

INSPECTION REPORT

THE MANOR SCHOOL

Mansfield Woodhouse

LEA area: Nottinghamshire

Unique reference number: 122829

Headteacher: Jonathon Hickman

Reporting inspector: David Thompson
15640

Dates of inspection: 20 – 24 November 2000

Inspection number: 223842

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	11 - 18
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Park Hall Road Mansfield Woodhouse Nottinghamshire
Postcode:	NG19 8QA
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr K Ball
Date of previous inspection:	18 April 1994

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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David Thompson (15640)	Registered inspector		What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
Suzanne Smith (9779)	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Philip Mason (3691)	Team inspector	Art and design	How good are curricular and other opportunities? Equal Opportunities
Mike Lewis (7431)	Team Inspector	Modern Foreign Languages	How well are pupils and students taught?
Janet Harvey (23323)	Team Inspector	Music	How well does the school care for its pupils and students?
Graham Matthews (11832)	Team Inspector		Special Educational Needs
Tony Drane (10170)	Team Inspector	English, Drama	
Maurice Edwards (1839)	Team inspector	Mathematics	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The Manor School is a comprehensive community school for pupils aged 11 to 18 years. It was designated a Specialist Sports College in September 1998. It is larger than most secondary schools, with 1450 pupils compared with the national average of 934. Its catchment area is predominantly that of an ex-coal mining and textile manufacturing community. It includes areas of new housing and extensive areas of social disadvantage. Overall, the socio-economic circumstances of pupils are much more disadvantaged than in most schools. The attainment of pupils when they enter the school is well below average. There are considerably more boys than girls and almost all pupils are of white British heritage. Less than 1% have English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs (20%) and the percentage claiming free school meals (15%) are both broadly average. The number of pupils with a statement of special educational need is low. The school operated on two sites until September 1999 when it became a single site school. This followed a fire on the previous upper school site in 1996 which caused severe damage. The subsequent building programme has been extensive and most of the school's accommodation is now of a high standard.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school. The school is led and managed very well. The quality of teaching and standards of attainment have improved since the last inspection. The school has many strengths and an improving ethos for learning. Its priorities for further development are highly appropriate and it offers good value for money.

What the school does well

- High quality leadership which has focused the work of staff and pupils on raising achievement.
- Substantial improvement in recent Year 9 national test results, and improved GCSE results since the last inspection.
- A very broad and relevant choice of post-16 courses, with effective provision for developing key skills.
- Fulfils its role as a Specialist Sports College very well, enabling pupils to develop effective leadership skills.
- Strong community involvement, benefiting pupils' learning and personal development.
- Careful and thorough financial management, matched well to developmental needs and making good use of specific grants.
- Very successful partnership with the neighbouring special school, enabling pupils to respect and support the needs of others.
- Very effective arrangements for promoting and monitoring attendance.

What could be improved

- Raising standards in literacy across all subjects.
- Improving curriculum provision for information technology, religious education and personal, social and health education.
- Supporting teachers in ensuring that all students behave well and are appropriately challenged.
- Improving the use of assessment to let pupils know what they are achieving and how they can improve.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the 1994 inspection, progress overall has been satisfactory, with an accelerated and better focused improvement during the last year. In the previous report the matching of finances to development priorities was criticised; this is now a major strength of the school. The quality of teaching has improved and the management team have introduced appropriate resources to foster further improvement. There has been strong improvement in the most recent Year 9 national test results, and GCSE and A-level results are better than at the previous inspection. The school has begun to address

the need to provide sufficient challenge for all pupils, but they are still not being stretched enough in some teaching groups. There has been too little progress in ensuring that the curriculum meets statutory requirements in the teaching of religious education and information technology. Becoming a specialist sports college has had a beneficial effect on community links and the development of pupils' leadership skills.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 14, 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	D	D	D	D
A-levels/AS-levels	E	E	E	

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

* Similar schools are grouped by the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, which is taken as a measure of social background. Local government profiles for Mansfield Woodhouse show that this criterion disadvantages The Manor School as it places its examination performance lower than is reasonable, considering social circumstances in the area it serves.

Results in the national tests at the end of Year 9 have shown a significant improvement in the year 2000. Standards are below national averages in English and science, and are below those of similar schools. Mathematics results are close to the national average. However, taking into account the fact that pupils enter the school with standards well below the national average, these results represent good achievement.

The proportion of pupils gaining five or more grades A*-C in GCSE examinations has improved since the last inspection. Results are still below the national average, but represent good achievement in most subjects. For example, in English and mathematics, achievement is good when compared with previous performance in Year 9 national tests. Performance is strongest where pupils are attaining results similar to those seen nationally, for example in art and design and physical education. Pupils' achievement at GCSE is at least satisfactory in all subjects, except in modern foreign languages where the proportion gaining grades A*-C has been in decline. Overall, girls achieve much higher standards than boys. The proportion of boys achieving 5 or more grades A*-G is below the national average, whereas girls' results are in line.

Results at A-level have improved slightly since the last inspection, but standards are still well below the national average. There was an improvement in 1998, followed by a decline in 1999. Year 2000 results show a small improvement. The proportion of students achieving the higher grades A and B is low and entry numbers are small. When compared with their previous performance at GCSE, students are achieving broadly in line with expectation. The proportion of candidates achieving a GNVQ qualification is low and entry numbers are small.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. Most enjoy coming to school and try hard, but many have short attention spans, although they persevere well when finding tasks difficult.

Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory overall, and improving as pupils get older. Most behave well in lessons, but a few disaffected pupils are disruptive in a minority of lessons. The large majority socialise well out of lessons, and movement around the site is usually orderly.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory, and improving as pupils get older. Most collaborate well in lessons, especially girls. Pupils respond well to their older peers who are given organisational responsibility such as in physical education. The school has effective measures on bullying, but occasionally does not deal with it sufficiently quickly.
Attendance	Broadly average. Attendance has improved and unauthorised absence has decreased significantly in the last year. Punctuality is good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 11-14 years	aged 14-16 years	aged over 16 years
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	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 is at least satisfactory in 92% of lessons, representing a 10% increase in quality since the last inspection. This reflects the intensive work done by the school to improve teaching and learning. The quality of teaching increases as pupils get older, but with a dip in Year 9 where 19% of teaching is ineffective. The best teaching is seen in Years 12 and 13, where 63% is at least good. In the good or better lessons observed, there are orderly and purposeful starts with clear objectives so that pupils know exactly what to do. Teachers ensure a brisk pace and strong challenge, stimulating students to get better results. Behaviour is managed well so that there is no disruption of learning, and questioning is used well to maintain high levels of attention. In the small number of ineffective lessons factors, such as vague objectives, indecisive behaviour management and low expectations of pupils, result in too little learning and slow progress.

There are examples of effective teaching in all subjects. In Years 7 to 9, teaching is good in English, mathematics, geography, modern foreign languages and physical education. In Years 10 and 11, teaching is very good in history, geography, drama and physical education. It is good in English, mathematics and art and design. In Years 12 and 13, it is very good in performing arts, English, mathematics and geography. It is good in information technology, history, physical education, modern foreign languages and music. Teaching is at least satisfactory, overall, in all subjects, except for music in Years 7 to 9 where it is unsatisfactory.

There is effective teaching of literacy to Year 7 pupils in English, but no co-ordinated approach in other subjects, although this is being planned. Low standards in literacy are currently having an adverse effect on progress in many subjects. The teaching of numeracy is sound, both in mathematics and through a well organised approach in other subjects. The teaching of information technology across subjects is insufficiently organised, especially in not producing a picture of pupils' experience and capability so that they can build on their skills.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Broad and relevant provision, especially in Years 10 and 11 where pupils can take 10 subjects to exam level, or an appropriate alternative work-related curriculum. Breadth of sixth form provision is a strength, with a good choice of courses for the full ability range of the school. Planning for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is a weakness, information technology is not sufficiently co-ordinated in Years 7 to 9 and religious education does not meet legal requirements.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	All have access to the whole curriculum. Withdrawal from lessons is very effective in improving skills. There is good provision of additional courses such as work skills, and appropriate recognition through a Certificate of Achievement. Very successful development of talented pupils in physical education.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Moral development is promoted well through many aspects of school life, including assemblies, most subjects and PSHE. There are good opportunities for social development such as in group work, community education and sports activities. Life in different cultures is considered through expressive arts, but there is insufficient preparation for life in England's culturally diverse society. Spiritual development is unsatisfactory, with too little time for religious education and rare use of "Thought for the Day" by tutors.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Personal support and guidance is satisfactory. There are appropriate procedures for dealing with behaviour problems, but these are not always used effectively. Attendance is rigorously checked. Use of a "compact" scheme and awards are working well in improving attendance. There is too much variation in the use of assessment information to let pupils know how they can improve or to plan future lessons. Arrangements to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils are good. Annual reports on pupils' work provide too little information on what they have learnt. Academic and personal support from tutors is mostly effective.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership of the recently appointed headteacher is a very significant strength. He is supported well by the core management team. Highly appropriate priorities for development have been identified, supported by a good range of strategies to raise standards through improving teaching and learning. Many faculty leaders are implementing the strategies well, but this is not yet universal. Success is already evident in raising the quality of teaching and better results in Year 9 tests, but there has not yet been sufficient impact on the results of older pupils.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are very well informed and carry out their roles successfully. The chair provides effective leadership, focusing on developing pupils' academic and personal achievement. They analyse factors such as attendance rates and examination results thoroughly in order to hold the core management team and staff to account. They work hard on the school's behalf.

The school's evaluation of its performance	Development plans have clear targets, timelines and responsibilities, and are focused well on raising standards. Recently introduced approaches to monitoring teaching are already having an effect on raising quality. Examination results are analysed in detail against predictions. Systems exist for promoting and monitoring pastoral care, but they are less well developed.
The strategic use of resources	Financial resources are managed very effectively to support the school's aims. The core management team analyses contracts carefully to ensure that best value is obtained. Learning resources are sufficient overall, but with too few computers. There are sufficient well trained teachers in most subjects, but not in English and music. Accommodation is greatly improved and mostly of a very high standard.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<input type="checkbox"/> Pupils like school. <input type="checkbox"/> Pupils make good progress. <input type="checkbox"/> Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school if they have a problem. <input type="checkbox"/> Pupils are expected to work hard. <input type="checkbox"/> The school provides an interesting range of activities.	<input type="checkbox"/> Standards of behaviour. <input type="checkbox"/> Better information about how well pupils are getting on. <input type="checkbox"/> Closer working between the school and parents.

The large majority of parents agree with the positive comments in the left hand column of the table above. Relatively few parents expressed negative views set out in the right hand column.

Inspectors confirm the views of parents. Many pupils express a liking for the school, and most are making good progress from a low starting point. Most teachers expect pupils to work hard, but a few do not provide enough challenge. The school provides a wide range of in-school and extra-curricular activities. Parents are strongly encouraged to contact the school at any time. Most pupils behave well, but a few are disruptive. Reports to parents do not convey strengths, weaknesses and improvements in subjects sufficiently well.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

Standards on entry

- 1 National tests are taken at age 11 in the term before transfer to The Manor School. There has been a rising trend in standards at age 11 for the last four years, 1997 to 2000. However, in comparison with the national picture, standards have been consistently well below average in English, mathematics and science for all four years.

Performance at age 14

- 2 Results in Key Stage 3 national tests at the end of Year 9 in 2000 were below national averages in English and science, and close to the average in mathematics. Results in comparison with similar schools are also below national averages in all three subjects.
- 3 Taking into account the fact that pupils enter the school with standards well below the national average, the results at the end of Year 9 represent good achievement. During the inspection week, pupils were observed to be making good progress in building on their previous attainment in all three subjects.
- 4 In English, the results have shown a significant improvement in the year 2000, after a substantial decline in the previous two years. Girls attain much higher standards than boys, with the difference between girls' and boys' attainment being much wider than seen nationally.
- 5 In mathematics, results have improved strongly over the last two years after a decline from 1997 to 1998. Results in 2000 are only just below the national average. Boys' attainment is better than girls' overall, reversing the national picture. However, girls outperform boys in attaining the higher levels, where they are in line with national averages.
- 6 In science, results improved significantly in the year 2000, after a substantial decline in 1998 and 1999. Boys attain higher standards than girls overall, matching the national picture, but girls do better than boys at attaining the higher levels.

Performance at age 16

- 7 At age 16, the proportion of students gaining five or more grades A*-C in the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) is well below the national average at 30%. Results have declined in the last two years after an improvement in 1998. Girls achieve much higher standards than boys, with the gap between girls' and boys' attainment being much wider than seen nationally. However, the recent decline in the school's results is apparent both in girls' and boys' performance. Results of students attaining five or more A*-G grades present a better picture, with boys' results below the national average and girls' results being in line.

- 8 GCSE performance is at its best where pupils are attaining results similar to those seen nationally, for instance in art and design, where results have improved and are now slightly above the national average, and in physical education, where results are close to the national average. In most subjects, results are below the national average, but still represent good achievement. For example, in English and mathematics achievement is good when compared with pupils' previous performance in Year 9 national tests. Pupils following a full GCSE information technology course were observed during the inspection to be making good progress, to achieve standards in line with those normally seen nationally. Pupils' achievement at GCSE is at least satisfactory in all subjects, except in modern foreign languages where the proportion of pupils reaching grades A*-C has been in decline and is well below the national average and in expressive arts, where improvement is slow.

Performance post-16

- 9 Students taking two or more subjects for the General Certificate of Education (GCE) A-level or equivalent examinations, have performed consistently below the national average in recent years. There was an improvement in 1998, when results were only just below average, followed by a decline in 1999. The most recent results (year 2000) show a small improvement, indicated by a rise in the average point score. The proportion of students achieving the higher grades A and B is low and entry numbers are often small. Use of previous GCSE points scores to predict A-level performance shows students achieving standards broadly in line with expectations during 1997 and 1998, but achieving below expectation in 1999. The proportion of candidates achieving the General National Vocational Qualification is very low, and entry numbers are small.

Standards in subjects of students who are currently in Years 7 to 13

- 10 In English, pupils make good progress from entry to the school. By Year 9, although pupils attain below the national average, their literacy competence has improved. Pupils also improve well in Years 10 and 11 and are achieving well on their GCSE course in comparison with predictions based on Key Stage 3 results, although still below national standards. Attainment for post-16 students is sound.
- 11 In mathematics, pupils make good progress during their first three years in the school, and are achieving similar to national standards in Year 9. Standards of pupils following a GCSE course are rising and, although below those normally seen, show good improvement from pupils' results at age 14. A-level performance is also below average, but with some exceptional individual performances, especially in Further Mathematics.
- 12 In science, standards are below those typically seen by Year 9. This represents good achievement when compared with very low standards on entry to the school. However, higher attainers do not move on to more demanding work at a high level. Progress during Years 10 and 11 is satisfactory, with pupils attaining standards on GCSE courses which are below those normally seen. Pupils continue to make steady progress in Years 12 and 13 to obtain standards which are lower than usually seen.
- 13 In art and design, some pupils progress well during their first three years and are working at a little above national standards by the end of Year 9. However, a large majority of pupils makes only just sufficient progress to achieve standards below those normally seen. In Years 10 and 11, pupils make good progress in option

groups to achieve average standards. They use paints, crayons and oil pastels well to interpret themes such as war and sorrow, but demonstrate weakness in analysing ideas. GCSE results have risen over recent years. Sixth form students achieve average standards.

- 14 In design and technology, pupils make sound progress from age 11 to 16, maintaining below average standards. Pupils develop their designing and making skills as they move through each material area, but have insufficient opportunity to demonstrate the range or depth required to reach the higher grades. Post-16 pupils make good progress, reaching standards appropriate to their AS- and A-level courses.
- 15 In expressive arts, overall standards are below average, with too little GCSE coursework time to consolidate underdeveloped skills. However, a small minority of pupils, particularly girls, produce above average work. There is a high drop-out rate in GCSE examinations owing to the failure of pupils to complete coursework. In dance, standards of composing, performing and appreciating dance are in line with those normally seen. Progress is satisfactory overall, with girls making better progress than boys. Boys' progress is often limited by unsatisfactory attitudes and behaviour. In drama, pupils develop skills well, from entering the school, to attain sound standards by the end of Year 9. Pupils with special educational needs often attain well as they can succeed using action and voice, and there is less emphasis on written work. Pupils choosing a GCSE drama course demonstrate positive achievement, attaining standards similar to those seen nationally. Boys and girls work well together, but girls achieve higher grades. Students following the A-level performing arts course attain high standards.
- 16 In humanities, standards in geography are well below average in Year 9, with boys achieving less well than girls. Work is predominantly descriptive, with little evidence of analysis or explanation. Pupils make good progress in Years 10 and 11 to reach standards which are below those normally seen. Pupils produce good coursework and are beginning to reason well, but boys make less progress than girls. Pupils achieve well at A-level, producing above average standards in recent years. In history, the picture is broadly similar, with standards well below those seen nationally in Year 9 and below average in Year 11. This represents sound achievement by Year 9 and good achievement in Years 10 and 11. Poor reading and writing skills often impede progress. A-level examination standards are below the national average. In business studies, standards are below average, compared with the national picture, but represent sound achievement in relation to students' previous attainment. Students use business terms appropriately, but investigation and evaluation skills are less well developed.
- 17 In information and communication technology (ICT), 11 to 14 year old pupils develop their skills within a range of subjects. This approach, combined with a shortage of computers, does not provide sufficient breadth or depth of experience to enable pupils to reach higher levels of the National Curriculum, and progress is unsatisfactory. From ages 14 to 16, pupils follow a GCSE course in ICT and make good progress, although standards are still below average. A minority of pupils follow a full GCSE course and achieve standards in line with those normally seen nationally. GNVQ and AS-level pupils make good progress in post-16 key skills lessons.
- 18 In the modern foreign languages faculty, standards of pupils currently following a GCSE course are low. By the end of Year 9, speaking often consists of simple prompted statements and the quality of written composition is below that seen nationally. By the end of Year 11, most pupils need guidance in order to produce even

short answers to questions and their accuracy is poor. Progress is hampered by low literacy levels and poor pupil attitudes which teachers are working hard to overcome. Progress is slow in A-level French, but good in German.

- 19 Standards in music have fallen since the last inspection, and progress in Years 7 to 9 is unsatisfactory. Attainment at the end of Year 9 is well below that seen nationally, with weaknesses in performing and composing. Progress from Years 10 to 11 and Years 12 to 13 is good. Attainment is only slightly below average at the end of Year 11 and is in line with national averages by Year 13. Pupils who learn instruments and participate in extra-curricular activities achieve the highest standards.
- 20 In physical education, pupils' planning, performing and evaluation skills are in line with those typically seen in other schools at age 11, and are better than those normally seen by age 16. Pupils make good progress in Years 7 to 9. Progress is very good in Years 10 and 11, and is good in Years 12 and 13. Some pupils show very high levels of skill, especially in football and boys' hockey.
- 21 In religious education, pupils make sound progress in Years 7 to 9, from a low starting point. By the end of Year 9, many pupils can express their thoughts about religious and spiritual issues well, but standards are below average. During Years 10 and 11, there is too little time to teach the agreed syllabus, and the attainment of most pupils is very low. The minority of pupils choosing GCSE religious education are making sound progress and achieving satisfactory standards.
- 22 Standards of literacy are low. A significant number of pupils enter Year 7 with low literacy competency in reading and written accuracy. This hinders progress across the curriculum, particularly in those subjects which have an emphasis on these skills. Writing skills are seen to be the weakest area across the curriculum, closely followed by reading skills, especially in the lower sets. Speaking skills are generally in line with expectation, though a significant number of pupils find difficulties in articulating complex ideas. Listening skills are under-developed for many pupils, though they improve markedly in those subjects where they are encouraged to work collaboratively and to discuss activities. Securing literacy competence in order to meet the target of raising standards is a key priority for the school.
- 23 Standards of numeracy are satisfactory. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy in Year 7 mathematics lessons is having a positive effect on standards. Pupils are growing in confidence when using a variety of mental methods to estimate and calculate. Many lessons start and end with good number games or activities, which are improving numerical thinking. In other year groups, number and graphic skills are good in high and middle attaining sets, but still weak for lower attaining groups. Here, multiplication routines involving fractions, decimals and percentages are not well known, and simple errors are made. However, calculators are used effectively in all classes. Numeracy across other subjects is improving. There is an effective staff working group and a written numeracy policy. All subjects contribute to the analysis of when and what numeracy skills are taught. For example, in geography, students plot hydrographs using scale and ratio competently to relate rainfall to rises in river levels. In science, students plot time – temperature graphs and can interpret them correctly. They measure accurately in design and technology lessons, but still find percentages difficult in business studies.
- 24 Pupils with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress. However, not all teachers have high expectations of what pupils with special educational needs can achieve in their subject. In withdrawal lessons, pupils are developing confidence

with their reading. They are motivated to learn and can work co-operatively with other pupils in pairs or small groups. Good peer support is evident when other pupils listen with patience to a pupil who is slower when reading out loud or in answering a question. Progress made by gifted and talented pupils is satisfactory in Years 7 to 11, and good in the sixth form. Talented pupils make very good progress in physical education.

Parents' Comments

- 25 Parents returning the questionnaire or attending the parents' meeting are, overall, satisfied with the work of the school. A majority commented that the school expects pupils to work hard, and they make good progress. The inspection confirms these findings for the majority of pupils.

Progress since the last report

- 26 The proportion of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSE A*-C grades in 1993 was 25%. There has been an improving trend, overall, since 1994. Despite a decline in 1999 and 2000, the most recent results show 30% of pupils achieved at this level. There were no results for Year 9 national tests available when the previous inspection took place in 1994. However, there has been a substantial improvement in the school's results in the year 2000 after a decline in the previous two years. Standards at A-level have improved slightly from an average point score of 10.6 in 1993 to 11.9 in 2000. The school has begun to address the need to provide sufficient challenge for all pupils, identified in the previous report, and sound progress has been made overall.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 27 The attitudes of pupils are satisfactory overall. Most enjoy coming to school, and they want to learn. They show suitable levels of interest in, and a growing enthusiasm for, their work as they move through the years. Many, especially in Years 7 to 9, have short attention spans and find it difficult to remain focused on tasks set, sometimes resulting in a disproportionate amount of time being spent in regaining attention, especially towards the end of lessons. Most pupils respond well to their lessons, they try hard and want to succeed; despite the low expectations that some have of themselves. A few are satisfied with making minimal effort. Many persevere even when they find the tasks difficult. This is particularly so with pupils from ages 14 to 18 years and where lessons are planned to provide suitably challenging work that is stimulating. A small number of pupils is disaffected and shows little interest in learning. Where their influence is allowed to be disruptive it slows learning for all. Most pupils enjoy practical tasks and where lesson planning

encourages them to take responsibility for conducting their own research and investigations. This usually results in them maintaining interest well, although there is sometimes reluctance to put forward their own ideas.

- 28 The ability of pupils to learn independently grows through the years, but develops more quickly between the ages of 14 to 18 years where expectations for them to take responsibility and use initiative increase. There are good examples of this in physical education and English. Some pupils value homework clubs and other subject specific support available as extra-curricular provision, although attendance at these is not high. Many pupils use and value opportunities provided for extra-curricular sport. Most pupils adopt a responsible attitude to the homework set for them; however, a few incorrectly record that none has been set. There are good opportunities for sixth form students to take more responsibility within the school. There is a head boy and girl as well as deputies, and other students represent the school at official functions. A number of students felt that the opportunity for taking responsibility around the school could be increased for the benefit of the whole school community.
- 29 The behaviour of pupils is satisfactory overall and improves as pupils move through the years, particularly after the age of 14. Most respond well to clearly expressed and well-understood expectations and their behaviour has a positive impact on learning. In a small minority of lessons, a few pupils show poor levels of self-discipline, resulting in behaviour that slows learning for all. These lessons are not managed effectively and the teacher has to spend too much of the available time in gaining pupils' attention. Out of lessons the large majority of pupils behaves well and socialises effectively. This is particularly so from the age of 14 years onwards and where there is suitable staff presence to supervise. A few pupils drop litter, showing a lack of respect for the premises or care-taking staff. There is little graffiti except in pupils' lavatories. Where unsupervised there are a few incidents of play fighting that stretch safety limits or develop into minor aggression. Movement about the site is usually orderly, but some congestion and unmanaged behaviour on stairs causes concern for safety. The number of fixed term exclusions during the last school year is higher than usually seen at 123; some of these involve pupils who have been permanently excluded from elsewhere. Permanent exclusions are below expectations at only 2. The number of pupils excluded is reducing during the current year as a result of specially designed programmes of work, careful monitoring and support, consultation with parents and consideration by governors and senior managers of the new guidelines for inclusion.
- 30 Relationships throughout the school and the personal development of pupils are satisfactory. Despite occasional lapses in respect for learning shown in a few lessons, pupils generally have a high level of trust in their teachers and are confident there is someone with whom they can share concerns. They grow in their ability to work together, particularly between the ages of 14 – 18. Girls, in particular, respond very well to opportunities provided for them to collaborate in learning experiences. Within tutor groups pupils show concern and care for their peers and willingly offer help when needed. In physical education, where older pupils are given responsibility for running lessons, others respond very well, accepting decisions unquestioningly and doing their best. There are occasional incidents of bullying, both verbal and physical. Initial monitoring is sometimes slow to trigger the well-documented formal procedures to ensure it is dealt with effectively at an early stage and that parents are suitably involved. The school is aware of this and is taking action to put it right. Pupils grow in personal effectiveness and understanding of the world around them through involvement in community education, supporting charities and residential visits.

- 31 The attendance figure for the last school year is satisfactory at 90.7%, being broadly in line with the national average for comparable schools. It is better than the average for similar schools locally and has risen over the last year. Unauthorised absence at 1.4% is higher than recorded nationally, but has decreased significantly since the previous year. These improved figures are a result of successful strategies by the school and good support from the educational welfare officer. The large majority of pupils arrive in time for the start of the day and lessons usually begin promptly, ensuring that time available for teaching is used to best effect. The attendance and punctuality of pupils supports learning effectively.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 32 Teaching is sound in Years 7 to 9 and good in Years 10, 11 and in the sixth form. It is satisfactory or better in 92% of all lessons. This represents a 10% increase in overall quality since the previous inspection, and reflects the intensive work which the school has done to improve teaching and learning. The quality of teaching increases as pupils get older, but with a noticeable dip in Year 9, where 19% of lessons contain ineffective teaching. In the sixth form, teaching is good or better in 63% of lessons, satisfactory or better in 98% of all lessons, and 100% satisfactory or better in Year 13.
- 33 There are examples of effective teaching in all subject areas. In Years 7 to 9, teaching is good in English, mathematics, geography, modern foreign languages and physical education (PE). It is unsatisfactory in music. In Years 10 and 11, teaching is very good in history, geography, drama and PE. It is good in English, mathematics and art and design. In Years 12 and 13, teaching is very good in performing arts, English, mathematics and geography. It is good in information and communication technology (ICT), history, modern foreign languages, music and PE. Teaching is at least satisfactory in all subjects, overall, except in music in Years 7 to 9.
- 34 In mathematics and PE lessons in Years 7 to 9, teachers use assessment well to find out how their pupils are performing, and keep pupils well informed about their successes and areas for improvement. In ICT, modern foreign languages, art and design, music and RE the flow of information and advice about attainment is insufficient. In Years 10 and 11, assessment and feedback are very good in mathematics and English. These are weaknesses in science, modern foreign languages, music and RE.
- 35 Planning is a weak area in science in Years 7 to 11, and in music in Years 7 to 9. Because the purpose and structure of lessons are not always clearly enough thought out, the process of pupils' own thinking and learning is confused or incomplete. This sometimes leads to misbehaviour and slow progress.

36 Where teaching was observed to be good, very good or excellent, pupils made strong progress. The characteristics of these lessons include:

- ❑ an orderly and purposeful start to the lesson, so that learning begins immediately. For example, in a Year 8 English lesson on fast food, where the teacher made contact with individuals as they came in, had the necessary materials ready for use, and expected pupils to start thinking about their work straight away;
- ❑ clear objectives, so that pupils know exactly what they have to do, how the different parts of the lesson build up, and what the class is aiming to have achieved by the end. For example, in a Year 9 German lesson on travel and holidays, where the lesson objectives were projected for the class, were explained in simple language, reflected exactly the structure of the coming lesson, and described the types of language which were expected;
- ❑ tight timing, which creates a brisk pace of activity, focuses concentration, and leaves no time for pupils to drift away from their tasks. For example, in a Year 10 art and design lesson where the teacher regularly emphasised the shortage of time with statements such as “You have eight more minutes”;
- ❑ an element of challenge or competition which stimulates pupils to get better results. For example, in a Year 7 Science lesson, where the teacher used a test at the beginning of the lesson to produce results which the pupils were expected to improve during the rest of the lesson;
- ❑ effective management of pupils, so that they can work efficiently, without disturbance from others. For example, in a Year 7 music lesson, where the teacher got total silence on request, and created an atmosphere of respect for others;
- ❑ lively use of questions, which leads to a high level of attention and participation and shapes pupils’ thinking. For example, in a Year 10 history lesson about the American West, where the teacher’s rigorous questioning guided individual pupils towards making logical links and subtle conclusions;
- ❑ clear instructions, as in a Year 10 business studies lesson on marketing, where the pupils knew exactly what the lesson was about, and what they had to do. Because of this, they were motivated and successful;
- ❑ knowledge and use of criteria such as National Curriculum level descriptions or GCSE grade requirements, as in a Year 11 German lesson about helping out at home, where pupils were encouraged to incorporate in their work first one then another feature which took their performance into a higher category;
- ❑ and structured planning and delivery, where lessons are carefully constructed to take pupils step by step through a process which builds up their knowledge or skills. For example, in a Year 9 PE lesson, where the specific skills of doing front drops were taught during a trampoline session.

37 In lessons where teaching was found to be unsatisfactory, poor or very poor, or where there were weaknesses in otherwise satisfactory teaching, the critical factors are:

- ❑ vague objectives, which set a general context but do not give pupils enough specific information about what is expected of them. For example, in a Year 9 French lesson about the school timetable, where the content of the lesson was explained but the purpose was not, and where this information was conveyed orally, with no visual back-up. As a consequence, pupils were unsure what they were aiming for and did their work without a clear sense of purpose.
- ❑ inconsistent or indecisive management of behaviour or noise levels, so that some pupils’ unacceptable activity is not challenged and reduces the effectiveness of learning for the majority of a class. For example, in a Year 9 science lesson about separating mixtures, where poor pupil behaviour went unchecked and led to

- unsafe practical work, confusion and an unsatisfactory standard of work;
- low expectations, so that pupils do not receive the challenge or leadership they need in order to make proper progress towards success. For example, in a Year 11 French lesson working towards expressing symptoms of illness, where for nearly half the time pupils worked with very simple words and phrases which were at Year 7 standards;
- too much teacher talk, so that pupils do not have enough active practice or participation in work which would consolidate their learning. For example, when pupils were creating a song in a Year 10 music lesson, a lengthy period of listening to instructions and explanations led to frustration, chatter and misbehaviour;
- and lesson planning, where not enough thought is given to the ability of the pupils, the tasks they need to achieve success, and the steps which the lesson needs to follow in order to equip each pupil for the task. For example, in a Year 10 science lesson on reproduction, where scientific terms were introduced which did not relate to the activities the pupils were doing at that time.

38 The teaching of literacy is improving, but is currently unsatisfactory. English has an effective strategy in place for a literacy lesson each week in Year 7, with plans to roll it through into Year 8 and then Year 9 over the next two years. Special educational needs supports literacy acquisition well, particularly through learning support and the Corrective Reading programme. Some curriculum areas have some literacy support strategies such as the use of key words linked to specific topics, for example in art and design and the use of writing frames, for example in the humanities, but these are not sufficiently widespread. Opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills are often provided in English, drama, mathematics, business studies and RE. Currently there is no coherent literacy approach across the curriculum, and this is having an adverse effect on improving skills. However, a whole school policy group has been formed and the way forward is being planned, including the provision of in-service time for group training of teachers.

39 The teaching of numeracy is sound. In mathematics, the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy in Year 7 is having a positive effect on standards. Pupils are confident to use a variety of methods for calculating and can estimate with confidence. Many lessons start and end with an appropriate number game or activity. Numeracy is good in upper and middle sets but weak in lower sets. Place value is not secure and routine methods for calculating with fractions and decimals are not yet well established. The school has a whole school numeracy policy and all departments have contributed to matching their requirements with those taught in mathematics lessons over Key Stages 3 and 4. There are good examples of numeracy in geography, where many pupils encounter the hydrograph (relating rainfall to the rise in river water levels), and can also use scale competently. Pupils apply measurement adequately in design and technology, especially in food studies. There are more limited opportunities in science, but most pupils are competent using metric measures.

Teaching of pupils with special educational needs

- 40 The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Teachers know which pupils have an individual education plan (IEP) and most, but not all, are aware of the targets set in the IEP. Some subject teachers plan carefully to provide a range of materials and other resources for different levels of pupils' attainment, and also set subject-specific targets for pupils which build on the targets set in the IEP. The school is not making the best use of the good practice which already exists in some cases to ensure that all teachers plan effectively to meet the needs of all the pupils in the class. Many teachers provide, and carefully explain, key subject words to pupils and check their understanding, but this is not consistently done by all teachers. Individual programmes are well planned by the special educational needs co-ordinator, learning support assistants and outreach teachers. Teachers and learning support assistants work well together. Learning support assistants are effective in supporting pupils to think and to learn for themselves and not to rely on others to do the work for them. Programmes to improve pupils' reading and spelling are very well taught, for example, in corrective reading. Excellent multi-sensory teaching is provided by the local authority outreach service. Most homework set takes into account what pupils with special educational needs can achieve. The use of Year 12 and 13 students to support pupils with special educational needs in physical education is very effective.

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

- 41 Curriculum provision is satisfactory. Many good quality learning experiences are provided, but there are also some weaknesses that need to be addressed.

Years 7 to 9

- 42 In Years 7 to 9, the curriculum covers all required subjects, which receive adequate time allocations. However, information and communication technology (ICT), which is taught through learning experiences in a number of different subjects, is not sufficiently well co-ordinated. Not all pupils of the same age are receiving appropriate experiences. This is because ICT knowledge and skills are being taught to different levels in classes within the same subject. In some subjects, such as English, mathematics and science, there are appropriate arrangements for pupils of similar ability to work together. Effective strategies for reinforcing literacy and numeracy skills have been introduced, but there has not yet been sufficient impact on raising literacy standards.

Years 10 and 11

- 43 In Years 10 and 11, there are more compulsory aspects to the curriculum than usual and students benefit from this broad provision. As well as English, mathematics and double science, all students study an expressive arts and a humanities subject. A large majority take French or German. All have a separate weekly lesson of ICT, and most take this for a full GCSE in Year 11. Single science and rural science are offered as an alternative to double science. Students have one optional subject. Some students take a Foundation GNVQ business studies course. Most take 10 subjects to examination level. The curriculum is extended by one lesson of personal, social and health education (PSHE) and two physical education (PE) lessons. Some students choose to undertake community education in place of one period of PE. The

school recognises that this standard curriculum is not appropriate for all and it provides a number of appropriate alternative programmes such as “The Manor Project” and the “Learning for Work” scheme. “The Manor Project” is organised by the school for 30 students and involves: additional work in literacy, numeracy and ICT; Spanish as a new foreign language; increased guidance and support; and work experience. The school works closely with the local Training and Enterprise Council’s training provider “Strategic Training Solutions” on a “Work to Qualify” scheme, the “Acorn Project” and a Compact. These involve students in additional work experience placements, and some include part-time attendance at the local college of further education. This alternative provision is a strong feature of the school as it offers students a relevant work related curriculum and retains their interest in learning. A curriculum weakness during Years 10 and 11 is the lack of time for religious education (RE). Students are not taught the Nottinghamshire syllabus to the required depth.

Years 12 and 13

- 44 The sixth form curriculum is a strength of the school. It offers a breadth of provision and a choice of courses for the full ability range in the school. All students in Year 11 can find an appropriate course that will match their ability and lead them on to gain more qualifications. There is, however, a significant shortfall in the provision of RE to sixth form students. This is in breach of statutory requirements and has remained unchanged since the last inspection. The thought for the day, as a method of delivering collective worship, is not uniformly adhered to across the sixth form and makes little impact on students.
- 45 Equality of access and opportunity are important cornerstones of the sixth form. There are good links with the West Nottinghamshire College to offer a breadth of vocational courses at foundation and vocational level. These are supplemented with GNVQ’s at intermediate and advanced level and Advanced Supplementary and Advanced level subjects across a wide range at the Manor School itself. Students also have the opportunity of taking A-levels, such as law, through a consortium arrangement with local schools. Students get free transport to and from the partner school.

Pupils with special educational needs

- 46 All pupils with special educational needs have access to the whole school curriculum and school activities. Withdrawal lessons have a very specific purpose and are effective in helping pupils to improve their basic skills. The school makes every effort to provide for pupils with physical disabilities, for example, in timetabling a ground floor laboratory for the teaching of science. In Years 10 and 11, the school provides additional courses, for example, for pupils to learn work skills at a college of further education and to have opportunities for extended work experience. The school has also introduced further national accreditation such as the Certificate of Achievement. Very good arrangements are in place to support pupils at risk of exclusion, or who have experienced exclusion, and these pupils have a personal adviser to support them and to monitor their progress.

Provision for gifted and talented pupils

- 47 Grouping pupils by prior attainment in sets responds to the need of pupils to work with others of similar ability. This occurs from Year 8 in mathematics and modern foreign languages, and from Year 9 in English and geography, with broad attainment groupings in science. The science groupings contain too wide a range of students to extend gifted pupils using current teaching strategies. Talented pupils in PE and sports develop extremely well owing to the coaching that has been made possible through the Sport College funding. The use of a “performance co-ordinator” has a positive impact on the progress of talented pupils in physical education. In music, talented students are catered for well in peripatetic instrumental lessons.

Personal, social and health education

- 48 All pupils have one period of personal, social and health education (PSHE) weekly, taught by their form tutor. This covers many issues relevant to the needs of young people, including careers, health, drugs and sex education. The programme is enriched by visiting speakers, drama groups and videos. However, planning for PSHE is a weakness because it is not co-ordinated well enough. Schemes of work are mostly lists of topic headings. Staff new to the school are disadvantaged because they have no guidance on what has been covered in the previous year’s teaching. In Years 10 and 11, RE is a topic covered within PSHE, but there is insufficient time to cover syllabus requirements.

Careers education and guidance

- 49 There are satisfactory arrangements for careers education and guidance that have recently been extended to provide for pupils from Year 8 onwards. There is suitable guidance to support the decisions that pupils must make in Year 9, although the timing of this is a little late for some pupils. It is complemented by an effective work experience programme for those in Year 10. The school liaises appropriately with the careers service and there is suitable support for careers’ action planning in Year 11. Students in the sixth form receive good quality information about opportunities available to them. All sixth form students get an effective one-week period of work experience.

Community links

- 50 Very good use is made of the local community as a curriculum resource. As a Sports College, students benefit from specialist coaches based in the locality. About eighty students in Year 10 and in Year 11 undertake timetabled community education activities. For example, these include working one period weekly in local primary schools, nursing homes for the elderly, church drop-in centres and old people’s homes. Links with the community are further enhanced by links with the local special school that sends students with moderate learning difficulties to Manor School for a large part of the week. These students have their own base within the sixth form common room area, and they register and do lessons such as PSHE with the Manor School students. There is opportunity for Manor students to undertake teaching and mentoring of the Year 6 students. This develops a large number of skills and positive attitudes to helping others. Community workers, such as representatives of the local police, health service and social workers contribute as

speakers to the school's PSHE activities. There are also links with Mansfield Town FC. Apprentices from the club follow a GNVQ course in leisure and recreation at the school, in a programme funded by the Professional Footballers Association.

Liaison with local schools

- 51 Relationships with education partner institutions are strong and these benefit the learning opportunities of students at The Manor School. Good liaison with primary schools enables a smooth induction process between Years 6 and 7. Joint curriculum planning occurs in English, mathematics, PE and drama. Very good relationships enable the special educational needs co-ordinator from The Manor School to gain accurate information about the learning needs of special educational needs students. The school is part of a sixth form consortium that enables students from a number of local schools to take A-level subjects offered at other local schools, such as philosophy, law and music technology and GNVQ intermediate level courses. Free inter-site transport is arranged. 'Link' foundation level GNVQ courses can be taken 2 days per week at West Nottinghamshire College. There is successful liaison with other secondary schools, led by The Manor School, such as in the "Nike Girls in Sport", and school sports co-ordinator programme.

Extra-curricular opportunities

- 52 Outside the taught curriculum, extra-curricular opportunities are good, especially those promoted as a Sports College. Talented sports-players, and those who participate for pleasure, benefit from specialist coaching. There is a much more extensive programme of fixtures for competitive sport than is typically seen. Music and drama encourage performances, and during the inspection students were observed practising for a Christmas pantomime, which will also involve 40 pupils from local primary schools. A number of subjects organise specialist homework clubs, so that students can benefit from specialist support if required.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision

- 53 Although there is no single policy covering students' spiritual, moral social and cultural development, these aspects are embraced well in the school's aims, its code of conduct and its equal opportunities and multi-cultural policies.
- 54 Provision for spiritual development is unsatisfactory, and is the weakest of the four aspects. The school does not do enough to enable students in Year 10, 11 and the sixth form to gain spiritual insights through RE teaching. Some assemblies develop topics which have spiritual significance and encourage students to reflect on what they have heard, but others do not. In art and design, drama and English, students empathise with people whose lives are blighted by personal dilemmas. Celebration of successes are a feature of PE lessons and this reinforces self esteem. 'Thought for the Day' is rarely used by tutors, therefore the opportunity to engage students in a spiritual experience at the start of the day is missed. Moral development is effectively promoted in many aspects of school life. Assemblies, most subjects and PSHE consider moral issues effectively. For example, during inspection week the theme of Year 9 assembly was the pain caused to others by verbal bullying. Students show a moral concern for those less fortunate than themselves. The friendship and support given by sixth form students to their peers from Yeoman Park Special School is exemplary. Pupils across the age range show a moral concern in the care shown for the animals kept on site. Staff provide good role models in the fair manner in which they treat students. A sense of fair play is promoted very well in sports activities.

There are many good opportunities provided for social development in lessons, visits and extra-curricular activities. Students co-operate well in group work, for example in English and drama. Older students work well with those younger than themselves in sports coaching and in providing reading support. Timetabled community education lessons in Years 10 and 11 provide excellent opportunities for developing social skills and about 80 students volunteer in each year group. Overall, there is an appropriate range of provision for developing positive social attitudes. The provision of expressive arts subjects for all throughout Years 10 and 11 is a strong statement of the school's commitment to the cultural development of its students. However, the quality of some of this provision requires close examination if the standard of examination results is to improve. In humanities in Years 7 to 9, pupils gain good insights into the lives and beliefs of people from different backgrounds in Britain, and other parts of the world. Aspects of life in different cultures are developed well through expressive arts themes, but there is insufficient preparation of students for life in culturally diverse English society. In the sixth form, social and cultural growth are further developed by visits, such as a recent business trip to New York and theatre trips in English. In some form groups there are debates and small group work on current issues, but this is not co-ordinated to ensure that all students receive the same set of opportunities. Team building work, such as the trip to Hagg Farm are highly regarded by the students and they welcome any opportunity that bonds Years 12 and 13 together more.

Statutory curriculum requirements

- 55 The school meets statutory curricular requirements in Years 7 to 9, although coverage of ICT needs strengthening. In Years 10 and 11, and the sixth form, insufficient RE is taught.

Progress since the previous inspection

- 56 Since the previous inspection, the curricular experience of students has improved because the school is now on one site and much of the accommodation has been refurbished. The organisation of the subject timetable in Years 7 to 9 is now more coherent. Arrangements for teaching ICT have much improved, although the new National Curriculum requirements mean that this is still an area for development. There has been good development of alternative course programmes in Years 10 and 11 for students who benefit from vocationally related learning. Sixth form opportunities that were reported as broad in 1994, have become more extensive through consortium arrangements with other schools and college link courses.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 57 The level of care is satisfactory overall. There are strengths in the promotion and monitoring of attendance, welfare, health and safety, but assessment is insufficiently used to support pupils' progress.

Promoting and monitoring attendance

- 58 The school places a high priority on improving attendance and has very effective strategies in place to achieve this. Despite registers that are kept manually, sufficient time is set aside to monitor individual year and tutor group attendance levels on a weekly basis and to identify effectively where action is needed. Awards for good attendance, together with an effective Compact scheme and alternative learning

programmes for some previously disaffected pupils, have succeeded in improving the overall levels achieved. Annual progress reports to parents provide suitable information where levels of attendance have affected their children's progress. Registers are taken twice daily as required and, together with effective late registration and booking out procedures, ensure an accurate record of those present in the school. Unexplained absence is followed up quickly, often on the first day, and reasons for absence are always required. Procedures to ensure accurate registration of students in the sixth form are very effective.

Promoting and monitoring personal development

- 59 Pupils receive satisfactory levels of personal support and guidance. There are effective and well understood procedures for dealing with behaviour and discipline problems, although these are not always consistently well used, particularly as a first response. Once started, procedures usually ensure effective monitoring and often involve parents. In the large majority of lessons behaviour is managed well. However, in a few cases teachers do not have the strategies to do this and reminders of disciplinary procedures are not followed by action. There is clear and suitable guidance to staff about bullying, but on occasion, initial signs are slow to be followed up and discussed with parents. The school is aware of this and has recently taken firm steps to secure improvement. The personal, social and health education programme includes bullying as a topic but, nevertheless, some pupils are not fully aware of procedures. Exclusion is used only as a last resort. The procedures comply with regulations and time spent out of school is kept to a minimum, usually one or two days. Strategies to reduce the number of exclusions and measures to monitor and support pupils when they return are successful. The merit system motivates pupils well.
- 60 The school liaises well with local primary schools to ensure the pastoral needs of pupils are suitably considered when they transfer. This, together with thorough arrangements for induction, usually ensure that pupils settle happily into Year 7. Form tutors monitor personal development to a satisfactory standard, providing suitable support for the writing of individual Records of Achievement, and informing parents through annual progress reports of their children's personal development. The personal, social and health education programme is currently being reviewed to improve its coherence and the quality of personal guidance; for example the relationships aspect of sex education. Careers education and guidance has been changed recently to include Year 8 pupils and provides suitable guidance to support pupils in the choices they make, although this is a little late in the year for some pupils in Year 9. It is supported effectively by community education and work experience for Year 10, but opportunities to learn through debriefing exercises following this are limited by the time available. Use of the last session on Fridays to enable tutors to support individual pupils provides effective guidance.

Promoting and monitoring health, welfare and safety

- 61 Arrangements to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils are good. Form tutors move with pupils through the school ensuring they know each other well and build positive relationships. This results in pupils being confident to share problems when they need to. The level of staff presence around the school, and in the grounds when they are not in lessons, is sometimes less than is needed to support the highest standards of behaviour. Child protection procedures are fully in place and there is a designated person with overall responsibility for this. The school works effectively with the education welfare officer and a full range of other support services

as needed. School records show that policies and procedures are usually reviewed regularly and reflect the current needs of the school.

- 62 Most necessary policies and procedures are in place to ensure high standards of health and safety. Arrangements for the regular testing of equipment and appliances are fully in place. Pupils practise emergency evacuation procedures with sufficient regularity to ensure they are familiar with these should it be necessary. There are suitable arrangements for dealing with prescribed medicines and first aid emergencies, although the need to record less serious incidents for monitoring purposes has been overlooked. Within these overall good levels of care, some high priority items from a health and safety audit in December 1999 have not been attended to. For example, introducing full assessments of risk and procedures to ensure the continued safety of the small amount of asbestos in the school. Good progress has been made with securing suitable risk assessment procedures within most subject areas, but these now need completing and implementing fully, particularly in science. Although there is a once a year inspection of the premises by governors with good levels of expertise in health and safety matters, there has been no whole school assessment of risk to guide this process.

Procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' academic performance

- 63 The school has a satisfactory policy for the assessment of students' work, but it is not yet consistently applied across or within departments. The best practice is generally seen in the sixth-form, where GCSE results are used to predict likely A-level success. This information helps senior managers to identify a student's potential overall under-achievement, though not weaknesses in specific subjects. Despite this, students in the sixth form appear to know fairly accurately the levels of their current achievement.
- 64 Below the sixth form, the picture is much more mixed. There is too much variation from teacher to teacher in using assessment information in helping students to identify what they need to do to improve their performance. For example, good practice exists in English and modern languages, but is not followed by all teachers in these departments. Students know their levels of achievement in some subjects, but not all. As examples, in Year 9 all students know what grades to expect at the end of Year 9 in maths and know their National Curriculum levels in geography. Other departments vary, for example National Curriculum levels are used in art and design in Years 10 and 11, but not in Years 7 to 9; in English all students know their GCSE predictions in Years 10 and 11, but not all do in Years 7 to 9.
- 65 Overall, departments are developing the use of assessment in Years 10 and 11, but they are not yet using all the information available to them. In Years 7 to 9, assessment is not used rigorously or consistently enough to help all teachers and students to identify and set realistic targets to improve students' attainment.
- 66 At the last inspection, monitoring of students' academic progress was inconsistent across the school. Only slight progress has been made, and that very recently. Assessment of academic standards and use of this information to promote students' higher attainment are not yet satisfactory. Senior managers are aware of the problems and are working hard to develop more rigorous and consistent assessment practices across the school, for example by regular checking of books to monitor marking standards. Teachers are mostly making effective use of opportunities to support pupils during the last session on Fridays. An overview of attainment is discussed and useful targets are set, but the quality of information available to do this needs further improvement.

Using assessment information to guide planning

- 67 Knowledge about students' achievements is not used sufficiently by teachers to plan future lessons. With the exception of the sixth form, there are weaknesses in science, modern languages, art and design and music, all of which lack consistent systems for using information to improve lesson planning. Few subject staff analyse results by gender, ability, group or teacher, therefore missing important factors affecting progress.
- 68 Students with special educational needs are identified before they attend the Manor School and on-going assessment also identifies students whose special needs arise after they arrive. Students are appropriately involved in setting targets in their individual education plans and these are used by teachers to plan lessons. Targets are regularly reviewed to monitor progress, but some pupils are not reminded of their targets sufficiently frequently.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

Parents' views of the school

- 69 The proportion of parents completing the questionnaire provided prior to the inspection is low. They indicate that response to the provision made for their children by the school is generally good. Most feel their children like school, work hard, make good progress and are able to participate in an interesting range of extra-curricular activities. Inspection evidence largely confirms these positive views, particular for pupils from age 14 years onwards. Parents do have some concerns. The homework timetable raises expectations not always met. Although homework set is usually satisfactory between the ages of 11 to 13 years, and good from 14 years onwards, there is some inconsistency and occasionally pupils do not record it. This is not always queried when planners are checked each week by tutors, or commented on in the planners by parents. Some parents are concerned about standards of behaviour. Although inspection findings are that these are satisfactory overall, there are a few disaffected pupils whose behaviour is not always managed effectively. Not all parents feel well informed about how well their children are getting on. Inspectors agree that annual progress reports are variable in the quality of information they provide, however, there are good opportunities to discuss progress at individual review meetings held each term. A few parents at the meeting with inspectors expressed concern about procedures in relation to bullying. The school has taken this very seriously, ensuring that these individual concerns have been suitably dealt with and that steps are taken to prevent similar problems from occurring.

Quality of information provided

- 70 The overall effectiveness of the school's links with parents is good. The prospectus provides a full range of information about the school and it is supplemented by a useful parents' guide that provides further detail about routines and expectations. The school encourages parents to make form tutors their first point of call when they have concerns. However, not all parents are aware of this and some experience difficulty in establishing contact. The school provides a useful list of diary dates at the beginning of the year and there are subsequent reminders. A lively and interesting newsletter documents school news each term and is a good source of information, particularly about sporting activities. The governors' annual report to parents provides much useful information about its' work and some aspects of school performance. It does not, however, include a statement on progress made on the action plan following the last inspection, or information about the professional development of teaching staff. All parents have been provided with a guide to the secondary school curriculum, which sets out useful information about what their children should be learning and what support they can give at home. The student planners provide a suitable means of two way communication between home and school but, in practice, these are not always used effectively by either school or parents.
- 71 Annual progress reports provide good information about pupils' attitudes to school, and they usually outline effectively what work has been covered during the year. Information about what pupils know, understand and can do, and the progress made, are less consistently well reported, although exemplars of good practice exist, such as in mathematics. There are some suitable examples of specific targets that help parents understand what their children must do to improve their work, though some are too general to be of real help. National Curriculum test results for individual pupils are reported and parents are able to compare these to national expectations that are published in the governors' annual report later in the year. Although there is an opportunity for parents to consult with teachers during the year, this does not coincide with the issue of annual progress reports and no such opportunity is offered with the issue of reports as required. Despite this, parents are offered good opportunities to discuss their children's progress at individual reviews, to which they are invited each term and for which there is a very good time allocation. Attendance at these by parents is usually good for younger pupils, but decreases as pupils get older.
- 72 The special educational needs policy has not been reviewed since 1995 and as a document which provides information for parents, as well as others, does not clearly describe the current practice of the school in meeting the special educational needs of its pupils. The school provides parents with a copy of their child's individual education plan and encourages parents to participate in the setting of targets.

Involvement of parents

- 73 The involvement of parents with the work of the school has a good impact on pupils' learning. There is an active parent and teacher association (PTA) that organises many successful social and fund raising events. In addition, they organise community information events, for example about drugs awareness and home security. Funding raised by the PTA supports the work of the school well in contributing to the purchase of equipment and materials. It also ensures the continuance of the fishing club as an extra-curricular opportunity. Parents have contributed their views, through consultation, about the times of the school day and the home/school agreement, and these have been suitably considered in the decision making process. A satisfaction questionnaire at consultation evenings has provided

the school with valuable information, for example about homework, that is being used to improve provision. Many parents of children experiencing behavioural difficulties have successfully supported improvement through their presence in the classroom. Parents offer good levels of support for events involving their children, for example sporting activities and public performances.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 74 The leadership of the headteacher is a very significant strength. He is regarded as being highly energetic and dedicated to improving the school, by teachers, parents and governors. He has a very clear vision for the school, centred on ensuring that all children achieve their potential, supported by highly appropriate strategies.
- 75 Since his appointment in September 1999, the headteacher has very successfully introduced improved management systems that promote consultation to inform effective decision making. Management success is evident in improved teaching and better results in national tests at the end of Year 9, but has not yet had sufficient impact on the examination success of older children.
- 76 The headteacher, deputy headteacher, directors of aspects of the school and the office manager form a core management team. Responsibilities are well defined and members of the team work very well together. High levels of mutual respect and encouragement of differing points of view lead to well informed and effective decision making. There is a strong sense of purpose continually to improve the school.
- 77 Heads of faculty are mostly providing good leadership. Many faculty leaders, for example in mathematics, modern foreign languages and physical education, are very sharply focused on raising standards through a variety of strategies, with a strong emphasis on raising the quality of teaching to improve learning. This strength of commitment does not extend to all subjects; for example, there is too little co-ordinated support and insufficiently high expectation of teachers in personal, social and health education. This has been recognised by the core management team and there are plans for improvement. The special needs co-ordinator (SENCO) is very well organised and makes a strong contribution to the development and progress of students.

Priorities for development

- 78 There is a very effective system of identifying priorities for development. Strong communication systems exist between the core management team and other managers, ensuring that subject plans are very well matched to the school's overall development plan. This results in the choice of highly pertinent priorities for improvement, with a strong emphasis on strategies for improving learning. Development plans are presented well, with clear targets, timelines, responsibilities and resource implications. However, identification of criteria by which success can be measured is often not sufficiently sharp. The core management team has introduced new approaches to monitoring and improving teaching. There is an effective partnership with the University of Nottingham's "Improving the Quality of Education for All" project, which is beginning to extend the range of teaching styles and improve understanding of techniques for increasing learning. Performance management has been introduced for all teachers, with an intention to extend this to all members of staff, as part of the school's commitment to Investors in People. This represents a very appropriate combination of strategies and, even at this early stage,

is having a positive impact on raising teaching quality. Development of the pastoral life of the school is less well advanced. There are systems in place for monitoring attendance, behaviour and performance. There is a clear vision and appropriate procedures for promoting positive pupil attitudes, but practice amongst teachers is inconsistent.

Governing body

- 79 Governors are very well informed and carry out their roles successfully. The chair of governors provides effective leadership, ensuring that the work of the governing body is focused well on offering improving opportunities for pupils to develop their academic and personal achievement. There is a clear committee structure and high levels of communication between sub-committees and the main committee. High quality verbal and written communication from school representatives enables all governors to be well-briefed. Presentations on a wide range of issues, including comparison of factors such as attendance rates and examination results with the national picture, ensure that governors are fully involved in holding the school to account. All governors are keenly aware and very supportive of the current drive to raise standards through improving teaching and learning. Great care has been taken to develop the governing body so that new members are able to contribute to the school's development, often bringing management expertise from industry and commerce to school decision making. The quality of proposals from school representatives, and their explicit link to raising standards, enables the governors to be supportive of the strategic direction of the school. Overall, governors fulfil their statutory duties well. However, at the time of the inspection, all pupils were not involved in a daily act of worship and many were not receiving sufficient religious education.

Financial management and deployment of resources

- 80 Financial management is of very high quality. The director of finance carries out very careful and thorough financial planning and monitoring. The practice of planning for the future first, and then matching budget allocations to proposed development, is very effective in making the best use of resources. Principles of "best value" are applied well, such as to school contracts for cleaning, grounds maintenance and governor services. Long term projections of income and expenditure are used appropriately to support future projects, such as the proposed expressive arts building, and projected expenditure is documented very clearly. Representatives of the school have been especially successful in attracting additional funding to improve facilities for students. This includes funding for the very substantial building programme, a specialist sports college grant, study support grants and funding to support increased use of computers. In all cases, funds have been very well matched to their proposed purpose and expenditure very carefully recorded to demonstrate benefits for students.
- 81 The school has sufficient well-trained teachers in most subjects of the curriculum and these are deployed effectively. In most subjects, for example, mathematics, science, modern foreign languages, business studies, art and design, history, geography and physical education, there is a very good match of qualifications to the subjects taught. However, in music, two of the teachers are not professionally qualified, and in English the school has been unable to fill two vacancies with suitable teachers. In both cases this is having an adverse effect on attainment and progress. There are good arrangements for the induction and professional training of newly qualified teachers. These arrangements are also effectively extended to other staff new to the

school. There are sufficient non-teaching staff who effectively support the work of the school. They are highly valued and contribute well to its smooth running. Technical support is mainly good and there are procedures in place to upgrade and extend the support for information and communication technology, which is currently insufficient. Technical support is very good in physical education. However, there are too few classroom support staff for students with special educational needs to meet their identified requirements.

- 82 The school's learning resources are satisfactory, though with some variation between departments. The mathematics, design and technology and physical education departments have good resources to support pupils' learning, for example different PE equipment is available for pupils with special educational needs. Other subjects, such as science, business studies and music, have much poorer provision. In science, for example, the lack of class sets of equipment such as heat emitters hampers learning in Years 7 to 9, and business studies pupils find it difficult to prepare coursework and assignments because of insufficient reference books. Library provision is poor. The provision of computers for the number of students in the school is low in comparison with the national average. This hampers the learning of pupils in information technology, National Curriculum core subjects (English, maths, science) and also music and design and technology. The school is aware of the problem and has plans to tackle it.
- 83 Some departments make imaginative use of resources outside the school. Pupils have good field-work opportunities in geography and GCSE classes make at least one visit to a history site. A long established field work course in biology is very successful. Sixth form media studies pupils have helped to produce publicity materials for a county sports conference. Pupils' art has been displayed in the Harley Gallery, Worksop, and last winter A-level business and economics pupils visited Manhattan to study the New York tourist industry. Work experience in Year 10 and the sixth form is offered in a wide variety of local businesses, including shops, banks, schools, a recording studio and the district council offices.

Special educational needs

- 84 The special educational needs provision is effectively managed by the special educational needs co-ordinator. The senior management link to the department is very supportive. The special educational needs co-ordinator has recognised the need to match the support requirements of pupils to the level of staffing required to deliver these arrangements. The school has identified the need to further develop the range of teaching and learning styles available to teachers to support the learning needs of pupils. The limited reading and spelling software available is used well, but 'talking computer' technology is not being used to support and consolidate the learning that is taking place.
- 85 Some subject policy documents include a specific reference to meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs, for example, in physical education. The school has recognised the need to include a section on special educational needs in all subject policies, and for subject development plans to refer to special educational needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator is not involved in any programme to directly monitor the quality of teaching and support which pupils receive in subject lessons. There are no clear terms of reference for the subject faculty special educational needs liaison group or identified responsibilities for the liaison teachers.
- 86 Learning support assistants are supported and encouraged to attend further training.

The school is planning to provide performance management for learning support staff which will be linked to further professional development.

- 87 The learning support base is used as a classroom, a preparation room and a staff room. It does not provide an attractive learning environment where pupils' work and achievements are celebrated, and storage for learning resources is very limited.

Progress since the last inspection

- 88 Since the 1994 inspection, progress overall has been satisfactory, with an accelerated and better focused improvement during the last year.
- 89 Of the five key issues identified in the last inspection report, very good progress has been made on one:
- there is greatly improved matching of finances and resources to development priorities.
- 90 In three key issues, there has been satisfactory progress overall. Progress during the last year has been substantial, but there is further work to be done:
- there has been strong improvement in the most recent results in national Year 9 tests and, although GCSE results only show a small improvement since the last inspection, they represent good achievement when compared with pupils' attainment during their younger years;
 - teachers are beginning to provide appropriate challenge to extend pupils' learning, but there are still too many teaching groups where pupils are not being stretched;
 - and there is good work in some subjects such as mathematics and physical education to develop systematic procedures for meeting the needs of all pupils, but this is not yet sufficiently widespread.
- 91 In one key issue, there has been insufficient progress:
- the curriculum still does not meet statutory requirements in the teaching of religious education, and the teaching of information and communication technology in other subjects still requires more development. However, the teaching of history now meets legal requirements fully.

Summary

- 92 Good management is resulting in an improving school where promotion of effective teaching and learning is raising standards and providing good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 93 To raise standards and the quality of learning further, the school management, governors and staff should:
1. Ensure that all students have continuous and progressive access to an appropriate curriculum by:
 - ❑ raising standards in literacy across all subjects (*Paragraphs 18, 22, 38, 42, 115, 177, 181, 188, 205 refer*);
 - ❑ co-ordinating a better organised personal, social and health education programme (*Paragraphs 48, 59 refer*);
 - ❑ providing improved opportunities for pupils to develop information technology capability in other subjects (*Paragraphs 17, 42, 55, 56, 91, 128, 137, 157, 189, 190, 197, 198, 208 refer*);
 - ❑ and meeting statutory requirements for the teaching of religious education (*Paragraphs 43, 44, 54, 55, 91, 228, 230, 233, 235 refer*).
 2. Improve teaching further by:
 - ❑ ensuring that plans for increased monitoring of teaching provide a clear analysis of strengths, areas for development and targets for improvement (*Paragraphs 32-38, 77, 78, 128, 137, 147, 158, 186, 188, 196, 198, 227, 235, 244 refer*);
 - ❑ using further observations of lessons to see if teachers' targets have been achieved (*Paragraphs 32-38, 77, 78 refer*);
 - ❑ supporting any teachers having difficulty in managing pupils' behaviour and ensuring that all pupils concentrate throughout lessons (*Paragraphs 29, 37, 77, 78, 122, 124, 128, 145, 146, 149, 162, 164, 195, 204, 214, 215 refer*);
 - ❑ and ensuring that teachers provide appropriate challenge for all pupils (*Paragraphs 35, 37, 77, 78, 90, 181, 186, 214, 231, 235, 244 refer*).
 3. Develop assessment further by:
 - ❑ ensuring that all teachers inform students of their strengths, weaknesses and how to improve in all subjects (*Paragraphs 34, 57, 63, 64, 65, 135, 137, 139, 149, 208, 217, 234, 235 refer*);
 - ❑ using results of tests and marking of work to identify where improvements in teaching are needed (*Paragraphs 67, 208 refer*);
 - ❑ continuing to develop systems for monitoring pupils' progress and setting challenging targets for pupils and teachers (*Paragraphs 63, 65, 66, 137 refer*);
 - ❑ and providing specific information in reports to parents on gains in knowledge, understanding and skills for every subject (*Paragraphs 69, 71 refer*).
- 94 Whilst not key issues, the school should consider how it will respond to:
- ❑ raising boys' attainment (*Paragraphs 4, 7, 15, 16, 141, 142, 161, 166, 174-*

- 176, 183, 184, 210 refer);
- meeting health and safety requirements (*Paragraph 62 refers*);
 - providing a daily act of worship (*Paragraphs 44, 54 refer*).

COMMUNITY LINKS

- 95 Community links are an important strength. The school has a well-stated commitment to developing these still further, particularly in conjunction with its successful Sports College initiative. Links with the community benefit students' educational and personal development.

School links

- 96 The Manor School plays an active role in fostering links within the local "Family of Schools". There have been sound developments in English and mathematics, so that pupils who have experienced the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies in primary schools have a smooth transition in their learning on transfer. There is very close liaison over pupils who have special educational needs. Very effective liaison in physical education ensures that schemes of work enable pupils to develop throughout all of their years in school. This is a good model for other subjects where curriculum liaison has yet to be established. The links created between The Manor School and Yeoman Park Special School for post-16 students are outstanding. The local education authority has built an additional room adjacent to the sixth form accommodation at The Manor School for post-16 students from Yeoman Park. This has promoted very strong opportunities for the inclusion of students who have moderate learning difficulties into a secondary school sixth form. Students from both schools mix readily and the partnership strongly promotes the social development of all.

Sports College Community Links

- 97 The designation of The Manor School as a Specialist Sports College in September 1998 has had a great impact within the school, at other local primary and secondary schools and on the community of Mansfield Woodhouse.
- 98 In conjunction with the local education authority (LEA), the PE faculty has been involved in curriculum planning and developing schemes of work for ages 11 to 16. The faculty has developed a very useful Record of Achievement booklet which is issued to all pupils in Years 7 to 9, enabling them to track their progress against specific learning objectives for all units of work, both in and out of lessons. This system has been placed on a CD ROM and offered free of charge to all schools in Nottinghamshire; 68 schools have taken up this offer. The Sports Education course for pupils in Years 10 and 11 enables them to develop their own learning, communication skills and self-confidence. The course encourages pupils to take on a wide range of roles such as umpire, coach, team manager, organiser and publicity officer, either in their own PE lessons or in extra-curricular festivals and events. An accreditation system runs alongside the programme, so that pupils can access appropriate awards in refereeing, umpiring, or coaching. The range of sports includes rugby, soccer, netball, athletics, basketball, hockey and boccia. In 1999/2000, 32 pupils gained the Junior Sports Leader Award and 12 gained the Community Sports Leader Award. Forty-two pupils received disability training enabling them to support the Awareness Participation Opportunity Coaching events, and also to assist in regional and national events in the county. Twelve pupils received TOPSTART

training to support work with pre-school children. The school has appointed a Performance Co-ordinator to ensure that the needs of all pupils in the school are met, including those with SEN and who have been identified as gifted or talented. The school is one of three schools in the country to pilot a national "Talented and Gifted" programme, with eight non-PE members of staff receiving national training on mentoring skills and lifestyle programming. It is envisaged that the skills and processes developed can later be used in other subjects.

- 99 In order to help support the PE work in the contributory primary schools, a three-day professional development event was funded by The Manor School for PE co-ordinators in these schools and for the school staff. As a result of this, a common PE curriculum for pupils aged from 5 to 16 has been established, together with a common tracking and assessment document. Specialist PE and dance staff have been allocated time to work alongside primary school colleagues in each of the five "family" schools. Staff and pupils from The Manor School have provided support in running extra-curricular clubs in the "family" of schools, which resulted in a 520% increase in extra-curricular activities in these schools in 1998/1999.
- 100 Students with learning difficulties from Yeoman Park School are also integrated into some PE lessons at The Manor School. Pupils from The Manor School have also run an annual sports festival for pupils from Yeoman Park School. The Manor School has been used as a County training base for teachers and coaches, and in June 2000 a Nottinghamshire Physical Education Sports Conference was organised by Manor staff and held at the school.
- 101 Other secondary schools have been invited to work with The Manor School to develop national initiatives such as Nike Girls in Sport, the sports education programme and the talented and gifted programme.
- 102 The school provides a venue for over 20 local clubs and organisations, ranging from Mansfield Town Football Club's apprentices to the Central Notts Health Care Trust. Through the work of the sports development officers based at the school, clubs benefit from specialist input and coaching. Many community projects have taken place at the school, including Summer Schools for sport and gymnastic clubs.

College Links

- 103 The school enjoys a good level of collaboration with West Nottinghamshire College of Further Education, which provides Year 12 and 13 students with a greater range of vocational courses than would otherwise be possible at the school. This arrangement enables students to study for a foundation level GNVQ courses in any one of four subjects. The College also provides a link course in Motor Vehicle Maintenance and Vehicle Valeting. These course partnerships enable students to work at the school for three days weekly and the College on two days.
- 104 The school also uses the facilities of the College for its Learning for Work programme on one day a week. This programme provides appropriate studies for a group of eight pupils in Year 10 who, without special provision, would be at risk of exclusion. This together with work experience, support for key skills and the guidance of a personal adviser, provides an appropriate alternative education for pupils who would otherwise see little purpose in examination studies for National Curriculum subjects.
- 105 Links with West Nottinghamshire College of Further Education offer students very good opportunities to undertake work programmes relevant to their needs, whilst still

remaining on the school roll and thereby maintaining the close pastoral support and guidance that The Manor School offers.

Football Trust Links

- 106 The Manor School is the designated school for the continuing education of apprentice professional footballers from Mansfield Town Football Club between ages 16 and 18. This provision enables players to continue studying for examinations, during their apprenticeship, for three sessions each week. They were observed to have positive attitudes to their studies and to have formed good relationships with staff and students.

Summary

- 107 Community links are developed far more strongly at The Manor School than is usually observed, and students benefit considerably in their learning and personal development. These established links have promoted the school as a central focus of community life in Mansfield Woodhouse. The school has aspirations to build on this reputation still further with the creation of a community sports centre, funded by the national lottery. This initiative is intended to create a facility of which the whole community can be proud; increasing job opportunities and promoting sporting excellence for students and adults.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	205
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	60

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5%	20%	30%	37%	5%	3%	0%

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils on the school's roll	1310	140
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	234	0

Special educational needs	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	187	0

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	53
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	26

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.6
National comparative data	7.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.4
National comparative data	1.1

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	140	113	253

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	57	82	69
	Girls	72	72	60
	Total	129	154	129
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	51 (28)	61 (52)	51 (33)
	National	63 (63)	66 (62)	60 (55)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	14 (7)	35 (21)	17 (6)
	National	28 (28)	42 (38)	30 (23)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	44	78	68
	Girls	57	68	58
	Total	101	146	126
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	40 (45)	58 (45)	50 (39)
	National	64 (64)	66 (64)	62 (60)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	14 (16)	30 (19)	15 (9)
	National	31 (31)	39 (37)	29 (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	110	109	219

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	22	93	101
	Girls	42	100	104
	Total	64	193	205
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	29 (35)	88 (83)	94 (96)
	National	49 (47.8)	88.8 (88.4)	94.4 (93.9)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	33.3 (33.4)
	National	38.7 (37.1)

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	0
	National		75.7

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	35	25	60

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	12.1	11.7	11.9	0	0	0 (0)
National	17.2	18.1	17.7 (18.2)	2.5	2.8	2.7

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	11	73
	National		83

International Bacculaureate		Number	% success rate
Number entered for the International Bacculaureate Diploma and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all they studied	School	n/a	n/a
	National		n/a

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	2
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	4
White	1372
Any other minority ethnic group	2

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	123	2
Other minority ethnic groups	0	

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y13

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	83.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y7 – Y13

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	399

Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y13

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	77.1
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Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y13

Key Stage 3	25.9
Key Stage 4	22.4

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	3,375,491
Total expenditure	3,415,917
Expenditure per pupil	2,468
Balance brought forward from previous year	287,985
Balance carried forward to next year	247,559

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	1450
Number of questionnaires returned	143

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	23	66	7	3	1
My child is making good progress in school.	20	66	4	1	8
Behaviour in the school is good.	15	37	24	6	17
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	14	50	22	14	1
The teaching is good.	19	53	11	3	14
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	11	48	23	14	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	30	49	11	7	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	36	53	3	3	4
The school works closely with parents.	12	47	19	12	10
The school is well led and managed.	20	50	6	8	16
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	20	55	12	4	9
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	48	5	2	10

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

ENGLISH

- 108 Standards in English are well below the national average on entry to the school but, through good teaching and positive attitudes to learning, pupils make good progress. Standards rise to below national averages by the end of Years 9, 11 and 13.
- 109 In Year 7 many pupils enter the school with significant weaknesses in basic literacy skills and the ability to sustain written work. Literacy competence on entry, which has been very low in the past, is improving each year and the current Year 7 shows considerable improvement in basic literacy standards. Through the emphasis given to literacy in Year 7, and good work by the special educational needs department, pupils improve well from the initially low level of competence. This improvement is sustained and, by the end of Year 9, pupils produce work of a much-improved standard, though still below average. For example, Year 7 pupils demonstrate improved understanding of how sentences are constructed to create specific effects for the reader. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 also develop better competence and confidence with the spoken word through group work and activities, improving collaboration and presentation of their ideas to the rest of the class. By Year 9, pupils are engaging in purposeful discussion of poem structure and writing well-structured poems. Very poor readers are advanced effectively through the Corrective Reading scheme and there is positive encouragement for all pupils to enjoy reading.
- 110 Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 10 and 11, but standards are below those typically seen nationally. Shakespeare is accessed well through close analysis in small groups, as in Year 10 where pupils develop a good understanding of the language and characters in the two induction scenes from “The Merchant of Venice”. Good use is made of spider diagrams and close annotation of text to structure group ideas as a first stage to writing, as seen in the Year 10 group working on “Yosser’s Story” and the Year 11 group analysing Marvell’s poem “To His Coy Mistress”. In both instances, good quality written work results, containing well ordered content presented within a coherent structure.
- 111 In the sixth form the faculty offer A-level English literature and a very successful new A-level Media course. Attainment of students at A-level English literature is below that normally seen, but represents satisfactory progress. In media, work of a very good standard is being produced by current Year 12 and Year 13 students. This is particularly well exemplified in Year 13, where media analysis was used very competently to deconstruct a “Friends of the Earth” poster which used the “Apocalypse Now” film poster as its image source. There is also very detailed and mature analysis of young adult magazines in Year 12, where the ideas of groups are presented well to the rest of the class. Students show a good grasp of media terms and concepts, applying them well to contexts, which they find both challenging and interesting.
- 112 Teaching is good for pupils aged 11 to 16, and very good in sixth form lessons. Teachers in Years 7 to 9 mostly have a secure knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum programmes of study and how to develop literacy skills. Literacy lessons are conducted effectively and are characterised by well-paced delivery and clear purpose. This was exemplified well in a Year 8 lesson on environmental issues related to fast food companies, where groups of pupils had to respond quickly through making notes on material before receiving the next batch of information. This was

done under tight timelines and created rapid gains in learning. In Years 10 and 11, teachers demonstrate a good grasp of GCSE course requirements. They make very effective assessments, using helpful comments and targets for improvement, which are valued by pupils. An appropriate emphasis is placed on pupils developing ideas in small groups and then requiring them to synthesise the resulting information for class presentations. This was seen well in a Year 10 lesson focusing on "Yosser's Story" from the plays "Boys from the Black Stuff". The teacher ensured that pupils used their notes and the text effectively to make spider diagrams of aspects of Yosser's character, then presented their group's ideas to the class prior to writing the essay. The application of the class to the task was such that it released the teacher to make useful oral assessments of some of the discussion work, as well as of the presentations. Teaching in the sixth form lessons is a strength, with students being given good opportunities to develop independence and explore ideas. A good example of rigorous, creative teaching was seen in a Year 13 lesson on Ibsen, where students were given the opportunity to explore characters and their motivation in short key scenes. Through the rehearsed performances students came to a deeper understanding not only from the analytical discussion but from having to portray the characters. Most teachers plan conscientiously and have high aspirations for their classes. Teachers mostly control classes well, and this creates a positive ethos for learning. Use of computers is fostered appropriately through developing word processing skills and basic desk-top publishing. Despite good work done by the supply and cover staff during the inspection, an area of concern is the level of shortfall in permanent staff, which is having an adverse effect on standards.

- 113 Most pupils respond well to their English lessons, showing increasing care with presentation and a willingness to learn. The emphasis on group work and sharing work encourages independence and confidence in presenting ideas. This way of working also helps the social development of pupils when working collaboratively. In some of the groups in Years 10 and 11, and in some of the lower groups in Year 9, a minority of pupils shows reduced commitment, and some disruptive behaviour can occur which affects learning and standards. While not explicitly planned, the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is furthered well by the work of the faculty.
- 114 The newly appointed head of faculty is providing very good leadership to the English team, with a clear vision for the direction of the faculty in the future. The focus on raising the standards of literacy in Years 7 to 9, as a means of raising overall standards to the national average, is targeted well and shared effectively by the team. The lead being taken by English in promoting whole school literacy is beginning to meet the priority of the school to raise standards in all subjects. Once the shortage in permanent staff has been overcome, the faculty will have a good capacity for further improvement. Monitoring and evaluation strategies are in place for initiation in the Spring term and they are targeted appropriately on developing teaching and improving standards.
- 115 The judgement in the 1994 inspection of attainment being at the national average for GCSE results, and slightly above average for A-level has not been sustained. However, attainment is currently moving steadily upwards towards the national average. There has been maintenance of many of the best features mentioned in the last report, such as good teaching, competent planning, good faculty leadership, emphasis on effective reading and group work. Action to raise standards further should include:
- improving staffing so that the team is complete;
 - ensuring that the good practice of using helpful comments and target setting in

- relation to individual pieces of work for older children, is extended to the younger age range;
- continuing to develop strategies for improving literacy in other subjects.

MATHEMATICS

- 116 In mathematics, pupils benefit from good teaching which enables them to learn well and make good progress.
- 117 Standards in Year 9 are similar to those typically seen nationally. In mathematics lessons in Year 7, the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy is having a positive effect on standards, which are currently satisfactory. Pupils are growing in confidence when using a variety of mental methods both to estimate and calculate. For instance, Year 7 pupils demonstrate their ability to calculate quickly at the start of a lesson. Pupils hold up cards, successfully showing the answers to a series of mental calculations. In other year groups, number and graphic skills are good in high and middle attaining sets, but still weak in lower attaining classes. Here, multiplication routines and procedures involving fractions, decimals and percentages are not yet well known and simple errors are still made. Calculators, however, are effectively used in all classes. Students' competency in the application of computer skills in mathematics is below average. Although they learn about spreadsheets in Years 7 and 8, these and other skills are not well developed and not yet used sufficiently to enhance their written work. In Number and Algebra, at age 14, standards are sound. Most students know about the tens system and can calculate using different powers of ten. They can form simple algebraic equations and substitute using numbers for letters. Higher attaining students know about error intervals and can use this information successfully to obtain maximum and minimum estimates of both length and area correctly. They are not yet able to extend these ideas to volume calculations.
- 118 Standards in Years 10 and 11 are below average. However, by age 16 many pupils can apply their number skills to real life situations and calculate using decimals, percentages and fractions. In low attaining sets, many students still find this difficult and their self-confidence is often low. Middle attaining classes extend these ideas and can refine algebraic expressions involving powers of letters and solve simple equations. Students in high attaining sets are confident in using graphic calculators to sketch quadratic functions, and describe transformations using vector notation, which is a very good preparation for further mathematical studies. Calculators are used effectively, including appropriate use of graphic calculators in Years 10 and 11.
- 119 Standards in Years 12 and 13 are below the national average. However, in using and applying mathematics, standards are good and show improvement as students get older. A-level candidates select problems to investigate that are related directly to their interests, and they can apply high level analysis to develop hypotheses.
- 120 Students with special educational needs and those in very low attaining classes make satisfactory gains in learning during lessons, but have insufficient support from classroom assistants. This has an adverse effect on their progress.
- 121 Students receive a very good mathematical education at The Manor School as demonstrated by the improvements in public examinations over recent years. In the national tests and teacher assessments in 2000, at age 14, results are still just below the national average. However, students enter the school, at age 11, well below

average and progress is good in their first three years at the school. The percentage of passes for students in GCSE examinations is rising, and although below national averages this year, again shows a good improvement from their results at age 14. Their progress is more rapid than normally seen. The same is true for the percentage of passes in the A* to G range. All students who entered for the Certificate of Achievement in Mathematics were successful in 2000 and hence all students who entered for external examinations, obtained a certificate indicating their merit. This is a very good achievement for the school. At A-level, the results again show this improving picture. Although currently below expectations, they also show gains made over recent years, with some exceptional individual performances, especially in the Further Mathematics course.

- 122 Teaching and learning are good overall. In just over three quarters of the lessons they are good or better, and very good or excellent in just over half. However, in a small minority of lessons they are unsatisfactory and rectifying this is a priority for the department. Teaching is also better in the 14 to 18 age range than for younger pupils. Teachers display good subject knowledge and planning is effective, especially in high attaining classes, although not always written down in sufficient detail. In most classes, a range of activities engage students, ensuring that they work productively and sustain this for whole lessons. Where teaching and learning are very good or excellent, the students develop a passion for learning, explanations are mathematically precise and use examples from everyday life. Teachers ensure that students work enthusiastically in groups, engaging in vigorous debate, and in doing so, refine and improve their mathematical knowledge and understanding. They often present their own ideas to their peers and meet the challenge presented with vigour. In these lessons, teaching demands the highest expectations both of behaviour and achievement. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, teachers spend far too much time dealing ineffectively with disruptive behaviour and this has an adverse effect on students' learning, resulting in slow progress.
- 123 An excellent example of teaching was seen in a Year 13 class where students were revising iterative methods and the factor theorem, both techniques required for the A-level examination. The teacher organised the class into small groups and the challenge for each group was to prepare and teach a short intensive lesson to another group. Students could choose what resources they needed. Many used computers very effectively to prepare their lessons, and in doing so showed a thorough knowledge of the mathematics involved. Towards the end the teacher summarised the main mathematical points needed for the final examination and congratulated his team of 'teachers'. Several effective examples of teaching and learning were observed during the inspection. A very good example occurred in a Year 11 class, where students began the lesson by completing a test designed to show their knowledge of algebra in three specific areas- collecting 'linear- like' terms, collecting 'quadratic- like' terms and solving equations. They then worked for a specified time in teams, with the objective of helping each other understand the errors they made in the test. The teacher effectively encouraged team members to analyse each other's problems. This led to improvements in understanding and confidence in the three areas of mathematics. A re-test, using different questions, at the end of the lesson, when marked, gave rise to shouts of delight as students realised how much progress they had made.
- 124 Attitudes towards the subject are very good. Many students talk confidently about their successes and areas in which they wish to improve. They all know their target levels and grades for examinations. The department has a very successful recruitment policy for the sixth form; numbers are increasing and students in Years

10 and 11 classes show an above average interest in studying mathematics in the sixth form. Behaviour in lessons is more varied, but still good in the majority of lessons. However, in a few lessons, a minority of pupils is disrespectful to the teacher and does not do as they are told.

- 125 Leadership and management in mathematics are very good. Planning for the future, and current research links with higher education, take account of recent developments in improving teaching and learning for all students and the staff are putting them into practice. The curriculum is of good quality and is enhanced well by mathematics clubs and booster classes to improve examination results. The culture is to improve standards and the written departmental guidelines provide very good advice. Assessment is rooted in students knowing their current level of achievement and is monitored effectively. There is a strong commitment to succeed, and a very good vision for the best teaching and learning in mathematics.
- 126 The department has made significant improvements since the previous inspection on every issue mentioned. Numeracy has improved, monitoring of teaching and learning is good and the department is well ahead in implementing performance management. Students are much more actively involved in contributing to their learning and mathematical thinking.
- 127 Standards of numeracy across subjects are satisfactory. For example, in geography students plot hydrographs relating rainfall to rises in river water levels, using scale and ratio competently. In science, students plot time-temperature graphs and can interpret them correctly. They measure accurately, according to the task set, using the metric system, in design and technology lessons. In business studies, students still find percentage calculations difficult. Numeracy across the school is now improving. The school has an effective working group and a written numeracy policy, and all departments contribute to the analysis of when and what numerical and graphical skills are taught.
- 128 In order to improve further, the mathematics department should continue to raise attainment by:
- securing very good teaching and learning in more lessons;
 - improving behaviour management systems and eradicating poor behaviour in the few classrooms where it occurs;
 - improving student competencies in using computers, in line with the revised National Curriculum.

SCIENCE

- 129 The science faculty is successful in achieving its aim of providing all pupils with a broad, balanced, science education. However, there are some significant inconsistencies in teaching and learning within the faculty.
- 130 Standards are below what is typically seen in Years 7 to 9. Pupils make good progress in Years 7 and 8, and have, for example, by Year 8 developed a good understanding of the particle theory of matter and how this relates to mixtures and compounds. Progress slows slightly in Year 9, but is still satisfactory for the large majority. Pupils of high prior attainment consolidate their learning, but do not move on to more demanding work at a higher level. For example, a Year 9 class revisited work on levers during a topic on the skeleton which breaks new ground, but pupils did not increase their intellectual development of the science studied.
- 131 In Years 10 and 11, pupils make steady progress, but standards remain below average overall. Those in upper groups make steady progress, so that for example, pupils in a top group are able to carry out an effective investigation into electrolysis, and those in a middle set can carry out good practical work on transformers. Pupils in lower groups make less progress, often because practical work done does not fit well with the planned learning objective; for example, when a group of Year 11 pupils is asked to cut out a model sub-atomic particle to make a poster in order to explain radio-activity.
- 132 Sixth form students achieve in line with predictions based on previous GCSE results, and make steady progress in their learning. For example, in Year 13 Chemistry, there is evidence of good understanding of the rate of expansion, and in Year 13 Biology, some very good work on plant growth leads to high levels of understanding. However, standards observed in the separate sciences are below what is typically seen of 17 and 18 year old students. For example, Year 12 students engaged in an investigation of potential divider circuits showed very little understanding of the theoretical background, and demonstrated quite poorly developed investigative skills.
- 133 Results in science in national tests improved significantly in the year 2000. This took the number of pupils obtaining level 5 to more than 50% for the first time. Standards of boys are better than those of girls overall, although more girls gain the highest levels. These results are encouraging after a declining trend, although they are still below the national average. In recent years, GCSE results have been improving gradually, but in year 2000 they were well below the national average. In 2000, staffing difficulties, caused by long term absence, adversely affected the top group in Year 11. A-level results are below average.
- 134 Teaching is mostly satisfactory or better, with the most successful teaching occurring in Years 10 and 11. In these years, there is a considerable amount of good and very good quality teaching. Learning is mostly good, and often very good, in the great majority of lessons. Most sixth form teaching is at least satisfactory, and some is of good quality. In these lessons, the learning is positive.
- 135 There were weaknesses in approximately one in five lessons. Likewise, there is considerable variability in teaching in Years 7 to 9 where, although almost one half the teaching observed was of at least good quality, nearly one third was unsatisfactory. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Where teaching is most effective, time and resources are used well. This teaching is characterised by a range of different activities, high expectations and good behaviour. A high work rate results from the

creation of a learning environment where quiet discipline is coupled with lots of praise. This good teaching leads to rapid learning and the strong development of social skills. For example, in a Year 8 lesson, pupils researched energy very effectively and then worked in teams teaching each other about what they had found out. Similarly, in a Year 10 rural science lesson, pupils displayed good independence and high levels of responsibility when working in the laboratory, glasshouse and the field attached to the farm unit. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, planning is insufficiently well co-ordinated between teachers and this impedes learning. For example, in Year 11 a class was being taught atomic structures by a physics and chemistry teacher in separate lessons. Pupils lacked an understanding of the importance of electron orbits because teaching was not well co-ordinated and opportunities for reinforcement and extension of learning were missed. In unsatisfactory lessons, the same activity is set to all in the class, thus limiting the achievement of higher and lower attaining pupils within the group. Poor classroom management and a lack of planning for classroom safety also characterises unsatisfactory lessons. The inconsistency in teaching in science is illustrated by the wide disparity in which teachers use information from tests and examinations. Sometimes pupils get thorough feedback on their performance, but in other instances very little. For example, pupils in a Year 8 group, who had struggled in a test on forces, were given no explanation to help them understand the concept better.

- 136 Pupils come to their learning in science with positive attitudes. They enjoy the subject and respond well to teaching that provides a range of learning activities and requires them to show initiative using problem solving skills. When lessons have not been prepared well, or where teaching fails to involve or challenge pupils, they become disinterested and poorly behaved. This causes disruption to the learning of the majority in the group who want to work hard.
- 137 Leadership and management are satisfactory. The head of faculty, an exemplary teacher with good subject knowledge, uses a collegiate approach to decision making. Monitoring systems have been in place for over a year and so the new performance management requirements are being incorporated into the faculty's way of working. These systems do not yet deal with all teachers within the faculty, so appropriate training to support teachers' needs is not fully evaluated. The use of data is unsatisfactory, whether it is from pupils' prior learning, from on-going assessments or from information based on the value added to pupils' knowledge and understanding during their time in the faculty. There is some use of data for target setting in the sixth form, but information about pupils' achievement is used inconsistently for the rest of the age range. Rural Science adds a distinctive curricular opportunity for pupils in Years 10 and 11 to develop independence, knowledge and understanding, as well as a series of valuable practical skills. The faculty benefits from newly refurbished accommodation, but noise from adjacent rooms and those above impedes learning. Provision of necessary equipment, including computers, is inadequate for full coverage of the National Curriculum.
- 138 Progress since the last report in 1994 has been slow. However, there has been significant progress in the last 18 months. The review and implementation of strategies to raise achievement is beginning to have an effect, as is the provision of appropriate and sufficient challenge to extend pupils' learning. Some monitoring of curricular provision is now in place. Monitoring pupil progress and targeting of work more closely to pupils' individual needs remains an issue in a number of science classes. Since the last inspection, GCSE results have improved, although there was a dip in the year 2000. A-level results have also improved and there has been a significant improvement in the most recent Year 9 test results.

- 139 Action to raise standards further should include:
- using data of prior attainment to: evaluate pupils' progress; set targets for pupils; and give them feedback on their performance and how to improve it;
 - tackling inconsistencies in teaching by: continuing the development of monitoring systems; improving teacher collaboration in planning; and increasing safety, literacy and writing skills;
 - and addressing the lack of sufficient resources, especially adequate equipment for class practical work and access to computers.

ART AND DESIGN

- 140 From a low start, standards improve well and students taking art and design as an optional course show a strong commitment to their work to achieve average standards.
- 141 Standards in Year 7 are well below those typically seen. Pupils' recording skills are weak when they make line and tonal drawings using pencil and ink. Many do not record with sufficient accuracy the shape and form of items they observe, such as when they draw dried poppy seed-heads. Drawing skills remain below average for many pupils throughout Years 8 and 9. For instance, in Year 8, their skills in recording the proportion and shape of packages and drink cans are insufficiently precise when they draw still life compositions. When pupils use paints, crayons and oil pastels to apply colour to their work, the results are often closer to national standards than when they produce pencil drawings. For example, one group in Year 9 used colour well when producing bold chalk-pastel drawings of cakes on a large scale. Pupils have a sound basic understanding of the styles of an appropriate range of artists. They apply this knowledge soundly to their own work, as in portraits made following the study of Amadeo Modigliani in Year 7 and Pop Artists in Year 9. Sketchbooks are mainly used to practise drawing from observation, but rarely for researching or developing ideas; these latter skills are weak. Some pupils use basic information and communication technology (ICT) skills appropriately to collect information about the work of different artists using CD-ROMS and the internet. By Year 9, some pupils have progressed well and are working at a little above national standards, but the great majority, including those with special educational needs, have made only moderate progress. Their standards and learning are below those expected for their age. Girls achieve higher standards than boys.
- 142 In Years 10 and 11, students in art and design option groups make good progress and achieve above average standards. Girls attain higher standards than boys and are more fluent in developing visual ideas in different media. In Year 10, students produce carefully drawn painted flower studies as visual investigations, inspired by the work of Georgia O'Keeffe. They apply tonal colour to these very effectively, using acrylic paints, crayons and oil pastels. Students demonstrate good standards when working directly in these media in Year 11, interpreting themes such as anorexia, war, sorrow and teenage motherhood. They make clear connections in their own work to artists' they have studied. Weaknesses are evident in their analysis of ideas and in expressing judgements when refining their work, owing to lack of practice. These are important aspects of the examination syllabus.
- 143 Sixth form students have similar strengths and weaknesses to those in Years 10 and 11. Many develop considerable fluency when investigating and developing ideas directly using different art media and they use a range of scales well. In creating final

pieces skills are in line with average standards. Because they do not critically evaluate their work sufficiently, few achieve the highest levels. Some very strong developmental work was observed to the theme 'twisted and knotted', such as personal interpretations of waves, trees, hair and tied ribbons of ballet shoes. Students apply a good knowledge of techniques and styles used by artists who have influenced their thinking.

- 144 GCSE examination results have been rising over the last three years. In year 2000, the pass rate at grades A*-C was above the national average, but no student gained an A* or A grade. Students, particularly girls, gained considerably higher results in art and design than they achieved in most other subjects taken. The A-level pass rate closely matches the national average, although mainly at grades C to E.
- 145 Overall, teaching is satisfactory. All teachers are specialists and individual lessons are planned to cover relevant content. A few lessons observed were of good quality. In these, teachers stated very clearly at the start of lessons the learning that would be covered and indicated how much time pupils would spend on particular tasks. During the lesson they checked with the class the progress that was being made. In too many other lessons, the work to be undertaken was explained verbally, but demonstrations or examples of high quality work were not used to reinforce high standards. Where the challenge set in lessons was high many pupils responded well. This was seen in a Year 8 lesson, where the class made line drawings of a complex still life group comprising large, interesting objects. Similarly very good challenge was seen in a Year 12 lesson, in which students, working on the theme of flowers, experimented with media they had not used before. In some otherwise satisfactory lessons with younger pupils, teachers had to spend too much time and energy settling a small number of pupils who chattered continuously and had not yet mastered the skill of disciplined observation. These pupils detracted from the learning of others. Teaching promotes concentration and independence very well among older students in art and design option groups and these abilities enable them to make consistently good progress in their learning. Relationships in Year 10 and 11 classes, and the sixth form, are very good. Across all years, most work is marked, but not enough is done to communicate to younger pupils the criteria upon which assessments are based, so that they know what they need to do to improve. Some marks given in Years 7 to 9 are unrealistically high.
- 146 Most pupils are keen to undertake practical art-work in different media. However, a number of younger pupils in most classes, mainly boys, do not listen carefully enough to the teachers' instructions or concentrate sufficiently on their work. Some lessons are characterised by continuous low level chatter. This adversely affects pupils' levels of concentration and is a factor in poor observation and recording skills, mentioned above. Older pupils who take art as an option, show good levels of self-discipline. They focus well when exploring visual ideas; making good progress in developing personal interpretations from an initial starting point and exploring how artists have recorded similar themes. In the sixth form, students make steady progress and many develop considerable commitment to the subject.
- 147 The recently appointed head of art and design has made a good start in subject management. She has appropriately identified the priority of raising standards and attitudes in Years 7 to 9. New schemes of work have been written for these years, which are matched well to new National Curriculum requirements, including using ICT. Insufficient time has elapsed since her appointment to establish systematic monitoring procedures. Although student numbers taking art and design as a full option are relatively low, art and design is a popular choice for post-16 study. Accommodation in four refurbished rooms provides appropriate working

environments, although space in two is restricted. Provision of resources is sound, but there are no facilities for using clay, and ICT software that enables the manipulation of images is not yet available. The subject supports the school's commitment to community involvement well. Post-16 students from Yeoman Park Special School use the art rooms at The Manor School and they are taught jointly by teachers from both schools. The achievement of these students in landscape painting is high.

- 148 Since the previous inspection, standards in GCSE groups have risen very well. Satisfactory standards at A-level have been maintained, but the quality of pupils' work in Years 7 to 9 remains too low. All teachers are now specialists and the quality of teaching has risen to a satisfactory level overall. The learning accommodation has been much improved.
- 149 Action to raise standards further should include:
- creating an atmosphere of calm, concentrated study in Years 7 to 9 to facilitate careful observation and personal artistic response;
 - increasing opportunities for GCSE, AS and A-level students to engage in critical analysis of visual information from different sources, and to express evaluative judgements when adapting and refining their work;
 - and communicating clearly to younger pupils the criteria upon which assessments will be based.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 150 In design and technology, pupils enjoy working in the recently refurbished facilities and make steady progress as they move through the school. In recent years, pupils' results have been consistently below the national average, but similar to their performance in other subjects.
- 151 At age 14, the attainment of current pupils is below average. From ages 11 to 14, pupils are making sound progress, developing a foundation of knowledge, skills and understanding within food, graphics, resistant materials, systems and control and textiles. In Year 7, for example, they learn how to draw accurate three-dimensional sketches and to apply basic colouring techniques. In resistant materials, they learn how to use hand and machine tools to carefully cut and shape materials to assemble hand-held games. In Years 8 and 9, pupils develop their designing and making skills as they move through each material area. For example in Year 8, in food, pupils develop their understanding of dietary issues by making puddings with a high fibre content. In Year 9 in textiles, pupils develop their hand and machine sewing techniques by designing and making bags. In Year 9 in systems and control, pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the use of electronic components by assembling successful working circuits. Attainment is below average for this age because the projects in Years 7 to 9 do not give pupils the opportunity to develop their designing and making skills to the depth required to enable them to reach the higher National Curriculum levels. At present, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to build upon the knowledge, skills and understanding acquired in the separate projects, for example, by extending the range of designing skills developed within each project. Pupils with special educational needs integrate well into the mixed-ability groups and make sound progress.
- 152 From ages 14 to 16, pupils continue to make sound progress, developing their designing and making skills in one of the material areas studied earlier. At age 16, the

attainment of current pupils remains below average. In Year 10, pupils develop a suitable range of designing and making skills, before starting upon their GCSE coursework projects, for example, in graphics, pupils develop lettering styles by designing their own fonts. In food, pupils develop sensory tasting techniques by testing different tomato soups. GCSE coursework folders in Year 11 demonstrate appropriate coverage of the examination syllabus. However, the coursework of a significant number of pupils does not demonstrate the range or the depth of work required by the syllabus to reach the higher grades. In general, these pupils have not researched, developed or evaluated their ideas in sufficient depth. For example in Year 11 in food, pupils trying out different ideas for their projects are over-reliant on existing recipes, rather than adapting these to match their product specification. In graphics, pupils are still not confident using freehand drawing techniques to quickly communicate their ideas. In electronics, more-able pupils make good progress, and successfully model their circuits and use computer software to design printed circuit boards.

- 153 In the sixth form, pupils are making good progress and are reaching standards appropriate to the AS and A-level courses being followed. In Year 12, pupils on the AS level course are making good progress on a group project, developing competent computer aided manufacturing skills making door handles. In Year 13, pupils have chosen suitable contexts for their major coursework projects and are undertaking a good range of relevant research and investigation to inform their designs.
- 154 Recent statutory teacher assessments for the attainment of 14-year olds have shown standards similar to those recorded nationally, but these are not moderated. At age 16, pupils' results in the GCSE examinations in the design and technology subjects over the last three years have been consistently below the national average, with comparatively higher results in electronics, graphics and resistant materials than in food. Recent results at A-level in design and technology show a high pass rate, mainly at the lower grades.
- 155 Teaching is good in one third of lessons and in the remainder is satisfactory. Teachers demonstrate an appropriate level of knowledge and understanding of the subject. Where teaching is most effective, lessons are well planned and teachers give clear introductions, describing the work to be undertaken. These provide pupils with a clear picture of what they are expected to achieve within the session. For example, in resistant materials in Year 7 the teacher reminded pupils about the importance of making a quality product, and provided them with accurately prepared materials to make hand-held games. Similarly, teaching is effective when teachers bring their groups together at the end of lessons to summarise the learning that has taken place and the progress made. For example in Year 13, the teacher reminded each pupil of the progress they were expected to make with their major projects by the start of the next lesson. Teachers generally manage their groups well and provide appropriate help and support by circulating around the room. They use questioning effectively to confirm pupils' understanding of the work, but do not always insist that pupils give full answers using the correct subject vocabulary. The technician is used well to support learning, for example showing sixth form pupils how to programme the computerised lathe and milling machines.
- 156 Pupils respond well and show a good level of interest in the tasks set. Standards of behaviour are nearly always good. Pupils work well together, and relationships between pupils and their teachers are good. From ages 11 to 14, pupils have limited opportunities to work independently, for example to learn how to undertake individual research and investigation to inform their designing and making. This is having an

adverse effect on standards in Years 10 and 11, where a significant number of pupils do not have the skills required to work more independently on their GCSE coursework projects.

- 157 The head of faculty is providing sound leadership to the teaching team, evident in the planning and delivery of schemes of work and the day to day management of the department. However, the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and its impact on learning requires strengthening to ensure that best practice is shared fully across the department. The refurbished facilities are well organised. The investment in computer-aided manufacturing equipment is being used well. However, the general shortage of computers in the department does not enable pupils to use ICT to support their designing and making at the present time.
- 158 Since the previous report, overall levels of attainment remain below average. Action to raise standards further should include:
- ensuring that the projects in Years 7 to 9 provide opportunities for pupils to build upon and extend their previous learning;
 - strengthening the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and its impact on learning across the department.

EXPRESSIVE ARTS

- 159 The expressive arts faculty comprises art and design, dance, drama and music. In Years 7 to 9, each aspect is taught separately, but a common theme links the work across all four subjects for one term each year. All pupils take expressive arts in Years 10 and 11, but specialist options are also taken in art and design, drama and music. GCSE results in expressive arts are well below average. Art and design and music, as National Curriculum subjects, are reported separately in this report.
- 160 Art and design is part of the expressive arts faculty. In Years 7 to 9, although work is taught separately, the four contributory art forms work to one common theme each year. This enables connections to be made between different arts subjects. For instance, in Year 9 there is a common theme on aboriginal arts. In Years 10 and 11, all pupils take a GCSE course in expressive arts. Overall, standards observed in the art element were below average. Students have too little time during the GCSE course to consolidate skills that are underdeveloped in Years 7 to 9 during the short course units. However, a relatively small minority, particularly girls, produces work of above average standards, as observed in a Year 11 class producing examination coursework to set themes such as dreams, storms or Egypt. In the 1999 and 2000 GCSE examinations, the drop-out rate from the course was high owing to failure of students to complete their coursework. Results at grades A*-C were well below national averages. The faculty has a sound development plan, matched to school priorities, but the contribution of the various arts disciplines is insufficiently well defined.

Dance

- 161 Dance is taught to pupils in Years 7 to 9 as part of the expressive arts curriculum. During the Inspection one dance lesson was observed in each of Years 7, 9 and 10. Overall standards of composing, performing and appreciating dance are in line with those normally seen. Pupils in Year 7 can copy a teacher-taught sequence of jumps and create their own sequences using this material. Year 9 pupils understand the essence of the Charleston, Lindy Hop and Jive dance styles. They can compose

short dances in pairs, using steps appropriate to these styles. Several pupils show considerable imagination, flair and adventurousness in the composition and performance of their dances. Most Year 10 pupils can compose a dance in small groups. They know, understand and can use basic compositional devices, including repetition, canon and unison. Several pupils show good use of focus in composition and performance. Pupils' progress is satisfactory overall, with girls making better progress than boys. Boys' progress is often limited by their unsatisfactory behaviour and attitudes to the subject.

- 162 The quality of teaching and learning is sound overall. Teachers have very good subject knowledge. Lesson planning is thorough, with clear teaching objectives and desired learning outcomes. Good use is made of videos and teacher demonstration to teach specific steps and dance styles. Management of pupils' behaviour, however, is unsatisfactory and this impedes pupils' learning. Pupils do not change for dance lessons because of the lack of changing facilities. This, together with the inadequate, cramped accommodation for some lessons, has a negative effect on the amount of energy pupils can expend and consequently on the quality of their learning.
- 163 A strength of the department is the very good liaison with the contributory primary schools. The Manor School staff have written a scheme of work for these schools; staff teach on a regular basis at each of the five schools, and pupils from two primary schools and a special school are performing in The Manor School pantomime.
- 164 There was no inspection report on dance in 1994. Action to raise standards further should include:
- improving the behaviour and attitudes of boys to the subject;
 - improving accommodation, including provision of changing facilities.

Drama

- 165 In drama, pupils benefit from good teaching and have positive attitudes. It enables them to progress well from a low start, and achieve sound standards by Years 9 and 11, and good standards in the sixth form. Pupils develop maturity of approach and performance skills in Years 10 and 11 to reach sound standards. Sixth form standards are good. During Years 7 to 9, pupils develop drama skills well through the exploration of narrative dilemmas and issues, using a range of conventions and techniques. Performance skills are honed and many pupils improve their confidence. Pupils also begin to develop sensitive critical responses to their own work, and that of others, by reflecting on performances. Pupils enter Year 7 with a wide range of drama experiences and develop skills to a sound level by the end of Year 9. This prepares pupils with a sound base for work in the Year 10 and 11 option group. Special needs pupils often attain well in drama, where there is less emphasis on written work and they can succeed using action and voice.
- 166 In Years 10 and 11, pupils produce sound standards. Work done constitutes a significant increase in depth from Year 9. This was exemplified well in the Year 11 lesson on the myth of Circe through ensemble improvisation, which was very movingly explored, with minimal interjection from the teacher, followed by a searching evaluation of the experience. This ended in realisation that the group had worked together really effectively. Boys and girls work well together, though girls reach higher standards. Talented pupils achieve high individual standards whilst remaining a part of the group experience.

- 167 In the sixth form performing arts course, students attain very good standards of performance work. The GCSE course provides a very effective base from which to move on to the rigours of A-level. Drama work is thoughtful and mature, and students are highly motivated. The Year 13 lesson, which focused on a performance piece in the style of the play "Bouncers", exemplified the confidence, timing and skill of the group. An ensemble piece, performed with great gusto, entailing sustaining of roles through quick changes of scene and character was excellent theatre and very entertaining. Results at GCSE are in line with the national average, and standards at A-level are good.
- 168 The quality of teaching in Years 7 to 9 is at least sound and often good. At GCSE and A-level the teaching is very good. The teaching team in Years 7 to 9, some of whom are not drama specialists, is generally skilled, with an appropriate knowledge of drama method. Basic drama skills are taught appropriately within well-planned lessons. Expectations, which are high for GCSE and A-level classes, are not sufficiently demanding of the younger pupils. Pupils' behaviour is managed well throughout the years. In Years 10 and 11, teaching is rigorous yet flexible, which allows for the progress of some drama lessons to be carried in interesting directions according to the development instigated by the pupils. There is good insistence on seriousness about the activities and levels of involvement are high. Good use is made of teacher-in-role to move the drama on. At A-level, teaching is of a high calibre with very good knowledge and understanding of the course requirements on the part of the teacher. Interactions between teacher and students are at a mature level, with high expectations bringing out some fine performance work.
- 169 In Years 7 to 9, the emphasis on small group work encourages pupils to take responsibility for their learning and to make choices. Responses are always positive and often appreciative. In Years 10 and 11, pupils can opt for drama as a separate subject, and these pupils are highly motivated to do well. Lessons are characterised by a seriousness of approach and a commitment to the group. Universally, all groups show enjoyment and interest in their drama lessons. Attitudes mature as pupils progress through to GCSE, where confidence grows with increasing control over the demands of performance work. It is the development of the serious and mature attitudes to drama, as pupils really start to appreciate the power it can exert, that allow the pupils to progress so rapidly and eventually attain well.
- 170 The head of faculty provides good leadership, being a skilled practitioner who believes in leading by doing. The quality of the work in the GCSE, AS and A-level groups is a result of hard work. The extra-curricular performances are a source of pride to the school community and are valued by the pupils and parents. Work presented ranges from last year's effective and affecting "Romeo and Juliet", to this year's Christmas pantomime "Dick Whittington". Theatre visits are arranged for sixth form groups, however, the provision of live theatre for the lower school is low. The work in drama currently takes place in inappropriate accommodation, which does nothing to enhance the status of the arts. This is recognised by the school and plans are in hand to remedy the situation in the next round of refurbishment. It is important that the hall lighting system should be reviewed as part of the refurbishment in order to ensure good health and safety coverage.
- 171 The coverage of drama in the last inspection report was one line within a brief paragraph in the English report. It reported satisfactory standards in drama in Years 7 and 8, and that the accommodation was inadequate. The current accommodation is still poor, but the standards have at least been maintained in Years 7 to 9 and the

scope for drama extended.

- 172 Actions to raise standards further should include:
- improving the quality of accommodation;
 - increasing the experience of live theatre for the lower school and GCSE groups;
 - raising standards in expressive arts in line with drama.

GEOGRAPHY

- 173 This is a good department which offers all pupils a broad curriculum and a high quality of teaching. Pupils make good progress in their learning from 11 to 16. Examination results have improved since the last inspection, but are below national averages.
- 174 By Year 9, attainment of pupils in geography is well below that found nationally. Pupils are acquiring a sound knowledge and understanding of geographical patterns and processes, for example in their work on the water cycle or the equatorial rain forests. They are developing their understanding of geographical and environmental issues, as in their work on the benefits and disadvantages of tourism and the idea of sustainable tourism. In producing a pamphlet on Japan's attractions for the visitor, Year 9 pupils showed that they can research material from books and CD ROMs, and present that information well, using a range of maps, graphs and diagrams. Pupils use indicators of development and selected photographs to make comparisons between Ghana and Japan, and so have acquired a sound knowledge and understanding of how people live in particular places. Pupils use maps and the atlas well from Year 7 on, and show good geographical skills such as field sketching and associated survey work in the Peak District. Although they can gather information, pupils are not producing the increasingly independent enquiry work needed to reach the higher levels of the National Curriculum. Much work is still predominantly descriptive and few pupils show they can analyse, reason and explain. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making sound progress from a weak base on entry in Year 7, although boys make less progress than girls. Poor writing skills impede the progress of a significant number of pupils.
- 175 By Year 11, pupils are achieving standards that are below those normally seen at this age. Pupils show a sound knowledge and understanding of geographical patterns and processes, for example, in their work on hydrology, counter urbanisation and the different residential areas of Nottingham. Much of their understanding is based on good use of detailed case studies, such as changing services in Nairobi or migration from Puebla to Mexico City. Pupils are developing a good understanding of environmental issues and how they may be managed, for example, flooding and flood alleviation in the Lavant valley. Some of their examination course work, particularly the field work on the quality of life in Mansfield Woodhouse, is good. These older pupils are thinking geographically and some are beginning to analyse and reason well. But many pupils do not write fluently nor find it easy to write in an explanatory way. In their course work on hazards they do not use the information they are given to write more than a descriptive response. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress. Poor literacy skills hinder the progress of some pupils. Boys make less progress than girls. Higher prior attainers are producing increasingly well written and well argued work of a good standard.
- 176 Currently, only one student in Year 13 is studying the subject at A-level and her work shows she is making sound progress towards a pass. The year 2000 teacher assessments, at the end of Year 9, indicated pupils achieving standards well below

those found nationally, with boys achieving markedly less well than girls. GCSE results are below those normally seen, but have been steadily improving. Girls continue to achieve better than boys. Examination results at A-level have been above national averages in recent years, with a large proportion of students achieving the higher grades.

- 177 Teaching in Years 7 to 9 is at least sound, and most is good. Teaching of older pupils is consistently very good. All lessons are well planned, well organised and well managed. Teachers have a good level of subject knowledge and a good understanding of how pupils learn. Lessons have a clear point and purpose which is explained well to pupils. They use a good range of teaching and learning activities. For example, in a Year 11 lesson, groups of pupils used a range of textbooks and a case study to collect focussed information and ideas about counter-urbanisation. Pairs of pupils then shared their findings with other pairs who had investigated a different aspect. They learned much from each other. This excellent lesson moved at a good pace, required all pupils to contribute and was summarised well by the teacher using a short test. In a very good Year 9 lesson, the teacher ensured that pupils used the computer in the classroom to collect information for their work on Japan and helped pupils to extend their work to include ideas of sustainable tourism. With a weak Year 10 group, the teacher used a good decision making exercise to involve the pupils in real world planning issues. Some lessons in Years 8 and 9 show that teachers do not match the work sufficiently closely to pupils' needs. They do not ensure that all tasks challenge the higher attaining pupils or allow them to achieve the highest possible levels. There is too little use of words and writing frames to attend to the literacy needs of lower attaining pupils.

- 178 Pupils' response to learning across the school is good. From Year 7 onwards pupils show interest in their work, generally work well on their tasks for the whole lesson and behave well. Many Year 9 pupils were showing good initiative in their research work. Pupils show good levels of concentration and work well in groups, particularly in Years 9, 10 and 11.
- 179 The subject is very well led and managed by the head of department. High quality documentation ensures consistency in teaching. Pupils are offered a broad and balanced curriculum, enriched by some use of computers and good fieldwork opportunities. Pupils' attainment is regularly assessed and good feedback given to them. There is a focussed development plan which ensures action for improvement. Teachers' work in the classroom has yet to be monitored by observation of lessons.
- 180 The judgement in the 1994 inspection that standards were satisfactory in relation to national norms, has not been sustained. Current standards are lower. Many pupils are still not developing sufficient enquiry and analysis skills, although pupils aged 14 to 18 are improving. Exploration by teachers of what pupils need to do to achieve, which was criticised in the last inspection, is now done well.
- 181 In order to maintain and improve standards further the department should :
- continue to develop pupils' reasoning and thinking skills through literacy strategies;
 - ensure that all tasks, especially for 11 to 14 year olds, provide focussed challenge for the higher prior attainers;
 - and develop progression in structured and sequenced enquiry work.

HISTORY

- 182 This is a good department which offers all pupils a broad curriculum and a good quality of teaching. Pupils make good progress in their learning from 11-16. Examination results have improved since the last inspection, but are below national averages.
- 183 By Year 9, the attainment of pupils is well below that found nationally. Pupils show a sound knowledge and understanding of the events, people and situations studied. They show a satisfactory sense of chronology through the use of timelines from Year 7 onwards. They show a developing understanding of historical ideas, as in their work on changes in industry from the domestic system to factory production and in their work on Josiah Wedgwood as a successful business man. An important strength is the pupils' ability to comprehend and use historical sources in their work, particularly in the Year 9 lessons on urban death rates and conditions in nineteenth century factories. Pupils are beginning to understand that historical features and events can be interpreted differently as in their work answering the question, "Why did the Victorians paint pictures of castles in the way they did?" Pupils make good use of computers to appreciate the variety of castles existing in England and Wales. Few pupils write fluently and well in an extended way. Most pupils can write descriptively in, for example, identifying and describing farming changes in the eighteenth century, but only a minority are able to explain the reasons for these changes. There is limited evidence of pupils working independently in research activities or investigations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making sound progress from a weak base on entry to the school, although boys make less progress than girls. Poor reading and writing skills impede the progress of a significant number of pupils.

- 184 By Year 11, pupils are achieving standards that are below those normally seen at this age. Over the two year examination course pupils acquire a sound range of knowledge and understanding. They have a sound understanding of historical ideas, such as the causes and treatment of illness in past periods. By Year 11, even lower attainers are beginning to both comprehend and analyse historical sources. There is more evidence of pupils writing well in an extended way, such as when they describe the Plains Indian view of the land and begin to argue cases in response to statements like, "When the buffalo are extinct, the Indians too dwindle away". Work is generally well presented. There are many examples of good course work where pupils write on conflict in Ireland and use site visit evidence to evaluate whether Cromford was, "a perfect place to build a cotton spinning factory in 1771." All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress. However, poor literacy skills hamper the progress of some pupils. Few lower attaining pupils give sufficient reasons and explanation when writing. Boys make less progress than girls. Currently, only two students in Year 13 are studying the subject at advanced level. Their work shows they are making sound progress. In the year 2000, teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 showed pupils achieving standards well below those found nationally, with boys achieving significantly less well than girls. GCSE results have steadily improved in recent years, but are below the national average. A-level results have been below the national average for the last three years. Few students gain the higher grades.
- 185 Teaching in Years 7 to 9 is always at least sound and sometimes very good. Teaching of older pupils is very good. The team of specialist historians shows good subject knowledge, plan interesting and focused lessons using a range of texts and well produced resources and organise and manage their classes well. Teachers have high expectations that pupils will learn well, particularly in Years 9, 10 and 11, and ensure that lessons move at a brisk pace. For instance, in a Year 9 class, the teacher helped pupils to use a range of sources to identify features of early nineteenth century towns which might give rise to the high death rate. Pupils individually presented a concept diagram identifying logical connections. Many showed the beginnings of sound reasoning. In Year 11, a lower set class was studying changes in medicine. Individuals used different sources to identify the beliefs the Romans had about the causes of bad health. Through skilful questioning the teacher led interested pupils to offer good deductions and fully record their ideas. Teachers offer good oral and written support to help pupils improve, but there is a lack of challenge for the higher attainers in Years 7 to 9. Whilst teachers do support pupils' writing by using writing frames, they need to extend their use to help lower attaining pupils write in more accurate sentences and paragraphs, giving reasons. Opportunities to broaden teachers' repertoires of teaching and learning activities by providing focussed discussion in groups are often missed, with an adverse effect on learning. Whilst there is a productive historical visit to Cromford for older pupils, younger pupils do not have a similar experience, limiting the provision of practical contexts for their learning. Pupils generally respond well to the subject. They show particular interest in Years 9, 10 and 11. Most work consistently on their tasks in the lesson and behave well, although some pupils in Years 7 and 8 do not concentrate properly on the matter in hand. Year 9 pupils are developing some independence in their in-depth study work, but this is better developed through course work in Year 11.
- 186 The departmental team of experienced teachers is led and managed well by an able head of department. Detailed and well planned schemes of work underpin the broad and balanced curriculum offered. Pupils' attainment is regularly assessed using clear historical criteria, but currently pupils do not know their level of attainment until the end of Year 9. There is a focussed development plan which ensures action for

improvement. Teachers' work in the classroom has yet to be monitored by observation of lessons.

- 187 The judgement in the 1994 inspection that standards were satisfactory in relation to national norms, has not been sustained. Current standards are lower. There is still a need to develop activities that promote pupils' independent learning. However, the national curriculum is now fully covered, whereas it did not meet legal requirements in 1994.
- 188 In order to maintain and improve standards further the department should:
- continue to develop pupils' writing and reasoning skills through literacy strategies;
 - ensure that all tasks in mixed ability classes challenge the higher attaining pupils;
 - and extend the range of teaching strategies to include learning through group activities and more independent enquiry.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 189 In Years 7 to 9, pupils develop their ICT skills within subjects. At present, this organisation does not provide pupils with an experience of either sufficient breadth or depth to enable them to reach the higher National Curriculum levels. In Years 10 and 11, pupils are able to use the new ICT rooms, and benefit from taught ICT lessons each week. However, the overall provision for ICT within the school is still inadequate, and pupils do not get sufficient access to computers to support their learning in all subjects as they move through the school.
- 190 From ages 11 to 14, pupils develop their ICT capability mainly within English, modern foreign languages, mathematics, science and humanities. In these subjects, they develop a foundation of basic skills, including word-processing, desktop publishing, spreadsheets and databases. For example in English, pupils develop word-processing and desktop publishing skills. By Year 9, they produce the front page of a newspaper, using ICT to combine text and graphics. Further opportunities to develop these skills are provided within modern foreign languages. In mathematics, pupils in Year 7 develop a basic understanding of spreadsheets, by calculating the cost of organising a party. In Year 8, they use graphics software to draw geometrical shapes and develop their mathematical understanding of reflection. Pupils in science are able to see data-logging equipment used to measure temperature change. However, the shortage of computers does not provide them with the opportunity to develop their own skills with the equipment. In geography, pupils in Year 7 use a database of statistics from an atlas and learn how to access and interrogate the information stored. They develop this work further in history in Year 8, and set up and explore a further database on castles. Currently, pupils are unable to use ICT to control events by creating sets of instructions, due to the shortage of computers in design and technology. Pupils with special educational needs have very limited opportunities to use ICT within their own teaching area, and this has an adverse effect on their progress. Overall in Years 7 to 9, the acquisition of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding of ICT is not systematic, and the opportunity for pupils to use and apply their basic skills in subjects is very limited. Pupils' overall progress, therefore, is unsatisfactory, and standards are well below average.
- 191 From ages 14 to 16, pupils are able to develop their skills within a taught lesson each week, following a GCSE course in ICT. These pupils are making good progress developing their ICT capability, although by the age of 16 their attainment is still below average. A minority of pupils in these years follows a full GCSE option. These pupils

are making very good progress and, by the age of 16, are achieving similar standards to those normally seen at this age. In Year 10, pupils in the taught lesson develop desktop publishing skills to design logos for a sports centre and word-processing skills to draft a report to evaluate their ideas. Pupils on the Manor Project in Year 10 work steadily through a series of modules to gain RSA level 3 certification. They are able to use the Internet and encyclopaedia CDs to retrieve information and incorporate it into desktop publishing. In Year 11, pupils in the GCSE groups work quite independently through a series of tasks on the leisure centre and the home, developing skills using a good range of ICT applications. The opportunity for pupils to apply and develop their ICT skills to support their learning in subjects continues to be very limited, and dependent upon subject choice and access to equipment. For example in rural science, pupils in Year 11 use a database effectively to compare the weight of piglets with the weight of food consumed. A relatively low number of pupils use their ICT skills to enhance their coursework, for example in English, mathematics, history and design and technology. In addition, a number of pupils are beginning to make use of the Internet and CDs to research information for their coursework, for example in art and design, geography and music.

- 192 In the sixth form, GNVQ and AS level pupils are making good progress to achieve average standards, applying and developing relevant ICT skills within their key skills lessons. For example in Year 12, pupils use desktop publishing to combine text, and Clipart and Internet images to produce good quality holiday leaflets.
- 193 Recent statutory teacher assessments for the attainment of 14-year olds have been well below those reported nationally at level 5 and above. At age 16, pupils' results in the GCSE examinations in ICT over the last three years have been falling steadily, to well below the national average in 2000. However, these include a large number of pupils who only studied ICT for the taught lesson each week. The results of pupils in the full GCSE option were much higher, approximately 12% below the national average last year.
- 194 Overall, teaching is satisfactory. In Year 7 to 9, teachers demonstrate satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the software applications taught. In the taught ICT lessons in Years 10 and 11, and in the sixth form, teachers' knowledge and understanding is good. Teachers set clear, long term objectives for pupils which provide them with a good picture of the tasks that must be completed in each module. They do not normally set short term targets for each lesson, leaving pupils unsure as to what they are expected to achieve by the end of the session. Similarly, they do not bring groups together at the end of lessons to check on progress and to discuss the learning that has been undertaken, leaving some pupils uncertain of what they have achieved. Good individual help and support is provided in lessons, which keeps pupils working well. However, teachers do not take sufficient opportunities in lessons to demonstrate new procedures and techniques to groups as a whole, for example, when using the Internet showing them how to use the search facilities more efficiently. Each module of work for GCSE is supported by well-prepared materials, available for pupils as both booklets and on-screen presentations. This enables pupils to work quite independently within lessons and at their own pace. However, they restrict the opportunities for more-able pupils to choose their own contexts in which to work or to decide on the ICT applications that they will use. Appropriate assessment procedures are in place for the taught ICT courses. Currently, however, there are no records to build up a picture of pupils' use of, and capability in, ICT across all subject areas as they move through the school.
- 195 Pupils' response to ICT is good. They settle down quickly, access the software

efficiently and show a good level of interest in the tasks set. Behaviour in ICT is good. Pupils use the equipment carefully and responsibly, both in and out of lessons, for example during lunch times and after-school in the Learning Resource Centre. Relationships between teachers and their groups are good. The large majority of pupils proceed well with the tasks set, without undue help and support from their teachers. A significant minority of pupils loses concentration towards the end of lessons and would benefit from a broader range of activities to maintain motivation and interest.

- 196 The development of ICT is a clear priority within the school development plan. At present, the ICT co-ordinator is providing clear leadership to ensure the improved delivery of the taught ICT curriculum from Year 10 onwards. The delivery of ICT in Years 7 to 9 is being currently evaluated. At present, the teaching of ICT through subjects is not providing pupils with a sufficiently continuous and progressive course as they move through these years. There is no overall monitoring of teaching and learning in the subject, for example to monitor how subject teachers deliver ICT in Years 7 to 9. The accommodation for ICT is heavily used and there is little opportunity at present for further use of the ICT rooms by subjects. Plans are in hand to extend the provision of computers in subject areas.
- 197 Since the previous report, the provision of ICT has been through a considerable period of change. The opportunity for all pupils to take ICT to GCSE level has been established. However, there are still too few opportunities for pupils to use ICT in other areas of the curriculum.
- 198 Action to raise standards further should include:
- ensuring that pupils in Years 7 to 9 receive their full entitlement to the National Curriculum through a more continuous and progressive course of study;
 - providing pupils in Years 10 and 11 with more opportunities to apply and develop their ICT skills in all subject areas;
 - and strengthening the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and its impact on learning in ICT.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

- 199 All pupils in Years 7 to 9 study French and German, with the option to continue one or both languages, or Spanish, in Years 10 and 11. At ages 14 and 16, a majority of pupils reach standards below the national average. A small number of students study languages in the sixth form, and the proportion of higher grades at A-level is low.
- 200 By the end of Year 9, most pupils in upper sets reach standards typically seen nationally, as do some pupils in middle sets. When listening and reading, they can understand straightforward messages and information. Their speaking consists most often of simple, prompted statements. Examples of longer or more complicated speaking work are emerging in upper sets, and pupils in middle and upper groups produce written compositions in line with expectations for National Curriculum level 5. These pupils are able to talk and write about familiar topics and to use the past tense. The quantity and frequency of written composition are lower than is usually seen. Most pupils in lower sets reach standards well below the national average. They can understand very basic printed and recorded messages, and their written and spoken work consists mostly of single words or short sentences. On balance, the majority of pupils reach a standard below that normally seen nationally.

- 201 By the end of Year 11, the profile of attainment is similar, but more pronounced. Most pupils in upper groups, and some in middle groups, are on target to reach standards at or above the national average. When speaking and reading, they are capable of producing several sentences, longer compositions and a fair level of accuracy. They can use their grammar knowledge to produce original and more interesting language. The majority of pupils demonstrate standards below that level; in middle and lower sets, many pupils in Years 10 and 11 are still working at levels which reflect usual Year 7 work. These pupils have made very poor progress. When speaking and reading, they need support and guidance in order to produce even short answers to questions and their standard of accuracy is poor.
- 202 In current sixth form lessons, the number of students is low. In French, progress is slow, and the standard of attainment is lower than what is often seen. The ability to communicate and to exploit grammar knowledge is not sufficiently developed to ensure examination success. In German, progress is good. Students are on target to be within the higher grade range by the end of the course, they can compose detailed and complex opinions, manipulate complex grammar, can express opinions on complex abstract issues, and reach a good level of accuracy.
- 203 In assessments carried out by teachers last year, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard at the end of Year 9 was recorded by the school as close to the national average. This does not reflect the standards observed in current lessons because the interpretation of National Curriculum levels has been generous. In recent years, in both French and German, the proportion of pupils achieving grades A* to G at GCSE has remained stable, while the proportion of pupils reaching grades A* to C has been in decline. Most recent results in 2000 are well below the national average, especially in French. In the sixth form, the number of students achieving higher grades at A-level has fallen progressively, particularly in French. Results in 2000 are well below the national average.
- 204 Teaching in Years 7 to 9 is good, leading to satisfactory learning. In Years 10 and 11 teaching is sound, and pupils' learning is more often unsatisfactory. The quality of learning is lower than the quality of teaching, mostly because of low literacy levels hampering progress, and because of poor attitudes which teachers are working hard to overcome. There are some unsatisfactory and some very good lessons in both age groups. In the best lessons, explanations and instructions are supported by visual clues such as pictures or diagrams, so that pupils see a picture of the words they are hearing, and can understand the idea which is being presented. Lesson objectives are presented in clear simple language, with some measurable element, so that pupils know exactly what they are aiming for and when they have succeeded. Teachers tell their pupils the factors, such as using a past tense, giving and explaining opinions and saying more than one thing, which give access to higher performance. This allows pupils to target the best possible standards. In a very good Year 11 German lesson about helping out at home, the teacher took pupils step by step from simple statements through to higher attainment where they had to say three things and then add an extra detail. In most lessons, pupils are kept continuously in action, leading to a fast and urgent pace of work, so that pupils have no time to lose concentration, and have a feeling of making rapid progress. Teachers have high expectations of pupils in higher sets, so that they are encouraged to aim for good standards. Potentially challenging pupils are sensitively but assertively managed, so that the class can focus on work in a busy and civilised environment. In the few lessons where teaching is unsatisfactory, or occasionally in otherwise satisfactory lessons, there is poor control of noise, so that it is difficult to work effectively. The pace of activity is slow, and pupils tend to drift into chatter. In some lessons, pupils

hear about the theory of what to do, but they do not have enough active practice in order to gain full understanding and fluency, or do not receive enough advice on the small steps which they could make in order to improve their performance. Language activities are not clearly modelled, so that pupils are not sure what to do. There is little or no visual support when lesson objectives are given, so that there is a delay or insecurity when pupils start their work. In the sixth form, teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use a variety of materials in order to stimulate learning. They support students well in the transition from GCSE to A-level studies. They have high expectations of their students, notably in German, and encourage students to produce more complex types of work.

- 205 Most pupils behave well and have a positive attitude to their work. There is a minority of pupils in many classes with negative attitudes, and who are unable to restrain their noisy chatter. In Years 10 and 11, pupils in upper sets have a good focus on their work and are keen to succeed. In lower sets, often because of serious literacy deficiencies, or because of negative previous experience of languages, there are many pupils who find the work difficult and do not take their work seriously enough. In the sixth form, German students are very committed and motivated. In French lessons, attitudes are more variable and less focused.
- 206 The judgement in the 1994 inspection that standards were satisfactory in relation to national norms has not been sustained. Current standards are lower. Many pupils are still not developing listening and speaking skills beyond a basic level, and there is less development of reading and writing skills than typically seen.
- 207 The leadership and management of the subject area are excellent. In a short time, the new co-ordinator has focused the faculty on standards, and how to improve them, by:
- encouraging teachers to share, discuss and try new and successful teaching methods;
 - encouraging teachers to plan lessons which are focused on getting well defined and higher standards of attainment;
 - introducing GCSE course work, which gives pupils more influence in determining their own success;

- organising faculty training and visits to colleagues' lessons which have informed debate and fuelled change;
- and supporting teachers as they try new approaches.

As a result of these activities, the subject area is now more cohesive and effective.

- 208 In order to raise standards, and to eliminate areas of unsatisfactory teaching, the faculty should follow through the excellent activity which has already been initiated, and also:
- reshape schemes of work with due regard for ICT, the standards which are targeted at each stage, and the learning skills which pupils need to acquire in order to become more successful;
 - redesign assessment and feedback systems, so that teachers and pupils have a clear view of pupils' performance and of what individual pupils need to do in order to make progress.

MUSIC

- 209 Standards in music have fallen since the last inspection. This is largely due to problems with staffing and a consequent decline in teaching standards. Pupils' progress in Years 7 to 9 is unsatisfactory, though it is good in Years 10 and 11 and in the sixth form. Assessment of pupils' work is not consistent and the department lacks resources.
- 210 Pupils' attainment at age 14 is well below that normally seen. Pupils in Year 9 are poor performers, weak in both singing and instrumental skills. Their composing is limited by this, because they cannot play their musical ideas. The large majority barely attains standards typical of Year 6, though a small minority of enthusiasts for the subject are a little better, especially at composing. Pupils have limited vocabularies, both of basic English and of musical words; for example, they cannot define 'contrast' or 'tempo'. The presentation of girls' work is better than that of boys, except among the higher attainers in Year 9 where there is no difference.
- 211 Pupils' attainment at age 16 is slightly below national standards. Pupils have had comparatively little experience of composing and about half are further hampered by limited performing skills. Those who learn instruments and participate actively in extra-curricular activities achieve higher standards. Pupils' self-appraisal of their own work is as normally seen. In Year 10, pupils have very limited musical vocabularies and know little about Baroque musical forms.
- 212 In the sixth form, students' attainment is in line with the national picture. Students studying music technology A-level understand and use confidently the principles of sequencing. The Year 13 student can self-appraise his own work accurately and explain the effects he wants to create. He uses expression sensitively, though his scant knowledge of common Italian musical terms limits the variety of written directions which he can give to performers of his music.

- 213 The number of GCSE candidates in music, in each of the last three years, has been too small to compare with national figures. However, the results in Summer 2000 were below what the same pupils achieved in other subjects. GCSE expressive arts results are very low. The number of A-level candidates is also too small to compare results with national figures, but over the last three years candidates' grades have been relatively low.
- 214 Teaching in Years 7 to 9 is unsatisfactory. It is satisfactory, overall, in Years 10 and 11, but with some weaknesses. Teaching in the sixth form is good with some very good features. Teachers' musical knowledge is good, shown in consistent use of music-specific vocabulary, clear well-informed answers to questions and confident demonstrations of music technology. Where teaching is effective, particularly in Year 11 and in the sixth form, but occasionally also in Years 7 to 9, pupils are given work which they can manage, but which also offers an interesting challenge. Frequent plenary sessions collect their responses to ensure they have the skills and understanding to move on. Use of their own compositions for group appraisal work provides an interesting stimulus for the whole class and helpful feedback to the composers, whose self-esteem is also raised. Effective use is also made of technology, both keyboard and computers, though the school does not have sufficient to give all pupils enough access to these resources. Instrumental teaching is of very good quality and is attracting increasing numbers of pupils, particularly in Year 7. However, particularly in Years 7 to 9, pupils do not receive enough training in the important musical skills of listening, composing and performing, to succeed. They are not assessed effectively and therefore lesson-planning does not take sufficient account of their needs. Often tasks are too hard for them, such as composing a song in Year 9 when they do not know how to construct such a long melody, or too vague, for example listening passively to the chord-pattern of a Blues song, which is not sufficiently interesting to command the attention of a lively Year 8 class. Frequently the focus is not practical enough, for example in Year 10 reading about Baroque instruments and compositions, rather than learning by listening to them. Sometimes time is wasted by over-lengthy explanations at the start of lessons. Pupils become bored, frustrated, or both, and when this happens classroom discipline degenerates. There are no agreed procedures for maintaining good classroom order. There is insufficient planning for pupils with special educational needs or for the highest musical attainers.
- 215 Pupils' responses vary considerably. At best, pupils work hard, as seen in Year 7, Year 11 and the sixth-form. They participate actively, asking questions, working diligently and making good progress in their lessons. Even when teaching is poor, a small minority of pupils in Years 7 to 9 apply strong effort, trying to teach themselves. They can also work effectively in groups, for example Year 7 produced some attractive short pieces in ternary form quite quickly because they pooled ideas and shared skills. However, many pupils in Year 9 apply little concentration, have extremely short attention spans and chatter throughout their lessons. In Years 10 and 11, many pupils taking expressive arts did not choose this option for themselves, and at least a third of them are not co-operative. Pupils have low self-esteem and do not value their own achievements.
- 216 Leadership and management of music are satisfactory. The head of department has been in post for only three months. He has great enthusiasm and he has correctly identified many of the weaknesses which the department needs to tackle, for example problems of communication with colleagues and the need to agree and maintain standards of assessment. However, he is constrained by staffing problems which have not been satisfactorily resolved. Of five teachers, two are unqualified, two are

newly qualified, and none has more than fifteen months' classroom teaching experience. The head of department is observing his colleagues' lessons but his own lack of experience in Years 7 to 9 means he cannot support them as effectively as he might wish. Major training needs are evident. The department is further constrained by its poor resources, particularly the lack of working keyboards, leads, sockets and head-phones for 11 to 14 year old pupils and sufficient computers and software for GCSE composing and performing. The accommodation is over-resonant and poorly-ventilated, one room is over-crowded, and because the two teaching rooms are separated by some distance, resources cannot be shared. Extra-curricular provision is good, with some interesting visits to shows and concerts, such as the London Proms. The annual pantomime is a splendid tradition, involving many pupils, including several from local primary schools, in a musical occasion which clearly raises levels of skill and enjoyment of music.

- 217 Since the last inspection, pupils' standards have declined, as has teaching, and the assessment of pupils' work. Action to raise standards, especially in Years 7 to 11, should include:
- improving the quality of teaching by giving more focused lessons, covering basic musical skills and improving behaviour management;
 - improving the accuracy and consistency of assessment to let pupils know what they have achieved and how they can improve.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 218 This is a department with strong, enthusiastic leadership which is committed to providing opportunities for all pupils, regardless of ability, to take a full and active part in physical education.
- 219 At age 14, pupils' planning, performing and evaluation skills are in line with those seen in other schools, with some pupils showing very high levels of skill especially in football and boys' hockey. Most pupils understand the importance of warm up activities. They know, understand and can perform a variety of appropriate stretching exercises to work specified large muscle groups. In hockey, Year 8 girls know and understand how to dodge an opponent, but can not always put this into practice. Year 8 boys' hockey skills are above those normally seen, with several showing very good use of reverse stickwork. They show very good understanding of how to create and move into spaces to receive the ball. In the only netball lesson observed, Year 9 girls' passing and receiving skills were just in line with those normally seen. In gymnastics, Year 9 boys can perform a range of balances with a partner. They know about the importance of body tension and several pupils show it in performance. In trampolining, Year 9 girls can create sequences using at least three different skills. Overall, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in Years 7 to 9. Girls and boys make similar progress.
- 220 At age 16, most pupils' planning, performing and evaluation skills in practical lessons are above those normally seen. They can perform well the roles of coach and referee or umpire. With the aid of a teacher they can devise and organise practices devised to improve specific aspects of a game. Most pupils can analyze skills accurately and give feedback to other pupils on how to improve their performance. This was particularly evident in the rugby, football and trampolining lessons seen. In football and netball lessons, pupils can analyse tactical play against specific criteria. Pupils overall show high levels of skill in passing and receiving, dodging and marking an opponent in football, hockey, netball and rugby, with some exceptionally talented

players in the football, hockey and rugby lessons seen. In trampolining, pupils show high levels of skill, with several pupils confidently executing forwards and backwards somersaults. All pupils can create and perform sequences with fluency. In GCSE theory lessons, pupils' knowledge and understanding of somatotyping and of anatomy represents the full range of GCSE grades. Pupils know and understand the three basic body types; they know the names of the major bones in the body and understand skeletal functions. Pupils make very good progress in Years 10 and 11.

- 221 In the optional Year 12 and 13 physical education programme, pupils showed good levels of skill in the trampolining and basketball activities seen. On the AS and A-level course, pupils' knowledge and understanding of the factors affecting motivation and performance in sport represent the full range of examination grades. Pupils make good progress in Years 12 and 13. Teacher assessments for pupils at age 14 show that most pupils are achieving standards in planning, performing and evaluating skills in line with those seen in most schools. 2000 was the first year that pupils were entered for GCSE and A level physical education examinations. The proportion gaining A* to C grades at GCSE was slightly below the national figure but, on average, pupils achieved one grade higher in physical education than they did in their other subjects. Six of the eleven pupils on the A level course were awarded a pass. This is below the national figure.
- 222 The school has a very good record in extra-curricular successes, with pupils from the school taking part at town, county and regional levels in rugby, netball, football, hockey, cricket, tennis, ice skating, ice hockey, badminton, bowls, athletics, swimming, martial arts and motorcross. Pupils also participate at national level in ice hockey, badminton, martial arts and bowls.
- 223 The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. It is very good in Years 10 and 11. All specialist teachers have excellent subject knowledge, especially in games and trampolining. Teachers have very good working relationships with their pupils. Most lessons are well planned, with clear learning objectives which are usually shared with pupils. Pupils' acquisition of skills is good because tasks are usually clearly set and presented in small, manageable stages, exemplified well by good teacher or pupil demonstrations. Clear coaching points are given for most skills, and individual and whole class feedback is usually given with reference to these points. Verbal feedback is given in theory lessons, but GCSE pupils are given insufficient written comments on how to improve their work. Teachers' questioning techniques are good and they are used very well to check, challenge or extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. In several lessons, including a Year 11 hockey lesson, questioning was also used well to encourage pupils to predict outcomes. In two theory lessons, however, questioning techniques were more limited, with an emphasis on checking pupils' knowledge rather than extending their understanding. Teachers are very supportive of pupils taking a coaching or officiating role in lessons. They intervene sensitively to give additional coaching points and to give feedback to the pupil leading the session. Pupils who are not able to take a practical part in lessons are usually given relevant work to do which is checked by the teacher during the lesson. Often these pupils officiate in games lessons, but in some lessons they are not fully integrated into class question and answer sessions.
- 224 Pupils' response to teaching is very good. They are usually enthusiastic and motivated, even in difficult weather conditions. Pupils who are not taking part practically in lessons usually have valid reasons for not doing so. Pupils usually expend a great deal of energy. All take and give constructive criticism well, either from a teacher or from their peers. This is seen particularly well in the lessons in the sports education course which makes an excellent contribution to pupils' personal

development. In these lessons, pupils take responsibility for coaching and officiating their own games, which they do very well. Pupils are usually very supportive of each other and make encouraging comments to their peers. The integration of pupils from a special school into Manor's post-16 programme makes a significant contribution to Manor pupils understanding and accepting people's differences. This was very evident in a basketball game when a pupil with special educational needs ran the full length of the court before attempting a shot. The other pupils totally accepted this without comment and continued as if nothing unusual had happened.

- 225 The head of the department provides very strong, enthusiastic leadership and manages the department very effectively. Good relationships exist within the department and all staff show a commitment to improvement. The curriculum is appropriate for all pupils. It provides a good range of accredited courses, including the Junior Sports Leaders Award (JSLA) and the Community Sports Leaders Award (CSLA). Pupils also have opportunities to take sports governing body awards. The curriculum is considerably enriched by the very good extra-curricular provision which is available to all pupils regardless of their ability. Staff give unstintingly of their time to support this programme. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs for whom special equipment is available. These pupils receive effective help in lessons from pupils in Years 12 and 13. A lunch-time club is also held for low attaining pupils. Special arrangements are made for those pupils who are identified as gifted or talented to encourage them to reach their potential. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 have their own assessment booklets in which they self-assess their work against teacher-given criteria. The accuracy of this assessment is then verified by the teacher. This system contributes significantly to pupils' self-knowledge of their learning. Some reports to parents do not give a clear indication of what pupils know, understand and can do and neither do they make reference to pupils' progress since the last report. No formal monitoring of teaching has yet taken place. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' moral and social development. They are encouraged to play fairly and to accept officials' decisions unquestioningly. Pupils' successes are celebrated through information and displays on notice boards, through announcements in assemblies and the school's intranet and through the termly Junior Sports Newsletter and The Manor News.
- 226 Good progress has been made since the last report. The school has achieved Specialist Sports college status. Improvements have been made to the curriculum to give pupils opportunities to take examination and other accredited courses through the introduction of GCSE, AS and A-level, JSLA and CSLA. Pupils now have more opportunities to take part in the creative and aesthetic aspects of the subject, as more time has been allocated to gymnastics and all pupils now study dance through Expressive Arts. The good quality of teaching has been maintained and the quality of learning has improved so that it is now good or very good in the majority of lessons. There is improved accommodation with a fitness room now in use and a new sports hall planned.

- 227 Action to improve the good standards still further should include:
- monitoring of teaching with written feedback and targets;
 - writing assessment criteria to match the new National Curriculum level descriptions;
 - ensuring that all pupils who are not able to take part practically are always included in class discussions and question and answer sessions;
 - and development of questioning techniques in theory sessions.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 228 In religious education, pupils make sound progress in Years 7 to 9, from a low starting point. Good teaching enables many of the more able pupils to attain average national standards by age 14. For Years 10 to 13, with the exception of the small GCSE religious studies groups, opportunities for religious education are extremely limited, and the school does not meet its statutory obligations.
- 229 When pupils arrive at the school, their standards in religious education are generally weak. Some of these pupils have a good understanding of religious education, but others know little about religions. From this starting point, most pupils make sound progress in Years 7 to 9, learning about key beliefs and features of Christianity and some other religions, and applying ideas to their own views of life. By Year 9 many pupils, particularly girls, have developed some good levels of skill in expressing their reflections and thoughts about religious and spiritual issues. Overall, standards are below those normally seen.
- 230 The attainment of pupils at age 16 is very low because the core provision of religious education in Years 10 and 11 does not meet statutory requirements. The agreed syllabus cannot be taught in the very few hours allocated to religious education. Pupils in the small GCSE option groups for religious studies, in both Years 10 and 11, make sound progress in learning through the course. Where pupils link their learning about Christianity to their own experience, and are challenged to build up a detailed picture of Christian belief and practice, or to evaluate moral issues with clear reference to biblical materials, they learn a lot, but progress is weaker where the focus is less clear, or only on social issues. Pupils develop an insight into Buddhism in the very short, but well-conceived, religious education unit within personal, social and health education. GCSE results have been below national averages in recent years, but represent sound achievement when compared with pupils' previous attainment.
- 231 All the teaching seen was at least sound, and some teaching was very good. For example, linking ideas about the well-being of all in a plural society to the study of world wide religious communities in Year 7, enables many pupils to deepen their awareness of the role of religion in life. Reflective work on evil in Year 8 asks pupils to develop their own ideas on some key moral questions. In Year 9, some pupils were challenged to think deeply about biblical narrative by taking the role of a movie director seeking to film the Annunciation. Teaching is less effective where classroom tasks involve re-processing information, for example in making a copy of data from a map. Such mundane tasks, particularly when the pace of teaching is slower, lead to poor motivation and low levels of interest from pupils. Teachers expect sound

standards of both behaviour and achievement from students. Teaching is often purposeful, insistent and vigorous, and at its best is creative, relevant and provokes a thoughtful response from most pupils.

- 232 Attitudes to learning are good in Years 7 and 8, though in Year 9, pupils often have little enthusiasm for the subject. In the best lessons, pupils are engaged by fast paced teaching, well focused tasks and group work based on relevant, interesting questions. Attitudes are merely compliant where the purpose and aims of the religious education work are not clear to pupils themselves.
- 233 Religious education in Years 7 to 9 is effectively managed by the staff. Schemes of work are thorough, and use the barely adequate allocation of curriculum time to cover most of the content of the agreed syllabus. There is too little teaching time to enable sufficient depth of study, particularly with regard to developing learning from religion. Management of religious education for older pupils is ineffective because of inadequate time allocation.
- 234 Since the last inspection, staff in the religious education department have made sound progress in teaching a broader and better balanced curriculum at Key Stage 3, and in providing opportunities for spiritual, moral and cultural development. Resourcing pupils' work with artefacts has given pupils an insight into several religious communities. Pupils' work is marked conscientiously, and feedback to pupils is clear and helpful, but the assessment of progress and attainment is unsatisfactory at present. Reporting to parents is sound at Key Stage 3, but unsatisfactory for older pupils whose parents receive too little information on progress. The issue of insufficient curriculum time for religious education, especially for Years 10 and 11 and the sixth form, has not been resolved.
- 235 Action to raise standards further should include:
- meeting the statutory requirements of the agreed syllabus for religious education for Years 10 to 13;
 - continuing to build up a widening range of teaching strategies which will motivate and challenge all pupils to learn from religion;
 - ensuring pupils know their strengths and weaknesses very clearly and are given targets to improve.
 - matching work to pupils' needs more effectively, particularly through precision in setting tasks;
 - building up the standards and quality of provision for GCSE religious studies.

BUSINESS STUDIES

- 236 Business studies is an optional subject at GCSE and in the sixth form. There is a good range of courses, including GNVQ foundation level for Years 10 and 11, and GNVQ intermediate level for Years 12 and 13.
- 237 In Year 11, achievement is satisfactory in relation to students' previous attainment, but standards are below average compared with the national picture. In Years 10 and 11, students work independently, exercise responsibility when using ICT and respond well, showing a satisfactory level of key skills. Evaluation skills are less well developed and some investigations are restricted because of limited use of reference materials. Students use a range of business terms appropriately, such as in Year 10 to describe the marketing mix and in Year 11 to demonstrate an understanding of the employment market.

- 238 In Years 12 and 13, students reach a standard that is in line with predictions based on their prior attainment. They show an understanding of concepts that they are then able to apply to case study material. Generally there is good quality analysis of information and a readiness to draw relevant conclusions and generalise from particular examples they have considered. Their assignments are perceptive, with a satisfactory balance of primary and secondary sources.
- 239 The success rate in GCSE examinations has shown an improvement from 1999 to 2000 and is approaching the national average, although the percentage of students reaching the highest grades is low. By the end of Year 13, attainment is below the national average, both for 2000 and the previous two years, but is in line with predictions based on prior attainment. The number of students gaining GNVQ awards is low in comparison with results in similar schools.
- 240 Teaching contributes positively to promoting satisfactory levels of achievement. Teaching was at least satisfactory in all lessons seen. All teachers in the department have good subject knowledge and use excellent examples relating to their own experiences. Teachers' plan their lessons well within detailed schemes of work. Where teaching is good, as in a Year 10 lesson looking at production methods, the teacher set deadlines for completing tasks that kept up the pace of learning. A variety of teaching and learning strategies is used. In the less effective lessons the teacher leads the session more formally and does not get student involvement but, in the good lessons, teachers build on previous work completed and students' own experiences. In group work, students are expected to help each other. For example, in the mini projects lesson seen in Year 10, students from various teaching groups were mixed together. They worked on their own initiative and asked their teacher for help when needed. In a newsroom role-play activity in Year 12, the nature of the task led to students gaining a good understanding of current business affairs. In most lessons the relationship between teacher and students is very positive. The teachers provide support, encouragement and feedback. Marking of students' work is done regularly, but there are too few comments to help students understand what they need to do to improve and reach higher levels of attainment. Where learning is satisfactory, students discuss work effectively with their peers and ask the teachers appropriate questions to enhance their understanding. Where learning is unsatisfactory, students make little progress in their understanding and find it difficult to communicate accurately what they have learnt.
- 241 In Years 10 and 11, students take a genuine interest in their work, particularly in situations in which they have the opportunity to pursue independent research, as in GCSE and GNVQ coursework. In the sixth form, students are enthusiastic learners. All students are interested in their studies and concentrate well. They enjoy the challenge of the work, and this is particularly so in Year 12.
- 242 The head of department is providing effective leadership in the drive to raise standards. A good working ethos has been established. Good progress has been made in implementing the new courses. The development plan sets out clear targets. Communication and co-ordination within the department is good. The department is well supported by having good accommodation.
- 243 Progress since the last inspection is satisfactory. Following the appointment of a new head of department, the curriculum has been completely revised. The school now makes good curriculum provision for all students; GCSE Business Studies and GNVQ at Foundation level are both raising the performance of lower attaining

students. A start has also been made on using assessment data to determine students' progress over time.

244 Action to raise standards further should include:

- raising teachers' expectations of what students can achieve, and increasing the pace of activities in the classroom;
- developing a resource base of relevant research materials, and further developing extra- curricular activities and links to industry that will make a positive contribution to learning;
- and strengthening the way teaching is monitored and improved.