are good, as is the use of assessment to inform curriculum planning. There is very good use of self-assessment. The department produces very useful student handbooks with information on what students need to know and be able to do for each topic. After each topic test students identify targets for improvement in these handbooks. This enables students to have an unusually good understanding of their own learning.

107. Resources are adequate and are well organised by the team of technicians. The wildlife wetlands area developed by the school is a well-used and valuable resource. There is a need for more textbooks that students can use at home to develop independent learning. The very large Year 8 teaching groups make practical work extremely difficult and potentially dangerous and a number of lessons are taught in classrooms which highlight the pressure on laboratory space for science.

108. In order to improve further the department should concentrate on developing more problem solving exercises, sharing good practice and improving the quality of marking.

ART

109. Over the period 1998-1999 the proportion of students gaining A*-C grades in GCSE was below the national average, although in 2000 it was well above average. The proportion of students gaining A*-G grades was broadly average. More girls than boys achieved the higher grades but no students achieved the highest grade. At A Level, over the 1998-2000 period, the proportion of students gaining the highest A-B grades or passing the subject was well below the national average.

110. By the age of fourteen, students' overall levels of attainment are average. The majority of students are confident in drawing and painting from observation, as for example in the still-life studies based on fruit, although some lower attaining students lack confidence in their own ability and exhibit a 'can't do' approach to their work. Sketchbooks are generally used well for homework and class studies. Higher attaining students use colour sensitively as in the pastel studies of the human eye. Gifted and talented students are confident when talking about their work, but this is not a strong feature of the majority of students. Boys, and students with special educational needs, chat too much about social interests, and attainment suffers. Whilst students use computers for homework by downloading information or images, they do not currently use computers within lessons. Written work is limited and spelling often inaccurate.

111. By the age of sixteen, students' overall levels of attainment are above average. Students have a good grasp of art techniques as well as a clearer understanding of what is required of them in order to be able to succeed at examination level. Drawing and painting are better developed than three-dimensional skills, whilst ICT is limited to research purposes. Students show good understanding of the styles and techniques of artists such as

Lichtenstein, Monet and Van Gogh as they replicate the artist's preferred brush strokes, or learn to apply particular colour combinations using acrylic paint on canvas or board. They are less able to discuss art-related ideas, or reflect on what has been achieved than might normally be expected. Sketchbooks are used well for research and developing ideas.

112. By the age of eighteen, students' attainment is average. Higher attaining girls draw well and have a deep interest in what they are doing, as for example when interviewing equestrian artists or developing work based on a visit to see African cave paintings. There is too little peer discussion including the sharing of ideas or problems encountered in lessons, and the lone male student, in particular, suffers from this isolation. The lack of life classes limits understanding of the human form and attainment in skill development is below what might normally be expected.

113. The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in two-thirds of lessons seen and unsatisfactory in one-third. The best teaching occurs in Key Stage 4 but teaching is unsatisfactory at Key Stage 3. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and provide a caring working environment for their students. They give generously of their time, both in and out of lessons. The combined Year 10 and 13 gallery visit and the residential coastal study greatly enrich learning for those students taking part. Where teaching is good tasks are challenging, time is used well and classroom assessment, by the teacher, ensures that feedback is helpful in moving learning forward. Unsatisfactory teaching and learning occurs where the teacher has low expectations and operates with too narrow a range of strategies. In these circumstances well-planned projects are often limited in effectiveness by the lack of focused opportunities for students to discuss ideas with their peers, or to reflect on what has been achieved. In these lessons too many students waste time and energy chatting about social events, and too little emphasis is put on the application of the intellect and the development of thinking skills. Opportunities are also missed for students to read aloud or to see, as well as hear, technical words connected with the subject. There is little planned use of ICT within lessons, although the digital camera is used to provide images of Year 7 students' faces, as a starting point for drawing and painting.

114. Students enter the school at the age of eleven with average artistic knowledge and skill. They make satisfactory progress in the traditional areas of drawing, painting and ceramics. Gifted and talented students, including those who take art at GCSE, make good progress. Progress slows for the majority of students, if they change teacher, because of the differences in expectations and the time needed to adjust to the new demands. Students with identified special educational needs often do not have any extra learning support within art and progress is limited when literacy skills are needed or where the teacher cannot react immediately to students' needs. Progress in using ICT is slow at present because of the lack of computer provision and limited teacher expertise. Progress generally is slower in the sixth form than at GCSE as the open entry policy means that students are sometimes ill prepared for the demands of the A Level course.

115. Students' attitudes are not always satisfactory although they know how to behave when required to do so. The majority of students in Key Stage 3 appear content to rely on the teacher for help rather than to think about solving problems for themselves. Boys, in particular, spend too much time and energy engaged in social chat in art lessons. Learning at Key Stage 3 is unsatisfactory overall. Attitudes, behaviour and personal development are best in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form where students generally show greater interest and have more positive attitudes to their work.

116. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory with the potential to be good. The department has several problems which still remain under the new arrangements for linking art with design technology. There are problems of communication between the art

teachers about what students are capable of attaining and this has an effect on continuity of learning and standards. Departmental documentation lacks reference to many important policies which underpin learning and as a result students' literacy, ICT and spiritual, moral, social and cultural education are less well planned than might be expected. Lack of audio visual and computer resources limits the development of students' knowledge and understanding. The school has made satisfactory progress in addressing those issues, which were clearly identified at the time of the last inspection, but underlying problems still remain.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY (DT)

117. At the end of Year 9 standards of attainment are above the national average. Teacher assessments in 2000 indicate that almost three-quarters of students achieve Level 5 or above. This is an improvement on the figures for 1999 and is above the national average. At Key Stage 3 the course provides a good base of knowledge, skills and understanding which covers all requirements although the opportunity to use and experience CAD/CAM is extremely limited. The teaching area requires enhanced resources to ensure full coverage of the programmes of study. In Year 7 students are introduced to the design and making process through the production of products such as a key tag and continuity tester. Teaching concentrates on the design process, developing a number of alternative approaches, along with the development of skills in using a range of hand and machine tools. Students work safely, confidently and with a good degree of competence. Through using an appropriate range of tasks students learn the basic skills of designing, marking, cutting and finishing. In Years 8 and 9 students work with a variety of textiles and through the tasks undertaken in these areas students are able to develop an understanding of the changes that take place in materials as they go through different processes. Both the practical and design work are of a better quality than might be expected at this stage in students' development. Students' ability in presenting and refining their design ideas is well developed and is similar to that reported at the previous inspection. Standards continue to be good. The level of equipment and general access limits the use of ICT by students at this stage in their design and technology work. However, many students make use of equipment outside lesson times or at home to enhance their work.

118. Results for students taking GCSE are above the provisional national figures for 2000 and an improvement on 1999, when standards dipped below the national average. With the exception of electronics all examination groups have exceeded the national average in 2000. Girls do better than boys. Students identified as having special educational needs attain well in the subject. Individual projects being undertaken by students in Years 10 and 11 show that levels of practical skills are at least satisfactory and in most instances good. Students are very aware of the importance of quality when making products, a point which is reinforced by the teaching staff. Skills, particularly practical skills developed at Key Stage 3, are enhanced through Years 10 and 11. Design and presentation is further developed through Key Stage 4 and students are able to use research methods well and discuss their ideas with teachers in order to present and refine their ideas. Standards of attainment remain good since the previous inspection.

119. Post 16 standards match the national average, however numbers of students taking design and technology at AS/A2 are very small making comparison with national figures difficult and unreliable. The group of four students currently taking DT in Year 12 have a sound knowledge of the course requirements and are developing a good understanding of research skills when planning assignments. Ideas generated for their first assignment indicate some innovative and challenging projects. Initial design work was of a standard

similar to students of the same age elsewhere. Most were confident in their explanations and able to discuss their projects at a technically competent level.

120. The quality of teaching is good in almost all lessons. More than nine out of ten lessons seen were at least satisfactory or better and seven out of ten lessons were good or very good. Teachers across the department have a good knowledge of their subject. They confidently introduce students to increasingly complex skills through demonstration and clear explanation. In the most effective lessons teachers are well prepared and have clear objectives. Students know what is required from them by the end of the lesson. Good pace is maintained through close monitoring and appropriate use of oral assessment, and students are given immediate feedback to enable them to improve their work. Teachers manage their students well ensuring that they follow safe procedures when operating machinery or using hand tools. They gain the respect of students through their professional competence and understanding of individual needs. Good examples were seen of correcting and improving techniques in using hand tools, for example Year 7 working in metal and Year 9 using sewing machines to produce quilted CD holders. Where teaching is least effective, insufficient thought is given to the overall structure of the lesson and learning objectives are too broad and are not focused. In these lessons teachers do not make clear to students their expectations, the tasks set are not designed to meet the needs of students at varying levels of attainment and as a result there is too little pace and progress for some students.

121. Learning within the subject is almost always at least satisfactory or good. Students take advantage of the good teaching to improve their knowledge and acquire the necessary skills. They are keen to develop and succeed. Concentration levels are good even when the teacher's exposition is lengthy. They make good use of any extra support in lessons and are well aware of their strengths and weaknesses. Students with special educational needs all make good progress in most lessons with some excelling at the design stage whilst others do well at practical work.

122. In some lessons students are slow to respond to teachers when questioned but this does not reflect a lack of commitment to the subject or a lack of interest. In all year groups examples were seen of students who were very proud of and keen to produce high quality work. They are prepared to help one another with their work, share expertise and provide critical, constructive comment as required. Relationships between students and between students and staff are good. In nearly all lessons mutual respect is evident to the outside observer.

123. There is a full range of design and make opportunities available throughout Key Stage 3 although provision for working in food and textiles is restricted to Years 8 and 9 and then only in alternate weeks. This does have an affect on the progress students make. CAD/CAM facilities are not available at a level to fully meet the needs of the curriculum although plans are in place to achieve this during the current academic year. Department documents show that a system of recording students' performance is in place and is used consistently throughout the department. However, the way in which the data is collated and recorded varies across the different aspects of the subject. Progress is monitored and students record this information; the quality of reports to parents is satisfactory although some are bland and lack detail about progress and attainment.

124. Management of the department is good with an experienced, caring head who supports students and staff well. Departmental planning addresses the new curriculum with the exception of CAD/CAM. There is no formal monitoring of teaching although performance management is being addressed in line with the whole school initiative. There is good technician support in resistant materials but no support for food and textiles, except for the

maintenance and repair of equipment. This has an impact on the amount of time spent by teachers on non-teaching activities.

125. Many of the positive features identified in the last inspection continue to be strengths. Teaching and learning has remained good, as have relationships and attitudes. The better co-ordination of the various aspects of the subject with a particular emphasis on integrating the work of food and textiles and increased use of ICT remain to be developed.

GEOGRAPHY

126. Students' overall attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 is above the national expectation. During the inspection students were working at levels slightly above what is expected nationally. When teachers assessed students' work in 2000, at the end of Year 9, results indicated that students' attainment was well above the national average, maintaining the high standards attained in the previous two years.

127. At the end of Key Stage 4 students' overall level of attainment is above the national average. In 2000 results in GCSE were better than in 1999 which were slightly above the national norm and students' attainment was above what they achieved in most other subjects. There was a significant improvement in results at the higher A*-A grades in 2000 and an improvement in the performance of boys, resulting in boys and girls achieving similar results.

128. GCE A Level results overall in 2000 showed an improvement on 1999 when they were above the national average, but they declined at the higher A-B grades.

129. The department reviews all these results annually and has analysed them closely. Clear strategies to raise standards have been implemented including supporting course booklets, additional revision and preparation for examinations, as well as close monitoring of students' performance.

130. Students have a good knowledge of geography, can describe what cities and landscapes are like and give reasons for the changes that are taking place. They have a good understanding of the relationship between people and changes in the environment. In one lesson at post 16, students used their knowledge of the features of hurricanes to work out how their course can be predicted. They then discussed the effectiveness of the precautions taken in Bangladesh against their effects, showing a good knowledge of the landscape and lives of the people. In Years 10 and 11 students have a good knowledge of geographical models and ideas to help support their understanding of the geography of cities and industry. Year 10 students used a diagram of the patterns of land use in a city to explain the layout of the city of Leeds and demonstrated a good knowledge of what places are like, and at post 16 students use geographical terms confidently and accurately.

131. Students can read maps accurately and in Year 7 can use maps to find and locate places and describe what they are like. Students have a good understanding of the methods of geographical enquiry, collecting and analysing data, and drawing conclusions. They use these skills well to complete GCSE coursework on the effects of tourism on the environment at Malham in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Written work is sound and questions are answered accurately. Students have good numerical skills and use statistical data well to construct and analyse a range of graphs.

132. Teaching at Key Stage 3 is satisfactory, and at Key Stage 4 and post-16 is good with some teaching being very good. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and give well-structured explanations using good examples to ensure that students have clear understanding of the topic. Lessons are carefully planned with clear objectives and a well-structured variety of activities which enables students to make good progress. The best lessons, particularly in Years 10 and 11, retain students' interest and encourage them to use their skills and knowledge in new contexts to reinforce their understanding. Year 10 students used their knowledge of the links between rainfall and the amount of water in a river supported by their good numerical skills to explain how river flooding can be predicted. They then used this knowledge to explain how and why the predicted times would vary between rivers. Lessons in Years 7 to 9 were less successful when questioning lacked rigour, expectations were modest and exercises were mundane and did not challenge or excite the students.

133. Teachers have a good relationship with students; they know them well and provide positive encouragement, help and support. Work is planned at appropriate levels and materials are matched closely to the requirements of students with special educational needs who are given good support and make good progress. They make particularly good progress when a support teacher is working in the classroom. Lessons are well prepared and organised, start briskly, and generally a good pace is maintained throughout. Marking is up to date and is generally sound.

134. Students learn well; they work hard and at a good pace and can maintain concentration and focus throughout lessons particularly in Years 10 to 13. A minority of students in Years 7 to 9 find concentration difficult when lessons have long periods of similar work. Students absorb information quickly, listen carefully, and are generally keen and eager to learn. They are well motivated and have a positive attitude to the subject. When they have the opportunity to work in groups they co-operate effectively. In one Year 11 lesson students worked in groups to match meanings to geographical terms as part of a well planned and effective revision exercise. They were all fully involved and worked together quickly, courteously, and enthusiastically, and made good progress in reinforcing their knowledge. Students invariably behave well and at post 16 complete work accurately, on time, are well prepared, and have a very mature attitude to their work.

135. The scheme of work fully complies with national requirements and for Years 7 to 11 is very comprehensive, well considered and of good quality. The teaching scheme for years 12 and 13 is undeveloped and does not provide a clear indication of progression through these years. There is a good programme of fieldwork in Year 7 and in Years 10 to 13, but as no opportunities are available in Years 8 and 9 there is no systematic progress in fieldwork techniques through Key Stage 3. A sound programme for the use of ICT has been developed. The procedures for the assessment and recording of results are very good, and the information is used effectively to support the progress of individual students.

136. The leadership of the department is very good. There is a clear vision for the future, a good sense of direction and a commitment to high standards. Development planning and monitoring are good and the department is well organised with well qualified, experienced and hard working staff who share a will to succeed. Accommodation is good, resources are satisfactory and both have improved since the last inspection, but there is still a shortage of textbooks and atlases in Years 7 to 9 and textbooks in Years 10 and 11. The department has maintained standards and improved provision since the last inspection and is in a good position to improve still further in the future.

HISTORY

137. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection with recent GCSE results being close to or just above national averages. In 1999 GCSE results were above the national average and boys did particularly well. Current Year 11 students are achieving in line with the national average and some are doing well in relation to their abilities. In class they demonstrate a good understanding of modern Russian history. They are refining their skills in interpreting evidence and have a good understanding of the subtleties of language used in historical texts.

138. At A Level results are generally good although the numbers entered are low. In 2000 all students passed with a significant number achieving higher grades. In lessons Year 13 students are well prepared for their examinations, and Year 12 have made good progress after one term. Year 12 students are confident, knowledgeable and orally fluent as observed in a class debate that was the culmination of their study of Cardinal Wolsey.

139. At the end of their first three years students' attainment is around the national average in teachers' assessments at Key Stage 3. Students with special needs make similar progress to other students. There is some high quality written work although there is a lack of breadth to students' historical knowledge. In most lessons students learn effectively and their progress is good. In the first three years they do not acquire an adequate overview of history or a sufficient range of knowledge and time is not as well used as it should be. Generally students enjoy their history and behave well in lessons. This is particularly evident in Year 7 and in examination courses where students are highly motivated to do well.

140. Teaching is generally good. There is very good practice in lessons where teaching is enlivened with stimulating resources and students are actively involved in their learning. Some imaginative activities were used in Year 7 and Year 8 but a small number of lessons were dull with only worksheets used when students needed to use textbooks with coloured illustrations. In modern world history lessons, the use of film and video would have assisted understanding but was not available. There is insufficient use of differentiated materials to meet the full range of needs in large mixed ability classes in the first three years. These classes are challenging for teachers and higher attaining students are not as intellectually stretched as they should be. The expertise of teachers is particularly strong in both GCSE and A Level classes. A Level teaching is very good.

141. Marking is good in history with recognition for effort and attainment. Teachers use constructive and useful comments which students appreciate. There are problems with the accuracy of assessment at Key Stage 3 and too many sustained writing pieces are proving to be time consuming and a constraint on teaching and learning. History's contribution to literacy is significant in terms of teaching specific vocabulary and the skills of planning and structuring sustained writing but varied and less frequent assessment tasks would promote students' enjoyment of the subject.

142. History has not improved significantly since the last inspection. Standards are similar to those described in the last report. Teachers are hard working and committed but good quality schemes of work and assessment procedures need to be planned and implemented to meet the requirements of National Curriculum 2000. This will give students an experience of history that is both broad and balanced. Attention to these aspects of the subject will better prepare students for GCSE courses.

143. Rooms have bright and interesting displays. There are some good textbooks but these are insufficient, particularly in the first three years. Foundation texts for low attainers are needed. ICT skills should be incorporated into the curriculum.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

144. By the end of Year 9 standards of attainment are in line with the national average. Teachers' assessments indicate that the majority of boys and girls are achieving at Level 5 or above which suggests attainment ahead of national averages however the work seen in lessons and discussions with students indicate that standards are closer to the national average. Teacher assessments show that attainment has fallen between 1999 and 2000. As the amount of ICT provision is limited and aspects of the programmes of study are not taught, an accurate assessment of all aspects of ICT was not possible. On entry to the school students' attainment is slightly below average. The school has recently introduced a system of baseline assessment in order to gain an understanding of levels achieved by new entrants. In their first year in the school they begin to develop a confident ability in the use of word processing and spreadsheets. They show a good understanding of the purpose and advantages of using spreadsheets and develop an understanding of the Internet. Planning is now in place to ensure that all aspects of the new curriculum will be taught. However, those students who completed Key Stage 3 this year have not had the benefits of a fully planned ICT programme. Higher attainers have a sound understanding of the value of using information and communications technology, expressing views that suggest they are becoming discerning users. All students, including those with special educational needs are beginning to realise that ICT has a considerable impact on the world around them.

145. At the end of Year 11 there is currently no system in place to assess the attainment of students or record their achievements and no discrete provision is made for students in Years 10 and 11. Within subject areas there are some opportunities for the use of information and communications technology but the school does not meet the statutory requirements for ICT at Key Stage 4.

146. Post 16 students, in their first year of advanced vocational certificates in information technology have a good basic knowledge of the subject and work effectively with the ICT hardware and software. The standard of work seen during the inspection matches that of other schools nationally with some individual students exceeding these standards. Year 13 GNVQ business students are confident users of ICT and make very good use of the technology. In a presentation on formal and informal groups students used PowerPoint very effectively to support their talks. The quality of their ICT work was equally matched by their understanding of the theory of groups.

147. In the range of discrete lessons observed all teaching was good. Students in Years 7, 8 and 9 receive a planned programme designed to develop their use and understanding of information and communications technology. The teaching in this key stage is well organised and delivered by staff who have good subject knowledge and effective student management skills. Lessons are conducted at an appropriate pace and expectations are high. Students are appreciative of the staff knowledge and competence that underpins their good learning. Year 12 and 13 students taking advanced level courses in ICT, and those taking business, receive good support from staff who use quality materials to support these courses. As no discrete lessons take place at Key Stage 4 the quality of teaching is dependent on the knowledge of individual teachers in subject departments. Students in Years 10 and 11 have access to ICT and use it in science, GNVQ leisure and tourism and music. However, the range and extent of use varies greatly between subjects, as access to computers is limited. Currently there is no system in place to monitor or assess the work that students in Years 10 and 11 produce across the curriculum. The confidence of staff in other subjects has

improved and subject specific professional development is taking place which should further improve cross-curricular opportunities.

148. The majority of students in Key Stage 3 have a sound understanding of ICT with the more capable assisting those experiencing difficulties. Students understand where their strengths lie and recognise when help is required. One Year 7 student identified as having special educational needs made good progress with his work by briefly joining a small group receiving extra tuition, and gathered sufficient information to then work independently. The outcome was the successful completion of the spreadsheet exercise. There is an evident eagerness to be effective users of ICT and students demonstrate a good degree of application to the learning tasks which are set. Even the frustration of working on older, less reliable equipment did not dent the enthusiasm of the Year 7 students. Behaviour is good in all lessons.

149. The school has recently appointed a co-ordinator for the subject who has a clear vision for ICT which is matched by energy and determination. Good development planning which has already been carried out should ensure that ICT moves forward effectively. The current situation, where overall planning is incomplete, is being addressed together with the need to establish stable staffing and better equipment levels. The department has the benefit of an effective and experienced technician.

150. Since the previous inspection, attainment at the end of Year 9 has marginally improved. However curriculum arrangements remain inadequate in terms of the amount of time available to deliver effectively the new programmes of study. The arrangements at Key Stage 4 have not changed as there is still no system for assessment, recording and reporting. The recent changes in the management and co-ordination of the subject have not yet made an impact on the effectiveness of cross-curricular provision at Key Stage 4 and the school has not made satisfactory progress since the previous inspection.

151. The development and inclusion of ICT across the curriculum is continuing although progress has not been good since the previous inspection. A number of subject departments include reference to ICT in their planning. Students have the opportunity to develop their understanding and knowledge of ICT application albeit in relatively few subjects. Use is appropriate and relevant in science, music, geography, design and technology and modern foreign language but limited use is made of ICT in mathematics and English. Planning for the implementation of ICT across the curriculum has only recently become a whole school priority. There are examples of good work being done by students either after school or at home. There is access to the Internet although the main bookable room currently contains equipment that is dated and unreliable. This should be replaced during the autumn term. Overall students' understanding of the use and benefits of ICT and its impact on the world community is average at Key Stage 3. It is not possible to judge the performance of students at Key Stage 4 as systems are not in place to assess and monitor provision and progress. The school does not meet statutory requirements at Key Stage 4.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

152. In the 2000 French GCSE examination the percentage of students with grades A*-C was better than 1999 where results were above the national average. There was a marked improvement by girls at these higher grades. Over the past three years boys have performed particularly well in comparison with national figures and the difference between boys' and girls' attainment is much less marked than nationally. Results for the students entered for French compare very favourably with their results in other subjects. In German, where fewer

students are entered, the percentage of students gaining grades A*-C in 2000 was well below the national averages for previous years. Boys improved significantly on their 1999 results and moved close to recent national averages. Over the last three years results in German have been well below national averages and students have not matched their performance in other subjects.

153. Standards across both key stages are in line with the national average, although there is a difference in attainment in the key language skills. By the end of Key Stage 3 there is evidence of considerable breadth of knowledge and in written work students can manipulate sentence patterns and describe past events in letters and essays. The work of students at all levels of attainment shows recurrent basic errors. In listening exercises students can pick key information from tapes recorded by native speakers and they follow teachers' instructions in class. Some students use French in everyday classroom situations, such as when asking for paper or apologising for a forgotten book. In one group students gave short presentations about a trip and in another group students in pairs confidently performed dialogues. Generally oral work is not as well developed and students are unsure, need prompting and lack fluency even in short conversations. Higher attaining students have a good understanding of grammar which supports their learning and use dictionaries well. In Year 7 there are good examples of computer-generated charts to illustrate the results of classroom surveys of pets. At Key Stage 4 students' progress and attainment matches that at Key Stage 3. Higher attaining students write about past, present and future events with more extended pieces of writing showing examples of redrafting. For many students types of writing are restricted to patterns prescribed for examination preparation and in speaking few students can give instinctive responses and there is very little originality.

154. The quality of teaching overall is good at Key Stage 3 and satisfactory at Key Stage 4. Some excellent and very good teaching was observed during the inspection week. All teachers have good language competence and understanding of their subject. Their experience shows in the preparation for examinations. In the best lessons planning includes strategies to make all students participate actively; there is supplementary work for students who finish quickly and those who might have problems and a variety of activities with competitions, music and use of computers use to stimulate interest. In these lessons teachers use French to challenge the students and encourage them to use French for classroom routines. Expectations are clear in the demand for correct pronunciation, answers in whole phrases and the use of dictionaries. In the majority of lessons some of these factors are present, but there is some unnecessary use of English. In almost all lessons the teachers' knowledge of the students and good relationships support good learning. When teaching is unsatisfactory planning is restricted to the content of the lesson and teacher input dominates. These lessons lack pace, fail to motivate the students and strain relationships. Homework is regularly set and marked. At Key Stage 4 some teachers give separate marks for content, level and accuracy and offer lengthy corrections. At present there is no consistent policy for setting improvement targets or requiring correction of work.

155. Students' behaviour and attitudes to the subject are good. At Key Stage 3 they are lively and show real enthusiasm and enjoyment in many of the activities. They like to participate and are confident to volunteer. In the majority of lessons there is a good work ethic and time is used productively. Students preparing for examination are sensible in asking for guidance and checking on requirements. They co-operate well in pair work and are supportive of each other. Some students are reluctant to participate actively or volunteer, although they complete the work set. In only one group is there any unacceptable behaviour which affects learning, and this is where relationships with the teacher have broken down.

156. The languages team is headed by an energetic and committed head of department who is leading the department's contribution to the school's development objectives. The

revised handbook extends beyond administrative routines to address issues of methodology. Several schemes of work have been revised to include opportunities for assessment and the use of computer technology. Attractive vocabulary books for Key Stage 3 and examination guides for Key Stage 4 support good learning and increase the time available for teaching. The use of assessment is being developed and data is kept in mark books and on a central computer. The department has regular meetings and the departmental development plan has identified objectives. The department contributes to the fuller life of the school with home-stay visits to France, trips for Year 7, an Italian club and a French café in the summer term. Since the last inspection there has been progress in developing ICT, but the requirement to identify specific job responsibilities still needs to be addressed. There are sound systems in place and the department has the strengths to address the issues for improvement. The key issue is to consider teaching and learning methodology alongside content, and to develop strategies to raise standards of oral work. The monitoring of teaching by the head of department would support this. Opportunities for mutual observation would enable identification of good practice and stimulate teachers to review their own teaching. The department needs to consider the use of assessment data to monitor individual progress and as a basis for target setting. Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

MUSIC

157. In the most recent GCSE examinations, results were below the national average, although this does not follow the trend in recent years in which results have been consistently above the national average. The one AS Level student gained a C pass, and the A Level student gained an A pass. No Key Stage 3 assessments were made this year. Standards of achievement are currently good at Key Stages 3 and 4, and with post 16 students.

158. By the end of Key Stage 3, students have gained many skills which enable them to appraise music, compose and perform. They have a secure knowledge of basic notation, and can successfully follow a melodic line written in the treble clef. They make accurate comments when analysing music they are listening to because they have a thorough knowledge of the elements of music, of form, and of the features of instrumentation. Standards of composition are especially good, particularly when graphic notation is being used. Students in one Year 8 class, for example, performed their compositions, written as background to part of the film "Ghostbusters," and demonstrated great imagination and versatility, using unusual instrumentation, unexpected harmonies and appropriate vocal effects. Ensemble work is well co-ordinated, and students' improvisation skills are good, as demonstrated by a Year 9 class working on a topic arising from music by the Beatles.

159. In practical ability, standards at Key Stage 4 range from elementary up to quite advanced. Students have well developed skills for composition work, and are able to write a melody and appropriate harmonies on a ground bass, using up to seven major and minor chords as a sequential foundation. They understand a number of different styles when composing, and are equally successful when writing in classical, blues or modern idioms. Students' aural skills are very good, and they use these to advantage when undertaking listening analysis: in this respect, they use the correct music language confidently and accurately.

160. Post 16 students have good practical standards of attainment. All students are advanced performers. Aural skills are well developed, and students are competent score readers. They have a secure knowledge of many important landmarks in music history and literature, and make accurate observations when undertaking stylistic and formal analysis.

161. Students have very good attitudes to music across the school. They enjoy their music lessons, especially the practical work. Concentration in group work is very good and higher attaining students frequently help others. Students are mostly very keen to perform in front of the class, and respond positively to suggestions for improvement. When standards of performance are particularly high, as in the Year 8 'Ghostbusters' lesson, students display positive reactions to the efforts of others in the group. Boys and girls are equally interested in music, as reflected in the take-up of GCSE and A Level courses.

162. The quality of teaching is very good across the school. This contributes significantly to the good quality of learning at Key Stages 3 and 4, and the very good quality of learning with post 16 students. Teachers have a secure knowledge of their subject and are able to use this to provide appropriate challenges. Lessons are well prepared and fit developmentally into a sequence of lessons. There are high expectations of students and constant pressure for more improvement, especially with older students. Teaching methods are very effective, and it is excellent practice that those who learn orchestral or band instruments are expected to play them in class ensemble. Classes are managed efficiently although very occasionally teachers run out of time. Assessment procedures are comprehensive. Very good provision is made for students with learning difficulties through the excellent use of support staff who contribute positively to lessons through group work. Talented students are given more demanding tasks in class and more intensive research on examination courses.

163. Information technology has been up graded since the last inspection, and is now central to the delivery of the curriculum across the school. A new computer has been acquired for the department and five machines in the ICT suite have been installed with specialist music software. Keyboards are used extensively for creative work, and for teaching skills. The delivery of ICT is central to the departmental development plan. In addition to the AS and A Level courses the department offers A Level music technology. Since the last inspection, vocal tuition has been introduced which will further enhance the breadth and balance of the course at Key Stage 3. There has also been a significant increase in the numbers of students taking music courses at Key Stage 4 and at post 16.

164. Music is very well led by a dedicated head of department who has the vision for even greater improvements, including developing music in the community. Students and staff respect and support him in these objectives. There is a need to ensure that he has sufficient support to fulfil his whole school responsibilities.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

165. The attainment of students is satisfactory and similar to that in most school nationally. Teachers' assessments of students at the end of Key Stage 3 are just above the national average; there are no GCSE results as the course started in September 2000 and no post 16 lessons were observed during the inspection week. Standards at the end of Key Stage 4 are around the national average.

166. In Year 7 boys are able to perform a range of gymnastic skills such as rolling and balancing whilst a few higher attainers are able to perform headstands and cartwheels. Girls in this year demonstrate good throwing and catching skills when playing cricket and are able to throw over arm effectively. Higher attaining girls in rounders in Year 8 have good hitting skills and show control and power in their shots, whilst the majority of students have satisfactory fielding skills and are able to bowl consistently. Boys in Year 9 gymnastics have satisfactory vaulting skills and are able to perform through and side vaults, with some higher

attainers able to perform neck springs. There is, however, a lack of quality in their performance. Girls in rounders in this year have developed satisfactory basic skills in fielding and throwing and a good understanding of the game. In Year 10 netball students know footwork rules and positional play and although there are few higher attainers, the majority of students are able to catch and pass and maintain correct positions on the court. In soccer in Year 10 students understand rules and team tactics and have satisfactory control in dribbling and passing with some higher attainers able to make effective lofted passes. In GCSE theory students have satisfactory knowledge of skeletal systems and are able to name the major bones in the body. Many students in Year 11 badminton many students are working below the level expected for the age group. Although they are able to show a range of serving styles, many are unaware of the rules of serving. They rarely hit the shuttle a good length and lack control with many strokes. In rounders students have a good understanding of the game and are able to hit the ball effectively. Some higher attaining students are particularly effective in bowling.

167. Teaching is good overall and is better in Key Stage 3 than in Key Stage 4. Teachers have good subject knowledge and give clear explanations and demonstrations which help students to improve. Effective use is made of time in the changing rooms in rounders lessons where objectives are shared with students and targets are set. Good planning of lessons and challenging tasks with high expectations for students contribute to good teaching. Classes are well managed and there is good behaviour in all lessons. Good teaching gives students opportunities to work independently and this often occurs at the start of lessons where students take responsibility for their own warm up, either individually or in small groups, and is especially well done in Year 11 badminton and rounders. Students make good progress as a result of strategic interventions by teachers who help individual students as in Year 7 gymnastics. In Year 9 rounders students are given good opportunities to evaluate each other's work, which helps them make good progress in their performance. However in GCSE physical education theory there are insufficient opportunities for students to take an active part in the lesson and so enhance their learning. Very good lessons, such as Year 7 cricket, have strong planning with progressive and well selected tasks and high expectations of students. The very good working atmosphere in this lesson is created by the positive and understanding relationship between the teacher and students which contributes to students making significant progress in the activity.

168. In all lessons students learn new skills, refine existing ones and improve their knowledge and understanding in the subject. Even where attainment levels are below that expected in Year 8 gymnastics students still make some progress in improving their range of skills. In Year 11 rounders students continue to improve both their skills and increase their understanding of the game when learning about on and offside hitting. New skills are learned and progress is often made in a single lesson. In Year 7 cricket girls learn new batting skills and are able to apply them in games. There is also progress over longer periods of time as students complete a unit of work, although this is often not clear as schemes of work do not show clearly the expected progression in an activity.

169. Students are enthusiastic about the subject and there are good levels of active participation with very few students excused lessons. When given the opportunity students co-operate well in pairs and small groups when working in warm ups or in skill practices. Students work hard at tasks set by teachers and are able to sustain interest and effort with little need for teacher intervention; students behave well and respond to their teachers' instructions. Those students who have chosen to take their GCSE course after school have made a commitment which shows a very positive attitude towards the subject.

170. The curriculum meets statutory requirements although there is a limited range of activities for students in Key Stage 3. The inclusion of GCSE in Key Stage 4 gives higher

attaining students the chance to gain accreditation in the subject, however the time allocation for this course is insufficient with one theory lesson after school and practical activities taking place during the students normal physical education time. There are no recreational or examination courses for sixth form students in curriculum time. There is a satisfactory range of extra curricular activities with some school teams for higher attainers and club and inter form events for all students. The Junior Sports Leaders Award is open to students in Years 11, 12 and 13 and is held at lunchtimes.

171. The management of the department is unsatisfactory. Insufficient work has been done to implement National Curriculum 2000. The documentation to support teaching is poor, and assessment using levels needs to be developed further. Risk assessment, rewards, uniform and other policies are contained in the department handbook, but further work needs to be done to make it a comprehensive and working document. Overall planning for the subject is unsatisfactory. The unit of striking games which includes cricket and rounders is too long and planned to take place outside in October and November. Better use could be made of the good sports hall by having two teaching groups at the same time, which would free up more sports hall time to develop a wider range of games activities throughout the year.

172. Since the last inspection standards of student attainment have been maintained. There is good teaching and students continue to have a positive attitude towards the subject. There has, however, been an unsatisfactory response by the department particularly in curriculum planning and development of assessment to facilitate the introduction of National Curriculum 2000.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

173. This is a successful department where GCSE standards are well above the national average and are high in relation to other subjects in the school. In addition to success in the numbers achieving higher grades, RE is enabling the full range of students to do well. In 1998 and 2000 all students entered for GCSE achieved an A*-C grade. This is a popular course which students value and the small number of students not entered for the examination are offered alternative accreditation.

174. During the first three years most students make good progress including those with special needs although some higher attaining students are not challenged sufficiently. Students are taught in large mixed ability classes with well over thirty in some. The high standards of teaching ensure good quality learning, but it is difficult to meet the needs of all students in such large classes. The time allocated to RE at Key Stage 3 is much less than that given to history and geography although it is in line with most schools nationally. There are some gaps in knowledge and understanding against the requirements of the North Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus, but teachers are doing well to prepare students to begin GCSE as effectively as they do and attainment is in line with national expectations.

175. There are strong features to the students' work. In Year 9 the unit on prejudice includes a powerful section on *The Holocaust* with good links to history. Students had been taken to an exhibition on *Anne Frank and the Holocaust* to support this work. In Year 8 a Christmas project was just beginning - this is an annual feature, is well structured and produces work of which students can be proud. In Year 7 students experienced a 'guided vision' on the life of a leaf which enabled them to appreciate the stages of life from birth to death in preparation for work on rites of passage. They were quiet and reflective and able to make thoughtful responses to the teacher's questions.

176. Most teaching is very good in both key stages because class management is effective; lessons are well planned and include a good variety of activities and teachers use time well. Students are expected to think hard in lessons. They generally respond well and try hard with their work. Marking students' work is a strong feature of teaching and students appreciate their teachers' efforts.

177. RE lessons contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students. The work on world faiths other than Christianity is good preparation for life in a multi-cultural society and many moral and ethical issues are addressed in lessons.

178. RE is well led and the subject leader is abreast of new developments. There is a good vision for the future, and planning which is appropriate to the school's priorities. The levels for assessment recently published as guidelines by QCA are being introduced to establish parity with other subjects in the school at Key Stage 3. Standards have been maintained at the same high level as at the last inspection and the most significant improvements are in planning, assessment and the monitoring of progress. The curriculum has been enriched with visits out and speakers coming in but ICT skills need to be incorporated into work. This will be difficult in the time allocated to the subject.

179. The main teaching room has some lively displays. Resources are supplemented well with in-house booklets but more books are needed, particularly for the first three years. Foundation texts, in particular, would help to meet the needs of all students.

180. The core RE course for Years 10 and 11 is part of the school's PSE programme. It is given only two per cent of curriculum time and also has to include citizenship education. The modules are relevant, well devised, and drawn from the locally agreed syllabus, but are only a small part of what is required and specialist RE teachers do not teach these modules. Statutory requirements are not met at Key Stage 4 and at post 16. At Key Stage 4 provision is insufficient for those students who do not follow the GCSE course and there is no RE at post 16.