

INSPECTION REPORT

**ABBAY GRANGE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
HIGH SCHOOL**

Leeds

LEA area: Leeds

Unique reference number: 108101

Headteacher: Mr D King

Reporting inspector: Mr S Freeman
2636

Dates of inspection: 02 - 06 October 2000

Inspection number: 223848

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

© Crown copyright 2000

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Comprehensive

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 11 - 18

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Butcher Hill
Leeds
West Yorkshire

Postcode: LS16 5EA

Telephone number: 0113 275 7877

Fax number: 0133 275 4794

Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr J Rex

Date of previous inspection: May 1995

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|--------------------------|----------------------|--|--|
| Mr S Freeman, 2636 | Registered inspector | | What sort of school is it? |
| | | | Improvement since the last inspection |
| | | | The school's results and achievements |
| | | | Teaching and learning |
| | | | How well is the school led and managed? |
| | | | Sixth Form |
| Mrs J Smith, 9649 | Lay inspector | | Attitudes, values and personal development |
| | | | How well does the school care for its pupils and students? |
| | | | How well does the school work in partnership with parents/ |
| Mr C Ashworth, 27201 | Team inspector | English | |
| | | Drama | |
| Mr J Collinson, 15078 | Team inspector | Mathematics | Value for money provided by the school |
| Mr K Hounslow, 27575 | Team inspector | Science | |
| | | Equal opportunities | |
| Mr J Pickering, 31129 | Team inspector | Art | |
| | | General studies | |
| Mr M Padmore, 16939 | Team inspector | Design and technology | |
| | | Business studies | |
| Mr J Haves, 8070 | Team inspector | Geography | |
| Mr D Pink, 20877 | Team inspector | History | |
| Mrs S Innes, 22524 | Team inspector | Information and communication technology | |
| | | Special educational needs | |

| | | | |
|---------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|---|
| Mrs S M Blewett, 23550 | Team inspector | Modern foreign languages | |
| Mr P Wilson, 20490 | Team inspector | Music | Provision for personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development |
| Mr A Henderson, 2941 | Team inspector | Physical education | How good are curricular and other learning opportunities? |
| Mrs B Colley, 30800 | Team inspector | Sociology | |

The inspection contractor was:

Nord Anglia Inspection Services

Strathblane House
Ashfield Road
Cheadle
Stockport
SK8 1BB

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|-----------|
| PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT | 7 |
| Information about the school | |
| How good the school is | |
| What the school does well | |
| What could be improved | |
| How the school has improved since its last inspection | |
| Standards | |
| Pupils' attitudes and values | |
| Teaching and learning | |
| Other aspects of the school | |
| How well the school is led and managed | |
| Parents' and carers' views of the school | |
| PART B: COMMENTARY | |
| HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS? | 12 |
| The school's results and achievements | |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development | |
| HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT? | 16 |
| HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS? | 19 |
| HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS? | 23 |
| HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS | 25 |
| HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED? | 26 |
| WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER? | 31 |
| PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS | 33 |
| PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES | 38 |

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

Abbey Grange is a Church of England mixed comprehensive school for pupils aged 11-18. There are 1189 pupils on roll, of whom 626 are girls. The school is heavily oversubscribed and pupil numbers have increased by 60 since the last inspection. There are 171 in the sixth form, compared to 129 in 1995. Pupils entering the school include the full range of ability, but the attainment of most pupils is above the national average.

Seventy-nine pupils (6.8 per cent) are eligible for free school meals. Eleven per cent of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Fifty-six pupils have English as an additional language, but none are at an early stage of language acquisition. Eleven per cent of pupils have special educational needs. Statements of special educational need are held by 1.7 per cent of pupils, a slight fall since 1995. All of these statistics are below the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Abbey Grange is an effective and improving school that provides satisfactory value for money. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 3 and good progress in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form. Their attainment is above average on entry, above average against national standards by the end of Key Stage 3 and well above average by the end of Key Stage 4 and the sixth form. The attitudes and behaviour of most pupils are good. The quality of teaching is good. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has made satisfactory progress against most key issues since the last inspection.

What the school does well

- Standards of attainment in GCSE and A-Level were well above the national average in 1999
- The overall quality of teaching and learning is good and is supported by good staff development
- The majority of pupils and students make good progress in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form
- The governors and staff are conscientious and committed to the school and to pupils
- Management by most subject leaders is good
- Pupils' attitudes to the school, their personal development and relationships are good
- Attendance is good. In all but a few classes, pupils' behaviour is good
- There is good provision for special educational needs and extra-curricular activities
- Provision for pupils' moral and social development is good
- Careers and vocational education in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form is good. The system for supporting, monitoring and reviewing the progress of sixth form students is excellent

What could be improved

- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 and inconsistent teaching of basic skills across the curriculum in Key Stage 3.
- The match of work to the needs and abilities of all pupils; also subject-specific targets in special needs individual education plans
- Use of national criteria and levels in teaching and assessment; also use of assessment to guide planning
- Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is neither systematic or sufficiently rigorous
- Information provided for parents in reports on pupils' attainment and progress; also provision of statutory information in the prospectus and governors' annual report
- Weaknesses in the systems for behaviour, discipline and exclusion
- Learning resources in a number of subjects and in the library
- Information and communications technology and design technology do not meet statutory requirements

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been satisfactory improvement in relation to most of the key issues in the last report. The improvement in teaching has been good. There has been satisfactory, though modest, improvement in standards in Key Stage 3, also in the provision for pupils' spiritual moral social and cultural development. The governing body and senior management team now plan strategically and have clear and complementary roles and responsibilities. GCSE and A-level standards have improved. Work is still insufficiently matched to the needs and abilities of all pupils, but provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. There has been insufficient improvement in the quality and use of assessment. In English, geography, modern foreign languages and physical education, there has been good improvement, but unsatisfactory improvement in history, information and communications technology and art. Information and communications technology across the curriculum is still unsatisfactory; additionally, the new arrangements for design and technology do not meet requirements.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

The 1999 National Curriculum test results at the end of Key Stage 3 were in line with national standards and below that of similar schools. The trend in English, mathematics and science is down over the last three years, but reflects the national trend and remains above the national average. GCSE and A-level results have risen over the last three years and were well above the national average in 1999. The school failed to achieve its target for five or more passes at GCSE grades A*-C, but exceeded the targets for one pass at A*-G and the average points score per pupil. It appears on course to meet current targets. As judged from work seen, attainment is above national standards throughout the school in English, drama, geography and modern foreign languages. It is below national standards in information and communications technology in Key Stage 3 and art in Key Stage 4, also well below national standards in information and communications technology in Key Stage 4.

The attainment of most pupils is above the national average on entry to the school, above average by age 14 and well above average by age 16 and 18. This represents satisfactory achievement against prior attainment in Key Stage 3 and good achievement in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school | Pupils have positive attitudes to school. They are keen to learn, attentive, concentrate well and work purposefully |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | In all but a few lessons behaviour is good. Behaviour around the school and in the dining room is orderly. |
| Personal development and relationships | Pupils' personal development and relationships are good. There are good relationships between pupils of different cultural and ethnic background. |
| Attendance | Attendance is good. At 93.5 per cent it is above the national average. Unauthorised absence is below the national average |

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good. In 98 per cent of lessons it was satisfactory or better. Just four lessons were unsatisfactory. In almost two thirds of lessons the teaching was good or better, including one in ten lessons where it was very good. There were no lessons where the teaching was excellent. Teaching in English and science is good throughout the school. Mathematics teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 3 and good in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form. Teaching in geography is good in Key Stages 3 and 4 and very good in the sixth form; it is good throughout the school in drama and modern foreign languages.

Most aspects of teaching are good in most subjects in Key Stages 3 and 4. These include subject knowledge, planning and the management of learning and teachers' expectations in Key Stage 3. Teachers' knowledge and understanding is very good in science and art in Key Stage 3 and in science and business studies in Key Stage 4. Management of learning is very good in both key stages in science, also art in Key Stage 4. Several aspects of teaching are very good in the sixth form, including teachers' subject knowledge in science, art, geography and business studies; the teaching of basic skills in geography; planning in geography and business studies; effective methodology in business studies; management of learning in science, art and business studies; also assessment in art and GNVQ subjects. Weaknesses in teaching in Key Stage 3 include planning, teachers' expectations, methods and assessment in history and use of homework in history and music. Weaknesses in Key Stage 4 include the teaching of basic skills, teachers' expectations, methods and assessment in art. Use of time and resources is a weakness in information and communications technology in Key Stages 3 and 4. Teachers in most subjects do not provide tasks and resources specifically matched to the needs and abilities of all pupils in the class. Though provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Most planning, teaching and assessment is not explicitly related to National Curriculum or examination criteria and attainment levels.

There is no school policy on the teaching of literacy and numeracy and no co-ordinated approach to the teaching of literacy, numeracy or information and communication technology across the curriculum.

The overall quality of learning is good. It is satisfactory in Key Stage 3, good in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form. Learning is good throughout the school in English, drama and geography.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|---|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | Statutory curriculum requirements are not met for information and communication technology in Key Stages 3 and 4, nor design and technology in Key Stage 4. In other respects, the school is providing a curriculum that is appropriate for the learning needs of pupils at each key stage. Extra-curricular provision is good. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Subject-specific targets are not clear or detailed enough in many individual education plans. Pupils are effectively supported by teachers and learning support assistants in mainstream lessons. In withdrawal lessons teaching is very good. |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language | No pupils with English as an additional language are on the early stages of language acquisition and there is no significant difference in provision made for them. These pupils make similar progress to other pupils. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Overall, the provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. Moral and social development are strengths of the school. Spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | The school provides satisfactory care for its pupils and many aspects of its care are good. There are effective procedures for child protection. The school's procedures for promoting good behaviour are unsatisfactory. The discipline policy is out of date, some procedures are inconsistent and monitoring is inadequate. |

The school's partnership with parents is unsatisfactory because the reports to parents on pupils' progress are unsatisfactory and the school prospectus and annual governors' report do not fulfil statutory requirements.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Overall leadership and management of the governing body, senior management team and middle managers is satisfactory. Day-to-day management of the school is good. Management by the majority of subject leaders is good. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | Accommodation and finance committees function very effectively. In the main, the curriculum committee fulfils its curriculum brief very well. Confusion in roles between the curriculum and disciplinary committees over pupils' discipline is unsatisfactory. The governing body is committed to a revision of the school's discipline policy and procedures to ensure consistency and equality for all pupils. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | The school development plan is unsatisfactory. Teaching and departmental performance are not sufficiently rigorously or regularly monitored, evaluated or reported to governors. |
| The strategic use of resources | Staffing and accommodation are adequate. Allocation of funds to learning resources is satisfactory, but there are historic shortages in some subjects. The library is seriously under-resourced. The school ensures best value. |

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good teaching • high expectations and standards • support for pupils' personal development • progress pupils are making • behaviour in school • extra-curricular activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and teachers' use of homework dairies • weaknesses in disciplinary and exclusion procedures, including internal exclusion • inadequate information on pupils' progress • the school does not work closely enough with parents • some parents think pupils do not receive the right amount of homework |

A large majority of parents have positive views on most aspects of the school. Inspectors support these positive views. Inspection findings indicate that homework is satisfactory in Key Stage 3 and good in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form. Inspection findings support the other concerns expressed by parents. Reports on pupils' progress are inadequate. Inconsistencies in teaching within and between departments have not been systematically monitored and improved; also teachers have not been consistent in their use of homework dairies or the school's disciplinary procedures. Some parents expressed strong concern about the inconsistent use of internal exclusions and the failure of the school to inform them as soon as possible if their child was to be excluded. The school is revising its approach on a range of disciplinary matters. It recognises that communication with parents about internal exclusions has not always been effective or timely and are committed to improving this communication.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The level of pupils' attainment on entry is evident from Key Stage 2 test results, tests administered in Year 7 and inspection evidence. These indicate that, for the majority, attainment in English, mathematics and science is above average when pupils enter the school.
2. This report uses the national test and examination results for 1999, as no comparative data for 2000 was available at the time of the inspection. The results for National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 3, in English, mathematics and science combined, is in line with the national average for all schools and below average for similar schools.
3. English was above the national average in 1999, having been well above average in 1998 and above average in 1997. Mathematics has remained above average for the last three years. Science was above average in 1997 and 1998, but dropped to average in 1999. The trend in these core subjects is down over the last three years, but reflects the national trend and remains above the national average. From 1996-1999 the performance of both boys and girls in the core subjects has been above the national average.
4. The 1999 examination results are well above the national average for pupils gaining five or more grades A*-C at GCSE or GNVQ equivalents, above average for those gaining five or more grades A*-G and below the national average for one or more grades A*-G. The 1999 average points score per pupil is well above the national average and above the average for similar schools. Based on the last three years, boys' results were above the national average, girls' results were close to the national average and, overall, pupils' results were above the national average.
5. The average points score for students entered for two or more A-levels, or A/S equivalents, has risen each year from 1996 - 1999 and is well above the national average. The number of candidates for Advanced GNVQs trebled from 1998 – 1999: the average points score fell in 1999 but remains above the national average.
6. The school is setting challenging but achievable attainment targets, related to the prior attainment of the cohort. They failed to achieve the target for 5 or more passes at A*-C grade, but exceeded the target for 1 or more A*-G and the average points score per pupil. They appear to be on course to meet current targets.
7. On the basis of inspection evidence, gained from entry tests, lesson observations, teachers' assessments, discussion with pupils and scrutiny of past and present work, the standards in subjects are as follows.

8. Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 are:
 - above the national standards for English, drama, mathematics, science, geography, modern foreign languages and physical education
 - in line with national standards in design and technology, history and music
 - below the national standards in art and information and communications technology.
9. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 is:
 - above the national standards for English, drama, mathematics, science, design and technology, geography, history, modern foreign languages, business studies, sociology and the diploma in vocational education
 - in line with national standards in music and physical education
 - below the national standards in art,
 - well below the national standards in information and communications technology.
10. At the end of the sixth form attainment is:
 - above the national standards for English, drama, mathematics, geography, modern foreign languages, business studies, sociology
 - in line with national standards in science, art, design and technology, history, music, physical education, general studies, health and social care, leisure and tourism and leisure and recreation.
11. Pupils' progress is discerned by comparing their current achievement with their prior attainment. The attainment of most pupils is above the national average on entry to the school, above average by age 14 and well above average by age 16 and 18. This represents satisfactory achievement against prior attainment in Key Stage 3 and good achievement in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form.
12. Achievement in the following subjects is consistent throughout the school. It is good in English, drama, geography and modern foreign languages; also satisfactory in science and music. Inadequate curriculum provision leads to unsatisfactory achievement by the majority of pupils in information and communications technology in Key Stage 3 and poor achievement in Key Stage 4. Achievement in other subjects is as follows.
13. Achievement against prior attainment in Key Stage 3 is:
 - good in physical education
 - satisfactory in mathematics, art, design and technology
 - unsatisfactory in history and information and communications technology.
14. Achievement against prior attainment in Key Stage 4 is:
 - good in design and technology, history, business studies, sociology and the diploma in vocational education
 - satisfactory in mathematics and physical education
 - unsatisfactory in art and information and communications technology.
15. In the sixth form achievement is:
 - good in mathematics, art, history, physical education, business studies, sociology, health and social care, leisure and tourism and leisure and recreation
 - satisfactory in design and technology and general studies.

16. Pupils with English as an additional language make similar progress to other pupils. Most pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall with support and in withdrawal groups. Throughout the school good progress is made by pupils who are gifted and talented.
17. Levels of literacy are satisfactory or better throughout the school. Pupils' reading and writing are satisfactory. Pupils' access to the curriculum, including those pupils with English as an additional language, is aided by their levels of literacy. Standards in numeracy in the school as a whole are above the national average and reflect the standards in mathematics lessons. In mathematics, particularly in Key Stage 3, attainment is improving through the influence of the National Numeracy Strategy. However, there are no agreed approaches to the teaching of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum. Pupils also do not receive their full entitlement to information and communications technology across the curriculum. This un-coordinated provision for basic skills hinders pupils' attainment and progress, particularly that of lower attaining pupils in Key Stage 3.
18. One of the features of the school is the large amount of data analysis which is done, particularly by the headteacher. The school analyses rigorously examination statistics with respect to gender and has recently extended this to ethnicity. They have found that boys do less well than girls up to the end of Key Stage 4 but boys do better than girls at A-level. Evidence concerning the performance of African Caribbean pupils shows that this group makes good progress within Key Stage 4. These pupils also have higher value-added scores than their white peers. The information about differences in attainment from different groups of pupils is given to departments but there are no strategies in place to address issues that arise and no systematic approach to the use of this data to identify aspects of teaching and learning which need improvement. The school formally considers that there is a significant influence of social circumstance on achievement, but has not identified or monitored this.
19. The sixth form has an excellent system for supporting and reviewing attainment and progress. Data is shared with students so that they are thoroughly aware of their forecasted attainment, progress so far, targets for improvement and what they can do to improve their grades. This is supported by a regular and very thorough review system which enables students to monitor and discuss their performance, to receive support, to modify their approach and to set challenging and realistic goals. The equivalent attainment data in other key stages is used by departments for retrospective analysis and departmental target setting. There is some sharing of data with pupils, but this is neither consistent nor used effectively to promote their progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

20. The vast majority of pupils have positive attitudes to school and enjoy participating in the wide range of activities which the school provides, including extra-curricular sport and drama. They are keen to learn, are attentive and concentrate on their tasks well. Pupils' good attitudes to learning are due to factors such as good teaching, the good relationships which exist between most pupils and staff and the purposeful working atmosphere which is found in lessons.

21. In all but a small number of lessons behaviour is good. Behaviour around the school and in the dining room is orderly. The school is overcrowded and the circulation of pupils between lessons is difficult. The new one-way system has relieved, but not solved the difficulties. In the playground some pupils are naturally boisterous, but behaviour is usually good natured. Most pupils are courteous and friendly to visitors and other adults. Pupils show respect for property in lessons in the way they handle books and equipment, but the amount of litter in the playground and thrown on the dining room floor demonstrates a lack of respect for the school environment.
22. Relationships are good in the school. There are good relationships between pupils of different cultural and ethnic background. Pupils are confident that when incidents of bullying occur the school deals with them promptly and effectively. Pupils collaborate well when doing group work in subjects such as music, drama and personal, social and health education (PSHE). An example of excellent team work was seen in a PSHE lesson for Year 12 pupils: groups of students used a range of means of communication including posters, stories and music to present their reactions to the sixth form induction programme before a supportive audience of their peers.
23. Pupils show respect for the feelings and beliefs of others. In form tutor time Year 11 pupils watched a video about contemporary slave labour in India and shared the feelings of moral outrage and pity that the film aroused. Pupils show that they are able to reflect on their own feelings. In a PSHE lesson Year 7 pupils wrote poems about themselves using metaphors; these displayed considerable reflection and self-evaluation.
24. The school's mission statement of empowerment is borne out in the confidence, responsibility and initiative shown by pupils. The school has a democratically elected student council. Council members have been involved in appointment interviews and observations of new teachers; other achievements include their choice of the summer uniform, the purchase of a payphone and improvements to the school environment. Many pupils show responsibility and initiative in raising money for charities. For example, some Year 10 pupils decided to set up a tuck shop to raise money for charity and the school assisted them by lending money to establish it. Students studying for the advanced GNVQ in leisure and tourism undertake considerable responsibility in the organisation of a special activity day designed to help prospective pupils, who come from primary schools with a small number of entrants, to make new friendships. There is limited evidence of pupils exercising initiative during lessons and taking responsibility for their own learning.
25. Pupils with special educational needs have good attitudes to school and are keen to learn. They concentrate well in withdrawal sessions established to improve reading skills. They read out loud confidently because they have very good relationships with the teacher and have established an atmosphere of trust. Self-esteem is raised and they are keen to please. Pupils are very well behaved in withdrawal lessons and behaviour is usually good in other lessons. Those with emotional and behavioural difficulties are well supported by learning support assistants, who moderate their behaviour through effective support and good relationships. These pupils make good progress towards behavioural targets. Pupils with special educational needs form good relationships with adults and with other pupils. They make good progress with personal development through learning to take some responsibility for their progress.

26. There were 42 fixed period exclusions involving 33 pupils in the last school year, which is close to the national average for a school of this size. Fifty pupils were excluded internally, that is, they were required to attend school and complete their work in an isolation unit under supervision. The numbers of pupils being excluded has risen over the last three years. Internal exclusions have doubled. This was due in part to worsening behaviour and to decisive action taken to address a spate of bullying. There were no permanent exclusions, which is well below average, and indicates the school's commitment to supporting the education of those pupils who display very difficult behaviour.
27. Attendance is good. The attendance rate, at 93.5 per cent, is above the national average. The rate of unauthorised absence is below the national average. Most pupils arrive punctually to school and lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

28. During the week of the inspection, 193 lessons or parts of lessons were observed. There were a number of staff absences during the inspection and the work of supply staff was observed. The overall quality of teaching was good. In 98 per cent of lessons it was satisfactory or better. Just four lessons were unsatisfactory. In almost two thirds of lessons the teaching was good or better, including one in ten lessons where it was very good. There were no lessons where the teaching was excellent. This represents a good improvement on the previous inspection, where teaching was 'generally sound', with good teaching in one third of lessons and shortcomings in over one in five lessons.
29. The quality of teaching was good or better in half the lessons in Key Stage 3, two thirds of lessons in Key Stage 4 and four out of five lessons in the sixth form. These included about one in ten lessons in Key Stages 3 and 4, also one in five lessons in the sixth form, where teaching was very good.
30. During the inspection the quality of teaching for each subject was assessed through direct classroom observation, an examination of pupils' work, past and present, discussions with pupils and a review of teachers' planning and assessment.
31. The overall quality of teaching in geography is good in Key Stages 3 and 4 and very good in the sixth form; it is satisfactory throughout the school in music and good in English, drama, science and modern foreign languages. In other subjects teaching is as follows.
32. In Key Stage 3 the quality of teaching is:
 - good in art and physical education,
 - satisfactory in mathematics, design and technology, history, information and communications technology
33. Teaching in Key Stage 4 is:
 - good in mathematics, design and technology, history, business studies and sociology
 - satisfactory in art, information and communications technology and physical education

34. The quality of teaching in the sixth form is:
- satisfactory in design and technology, history and music
 - good in all other subjects inspected
35. Most aspects of teaching are good in most subjects in Key Stage 3 and 4. These include subject knowledge, planning and the management of learning and teachers' expectations in Key Stage 3. Teachers' knowledge and understanding is very good in science and art in Key Stage 3 and in science and business studies in Key Stage 4. management of learning is very good in both key stages in science and art in Key Stage 4.
36. Several aspects of teaching are very good in the sixth form, including teachers' subject knowledge in science, art, geography and business studies; the teaching of basic skills in geography; planning in geography and business studies; effective methodology in business studies; management of learning in science, art and business studies; also assessment in art. A very strong feature of GNVQ subjects is the thorough assessment, the use of assessment to assist students to overcome difficulties and the use of assignments to extend students' knowledge beyond the classroom.
37. Weaknesses in teaching in Key Stage 3 include planning, teachers' expectations, methods and assessment in history; use of time and resources in information and communications technology; also the use of homework in history and music. Weaknesses in Key Stage 4 include use of time and resources in information and communications technology; also the teaching of basic skills, teachers' expectations, methods and assessment in art.
38. The overall quality of learning is good; it is satisfactory in Key Stage 3, good in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form. Learning is good throughout the school in English, drama and geography. In other subjects it is as follows.
39. The quality of learning in Key Stage 3 is:
- good in art, modern foreign languages and physical education
 - satisfactory in mathematics, science, design and technology, history, information and communication technology and music
40. Learning in Key Stage 4 is:
- good in mathematics, design and technology, history, business studies and sociology
 - satisfactory in science, art, information and communication technology, modern foreign languages, music, physical education and diploma of vocational education
41. Learning in the sixth form is:
- satisfactory in science, design and technology, history and music
 - good in all other subjects inspected

42. In Key Stage 3 pupils acquire new knowledge and develop their understanding well; in art this is done very well in Key Stage 3 and unsatisfactorily in Key Stage 4. All other aspects of learning are satisfactory except pupils' effort and understanding in information and communications technology. In Key Stage 4 good aspects of learning include the acquiring and development of knowledge and understanding, pupils' effort, the pace of work, and pupils' interest and concentration. In business studies pupils' interest, concentration and ability to think for themselves is very good.
43. In the very small minority of classes observed where behaviour was unsatisfactory, this was associated with teaching which did not engage pupils, activities which were not linked to the needs and abilities of pupils, and limited strategies for managing behaviour. A very small minority of teachers have poor relationships with pupils.
44. Teachers in most subjects do not provide tasks and resources specifically matched to the needs and abilities of all pupils in the class. Also, most planning and teaching is not explicitly related to National Curriculum or examination criteria and attainment levels.
45. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers co-operate with the special educational needs co-ordinator who provides support and information for teachers about how they can best support pupils in lessons. Teachers are aware of the Code of Practice recommendations and the requirement to assess and monitor the progress of pupils. They are involved in the setting of targets for pupils based on the needs of pupils and given a subject focus. All staff are involved in the formulation of individual education plans and adapt them for subject use. However, in many individual education plans the subject-specific targets were not clear or detailed enough for progress to be monitored.
46. Pupils' special needs are effectively supported by teachers and learning support assistants in mainstream lessons. They are provided with work which matches their needs and have withdrawal lessons in small groups when necessary to provide additional support. In these instances, work is related to that being taught to other pupils so that they can return to mainstream lessons better informed and more confident.
47. In withdrawal lessons teaching is very good. Teachers have very clear learning objectives and closely monitor the progress of pupils. Very good relationships are established and pupils' confidence and self-esteem is raised. Pupils are encouraged to speak clearly and to read out loud and they do so knowing that they will be respected and without fear of embarrassment if they hesitate over words.
48. Pupils' special educational needs are identified at an early stage, either as a continuation from primary school or by staff raising awareness of them when they transfer. Assessment takes place in class or withdrawal sessions and progress towards identified targets is reviewed by the special educational needs co-ordinator and pastoral heads at least annually. Pupils are moved up or down or off the register appropriately. The register is well maintained and indicates that pupils make good progress towards identified targets in Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form.

49. No problems related to gender or ethnicity were identified in lessons observed during the inspection. No pupils with English as an additional language are on the early stages of language acquisition and there is no significant difference in provision made for them. These pupils make similar progress to other pupils.
50. There is no whole school policy on the teaching of literacy. Provision across departments is, therefore, inconsistent. Speaking and listening is actively encouraged as a means of learning in some subjects such as English, geography and science. Many subjects, but not all, have extended reading requirements beyond the immediate needs of the curriculum. Spelling, punctuation and grammar errors are corrected regularly in most subjects. In Key Stage 3 basic literacy skills are given appropriate emphasis in English. Drafting to encourage accuracy and development of writing is employed in English, modern foreign languages and mathematics. Several subjects provide opportunity for extended writing; for example, English, modern foreign languages and science. However, not all subjects use subject specific language adequately. Key words and basic literacy rules are displayed in some areas of the school. In many mathematics lessons attention is given to number and calculation skills through brief introductory activities which include practice in mental calculations. The school has not developed a whole school approach to the development and use of number. Subjects are developing their own approaches and, in art, for example, doing this well, but there is no co-ordinated approach to the teaching of literacy, numeracy or information and communication technology across the curriculum. There is also no systematic monitoring of teaching strategies or assessment of pupils' attainment and progress in these basic skills.

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

51. The statutory curriculum arrangements in the school are unsatisfactory because requirements are not met for information and communication technology in Key Stages 3 and 4, nor for design and technology in Key Stage 4. In other respects, the school is providing a curriculum that is appropriate for the learning needs of pupils at each key stage. The curriculum is generally managed effectively by a governors' committee and key senior staff. Curriculum issues are regularly discussed, and changes have been successfully introduced following the recent curriculum review. For example, the school has moved to a two week timetable and reduced the length of its teaching periods to sixty minutes. Overall time allocated for teaching each week is in line with nationally recommended levels. The revised requirements for sixth form accreditation have been smoothly introduced this term. Monitoring and evaluation of the impact of these and other developments are built into the school's current development plan.
52. The quality and range of the curriculum at Key Stage 3 is satisfactory, and is good at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. At Key Stage 3, the curriculum is mainly broad and balanced, and is accessible to all pupils, including those with special educational needs, with the exception of four statemented pupils who are disapplied from the National Curriculum. There is a full range of National Curriculum subjects, and religious education, drama, and personal, social and health education. Since the previous inspection, arrangements for modern foreign languages have been modified; some, but not all pupils are given the opportunity to study a second foreign language from Year 9 onwards. Provision for information and communication technology is unsatisfactory because the course does not cover all the strands required by the

National Curriculum. At this stage the new timetable appears to be effective, and is responsive to the varying demands of subjects for grouping pupils by ability.

53. At Key Stage 4, the curriculum does not fully meet the statutory requirements because provision for information and communication technology and design technology is unsatisfactory. All pupils take GCSE courses in English, mathematics, science, religious education, French and/or German, plus core non-examination courses in design and technology, information and communication technology, physical education and personal and social education. Three further GCSE choices are made from the remaining National Curriculum subjects together with a good range of vocationally orientated courses including business studies, child development, sociology, and drama. In addition, a diploma course in vocational studies is offered. Overall, this provides a good breadth of opportunity for pupils. However, arrangements for design and technology for all pupils is unsatisfactory because the modular course is too short to ensure statutory requirements are met, and does not lead to an appropriately recognised qualification. Information and communication technology provision continues to be unsatisfactory at this stage: the content is narrow within the modular course shared with careers and design technology, does not provide sufficient experience in control and data logging, and does not lead to any accreditation for pupils. Health education, including sex education and drugs awareness, is taught within the personal development programme, and work experience takes place in Year 10.
54. Approximately half the pupils in Year 11 continue into the sixth form. Provision in the sixth form is good, and is appropriate to the academic needs and aspirations of those students who choose to stay on. The changing requirements for post-16 Curriculum 2000 have been put in place with 20 courses offered at A/S level. This is supplemented by three GNVQ options and a complementary studies course for all students which includes key skills and general studies. The curriculum is effective in enabling students to attain standards which are well above average and to move on to their first or second choice higher education destinations.
55. The school's extra-curricular provision is good and greatly valued by the pupils. There is a good range of opportunity, and activities are well supported. For example, provision for sport is good, with strong participation. The award of the Sports Council's Sportsmark in 1998 is testimony to the quality and range of opportunity here. Drama is also a strength, and most subjects offer extra-curricular opportunities which support pupils' learning and provide for their interests and enthusiasm. There is a full and varied programme of school visits, including field study, foreign language exchanges and cultural visits in this country and abroad. The sixth form induction is both popular and successful.
56. The school makes good provision for PSHE which it regards as making an important contribution to pupils' personal development. There is a period a week allocated to it for all pupils. The programme which is used has satisfactory coverage of all areas including some work on citizenship. In Key Stage 4, in addition to the regular PSHE period, Year 10 pupils follow a number of short courses including ones on sex education and drugs misuse. The newly appointed co-ordinator is full of ideas for improving provision, for example by having more visiting speakers from external agencies.

57. The school has many good links within the community which make a significant contribution to pupils' personal and academic development. The music and religious education departments take advantage of the good links which exist between the school and numerous churches in Leeds. Many speakers from Leeds University visit the school, for example, science students have been given a talk on boomerangs. The links which the geography department has with the local planning office are useful for students doing geography projects. French and German trips are organised by the governors. The physical education department has good links with a very wide range of local sports centres. Every year children from the Chernobyl area visit the school for a week and are paired with pupils. This has led to many international friendships. The school is also twinned with two church schools in Sri Lanka and a member of staff spent two weeks at these schools this year.
58. The school has constructive links with the numerous primary schools from which it draws its pupils. The Head of Year 7 is responsible for liaison. The school receives a brief but useful summary of pupils' academic achievements and pastoral information; this assists in a smooth transition. The information provided is distributed to departments, who take it into account when placing pupils into teaching groups or sets. The mathematics department is confident in the teacher assessments provided by primary schools. The quality of information provided on pupils with special educational needs is found to be particularly useful by the school.
59. Overall, the provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. The school chaplain, clergy from the diocese and other visitors to the school, help to develop pupils' spiritual understanding. There are opportunities for pupils to take part in regular optional communion services and other religious occasions together with extra-curricular religious activities. Since the last inspection much work has been done on making departments aware of the ways in which they can promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, particularly spiritual development, within subject areas. An audit of all departments was carried out and very detailed policy documents produced. This has had a positive impact in some subject areas, but not all. Collective worship meets statutory requirements.
60. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. The school teaches principles of morality and pupils are taught right from wrong. The home-school agreement indicates that expectations are high in this area. Most subjects of the curriculum make a significant contribution to pupils' moral development and pupils have opportunities to explore moral issues. Business studies lessons investigate ethical questions related to global economies. In art, there is reflection on moral conflicts related to war and oppression, in consideration of subject matter for paintings. In design and technology the need for recycling and the use of renewable resources is discussed. The PSHE programme involves a range of social and moral issues. In addition, the school promotes many charitable causes. Pupils raise money for worthy causes, including Christian Aid and World Vision. Local charities have close contacts with the school community. Recently, both pupils and staff raised money for Chernobyl Children's Lifeline and hosted a day in school for a group of children from Belarus affected by the disaster.

61. The social development of pupils is good. Throughout the school the emphasis on conduct and good relationships ensures a positive atmosphere for work. The school is aware of the need to prepare pupils for their role in society and the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. In many subjects, for example music, physical education, information and communications technology and drama, pupils develop their social skills by working in groups. The student council provides a forum for pupils to express their views. Contacts with the broader world, such as the recent visit from the local Member of the European Parliament and the discussion led by two Ghanaian cocoa farmers, who talked to pupils about fair trade, help pupils to understand issues outside the school. Other groups and events, for example, Young Enterprise, Year 9 involvement in an anti-racist workshop and a recent visit to the House of Commons by older pupils, also help to broaden horizons. Such opportunities for pupils to experience social situations in links with the local community and visits to places of interest have a positive effect on their social development.
62. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. There are many opportunities to explore Western culture and some opportunities to discover the diversity of other cultural traditions. In art, work on African and Indonesian masks and in design and technology, consideration of world-wide cuisine, help pupils to understand other cultures. As part of language courses pupils have opportunities to visit other European countries. The school is aware of the need to extend and develop pupils' appreciation of other cultures. Regular visits take place to dramatic and musical performances as well as to other venues of educational value. There are opportunities for pupils to perform, in sport, drama and music, and to experience the creative input from visiting practitioners such as artists-in-residence. The music department has organised performances in various venues, including Leeds Parish Church and the Albert Hall in London, and hosts regular visits from the Hovedgard *Skoleorkester* from Denmark. The numbers taking part in extra-curricular musical activities, however, are very low. The annual round of events provides a suitable showcase for the work of pupils in sport, music and drama. Such opportunities have a positive impact on pupils' cultural development.
63. The provision for careers and vocational education is good. There is a very good, accessible careers library with a good range of occupational leaflets and college information. There is also access to some of this information on computer databases. The provision for careers teaching is well organised and suited to pupils' needs throughout Key Stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form. Pupils of all abilities can choose to follow a vocational course in Years 10 and 11 and a small number regularly do so. There is effective continuity from this course into GNVQs in the sixth form. Work experience is offered to all pupils in Year 10. The organisation of this is also good. Pupils are interviewed for selected placements and the de-briefing is well organised. There is good provision for all teaching staff attached to Year 10 to visit pupils in their placements. There is a well planned and challenging vocational course, as part of an enrichment programme, for students in the sixth form.
64. Pupils with special needs have full access to the National Curriculum and have withdrawal lessons in small groups to aid progress if this is necessary. In lessons, teachers are aware of the special needs of pupils and provide appropriately for them.

65. Strategies for teaching basic literacy and numeracy are encompassed in IEP targets and taught in mainstream lessons or in withdrawal lessons. The identification and assessment procedures for pupils with special educational needs are good. Pupils with special educational needs are effectively supported through individual education plans which are reviewed annually or more often, if necessary. Their progress is monitored and pupils are placed on the appropriate stage of the special educational needs register. The register is well maintained and good progress is evident. Pupils are successfully integrated fully into all aspects of school life. The schools' aim to raise their self-esteem and confidence is successful. Pupils work is assessed and monitored through individual education plans and the results of assessment are used to plan future work. This includes assessments from feeder schools.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

66. Overall the school provides satisfactory care for its pupils and many aspects of its care are good. The school has a committed and caring pastoral team of heads of year, led by the pastoral deputy head, who gives extremely skilled and caring support to pupils who are in difficulty. Pupils feel secure in school. They are confident in approaching their form tutor, head of year or other staff when they have problems. The school has very good arrangements for helping Year 7 pupils settle happily into school and these are valued by parents and pupils.
67. The school's day-to-day arrangements for pupils' welfare are satisfactory. Safe working practices are observed in all subjects and the school bursar monitors departments to ensure that safety checks are regularly completed. However there has been no external health and safety assessment of the school carried out within the last eighteen months. The school has a contract with Leeds City Council to provide them with health and safety advice and the governor for health and safety is assisting the school in its efforts to ensure that a risk assessment is carried out.
68. There are effective procedures for child protection. Staff are aware of the issues and there are good arrangements for instructing new teachers about procedures. The deputy head is at present the named person for child protection but another member of the pastoral staff has recently undergone the necessary training.
69. The school's procedures for promoting good behaviour are unsatisfactory. The school is in the process of reviewing its behaviour policy which is out of date and does not reflect the emphasis on positive behaviour which the school is now trying to strengthen. There is no overall monitoring of the consistency of sanctions and rewards and there is evidence of inconsistency by staff in the giving of detentions, disciplinary referral slips and also merit slips.
70. The vast majority of staff have good relationships with pupils and handle behaviour in the classroom skilfully. Most pupils respond well to teachers' expectations of good behaviour and to the respect they are shown by most teachers. They like the school's reward system of positive information and merit slips. However, a very small minority of staff have poor relationships with some pupils. These teachers issue a disproportionate number of disciplinary referral slips.

71. Analysis of fixed period exclusions for last year shows that there are twice as many boys excluded as girls. There is also a significantly higher proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds excluded than their white counterparts, particularly those who have African Caribbean heritage. In absolute terms there are fewer pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds than white pupils excluded. However, they represent a small minority in the school population, which is predominately white.
72. The school claims that it deals with each incident on its merits and applies its policy on exclusions consistently to all pupils irrespective of gender or race. However, the school acknowledges the inadequacy of its discipline policy; inconsistent use of disciplinary referral slips by teachers; unsatisfactory governing body committee procedures regarding discipline; a lack of monitoring of exclusions by age, gender and ethnicity; inadequate documentation related to disciplinary decisions at school and governing body levels; also insufficient monitoring and evaluation of the operation of the disciplinary and exclusion procedures. A working group was convened in April to consider alternative approaches to behaviour management. This has resulted in staff training on assertive discipline and a new approach to, and a closer monitoring of, the use of disciplinary referral slips by teachers.
73. Some parents expressed strong concern about the inconsistent use of internal exclusions and the failure of the school to inform them as soon as possible if their children were to be excluded. A few parents indicated several days' delay. The senior management recognise that communication with parents about internal exclusions has not always been as effective or timely as it should be, and are committed to more effective communication with parents over internal exclusions in the future.
74. The school's anti-bullying policy covers the issue of racial and sexual harassment. There is strong evidence of care and no evidence of any harassment in the school.
75. In addition to the use of sanctions the school tries very hard to help pupils with behaviour difficulties by the use of positive strategies, such as counselling by pastoral staff and referral to the two learning mentors or to the student counsellor. The range of strategies used shows the school's strong commitment to supporting pupils who have behaviour, attendance or other problems. The employment of two learning mentors is part of the new 'Excellence in Cities' initiative. Pupils value the support they are receiving and there are early indications that the project is helping the pupils involved.
76. There are clear procedures for monitoring attendance and following up unexplained absence. The school does not take the initiative to contact parents on the first day of a pupil's absence. It is reconsidering its approach. In the few cases of persistent truancy the school has tried a number of different strategies, but with limited success. The school values the good assistance provided by the educational welfare service.
77. The school takes appropriate and firm action to deal with incidents of bullying. Pupils are encouraged to inform staff of any concerns they have about bullying and are confident that incidents reported will be followed up. The strong moral ethos of the school also helps to prevent and counteract bullying. Some Year 11 pupils are at present receiving training to help them form a 'buddy club' for younger pupils.

78. Many parents have indicated their concerns about the overcrowding, rough and unsafe behaviour which occurs on some buses used to transport pupils to and from school. The school shares these concerns and is seeking to negotiate with the bus company improved provision to resolve these problems.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

79. A large majority of parents have positive views on most aspects of the school. For example, they value the good teaching, high expectations and support for pupils' personal development. Inspection findings support these positive views. A significant minority of parents are unhappy about aspects of the school's work. They consider that their children do not receive the right amount of homework, that they are not kept well informed about their children's progress and that the school does not work closely enough with parents. Inspection findings indicate that at Key Stage 3 the use of homework is satisfactory and at Key Stage 4 and the sixth form it is good. Pupils are given a homework timetable and an excellent student planner which is usually monitored by the form tutor and has space for parents to communicate with teachers about problems. This is very useful and many parents use this means of communication with teachers. Inspection findings support the other concerns expressed by parents, for the following reasons.
80. The school's partnership with parents is unsatisfactory because the school provides insufficient information to parents about pupils' progress. Annual reports to parents on pupils' progress are unsatisfactory. In some subjects, in particular English, reports give a clear idea of pupils' strengths and weaknesses in the subject and targets given are usually specific to the subject, for example: 'read as much fiction and non-fiction as possible to improve vocabulary' or 'volunteer more spoken contributions'. In many other subjects, such as, mathematics, science and physical education, strengths, weaknesses and targets for improvement are not consistently described in terms which are specific to the subject. General comments related to behaviour, attitude or personality are insufficient to identify attainment or progress, nor do they give guidance on improving performance. There is a school assessment system of attainment on a one to five scale, but there is no information for parents on how this relates to National Curriculum levels. The giving of an overall grade obscures the differing progress pupils may be making in the different attainment targets within each subject of the National Curriculum.
81. Parents receive interim reports which give effort grades for different subjects but these are not sufficiently informative and many parents consider that the school provides them with inadequate information on their children's progress during the year. The school generally informs parents if there are problems concerning their children. There is less consistency in notifying parents of good news. For example, if a pupil receives three negative information slips these are sent home with a letter of concern. Positive information slips are not so often given and are not usually sent home.
82. The school prospectus for 1999/2000 and annual governors' report to parents do not fulfil statutory requirements as neither document contains national comparative data on National Curriculum tests and external examinations.

83. Most parents feel able to approach the school with questions or problems and parents say that communication between them and the school is improving. However, the numerous comments at the parents' meeting and on questionnaires about difficulties in obtaining positive responses and information, indicate inconsistency and limitations in communications with parents. Parents value the student planner as a useful source of information but say that it is used inconsistently by staff. Evidence gathered during the inspection supports this view.
84. Other links which the school has with parents are good. There is a parents' association which raises large sums of money for the school through such activities as sponsored walks. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are properly involved in reviews of their children's progress. Many parents speak very highly of the good pastoral support which the school provides for their children. Parents support the home-school agreement. The school sent a draft form of this to parents and a small proportion of parents responded with their views. Most parents help in their children's education by supporting homework. The school assists them to do this effectively through its use of good quality informative student planners.
85. Parents are invited to discuss the progress of pupils at parents' evenings and additionally, a 'surgery' has been set up when parents can meet with the special educational needs co-ordinator more frequently to discuss the progress of their children. Parents are supportive and attend meetings and annual reviews of pupils with statements of educational needs.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

86. The leadership and management of the school has been in a state of flux since the last inspection. Since 1995, the chair of the governing body, the headteacher and four deputy headteachers have retired or left the school. This state of transition continues. The headteacher has been in post for four years, one deputy for one year and the other retired in July 2000, but agreed to continue in an acting capacity until the appointment of the new deputy in January 2001. The composition of the senior management team, extended since the last inspection, is also changing. This discontinuity over five years has weakened the leadership and limited its effectiveness. During the last year, essential changes have been made, and the overall leadership and management of the governing body, senior management team and middle managers is now satisfactory.
87. The headteacher and deputy headteachers work together effectively. There is a helpful separation of roles in order to build on their knowledge, skills, abilities, experience and personalities. The line management of all subject areas is too great a responsibility for one deputy headteacher. In its current transitional state, the roles and responsibilities of senior teachers and the function of the wider senior management team is unclear. The day-to-day management of the school is good.

88. A key issue in the last report was the identification of strategic priorities and to identifying the respective roles of the governing body and senior managers. The complementary roles of staff and governors are now well established. There is a greater openness between staff and the governing body than there was at the previous inspection, also increased liaison and shared decision-making. The governing body is now acting more effectively. It is aware of many of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and the challenges it faces, though it is not sufficiently aware of the attainment of pupils in the school and nationally.
89. The governing body's post-OFSTED action plan was inadequate. However, the school has now made a satisfactory improvement in response to most of the key issues from the last inspection. There has been satisfactory improvement in teaching, learning and standards in Key Stage 3, also in the provision for pupils' spiritual moral social and cultural development. GCSE and A-level standards have improved. Work is still insufficiently matched to the needs and abilities of all pupils, though provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. There has been insufficient improvement in the quality and use of assessment. In English, geography, modern foreign languages and physical education there has been good improvement, but unsatisfactory improvement in history, information and communication technology and art. Information and communication technology across the curriculum is still unsatisfactory; additionally, the new arrangements for design and technology do not meet requirements.
90. The governing body accommodation and finance committees function very effectively. In the main, the curriculum committee fulfils its curriculum brief very well. However, the confusion in roles between the curriculum and disciplinary committees on matters of pupils' discipline has limited the effectiveness of the school in this sensitive area. The role of the governing body disciplinary committee has been reviewed, training received and procedures are being brought into line with national guidelines. The governing body is committed to a thorough review of the school's policy and procedures and to ensuring consistency and equality for all pupils.
91. The school has a mission statement which is implemented satisfactorily, but there is not a clear sense of direction which unifies the staff. Appropriate priorities are beginning to emerge and are briefly identified in documentation. The current school development plan is the focus for school improvement and links departmental and school priorities. However, objectives lack clarity and indicators of success related to pupils' attainment and progress; resource allocations are vague; and procedures for monitoring and evaluation of the plan are inadequate.
92. Overall, management by subject leaders is good. Management by the subject leader makes a very good contribution to pupils' attainment and progress in modern foreign languages, business studies and all GNVQ subjects. The contribution of management is good in English, drama, art, geography and sociology; it is unsatisfactory in history and information and communications technology. Since the last inspection the middle managers have taken increasing responsibility. Immense strides have been made within the last year in ensuring accountability of subject leaders. However the role in monitoring and evaluation of teaching in order to raise standards of attainment is in its early stages.

93. The management of special educational needs is very good. There is a designated link governor for special educational needs who is well informed and supportive. The co-ordination of special educational needs is structured to include representatives from each department. The special educational needs department has the full support of the headteacher and senior staff. Recommendations of the Code of Practice are being met. This represents a satisfactory response to the key issue raised in the last report.
94. Provision for special educational needs meets the requirements of the Code of Practice for the identification, assessment, review, placement on the register, transition plans, and governing body reports to parents. Transitional reviews are held at the start of Year 10 for pupils who have statements of special educational needs. The quality of documentation for the department is very good. It provides a good picture of the needs and progress of pupils and is efficiently managed.
95. The headteacher has overall responsibility for equality of opportunity in the school. The pastoral team fulfils its responsibility for the implementation of the school policy. Women are under represented in the senior management team. Care is taken to ensure that the student council represents a cross section of pupils. Irrespective of gender or background, pupils can feel they have a voice in the management of the school.
96. There are good, well established procedures for the appraisal of teachers. The purpose is clearly the professional development of teachers. New procedures have been agreed for performance management. These are based upon explicit criteria and meet statutory requirements fully. A focus of many appraisals is classroom practice, with some objectives linked to pupil performance. Objectives which relate to management responsibilities are not sufficiently clear.
97. Classroom observation has taken place for the purpose of appraisal and to address specific areas of serious weakness in teaching. The effectiveness of this action, accompanied by good staff support and development, is evident in the improvements in teaching since the last inspection. The school has no system, linked to the annual school development planning cycle, for rigorously monitoring and evaluating the performance of teachers and departments, in order to improve the quality of teaching, raise standards of attainment and promote consistency within and across subjects. The school also lacks effective procedures for recording and reviewing improvement, and reporting improvement to the governing body. This is unsatisfactory.
98. The procedures which support the induction of newly qualified teachers are of good quality and are rigorous. They include provision of access to local authority courses, classroom observations and school based mentoring. They provide good quality support for new entrants, which is continuous throughout their first year. Other new staff have the opportunity to join this programme. The school is an effective provider of initial teacher training. Good links exist with partner institutions and the school carefully regulates the numbers of students.

99. Most staff are conscientious, hard working and strongly committed to children's attainment and progress. There are sufficient, suitably qualified and experienced teachers employed to meet the needs of all pupils and to teach the curriculum. There is a wide balance of experience, from long established members of staff to those in their first year of teaching. A significant number have gained additional qualifications, which enables the school to offer a wide range of courses. The numbers of support staff are sufficient to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and to give technical support, though time allocation for technicians in science is unsatisfactory. The school also employs pupil mentors who provide further support for individual pupils. Overall staffing provision is satisfactory.
100. The school is housed in attractive buildings and situated on a sloping site with panoramic views of the surrounding countryside. There is an attractive courtyard in the centre of the building with seats where pupils might relax. The new part of the building won an architectural award when it was completed five years ago, but already the fabric of the building is deteriorating due to rainwater. There are inherent problems of drainage due to the sloping nature of the ground and water collects in the lower corners of the premises. The banked grassy areas skirting paths and roadways wash away when rain is heavy and there are similar problems around the steps leading to the tennis courts. There is some graffiti but the textured nature of the bricks makes its removal virtually impossible. The classrooms and corridors are clean and bright, with high quality displays in the teaching and public areas of the school. Although there have been improvements in the standards of maintenance, as at the time of the last inspection, there is room for improvement in accommodation: the rooftops above the gymnasium, the hall, the small dining area and the humanities room are all in need of repair. The temporary classrooms identified in the last inspection as uncomfortable and unsatisfactory, cost progressively more to maintain each year. These pre-fabricated buildings, which are not included in the school fire alarm system, have been the subject of a recent independent architects' report where they were identified as unacceptably uneconomic. Pupils and parents complain about the state of some toilets, particularly near the modern languages department, and access to them. The school is overcrowded and the circulation of pupils between lessons is difficult. There is still a lack of adequate workshop space for design technology and overflow classes are taught in non-specialist rooms. Some rooms are too small for larger food studies classes, which hinders progress; a similar problem exists in one of the information technology rooms. New furniture is required in the business studies rooms and science laboratories. The dining area is overcrowded and requires staff to move a large number of chairs every day. The sports fields on the other side of the road in front of the school are open to the public and the fouling by dogs creates unpleasant health problems. The accommodation for art and design and physical education is good. Litter remains a problem for cleaning staff, even though there are more than twenty large red litterbins placed strategically around the site. The site manager and his colleagues take pride in their work and their efforts are recognised and valued by the headteacher and the teaching staff.
101. The overall allocation of funds to learning resources is satisfactory. Provision is good in mathematics, but there are inadequate learning resources in science, art, history, physical education, business studies and sociology. These subjects, as well as geography, information and communication technology and modern languages, lack access to suitable computer facilities and resources. This situation appears to be due to historic under-funding and the effects of prioritised allocation in accordance with the school development plan.

102. The library is seriously under-resourced for a school of this size and provides insufficient support for the curriculum or pupils' needs.
103. The school demonstrates appropriate use of special educational needs related funding. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are adequate. There is a special educational needs co-ordinator plus assistant special educational needs co-ordinator, six learning support assistants and a further one to be appointed. This represents an adequate provision because staff are efficiently deployed. There is full involvement of the careers staff. There are good links with outside agencies, including the educational psychologist, who visits school to assess the individual needs of pupils who have statements of educational need. There is a special educational needs base where pupils are withdrawn for additional support. It provides an adequate learning environment, but not a stimulating one. Computers are located there but resources are out-of-date and there are not enough resources or use of information and communications technology. Other learning resources are adequate.
104. The school's financial control and management are good. The business manager, headteacher and other senior staff are vigilant in monitoring school and departmental expenditure and ensuring best value. The governing body and governors' finance committee receive regular reports of up-to-date income and expenditure and monitor the budgetary statements received from the local education authority. Administrative staff make good use of new technology to support the financial systems.
105. The governing body has oversight of strategic spending decisions and in the last three years has ensured a reduction in staffing costs to meet current needs. Funds have also been made available for essential maintenance and repairs to buildings. The school's educational priorities are supported through effective financial planning and there is a match of expenditure to the priorities. Expenditure through specific grants such as the Standards Fund and Excellence in Cities, is effectively allocated and monitored by the senior staff. At departmental level, where the school has arrangements for additional funds through bidding arrangements, there are insufficient details in departmental development plans to ensure that funds are allocated to improve the quality of teaching and learning and to raise standards; also inadequate success criteria and evaluation procedures to ensure value for money. There is currently considerable subsidy of post-16 provision from Key Stage 3 and 4 allocations. However, this subsidy is supporting a new curriculum with new time and staffing allocations. Inspection evidence indicates a generous time and staffing allocation for A/S levels, but this is a legitimate safeguard in view of the new arrangements. A review is planned after the first year of implementation to examine the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of the new arrangements. School market research indicates that the sixth form provision is a strong attraction in choosing the school, and is, therefore, an income generator. The school has set long-term targets to increase the number of post-16 students as a way of reducing the subsidy. There have been improvements since the previous inspection in the control of financial systems, long-term financial planning and in the allocation of funds to special educational needs.

106. Pupils make good progress in this school, due to good teaching, and, by the time they leave, most pupils attain standards which are well above the national average and above average for similar schools. It is an effective and improving school that provides satisfactory value for money. The school has made satisfactory improvements in most of the key issues since the last inspection.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

107. The following matters should be addressed by the governors, senior managers and staff in order to raise standards of attainment and improve the quality of educational provision in the school.

(1) Improve the attainment and progress of all pupils by:

- raising standards of attainment against national standards and similar schools in Key Stage 3 (para 2)*
- systematically and consistently teaching literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills through all aspects of the curriculum (paras 17; 50)*
- ensuring that teaching is matched to the needs and abilities of all pupils and that teaching and assessment are closely related to National Curriculum and examination criteria and levels (paras 44; 89)*
- closely monitoring the attainment and progress of pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4, using the data to set individual targets for pupils, related to national criteria and standards (paras 19; 80)*
- ensuring that individual education plans have subject-specific targets (para 45)*
- providing parents with clear and specific information in reports on pupils' attainment and progress; also providing statutory information in the prospectus and governors' annual report (paras 80 - 82)

(2) Improve the roles of the senior managers and subject leaders in raising pupils' attainment by:

- ensuring that evaluation criteria in the school development plan explicitly relate to higher standards of attainment for pupils and improvements in teaching (para 91)
- rigorously and systematically monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning, then taking all necessary action to improve pupils' progress and standards of attainment (paras 92; 97) *
- using the data on pupils' attainment and progress to identify aspects of teaching and learning which need improvement (para 18)
- annually reviewing and reporting whole school and departmental improvements to the governing body (para 97)

3) Improve curriculum provision by:

- fulfilling statutory curriculum requirements throughout the school in information and communications technology, also in design and technology in Key Stage 4 (paras 51; 53)
- targeting funds to improve learning resources (para 101)
- ensuring that the library is adequately stocked to support the curriculum and the needs of pupils (para 102)

4) Improve attainment and personal development by:

- staff and governors implementing consistent approaches to behaviour management (paras 69; 70; 90) *
- addressing the weaknesses in the exclusion system (paras 72; 73) *

108. Other weaknesses which should be considered by the school:

- Ensuring risk assessments are carried out by external agencies at appropriate intervals. (para 67)

* indicates that this will build on work already being undertaken in the school

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|-----|
| Number of lessons observed | 194 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 70 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0% | 11% | 53% | 34% | 2% | 0% | 0% |

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

| | Y7 – Y11 | Sixth form |
|---|----------|------------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll | 1018 | 171 |
| Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals | 65 | 10 |

Special educational needs

| | Y7 – Y11 | Sixth form |
|---|----------|------------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | 17 | 3 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 130 | 3 |

English as an additional language

| | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 56 |

Pupil mobility in the last school year

| | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 8 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 14 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 5.9 |
| National comparative data | 7.9 |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.8 |
| National comparative data | 1.1 |

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3

| | | | | |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year | 1999 | 79 | 122 | 201 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above | Boys | 51 | 58 | 48 |
| | Girls | 88 | 82 | 56 |
| | Total | 139 | 140 | 104 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above | School | 69 (80) | 70 (66) | 52 (60) |
| | National | 63 (65) | 62 (60) | 55 (56) |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above | School | 30 (50) | 41 (42) | 18 (29) |
| | National | 28 (35) | 38 (36) | 23 (27) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above | Boys | 50 | 59 | 52 |
| | Girls | 88 | 82 | 56 |
| | Total | 138 | 142 | 126 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above | School | 69 (80) | 71 (71) | 63 (65) |
| | National | 64 (61) | 64 (64) | 60 (61) |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above | School | 33 (47) | 40 (44) | 28 (27) |
| | National | 31 (30) | 37 (37) | 28 (30) |

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 |
| | 1999 | 93 | 86 | 179 |

| GCSE results | | 5 or more grades A* to C | 5 or more grades A*-G | 1 or more grades A*-G |
|---|----------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Numbers of pupils achieving the standard specified | Boys | 50 | 91 | 91 |
| | Girls | 55 | 82 | 82 |
| | Total | 105 | 173 | 173 |
| Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified | School | 59 (49) | 97 (96) | 97 (98) |
| | National | 46.6 (46) | 90.9 (88) | 95.8 (93) |

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

| GCSE results | | GCSE point score |
|-------------------------------|----------|------------------|
| Average point score per pupil | School | 45.1 (36.9) |
| | National | 38 (36.8) |

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

| Vocational qualifications | | Number | % success rate |
|--|----------|--------|----------------|
| Number studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all those they studied | School | 9 | 100 |
| | National | | - |

Attainment at the end of the sixth form

| | | | | |
|---|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of students aged 16, 17 and 18 on roll in January of the latest reporting year who were entered for GCE A-level or AS-level examinations | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
| | 199 | 19 | 40 | 59 |

| 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 | 24.7 | 17.1 | 19.7 (18.5) | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| National | 17.7 | 18.1 | 17.9 (17.6) | N/A | N/A | N/A |

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 | 35 | 89 |
| | National | | 72.9 |

| 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 | 28 |
| Black – African heritage | 10 |
| Black – other | 20 |
| Indian | 51 |
| Pakistani | 8 |
| Bangladeshi | - |
| Chinese | 1 |
| White | 1029 |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 16 |

Exclusions in the last school year

| | Fixed period | Permanent |
|------------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | 12 | - |
| Black – African heritage | 1 | - |
| Black – other | 3 | - |
| Indian | 1 | - |
| Pakistani | 1 | - |
| Bangladeshi | - | - |
| Chinese | - | - |
| White | 24 | - |
| Other minority ethnic groups | - | - |

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y13

| | |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 68.1 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 17.2 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y7 – Y13

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 16 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 461 |

Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y13

| | |
|---|------|
| Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes | 81.4 |
|---|------|

Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y13

| | |
|-------------|------|
| Key Stage 3 | 26.0 |
| Key Stage 4 | 21.6 |

Financial information

| | |
|----------------|-----------|
| Financial year | 1999-2000 |
|----------------|-----------|

| | £ |
|--|---------|
| Total income | 3120613 |
| Total expenditure | 3119790 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2683 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 4464 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 823 |

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 1,153 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 875 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 39 | 52 | 5 | 2 | 3 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 31 | 49 | 6 | 1 | 12 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 30 | 54 | 6 | 1 | 9 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 21 | 49 | 15 | 2 | 13 |
| The teaching is good. | 29 | 56 | 3 | 0 | 13 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 26 | 41 | 16 | 4 | 14 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 44 | 42 | 6 | 2 | 6 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 56 | 37 | 3 | 0 | 4 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 25 | 47 | 15 | 3 | 9 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 32 | 48 | 5 | 2 | 13 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 36 | 48 | 4 | 1 | 12 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 27 | 43 | 10 | 2 | 18 |

Other issues raised by parents

In the parents' meeting and comments attached to the parents' questionnaires, parents drew attention to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and teachers' use of homework diaries and weaknesses in disciplinary and exclusion procedures, including internal exclusion.

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

ENGLISH

109. Results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 3 were above the national average. These results were broadly in line with those in mathematics and above those achieved in science. In 2000, the percentage of pupils achieving levels 5 and above was lower than in the previous year. There was no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.
110. The 1999 GCSE results in English were above the national average: seventy six percent of pupils achieved grades A*-C against a national average of fifty five percent. Results in 2000 were lower but still above the national average. In English literature results were above the national average in both 1999 and 2000.
111. In both subjects and in both years girls achieved better than boys. A-level results were better in 2000 than 1999 but the small number of candidates entered makes accurate statistical comparisons difficult.
112. Pupils enter the school with levels of attainment which are above average. Standards of attainment are judged to be above average overall across the attainment targets at the end Key Stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form. At the end of both key stages standards in speaking and listening are above average. In Key Stage 3, pupils learn to discuss feelings and ideas and adapt their speech according to audience and purpose. They learn to explore texts orally, as when a class discuss 'Stone Cold' following a reading. At Key Stage 4, pupils develop these skills further. They explore texts through dramatic representation, for example working on sections of 'The Long, the Short and the Tall' to present to their peers. At sixth form level students are able to articulate and develop complex arguments in their exploration of set texts.
113. Attainment in reading is above average in each key stage. At Key Stage 3 pupils read a wide variety of fiction, plays and poetry. There is a strong emphasis on basic literacy skills. Comprehension skills are developed across the key stage so that by Year 8 pupils are able to respond to challenging texts; for example, a lower ability Year 9 class explored with confidence a complex poem by Browning. In Key Stage 4 pupils develop these skills in relation to set GCSE texts; for example, Year 11 pupils explore and reflect on a wide range of love poetry. At sixth form level reading of challenging texts is fluent and perceptive; for example, Year 12 A/S level students confidently explore Chaucer's 'The Merchant's Tale'.
114. Attainment in writing is above average in each key stage. At Key Stage 3 pupils engage with a variety of text type - stories, diaries, journals and poetry. Appropriate emphasis is placed on teaching basic literacy skills. Knowledge of language structure is developed well so that by Year 9 pupils understand such concepts as reflexive pronoun and adverbial clause. At Key Stage 4 formal writing skills are developed further by the requirements of the coursework components. Writing is often thoughtful, technically correct and well developed. At sixth form level students produce well-constructed responses, which often demonstrate high levels of skill in analytical writing.

115. Pupils of all abilities achieve well in lessons and over time. This is often because of good quality teaching. Pupils with special educational needs, including the able and talented, make good progress relative to their prior attainment, because the department meets the needs of these pupils well.
116. Pupils have a positive attitude to learning, and therefore, make good progress. Pupils behave very well in lessons and work hard. Teacher–pupil relationships are good. Pupils show a keen interest in their work and respond enthusiastically to the effective teaching offered. Pupils work well together and many examples of collaborative work were seen. At sixth form level students show independence of thought and initiative.
117. The department has addressed all the issues raised by the last inspection report. The relative lack of achievement by boys in the middle groupings of Years 8 and 9 has been successfully countered by introducing more suitable material and revising teaching methods. More active learning methods have, on the whole, though not entirely, removed the tendency to didactic and over-directed teaching. Much work has been done to create worksheets' which are suitably differentiated for pupils of varying abilities. New models of assessment were introduced in September for Key Stage 3, which will enhance the accuracy of assessment and target setting. Procedures for formal monitoring of the teaching in the department are soon to be introduced.
118. The quality of teaching is good overall in each key stage. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. Almost nine out of ten lessons seen were good or better across the three key stages. Teaching is characterised by very good subject knowledge. Teachers demonstrate an enthusiasm for their subject. Planning is very detailed and effective. This leads to good progress, because pupils know how their learning links with what has gone before. Objectives are shared with pupils so that they understand clearly what is required. All teachers display good classroom management skills; lessons proceed in a calm, orderly and positive manner.
119. Lessons proceed at a good pace. This ensures that pupils learn and remain interested and alert. Teachers offer their pupils a high but appropriate level of challenge. This is a major strength of the teaching. Learning is good because pupils are stimulated to extend themselves. Very occasionally, the teacher over-directs parts of a lesson. Marking is thorough and thoughtful, based on helpful formative comments. Occasionally, however, comments and grading lack consistency. Regular well considered homework reinforces learning.
120. The leadership of the department is good and offers a clear educational vision. The teachers in the department make a strong and effective team. This is a major strength of the department. There are detailed and very useful schemes of work, a good development policy and a range of other appropriate policies in place.
121. Levels of literacy are satisfactory or better throughout the school. Pupils' reading and writing are sound. Their access to the curriculum is aided by their levels of literacy. There is, however, no whole school policy on the teaching of literacy. Provision across departments is, therefore, inconsistent. Speaking and listening is actively encouraged as a means of learning in some subjects such as English, geography and science. Many subjects, but not all, have extended reading requirements beyond the immediate needs of the curriculum. Spelling, punctuation and grammar errors are corrected regularly in most subjects. At Key Stage 3 basic literacy skills are given appropriate emphasis in English. Drafting to encourage accuracy and development of writing is employed in English, modern foreign languages and mathematics. Several subjects provide opportunity for extended writing; for example, English, modern

foreign languages and science. However, not all subjects use subject specific language adequately. Key words and basic literacy rules are displayed in some areas of the school. There is no systematic monitoring of teaching strategies or assessment of pupils' attainment and progress in literacy across the curriculum.

DRAMA

122. GCSE results in drama in 1999 were above national expectations. Eighty two per cent of pupils gained grades A*-C compared to the national average of sixty seven per cent. In addition, a higher proportion of pupils were entered than is the national average. The results in 2000 substantially improved on this already high figure: ninety five percent of students entered for the examination gained grades A*-C. Far more girls than boys opt for drama at GCSE. Girls achieved more highly than boys. A-level results in theatre studies were satisfactory in 1999. There were no entries in 2000.
123. Attainment in lessons is good. At Key Stage 3 pupils make good progress and learn techniques such as freeze frame, hot seating, narration, circle thought and flashback. In Key Stage 4 pupils follow the GCSE syllabus and make good progress. They extend their presentational skills and ability to analyse the work of others as they move through the key stage. Techniques are developed and refined and pupils enter enthusiastically into rehearsals, for example, using Brechtian techniques. Sixth form students follow the A-level theatre studies course and make good progress with both practical and written work. They study dramatic theory, for example Artaud. Their written assessment of drama is mature.
124. Teaching is good. All of the lessons seen were judged to be good. Lessons are well planned with effective long-term organisation. Pupils know where their learning fits into this organisation and understand lesson objectives. A good level of challenge is offered to pupils. They respond positively to this challenge; for example, when small groups in Year 8 are asked to devise appropriate freeze frames of holiday occurrences. Teachers show sound management skills. This results in good learning taking place as pupils work in an orderly, purposeful environment. There are good teacher-pupil relationships throughout.
125. Learning is good. Pupils are keen and interested in making progress. They work well together. Behaviour is good. Pupils work with enthusiasm in both key stages and the sixth form. They respect and appreciate others' work, as when Year 12 groups evaluated and commented positively on the work of their peers. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into groups and participate fully in lessons.
126. The department is well led. Schemes of works are very good and appropriate. All relevant policies are in place. Two well qualified drama specialists share most of the teaching. Facilities in the drama studio are good. The department contributes to the extra-curricular provision in the school by theatre trips and visits.
127. There were no issues from the previous inspection report as drama was not reported as a separate subject.

MATHEMATICS

128. Standards of attainment in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 3 are above the national average. There was an upward trend over the three years to 1999 although the results were below those of similar schools. The upward trend was continued in 2000, particularly in the higher levels. There is little difference in the performance of girls and boys. In GCSE the results are above the national average in grades A*-C and in grades A*-G. This level of performance was maintained in the three years up to 1999 and continued in 2000. The results are above average when compared with other subjects in school. Girls on average do slightly better than boys in GCSE. At A-level the results are, overall, above national averages although they show some fluctuation. The results in further mathematics A-level over the last three years have been good.
129. The inspection findings confirm the upward trend in mathematical results seen at the end of Key Stage 3. In Years 7 to 9, pupils have above average skills in calculation and mental arithmetic as well as a good understanding of the properties of number. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has its main impact on Year 7 where results have noticeably improved, and it is also having an effect on other years. Examples include problems on fractions, decimals and percentages appropriate for pupils' levels of attainment. Pupils show confidence in developing algebraic skills, for example, when looking for number patterns. Geometrical ideas, such as symmetry and rotation, are extended as well as the estimation and accurate measurement of angles. In all years pupils develop skills of using and applying mathematics through investigational activities. All the mathematics attainment targets are covered and the work proceeds at a good pace. Higher attaining pupils are able to manipulate algebraic expressions and solve simple equations. They extend numerical skills in problems, where large numbers and very small numbers are involved, by using rules of indices and significant figures. Lower attaining pupils can draw symmetric shapes and use simple angle measurers. They practice mental and written calculations and in many cases show competence in this work. In a small number of lower sets, pupils' achievement in numerical work is below what could be expected. Pupils with special educational needs are satisfactorily provided for through the setting arrangements and make satisfactory progress overall. In Key Stage 3 pupils extend their knowledge and understanding of mathematics. The general level in mathematics is above average when pupils enter the school and they maintain above average performance. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in mathematics in Key Stage 3.
130. The improvements in results from previous years in Key Stage 3 are now having a benefit when pupils reach Key Stage 4. This is seen particularly in the current Year 10. All pupils benefit from the effects of the attention given to numeracy skills. In Key Stage 4 pupils continue to extend their knowledge and skills in all areas of the mathematical curriculum, in the application of these skills to problems and in open-ended activities requiring a range of skills and knowledge. Higher attaining pupils apply algebraic methods to harder problems and predict, generalise and check results. They develop rules of indices in algebraic expressions and apply trigonometrical methods in a range of problems. Lower attaining pupils are able to apply their knowledge of decimal and fractional numbers to questions on measurement and the interpretation of graphs. All pupils take courses leading to GCSE and the lowest attaining pupils are also entered for Numeracy Certificates of Achievement which extend skills in basic arithmetic. Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for and their progress is satisfactory. Pupils are above average in attainment at the beginning of Key Stage 4 and maintain this level of performance. Overall, achievement of pupils in Key Stage 4 is satisfactory.

131. In A-level lessons the students build effectively on previous knowledge and skills and demonstrate good levels of achievement in the range of pure mathematics topics, mechanics and statistics. Achievement in the Further Mathematics class is good and students are competent in the application of algebraic methods in the development of geometrical ideas. Progress in A-level classes is good and maintains the high A-level performance of recent years.
132. In almost all mathematics lessons pupils are well motivated and behaviour is good. In the large majority of lessons pupils work well and make progress. They show initiative in their work, for example in investigatory activities, and are able to make sensible choices. Attitudes to mathematics and in mathematics lessons are good in both key stages and the sixth form, and have a beneficial effect on the work done in lessons.
133. The teaching in mathematics is satisfactory overall in Key Stage 3. The teaching is good or very good in half of the lessons. There is some unsatisfactory teaching. In Key Stage 4 the teaching is good or very good in over half the lessons. There is a little unsatisfactory teaching. In A-level classes the teaching is good with some very good teaching. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and understanding, and almost all teachers contribute to post-16 teaching. In Key Stages 3 and 4, where increased attention is given to numerical activities, many lessons begin with a mental arithmetic activity. There is variety in most lessons so that the interest of pupils is maintained. Strengths in the teaching lie in the teachers' commitment, experience and management of pupils. There is very good teaching where, for example, teachers respond well to pupils and build on their previous knowledge, as in a lesson reviewing short-cuts in division when practicing mental arithmetic. There are good and very good examples of lesson planning, as for example, in a lesson drawing together geometric ideas of reflection and rotation. Teachers provide a variety of approaches which contribute to effective learning, for example in a lesson on equivalent fractions in which practical activities of cutting and pasting were used to illustrate the ideas. However, in a few lessons the planning does not ensure that pupils make sufficient progress. There are also a few lessons in which the teaching styles, particularly with the lower sets, are too formal and insufficient learning takes place. The need to develop a wider range of teaching styles was raised in the previous inspection report. Some attention has been given to these issues and they are included in the departmental development plan but further development is needed. Steps have been taken in response to the new approaches to numeracy and in the inclusion of investigatory and computer activities in the scheme of work and these have been effective. The marking of homework is satisfactory, but the marking of classwork varies and there is little comment helpful to the pupils.
134. The leadership and management of the department is satisfactory overall. There are, however, strong features in the leadership, particularly in the mathematical direction the department is taking. The department is active in adopting the National Numeracy Strategy and has reviewed schemes of work in line with the National Curriculum revision of 2000 and A-level changes. Priorities which have been identified by the department include improving and monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, target setting, improving pupil discipline and behaviour. These priorities have been acted upon. There is a strong commitment to improve pupil performance. Departmental management of day-to-day working is also good. Assessment procedures link to the schemes of work and provide a sound structure for the monitoring of curriculum delivery. Delegation of responsibilities within the department ensures that a wide range of work and development is taking place. However, the monitoring of the work of the department is still at an informal stage. Observation of

teaching has been done but arrangements for following up to ensure improvement have not been determined. There is inconsistency in the monitoring of pupils' work and too much is left to individual teachers. Mathematics teachers are well qualified and the department has a good range of expertise and experience. The accommodation is good, well looked after and maintained. The resources are of good quality and effectively support the work of the department.

135. Standards in numeracy in the school as a whole are above the national average and reflect the standards in mathematics lessons. In mathematics, particularly in Key Stage 3, attainment is improving through the influence of the national numeracy strategy. In many mathematics lessons attention is given to number and calculation skills through brief introductory activities which include practice in mental calculations. The school has not developed a whole school approach to the development and use of number. Subjects are developing their own approaches and, in art, for example, doing this well. However, there is no co-ordinated approach to the teaching of numeracy across the curriculum, no systematic monitoring of teaching strategies nor assessment of pupils' attainment and progress.

SCIENCE

136. Attainment in the national testing at the end of Key Stage 3 over the three years to 1999 has fallen to about the national average. In 1999 the percentage of pupils obtaining level 5 and above was 52 per cent (55 per cent nationally), and at level 6 and above 18 per cent (23 per cent). When compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds the pupils' performance is well below average. Over the three years up to 1999 average points score have fallen slightly. Results in science were below those in mathematics and English in 1999. Over the last four years the performance of boys was above the national average, with that of girls close to the national average. These results are unsatisfactory given that pupils come into school with attainment above the national average. Results for 2000 are significantly better at both level 5 and above, and level 6 and above (69 per cent and 39 per cent respectively). Attainment at GCSE is above the national average. In 1999 the percentage of pupils obtaining A*-C grades from the Double Award course was 61 per cent (48 per cent nationally). This year, results fell to 50 per cent. Attainment from the three sciences at A-level is broadly in line with the national average but the numbers taking these courses are too small for rigorous analysis. Results vary from year to year and from subject to subject. There is no significant difference in students' attainment in biology, chemistry, and physics.
137. Lower attaining Year 9 pupils can effectively follow diagrams to wire up electric circuits. They are then able to use these circuits to measure the voltage across various components. Average attaining pupils in Year 9 are able to sort well elements into groups based on both their physical and chemical properties. Pupils' laboratory skills at end of Key Stage 3 are in line with expectations. Their understanding of the principles of fair testing is satisfactory, but the majority cannot explain properly what the implications are if variables are not controlled. Highest attaining pupils in Year 11 have a very good knowledge and understanding of forces. Importantly they are able to apply their knowledge well, which is a requirement for the highest GCSE grades. Average attaining pupils particularly in Key Stage 4, have below expected levels of factual recall and understanding of previous work. Good numerical skills help pupils to attain well, particularly in Key Stage 3. Students in the sixth form have the ability to evaluate their work carefully so that the correct scientific conclusions can be drawn and wrong results explained. Their knowledge and understanding of previous work is in line with expectations.

138. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in both key stages and the sixth form. At Key Stage 3 pupils enter the school with above average attainment. Attainment is now appropriately above the national average at the end of Key Stage 3. Progress in Key Stage 4 is also satisfactory since pupils start from above the national average and achieve results above the national average when they leave the school. Able and talented pupils make good progress in both key stages. Students in the sixth form progress in line with expectations based on their prior attainment. Evidence from lessons observed suggests that pupils should be achieving better results than they do. In lessons, Year 9 pupils, irrespective of their prior attainment, progress well whether learning about the Periodic Table or investigating how the potential difference divides in a series circuit. Higher attaining Year 8 pupils make very good progress when assessing the healthiness of diets using secondary data. Pupils in Year 7 mixed ability groups have good numerical skills. They demonstrated these skills when plotting difficult line graphs of the distance from the sun and the time for the planet to orbit the Sun. Higher attaining pupils in Year 11 make good progress when evaluating data from rotting grass experiments. When learning about how the organs in the ear help us to keep our balance, lower attaining pupils in Year 11, following the certificated Science Plus course, also make good progress. Highest attaining pupils in Year 10 make good progress when learning how enzymes can break down particular substances. The department writes subject specific targets for pupils with special educational needs. However, these targets are not sufficiently specific enough for the department to fully monitor their progress. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to other lower attaining pupils, but material adapted for their needs is not used sufficiently. Students in the sixth form make good progress, whether investigating the properties of enzymes in chemistry, learning about bacterial counting in biology, or finding out about simple harmonic motion in physics.
139. Pupils' attitudes to learning in lessons are good. Higher attaining pupils show high levels of interest for the subject. Middle attaining pupils in Key Stage 4, however, do not show the level of interest which could be expected from pupils of this calibre. Behaviour is good so that all pupils have every opportunity to learn. Pupils work very well together when carrying out experiments. They work safely, making every effort to follow instructions carefully. When moving around the laboratory to collect materials and equipment, pupils act responsibly. During whole class discussions, pupils answer their teachers' questions in a very courteous manner and to the best of their ability. The very positive attitudes and behaviour of the pupils make a significant contribution to the standards of attainment seen in the department.

140. The quality of teaching is good with no significant difference between the two key stages and the sixth form. This is a very strong department whose committed team of teachers works very hard to enable pupils to achieve their full potential. Teachers set high standards for discipline, which are achieved. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and understanding. Expectations of pupils are appropriate, with most pupils appropriately challenged. Lessons are carefully planned, often using a range of resources and methods. Teachers do not provide sufficient work suitable for pupils of different attainment in the same group. However, the setting arrangements for the different groups are accurate so that each group has its work matched to pupils' needs. The quality of marking is satisfactory, but scientific supportive comments are not used sufficiently. There is inconsistency in the way teachers use the marking policy. The quality of reports to parents is unsatisfactory. Teachers do not report strengths and weaknesses in the four attainment targets. The use of homework to support pupils' learning is good.
141. The department provides one GCSE course, Co-ordinated Double Award, which is a good course for the higher attaining pupils in Key Stage 4. The Science Plus course supplements the needs of the lowest attaining pupils. The co-ordinated course, as it is presently taught does not maintain the interest and motivation of the majority group of middle / lower attaining pupils. Nor does it keep pupils sufficiently aware of their current level of performance. Following the re-organisation of the timetable the percentage of curriculum time at Key Stage 4 is slightly low. It is too early to assess the impact of this reduction of time on results. Schemes of work plan effectively for continuity and progression in both key stages. Assessment procedures help staff to form similar attaining teaching groups. These procedures are suitable for ranking pupils. The department does not make enough use of target setting approaches, to bring about a further improvement in results in both key stages.
142. The department is managed satisfactorily but there is insufficient monitoring. Both the school and the department were slow to react to unsatisfactory results in Key Stage 3. However, strategies are now in place, which brought about the improvement in 2000. There is insufficient monitoring of special educational needs targets, marking, and support for technicians. The teaching staff are dedicated and very well qualified and experienced. Many of the teachers have school responsibilities outside of the department. The department is well supported by an efficient technician team. However, the time allocated for technicians is unsatisfactory for the number of laboratories, courses, and teacher periods which have to be supported. Accommodation is satisfactory in terms of number of laboratories but three of the rooms are in need of refurbishment and most of the others have unsatisfactory tables and stools. There are some serious shortages of basic science equipment, textbooks, and computers. The money made available annually is insufficient for a school of this size and is inadequate to address these shortages. The equipment shortages give rise to potential health and safety problems because of the amount of lifting and carrying which has to be done by the technicians. The storage space in the preparation rooms is unsatisfactory, so that chemical solutions and apparatus are stored far too close together for safety. The science department gives proper consideration to health and safety and no other major problems exist. The department has addressed most of the issues raised in the last inspection, with one exception. There is now a marking policy but it is not used consistently.

ART

143. GCSE results in art at the end of Key Stage 4 are well below the national average. In 1999 only half of the pupils gained passes between A*-C compared with the national average of sixty-one per cent. The girls' performance was close to the national average but the boys' performance was almost twenty per cent below the national average. The results in 2000 were worse, as the girls' performance also fell to twenty per cent below the national average. These results have declined steadily since the last inspection. At A-level the art department's results are amongst the best in the school, with the points score in line with the national average for boys and well above for the girls.
144. The standard of work seen during the inspection is in line with expectations in the sixth form but below expectations at the end of Key Stages 3 and 4. Pupils throughout the department rely too heavily on copying images, at the expense of objective drawing. The higher profile of critical studies is a major improvement since the last inspection, as are the recently introduced homework books which allow development of ideas, although there is insufficient space for personal research.
145. The achievement of most pupils in art is satisfactory. Allowing for the different experiences of art which the pupils have before they arrive in the school, their achievement during Key Stage 3 is satisfactory. These pupils approach their studies with great energy and, in a particularly profitable lesson, they made rapid progress when developing imaginative masks from plaster casts they had taken from each others' faces. Achievement is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 4, particularly amongst the boys, where it is poor. The main hindrance to progress is an over-reliance on secondary source material. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in art. Those pupils who are gifted and talented, make good progress also, except in Key Stage 4, where there is a noticeable lack of the highest GCSE grades. Achievement in the sixth form is good.
146. Attitudes and behaviour in the department are seldom less than good. Usually they are very good. Pupils are proud of their work and happy to explain it to their classmates, teachers and visitors alike. They respect each other, their teachers and the fabric of the department. The atmosphere in the department encourages reflection. The only unsatisfactory behaviour was in a Year 8 lesson when a minority of immature pupils, boys and girls, set the tone, and, despite the best efforts of their teacher, slowed the progress of the entire class. There is a lack of strategies to combat such disruption. The pupils' personal development and relationships are very good and a great strength of the department. The pupils like and trust their teachers and rely on them for their future development. In every lesson teachers take a genuine interest in their pupils and their sensitive manner is a positive aid to learning.
147. Teaching in the department is good overall. The best teaching occurs in Key Stage 3 and in the sixth form where there is an emphasis on developing basic skills. In Key Stage 4 the teaching is satisfactory. Throughout the department the teachers often fail to take advantage of their good relationships with their pupils to increase the challenge and the success rate, which would soon attract a greater proportion of pupils into the department. The teaching staff have good knowledge of their subject and the accomplishment they show with a range of both two and three-dimensional materials and their clear demonstrations of processes and techniques inspire good efforts in their pupils. There are occasions, however, particularly in Key Stage 4, when teaching fails to promote learning and the basic elements are seen as less important than the development of ideas. The emphasis placed on safe working methods and respect

for the work of other pupils is good. There are times when the pupils' work suffers from an inability to develop their own images through drawing and research. They have a weak grasp of the basic elements of drawing along with limited knowledge of colour theory. The use of a subject specific language is unsatisfactory.

148. Pupils' learning is generally good, with the best learning occurring in Key Stage 3 and in the sixth form; both groups reflecting the better teaching they receive. The younger pupils carefully recall previous learning, develop skills and gain new knowledge as quickly as it is offered. They respond most positively to engaging tasks, especially when working with clay, batik and 'Modroc', to produce interesting, original work. There are many opportunities to learn from each other as well as from their teachers. Year 10 pupils, early in their course, still work with similar enthusiasm but by Year 11 their creative energies are almost entirely devoted to ensuring that their work resembles an image taken from a book or other source. The research in pupils' sketchbooks shows a lack of understanding and awareness. An inability to draw from observation or develop ideas using the full range of processes available to them is a hindrance to their learning. It is significant that the sixth form were alarmed when challenged to draw a portrait from observation using dramatic light and shade; but it is equally significant that they responded so positively when their teacher helped them demonstrate their ability. The link between teaching and learning was never clearer.
149. The curriculum in art is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. There are opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in painting and drawing, graphics, sculpture, photography, animation and printmaking, although most pupils are happiest when using a variety of graphic processes to develop their ideas. Provision for those pupils who have special educational needs is good and the department prepares individual education plans wherever necessary.
150. The department makes a good contribution to the pupils' personal development. Clear analysis of pupils' work by the teachers and their gentle encouragement creates many opportunities for reflection in lessons. Group activity is common and good behaviour is the norm. Teachers are good role models. The department has a gallery area and display in and around the department is both stimulating and challenging. Extra-curricular opportunities are numerous and include opportunities to work in the studios at lunchtime and after school. Whenever finances allow the department arranges for artists-in-residence to work in the school; while older pupils visit junior schools and engage younger children in creative activities.
151. Leadership and management of the department is good. The head of department sensitively manages a team whose skills, interests and abilities complement each other and provide an appropriate range of opportunities for learning. There is a lack of formal monitoring of teaching and sharing of good practice with colleagues. The open plan accommodation, with its panoramic views of the surrounding countryside, is good. As at the time of the last inspection, the resources in the department are unsatisfactory, particularly for information and communication technology. The department has lacked the investment needed to implement recent developments in processes and techniques in art and design. The inadequate resources for ceramics have not improved since the last inspection. Development plans are appropriate and up-to-date but there is no indication of the cost necessary to implement the plans.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

152. Results of the Key Stage 3 teacher assessments in 1999 were above national averages. Teachers gave 72 per cent of pupils level five or better and in the previous year they gave only 49 per cent level five or above. The national average is around 60 percent. Standards during the inspection were found to be in line with national expectations. The difference between the two is due to inaccurate teacher assessments of the progress pupils made over the key stage. The department has now improved procedures and the accuracy of assessment.
153. Across the range of GCSE subjects offered in this area in 1999, results average out at just below national standards. Attainment in graphics products was in line with the national standard while in home economics and in resistant materials it was below. There has been a substantial improvement in 2000 in the results. Results in the 1999 A-level examination were above average. Three students were entered.
154. At the end of Key Stage 3 standards are in line with national expectations. This is an improvement on the situation described in the last inspection report when standards were described as average to below in this key stage. All pupils including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Attainment is satisfactory across the areas of knowledge and understanding and the designing and making skills required by the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. For example, pupils studying textiles acquire a suitable knowledge of a range of ways to apply colour to fabric. To develop their designs a number make satisfactory use of moodboards. They know about methods of batch production. They have a satisfactory understanding of materials and processes which is an essential preparation for the design stage. Making skills are generally satisfactory and most pupils pay appropriate attention to quality and finish. In food technology, pupils gain a satisfactory awareness of hygiene and safe practice in the food preparation areas. They have a satisfactory understanding of the need for quality assurance in the commercial production of foodstuffs. They develop satisfactory basic making skills and gain a satisfactory knowledge of what constitutes a healthy diet for a teenager. In resistant materials pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of the properties of the metals they work with. They produce suitably labelled drawings that communicate their design intentions. Some pupils make good use of the internet for research, though generally little use is presently being made of information and communication technology in the subject. The department has recently acquired a room equipped with computers and is rewriting schemes of work to incorporate them into the department's programme. In the graphics module the pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of aspects of packaging as they disassemble a range of products and learn how to draw nets and to assemble prototypes of their own packaging. They gain a satisfactory awareness of the way companies use colour, text and images to attract buyers while learning how to gain information from the nutritional information details exhibited with them.

155. Standards attained by most pupils are above average at the end of Key Stage 4, though in some examination courses they are below. In design and technology courses that are taught in the personal, social and health education carousel, standards are well below average and progress is poor for those who do not take a full design and technology course as well. The time allocated, eight hours per year, is totally insufficient for these pupils to cover the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. In electronics, standards are good and individuals use their home internet connections well to research ideas for their projects, for example when they need to find out about components of their circuits. They develop good information and communication technology skills as they use a challenging programme to design and test their circuits. They make good clear statements of the problems for which they are developing solutions. Their analysis of their tasks takes in a good range of considerations and their customer research is well focused. The questions they ask in their surveys are well designed and produce useful information to help the design process. Attitudes in this class are good and pupils use home computers well for both research and for improving the presentation of the work in their folders. The progress they have made in their project work, however, is slow. Practical skills are satisfactory in food technology and these pupils are making satisfactory progress. Pupils prefer making to acquiring the areas of knowledge and understanding they are required to demonstrate by the examination board and standards in these are below expectation. There is good provision in this group for pupils with special educational needs and in one lesson observed a pupil with SEN made very good progress in making and produced the best work in the class. Though pupils carry out sensory analyses satisfactorily there is limited understanding of why they do so, or how this process might relate to industrial practice. Year 11 work for the resistant materials course is limited. Research is largely superficial and often consists of photographs cut out of catalogues. Few pupils are making sufficient use of sketching to communicate their ideas. They have a new teacher this year who has made satisfactory advances in the process of assessing the progress pupils have made over the previous year and of setting realistic targets for their ongoing work. He is working well to improve behaviour in the class and to turn their efforts towards the work in hand. These pupils are now making satisfactory progress. Standards and progress in graphics products are good. Pupils are making good and informed choices of major projects. Their progress in the research aspects of their projects is good and a high number of pupils have spent a lot of their own time engaged in practical research to identify sites, for example, for their wine bar designs. A number have not thought in sufficient depth about the questions they have included in their customer surveys and the answers to these often contribute little of relevance to their research. Many pupils make good use of sketching to explore and present ideas. Most pupils pay good attention to finish, to layout and presentation as they set out their ideas on paper.
156. Year 12 students make satisfactory progress in developing their key skills in communication. Their presentations are generally clear and follow a logical structure. They show a satisfactory understanding at this early stage in the course of a range of techniques to test materials. Their solutions are generally sound and their evaluations are suitably informed. They understand the place testing has in the design and manufacturing process.

157. Teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 3 and in the sixth form. It is good overall in Key Stage 4. Teachers are secure in their subject knowledge and this is evident in the clarity of their input in lessons, whether it is to the whole class or to individuals as teachers work around in support. Planning in both key stages and in the sixth form is satisfactory.
158. In Key Stage 3 there is satisfactory coverage of the programmes of study and pupils work with a suitable range of materials. In this key stage the department lacks a shared approach across the materials areas to the design process through common format design booklets which support, inform and guide their work and offer pupils a more coherent learning experience. Teachers prepare well for their lessons and little time is lost for learning. They give clear and informative introductions that set out what will happen in the lesson. This means that pupils are clear about what they have to do. The pace of lessons in Key Stage 3 is generally satisfactory, however, some modules have tasks that are too well defined to allow pupils to progress at a faster rate than their peers. Teachers often provide expert demonstrations that provide good role models.
159. In both key stages and in the sixth form relationships are generally productive. Lessons mostly proceed with a calm and purposeful atmosphere allowing teachers to direct their attention to where support is most needed. Assessment procedures have been improved since the last inspection and are now satisfactory. Some teachers in Key Stage 4 have built on these procedures to create very good examples of individual mentoring, tracking of progress and target setting. These teachers have built up a clear and useful picture of the advances individuals make. This practice is not uniform in the department. In Key Stage 4, teaching is well directed towards the examination courses and to the criteria against which outcomes are assessed.
160. The acting head of department has effectively introduced assessment procedures that are a substantial improvement on those which were being used during the last inspection. She has a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses in the department. There is still a lack of adequate workshop space for design technology and overflow classes are taught in non-specialist rooms. Some rooms are too small for larger food studies classes, which hinders progress. Teachers have had inadequate information and communications technology training in order for the department to make full use of the information and communication technology facilities it has recently acquired.

GEOGRAPHY

161. The 1999 GCSE results indicate that 67 per cent of pupils achieved grade A*-C against the national average of 54 per cent. Nearly all pupils entered achieved grades in the range A*-G. Boys and girls achieved similar standards above the national average. At A-level, the majority of students achieved well above the national average in gaining an A grade. All remaining students entered achieved grades in the range B-D. In the year 2000, results were a little lower for GCSE, with 61 per cent of students achieving grades A*-C. Only three students sat the A-level examination, gaining grades A, B and C respectively.

162. Standards of attainment are above the national expectation by the end of Key Stage 3; they are above the national average at the end of Key Stage 4 and above the national average at the end of sixth form. Pupils make good progress throughout the school in geography, including those with special educational needs, who are well supported.
163. By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils' overall attainment in lessons is good. There is a good standard of detailed written work that extends through most of the year group. For example, pupils have a secure understanding of climatic change and make valid comparisons between temperate zones and equatorial rainforest. They interpret statistics accurately and demonstrate an understanding of how climate affects agriculture and social conditions. As they move through the key stage, they acquire a good range of skills. For example, in Year 7, they become increasingly familiar with using a compass and co-ordinates to plot locations on a map. In Year 8 they sharpen their awareness of the environment. A case study of a local quarry extension helps them recognise how change impacts upon different interest groups, such as tourists and shop-owners.
164. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 achieve good standards in class and their attainment is above average by the end of the key stage. They interpret population data accurately, recognising that differing birth and death rates lead to change. Most pupils offer reasoned explanations for this. For example, they recognise that increasing employment opportunities for women is likely to slow the birth rate and delay parenthood. Pupils use a good range of skills to present and interpret information. These include narrative, using graphs and diagrams. As they progress through the key stage, pupils cover a good range of topics, as required by the examination syllabus. They carry out a case study on urban renewal in Leeds, identifying economic and social influences. For example, one pupil comments perceptively on the 'low self-esteem' that can result from poor housing conditions. In other topics, pupils produce detailed work on soil erosion and river systems, comparing the Nile and the Ouse. They examine how earthquakes are caused and consider the impact of environmental change upon agriculture.
165. By the end of the sixth form students' attainment is above average. They produce well structured answers to questions and make good use of data to support their responses. For example, work on glaciation is well supported by detailed diagrams. They identify features in the landscape, such as cols and understand the effects of erosion. As they move through the Sixth form, pupils complete complex graphs and develop skills in interpretation. For example, they plot the relationship between rainfall and run-off and identify a positive correlation. Pupils recognise that results are affected by differing types of soil and their relative porosity.
166. Throughout the school, most pupils behave well, have positive attitudes to learning and work hard. A small minority have short concentration spans and can become restless in class, however, no incidents of unacceptable behaviour were observed. The impact of this is that most pupils successfully complete tasks and take an active part in the lessons.

167. The quality of teaching is good in Key Stages 3 and 4. It is very good in the Sixth form. There are a number of common features in place throughout the department. Teachers have a good knowledge of their subject. They ensure that a wide range of basic skills are taught thoroughly. Pupil management is good and tasks are well organised, with appropriate resources used. Planning is clear and learning objectives are clearly stated. Where very good teaching takes place, there is a clear understanding of individual pupils' strengths and weaknesses. Tasks are targeted to match these needs. The result of this consistent and good teaching is effective learning. Pupils make good progress in most lessons and this is reflected in the attainment levels achieved. The department has made a satisfactory response to the narrow range of teaching methods identified in the previous inspection report. However, during the inspection, there were no examples seen of pupils working collaboratively to plan their responses. Teachers are aware of the importance of this and some useful plans exist to promote thinking skills through group discussion.
168. The leadership of the department is good, staff work effectively as a team, supporting one another well. The curriculum offered is appropriate and the development of a certificate of achievement helps address the needs of all pupils. There is a satisfactory contribution to the social and cultural development of all pupils; for example in comparing differing cultures. The monitoring of pupils' progress is satisfactory, with a good range of assessment procedures in place. Staff know their pupils well. There are appropriate procedures in place for reporting to parents. Opportunities to monitor teaching are limited. All staff have had opportunities for professional development, which has addressed pertinent issues, such as teaching methods. Resources are just adequate, however, they are poor in respect of information and communications technology. The department's computers are too old to provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to research information. There is insufficient access to the school's computer facilities. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to the development of literacy and a good contribution to the development of numeracy within the school. The overall improvement since the previous inspection is good.

HISTORY

169. GCSE results for 1999, are well above the standards expected nationally for all and similar schools. Seventy eight per cent of the pupils attain at A*-C grades and 100% of pupils attain at grades A*-G. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Standards of attainment, as measured by average point score, have improved between 1997-1999 from 3.3 to 5.6. By the end of the sixth form pupils at A-level standards are in line with national expectations, but the numbers in the cohorts are too small to make comparisons reliable.
170. The achievement of pupils is unsatisfactory overall. The achievement of pupils in Key Stage 3 is unsatisfactory, whilst the achievement of those pupils in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form is good. From evidence gathered during the inspection, standards are in line with national standards at the end of Key Stage 3. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys or girls. Standards are above national expectations by the end of Key Stage 4 and in line at the end of the sixth Form. Pupils enter the school above national expectations in Year 7. Pupils in Year 7 know that the Roman army was important in securing the empire in Britain. They understand how the army was organised and can track the legacy of Roman Britain through to the use of Latin on currently used currency. In Year 8 pupils know the Tudors ruled England in the 15th/16th century. They understand some of the reasons why Henry VIII had six wives and can chart the reasons for these marriages. In Year 9 pupils know that

industrial change took place in Britain during the 18th/19th centuries. They understand how people living in 19th century Britain did not all share the same view of contemporary events and that many cottage workers saw the arrival of the factory production of textiles as a threat. They explore the methods that Richard Arkwright used in order to improve and increase the production of cloth.

171. In Year 10 pupils understand why trench warfare was used on the western front in the First World War. They understand how the conditions in the trenches deteriorated over time. They collect and prepare notes in order to produce longer written accounts. In Year 11 pupils understand the reasons for the Israeli attack on the Arabs in 1967. They understand why the Israeli victory came swiftly and prepare notes for a longer written analysis of the events. In the sixth form students have a broad knowledge of the constitutional changes in Britain from Saxon times until the present. They can compare different ways of governing during the period and can discuss assertions made by historians as to the relative importance of some of those changes.
172. The development of numeracy and literacy is satisfactory. Numeracy is developed using graphs to denote the number of 18th century enclosure acts; timelines over short periods to help pupils to order information in a chronological sequence. Pupils are encouraged to write at length on some topics from Year 7, but there is inadequate use of note taking and scanning text is underdeveloped. Also, literacy techniques, such as writing frames, are not used to develop the language levels of all pupils.
173. The attitudes of pupils are good. They respond well to good teaching and are attentive to the demands made by the teachers. Pupils become dissatisfied when work does not challenge them and when teachers' expectations of them are low.
174. Improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. The achievement of pupils across Key Stage 3 is unsatisfactory and there has been insufficient emphasis on raising the achievement of these pupils. There has been an improvement at Key Stage 4. The tasks pupils are expected to complete in Key Stage 3 are still limited in scope and the assessment of the capabilities of pupils is still unsatisfactory.
175. The head of the department was absent for most of the inspection. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teaching in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form is good. Where teaching is good, enthusiastic and committed teachers engage pupils' imagination. They have appropriate and challenging expectations. Clear objectives of learning are shared with pupils which increase in confidence as learners. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and teachers manage pupils skilfully. In Key Stage 4 and the sixth form GCSE and A-level criteria are used effectively to track pupils' progress. However, in Key Stage 3, there are weaknesses in the teaching characterised by a lack of challenge to pupils both in behaviour and expectations of work. Teachers use a marking system consistently, but it is not linked to national criteria or levels and so does not provide teachers with enough information to effectively track pupils' progress. This lack of information results in low expectations of pupils' learning in Key Stage 3. The use of homework is unsatisfactory. In too many cases, pupils are expected to finish work started in class for homework. This means that the highest attainers have insufficient homework and the lowest attainers are overburdened. This does not help pupils to become independent learners.

176. The leadership of the subject is unsatisfactory. There is insufficient recognition in the department's development plan of the need to raise the standards of pupils' attainment in Key Stage 3. The monitoring of teaching, also, does not ensure consistently high standards in Key Stage 3. The curricular provision is satisfactory, the lack of guidance as to expected levels of work for pupils' differing attainments is insufficient to ensure appropriate standards of learning in Key Stage 3. Although there is a satisfactory match of staff and accommodation to the subject, there are insufficient textbooks and library resources for pupils in Key Stage 3 and sixth form. The use of information and communication technology is limited and there are insufficient CD-ROMs to allow pupils to conduct appropriate research.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

177. Standards of attainment in information and communications technology are below average in Key Stage 3 and well below in Key Stage 4. Pupils are not currently studying for GCSE courses in Key Stage 4. In the last two years the small proportion entered for GCSE short course examinations gained below average A*-C grades.
178. At the end of Key Stage 3, pupils reach standards which are below average because they have not had opportunities to study information and communications technology beyond Year 7. Year 7 pupils have satisfactory skills for word processing. They create documents in appropriate formats, such as letters, and they use features of the keyboard, for example to embolden or underline text. Year 8 are just beginning their second year of the subject. They have satisfactory keyboard skills and word process text to present information clearly. For example, they change the size and style of fonts and use colour to create attractive documents. Higher attaining pupils are imaginative and illustrate their documents with pictures. Year 9 pupils have reached the same standard as the current Year 8 because they have not studied the subject since Year 7. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to study control aspects of the subject and they have limited opportunities to use computers and observe environmental changes, for example of light and temperature, because there is insufficient equipment.
179. By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils reach standards which are well below average because they have not had opportunities to study the subject since Year 7. They carry out simple word processing tasks and have a satisfactory knowledge of how to log on to the computer network and to save their work. Year 10 pupils have a rudimentary knowledge of using databases.
180. Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 3. They make satisfactory progress with word processing in lessons, but a combination of insufficient previous experience of the subject and insufficient equipment for control restricts their progress over the key stage. Pupils' achievement in Key Stage 4 is poor. They acquire poor knowledge of all aspects of the subject over the key stage, except for word processing, where they are just beginning to make satisfactory progress because of the new arrangements for teaching the subject.
181. The quality of teaching observed in the inspection was satisfactory. In more than half the lessons observed it was satisfactory and in the remainder it was good. In the best lessons, teachers had clear learning objectives which they shared with pupils at the start of lessons and provided pupils with opportunities to explore the potential of the computer and to develop creativity and independent learning skills. Teachers assess work during lessons so that pupils are aware of their progress, but work is not sufficiently linked to National Curriculum levels. Lessons are well structured, but often

are so narrow in range that pupils have insufficient opportunities to extend their skills and knowledge beyond the set exercises followed. This restricts their progress and ability to develop the higher order skills of the subject. Teachers place good emphasis on accuracy of spelling and grammar, which contributes satisfactorily to pupils' development of literacy. Pupils are well behaved and want to learn in lessons, because they have good relationships with teachers and are interested in their work. Teachers have satisfactory knowledge which they use effectively to communicate information so that the quality of learning is at least satisfactory and is often good. Work is well targeted to the needs of most pupils, which is particularly important at this stage because they have had insufficient experience of the subject. They are now beginning to use basic applications to present information clearly and attractively. The poor functioning of equipment in some lessons observed hindered teachers in their ability to present information using appropriate resources. Teachers, however, drew on their experience or good teaching skills to use alternative strategies successfully. Teachers understand the needs of pupils with special educational needs and provide them with good support in lessons but there are insufficient specialist information and communications technology resources.

182. The curriculum for information and communications technology does not meet statutory requirements because pupils do not have opportunities to develop skills and knowledge of control, also progress in data logging is hindered by insufficient equipment. The curriculum offered to pupils provides opportunities for them to develop skills and knowledge of word processing, desktop publishing and the use of spreadsheets and databases. Worksheets are used too frequently and they restrict opportunities for independent learning. Systems to monitor the experience and attainment of pupils have just been introduced but are not sufficiently linked to National Curriculum levels to enable pupils to be made aware of the levels they have reached and what they need to do to improve.
183. Management of the subject is unsatisfactory. There is clear direction for the work of the subject in separate information and communications technology lessons and the co-ordinator has provided useful guidance for teachers to assist with lesson planning. Co-ordination of the subject across the curriculum is unsatisfactory and there are no clear plans for its development. There are some opportunities in other subjects for pupils to practise what they have learned, but often they have insufficient access to resources for this to be effective. Planning has not taken sufficient account of the need to provide resources for all aspects of the subject, including control.
184. Improvement to the subject since the previous inspection is unsatisfactory. There have been some significant improvements to the quality and quantity of resources, but there is still not enough provision for use in other subjects of the curriculum and there is very limited access to the internet for pupils to research information. Co-ordination of teaching of the subject across the curriculum remains inadequate.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

185. At the end of Key Stage 3 the attainment of most pupils is in line with national expectations, with many pupils exceeding it.
186. In the 1998 and 1999 French G.C.S.E examinations, the A*-C pass rate was above the national average. In 1998 and 1999 about half the passes were A*-C grades. The 2000 results show 71 per cent of pupils achieving grades A*-C, which is a considerable increase.
187. A different picture emerges in German. In the 1998 GCSE examination, the A*-C pass rate was 38 per cent, well below the national average. 1999 showed a considerable improvement with 56 per cent gaining A*-C, but in 2000 it was 39 per cent A*-C. A comparison of value added figures, looking at the whole range of subjects shows that many pupils who chose German have not performed as well as in other subjects.
188. Students in the sixth form are achieving well in both languages. Boys are choosing languages and in many cases students have aspirations to continue their studies beyond A-level.
189. Pupils in both languages and of all abilities are actively encouraged to use the foreign language in class to ask routine questions, or to ask permission to do something. Accent and intonation are good and higher attaining pupils show ability to expand on minimal answers. Tasks are suitably demanding and pair work and group work are well established. Listening is a difficult skill, but skills are developed to enable pupils to understand key phrases and more complex sentences. Written skills vary according to ability. Higher attaining pupils are writing longer passages especially at examination levels. The majority of pupils are well motivated. Setting enables lessons to be planned to suit ability levels.
190. Progress in both languages at Key Stage 3 is satisfactory. Teacher-pupil relationships are good, which helps progress, as pupils keenly exchange ideas and are not afraid to ask for help when needed. There is good collaborative work in lower ability groups. There was excitement and anticipation in a Year 9 class as each pupil was measured on a metric wall ruler. Large figures had to be retained, written down and presented in French to the class. In a higher ability Year 9 class, verbs came alive, on account of enthusiastic teaching. Motivation continues into Key Stage 4, where there are a number of dual linguists. A lower ability French group vied to show each other they could ask for items of shopping in French and were proud to hear their attempts on tape. A well structured German lesson included numerous teaching aids which successfully stimulated a listening activity using time. Despite small numbers in the sixth form in both languages, there is good interaction and a sense of keenness amongst the students. The pronunciation is good at this level.
191. The quality of teaching throughout the school was satisfactory or better. Teaching was good in 75 per cent of lessons observed in Key Stage 3 and 60 per cent of lessons in Key Stage 4.

192. Most of the teaching observed throughout the school is good and is a strength of the department. Staff show enthusiasm and commitment. There are three native speakers, plus two foreign assistants. Specialist German teachers are currently teaching German in an effort to raise standards in this language. Lessons are well planned, with clear aims and objectives, using a variety of teaching strategies. Ideas are shared. Teachers are good role models in the use of the foreign language in lessons. Relevant homework is regularly set, with clear explanations and deadlines given. Marking is inconsistent and not systematically monitored.
193. The department is well managed and led. Documentation is clear and schemes of work practical. The head of department has clear aims and high expectations. He is very supportive and sensitive to the problems staff encounter. Arrangements for the subject meet requirements of the National Curriculum. There is insufficient opportunity for colleagues to gain by observing others teaching. Penfriend links are established and Years 9 and 10 participate in a Yorkshire / Westphalia exchange. Lessons are taught in a suite of rooms, which are well equipped and attractively displayed. Pupils have individual textbooks. Curriculum time has been reduced following the introduction of 60-minute lessons and a two-week timetable. Hitherto, pupils have studied two languages from Year 7, but reduction in time would allow little time for a good basic grounding in both languages. Some pupils have had difficulty coping with two languages. The move to study French as the first language is intended to give scope for good consolidation. German will continue to be offered in Year 9 as at present, by which time pupils will know their own aptitude in languages. The decision not to offer German in Years 7 and 8 has been viewed by the school as a regrettable necessity. It has been a controversial decision. Parents expressed considerable concern about the decision, and the way it was communicated to them, in the comments they attached to the OFSTED parents' questionnaire.
194. There has been a satisfactory response to most of the issues raised in the last inspection, particularly the increase of teaching methods. Insufficient progress has been made in developing work matched to the needs of all pupils and to monitoring of marking and standards. The access to information and communications technology is inadequate.

MUSIC

195. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 is near the national average, and is broadly in line with similar schools. Pupil's achievement in Key Stage 3 is satisfactory overall when compared with their attainment on entry. Achievement by pupils with special educational needs is also satisfactory. At the end of Key Stage 3 pupils are able to use classroom instruments with competence, for both performance and composition. Pupils build on their keyboard and instrumental skills. For example, in compositions for film accompaniment in Year 9, pupils made inventive use of available resources. Achievement in singing is often average, but occasionally good, as in a Year 8 project on pentatonic blues. Appraising skills are above average; pupils are able to develop and use a musical vocabulary with which to describe and appraise the music they hear.

196. GCSE music results were in line with national averages in 1999. The 2000 results, however, were below the average for similar schools. The reason for this was an uncharacteristic dip in attainment in composition. In 1998 results were above average, with 86 per cent of candidates gaining grades A-C. There were no A* passes in these years. Achievement in appraising and performing has been consistently good; standards in composing more variable. However, the achievement in aural work of pupils of relatively low attainment is good. This is due in part to the consistent emphasis the department places on basic skills, particularly literacy. Such emphasis helps pupils to develop a suitable descriptive and technical language, thus advancing their musical understanding. In Year 11, pupils' compositions often display competence in work derived from various styles and sources. A small number of folios show very limited levels of invention, consisting of 'selection bank' pieces. Most pupils in Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form successfully use computer-generated composition and they are conversant with a range of musical techniques. One successful Year 11 composition, for example, drew on computer-generated sounds to produce a delightful timbre piece. Individual instrumental skills are often strong and are used well in supporting both performance and composition.
197. At A-level, there were no candidates in 1999, but in 2000, results were broadly average. However, the very small number of A-level candidates, together with the low number of candidates from year to year, invalidates statistical comparisons. The very small number of pupils opting for A-level music was referred to in the previous report. Whilst most pupils make satisfactory progress in building on their attainment at GCSE, it is not always sufficient to enable them to reach the highest standards at A-level. The reason for this is variable achievement in aural and appraisal work and some aspects of extended writing. In comparison, standards in composition and performing are sometimes high. Overall standards in music broadly compare with pupils' attainment in other subjects.
198. Most teaching in Key Stage 3 is satisfactory; it is sometimes good. Teachers successfully build on attainment in Year 7. In Key Stage 4 and the sixth form teaching is satisfactory. There are significant elements of good practice in all key stages. Work is usually well matched to pupils' abilities. Teachers' vocal, keyboard and other musical skills are used in the classroom and in extra-curricular activities. Teaching embodies satisfactory preparation, suitable teaching styles, a range of interesting work, good pace, and often satisfactory organisation. Pupils have opportunities to explore their own culture and value the opportunity to explore world music. Such work helps pupils to broaden their understanding of other cultures. Pupils are also helped to consolidate their word skills; teachers routinely refer to spelling. Music teachers support pupils with special needs with work to reinforce or extend classroom tasks. This has a positive effect on the progress of such pupils. Satisfactory teaching, adequate resources and planning, ensure that many pupils make satisfactory progress across Key Stages 3 and 4. Teachers ensure that in both key stages pupils have opportunities to develop most necessary musical skills. Computer work, however, has insufficient emphasis in Key Stage 3. Both teachers and pupils in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form display expertise in the use of information and communications technology, but resources are insufficient to allow reasonable progress. Sixth form teaching is satisfactory overall and is good in relation to performance skills. There is occasionally some tendency in sixth form lessons to lose focus and to develop insufficient critical thought and analysis.

199. Instrumental teaching is good and the number of pupils taking lessons in school, approaching 14 per cent, is about average. About 170 pupils take instrumental lessons. The seven visiting instrumental teachers make a valuable contribution to the curriculum and their work is carefully managed and integrated into the work of the department. Pupils have the opportunity to take instrumental grade examinations on a variety of instruments and have a record of success to Grade 7.
200. Pupils' attitudes in music lessons are usually good. They respond well to challenging work. Their response is often attentive, with appropriate levels of interest, co-operation and behaviour. Pupils work well individually and with enthusiasm in instrumental groups. In Key Stage 3 they co-operate in group composition and are enthusiastic in performing tasks. Pupils enjoy playing their compositions and respond by listening attentively to the compositions of others. Pupils at all stages respond well to most classroom tasks and are co-operative. Sixth formers are usually hard working and diligent.
201. Leadership and management in the department are satisfactory. Departmental organisation is satisfactory, with many suitable administrative processes in place. Schemes of work are detailed. Some use is made of target setting. The long-term monitoring, assessing and recording of pupils' work are satisfactory. Day-to-day assessment is not formally used to develop the work offered to pupils in Key Stage 3. There is good detailed analysis of results by component at A-level and GCSE. This has a positive effect on the introduction of new strategies to develop pupils' learning. Leadership of the department has an impact on performance and extra-curricular work. The previous report indicated that extra-curricular work lacked development. There is a range of extra-curricular activities but the numbers of pupils taking part are very low and some of the activities are occasional rather than regular. Improvement in this has been unsatisfactory.
202. Some pupils enthusiastically commit time and effort to the choirs and other groups. The performing and composing work of pupils is appropriately celebrated in the school, and in the community, within a regular calendar of musical events. There are regular cultural visits and exchanges, for example, a concert band exchange with a group in Denmark. Such opportunities for performance have a strong impact on the cultural and social development of pupils; they also contribute positively to the ethos of the school.
203. Management of the learning environment is satisfactory. The department has adequate instrumental stocks but information and communication technology resources are unsatisfactory and the equipment is old. Accommodation is satisfactory and suitable for all musical activities.
204. There has been satisfactory but variable improvement since the last inspection report. There is inadequate use of information and communications technology in all key stages. Computer equipment is out of date. Unsatisfactory use is made of assessment analysis to inform teaching in Key Stage 3. Insufficient priority has been given to improving the low numbers opting for A-level, and to increasing instrumental take up, expanding the role of visiting instrumental or vocal teachers and re-invigorating pupils' extra-curricular involvement.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

205. In 1999 the teacher assessments in physical education at the end of Key Stage 3 were slightly below the national results, whilst those for 2000 show considerable improvement. In work seen during the inspection, attainment in Key Stage 3 is above average for both boys and girls, and confirms the teachers' assessments. At this stage many boys and most girls including pupils with special educational needs, are achieving expected standards in their activities. Standards in games and dance are above average.
206. Since the previous inspection in 1995 GCSE results have been consistently above the national average, although the rate of improvement is slower than nationally. In 1999, 62 per cent of pupils gained A*-C grades, with an above average number of the highest A*/A grades. Results for boys were significantly above the national average and exceeded those for girls. Results for 2000 have dipped to 55 per cent A*-C, with a significant improvement by girls, with almost three-quarters gaining A*-C grades. GCSE physical education is a popular option and the take-up is above the national figure.
207. In the sixth form A-level physical education is well established. The number of candidates has fluctuated since the previous inspection, but the current numbers in Years 12 and 13 are very healthy. Results since the previous inspection have been above average overall, with a 100 per cent success rate each year, although with fewer higher A/B grades than nationally. In 1999, all eight students passed, with one gaining grade B. The very low entry in 2000 makes statistical comparison with national performance insecure. Both students passed the examination, one at grade C and the other at grade D. Comparison of results for both 1999 and 2000 shows that students' performance in physical education was significantly higher than in their other A-level examinations, and represents high achievement for these students.
208. In work seen during the inspection, standards at the end of Key Stage 4 are average overall, with strengths in games, particularly football and netball. Attainment for those boys and girls who have chosen to take the GCSE physical education is slightly above average, and standards of practical work for boys and girls is generally higher in Year 10 than in Year 11. In the sixth form, standards in the A-level course are average.
209. Pupils' learning skills are generally good and their rate of progress in Key Stage 3 is good including for those pupils with special educational needs. In Key Stage 4 progress is satisfactory in core physical education provided for all pupils. It is good for those taking the GCSE course, particularly in practical activities where strong teaching combines with pupils' interest and commitment and results in effective learning. Progress and achievement are good for A-level students in the sixth form because skilful teaching ensures that students' motivation and positive attitudes to the course are consolidated in effective learning.
210. Pupils are co-operative and behave well in their lessons. Attitudes across the school are very positive, especially in Key Stage 3, and levels of interest and enthusiasm are high. Participation rates are very good and pupils have good learning skills. Pupils show good commitment and work hard in their activities, listening well to advice from their teachers and applying it effectively in improving their skills. Boys and girls work well together, and take responsibility readily, for example, in leading warm-up activities. Collaborative work is good, and in examination work many show a mature approach to their studies.

211. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Overall, teaching is now good and no unsatisfactory teaching was seen. In Key Stage 3 teaching is good. Subject knowledge and understanding is strong. Lessons are effectively structured, with good opportunities to engage pupils in the planning and evaluation of their work, particularly in dance and gymnastics. Teaching at Key Stage 4 is satisfactory, and is particularly effective in practical GCSE work. Sixth form teaching is consistently good where expectation and pace are strong features. The most successful teaching combines strong subject knowledge with good pupil management skills, high expectations of pupils' response, and well judged teacher intervention and feedback to promote learning. Where this was the case, for example, in Year 7 basketball and netball, Year 9 dance and hockey, Year 8 badminton, Year 12 A-level anatomy and physiology and Year 13 examination work on behaviour and personality in sport, pupils concentrated well, enjoyed the work presented, took responsibility for their own learning and made good progress. Relationships and discipline are strong and lessons are usually purposeful and busy, although, on occasions, slow to get underway. Work is usually well matched to the developing skills and capabilities of the majority of pupils, although more specific tasks and resources are needed to help the gifted and the lowest attaining pupils improve their progress. Effective use is made of homework in examination classes to reinforce and extend learning, although insufficient use is made of information and communication technology, and in Key Stage 4 there is a lack of opportunities for pupils to research topics and produce their own independent, extended writing.
212. Subject leadership and management are satisfactory. Curriculum documentation is very good and the requirements of the National Curriculum are properly covered. Improved assessment arrangements are in place which ensure that pupils' progress is effectively tracked throughout the school. Day-to-day administration is good. Planning for development has been introduced, although not effectively costed. Whilst teacher appraisal is established, there is no regular, structured monitoring and evaluation of teaching and its impact on pupils' progress and learning in physical education.
213. Facilities for physical education are good overall, but examination work suffers from the lack of a dedicated classroom base to promote subject identity and provide appropriate storage of records, resources and teaching materials. Resource levels are barely adequate, and funding for the subject is lower than usual. As a result, gymnastic equipment is outdated and requires improvement. There are insufficient GCSE textbooks to provide personal copies for pupils to take home for research, revision and homework. Library and information and communication technology provision for physical education are inadequate. The playing fields opposite the school are open to the public and fouling by dogs creates unpleasant health problems. Staff are well qualified and hardworking. In addition to their commitment to their curricular roles and responsibilities, they provide a good range of extra-curricular opportunities for boys and girls. These are popular, well supported, and enable some pupils to achieve high standards, both individually and within their teams.
214. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good. With the exception of examination resources, the issues raised have been tackled effectively. Teaching and assessment procedures have improved and the above average examination results have been sustained. The department's commitment to extra-curricular work and curricular provision were recognised with the award of the Sportsmark in 1998. The popularity of the subject is reflected in the good levels of pupil participation, and the current take-up for examination courses.

VOCATIONAL COURSES

BUSINESS STUDIES

215. In the 1999 GCSE examinations 74 per cent of students gained A*-C grades. This is well above the national average and was achieved by an exceptional cohort of pupils. In this year's GCSE nearly 60 per cent of pupils achieved A*-C grades. This is above the national average. Though there have been variations in the past few years, average figures in the school have been consistently higher than national expectations. The first cohort of A-level students in the school took their examination in 2000 and all students gained a grade C or better. GNVQ business studies students also achieved good results with almost all students gaining either merits or distinctions.
216. At the end of Key Stage 4 business studies students have a good knowledge of a range of business organisations. The progress they make in working through the areas of knowledge and understanding required by the syllabus is good. Through practical examples they explore, for example, the implications of the privatisation of Abbey Grange School. They reach a good understanding of the ways in which people fit into organisations. They produce clear and informative organisational charts that define the lines of communication and chains of command that organisations develop. They have a good understanding at this stage of factors affecting growth in business and the ways in which growth is measured. Their background knowledge and understanding is generally good and they are able to communicate this well in class.
217. Standards in the sixth form are good as is the progress they make. A-level students have a good knowledge of market research and of qualitative and quantitative methods. They have a good understanding of, for example, the potential of individuals to distort the dynamics of focus groups. They understand the need to validate research and have a good knowledge of a range of survey methods. Research skills are good in the GNVQ classes. Students are making increasingly good use of the internet to inform their work. They take a good analytical approach to business planning and can identify important factors such as where to go for advice on legal or financial matters. They produce good model business plans. The presentation of their work is good and they use information and communication technology well to present information about, for example, organisational structures.
218. Teaching and learning are good. The subject knowledge of teachers in the department is very good. This is demonstrated in good planning and in good quality input throughout lessons. Lessons are introduced with clarity and learning objectives are shared. This purposeful approach leads to clear and coherent learning on the part of pupils who know where they are heading. There is good pace in lessons, they are lively and often fun. Teachers ensure that there is intellectual challenge and use praise and encouragement to motivate pupils to rise to the challenge set. Relationships are good. Teachers respect and value the contributions pupils make.

219. Business Studies is a popular subject in the school. Its results have been consistently high. This is the result of good leadership and good teamwork. A strength of the department is the monitoring of its work. The head of department has developed very good procedures to track progress both in teaching and learning. The department is not enabling pupils to gain maximum benefit from information and communications technology because of the difficulty in gaining access to the necessary facilities.

DIPLOMA OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

220. The attainment of pupils is in line with expectations of pupils by the age of 16. In 1999, 100 per cent of pupils attained the diploma. The size of the cohort of pupils varies from year to year and so comparison between years is unreliable.
221. The attitudes of pupils to the courses are good and they respond well to the challenges set. In Year 10 pupils complete a project on disability. In Year 11 pupils devise their own business.
222. Teaching is good. Pupils are well managed and set appropriate learning assignments. They are encouraged to plan their work and carry out independent research.

GNVQ LEISURE AND TOURISM, LEISURE AND RECREATION, AND HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE.

223. These courses are offered at both intermediate and advanced level in the sixth form. At advanced level in 1999, 88 per cent gained distinction or merit in health and social care with 100 per cent at pass or above. Also, in leisure and tourism, 75 per cent achieved a pass or above with 25 per cent attaining a merit or distinction. At intermediate level in Health and social care 66 per cent attained a merit or distinction and in leisure and tourism 100 per cent attained a pass or merit. Leisure and Recreation is beginning in Year 12. Attainment matches national expectations at both levels; although the numbers involved are too small to make reliable comparisons between years.
224. Students make good progress and broaden their knowledge. Students on all of these courses are very well motivated and respond well to the demands made by the teachers. They are confident in organising their work and about visiting places in the locality, to support their study. They are confident in the use of information and communication technology.
225. Teaching is good overall in health and social care and leisure and tourism at both levels. It is also good in leisure and recreation. On occasions, it is very good with teachers skilled in one-to-one discussion with the pupils, helping them to organise their work and setting appropriate priorities and deadlines. There are good relationships between students and their teachers and this builds confidence in the students. On occasions, however, students are required to be passive for long periods, while listening to the teacher. This results in insufficient challenge for students. Science staff make a good specialist contribution to health and social care.
226. The overall management of GNVQs is very good. The assessment scheme is very good and ensures consistency across the different courses.

OTHER SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE INSPECTION

GENERAL STUDIES

227. The attainment of students is in line with national expectations. The average point score for pupils in 1999 was 5.5 at GCE A-level. This was an improvement over the previous year where the point score was 4.8, although the cohort was larger in the former year.
228. Students respond well to the demands of their teachers. They broaden their understanding of political and scientific issues. Students explore the differences in cultural ideas in the east and west about democracy. They understand that different cultural traditions contribute to these ideas and beliefs. They know how to elicit data from a scientific text to produce a written response.
229. Teaching is good. It is well planned and focused on the developing needs of the students. There is a good balance of text analysis and challenging debate

SOCIOLOGY

230. Advanced level sociology results in 1999 were above the national average. There was a 100 per cent pass rate. Results in 2000 were similar.
231. GCSE results in 1999 were above the national average. The proportion of pupils gaining grades A*-C remained about the same in 2000. The proportion of those gaining at least grade G was 100 per cent in 1999. This fell slightly in 2000. Pupils achieved about the same in 1999 in sociology as they did in their other subjects; in 2000, their attainment was slightly higher.
232. In the sixth form, the evidence in lessons observed indicated that achievement by Year 13 is good. Pupils do best in discussion where they use evidence to formulate their hypotheses and share these to reach conclusions. In one Year 13 lesson, for example, this was demonstrated when violence and the mass media was discussed. The media influences such as television and the press were examined for the ways in which messages could be conveyed which might prejudice society. Most pupils formulated social, moral and sociological explanations whilst viewing appropriate stimuli. They drew well on their knowledge of sociological information to support their views. Pupils' skills were weaker in linking the work of renowned sociologists with that of their present work, although different perspectives were examined and included.
233. The evidence of the pupils' work and the lessons observed showed that the standard of work of pupils currently in Year 11 is also good; like the sixth form, pupils do best in discussion where they learn from one another's experience and begin to apply sociological terms. For example, in a Year 11 class, pupils focussed their discussion on sociological reasons for the link between gender and crime. They drew on previous knowledge and prompts from work sheets to establish in a balanced way reasons why the different socialisation of genders might affect the percentage of male and female crime. Higher attaining pupils used appropriate sociological terms, for example peer pressure, and articulated related specific points well. Some lower attaining pupils gave more generalised comments and projected biased rather than balanced views.

234. When compared to their earlier attainment, pupils' achievement in sociology is good. They build up knowledge in a structured way in a very supportive and caring environment. For example, in a Year 10 lesson, pupils quickly learnt how to conduct an interview when studying methodology. They understood the advantages and disadvantages of a structured, semi-structured and unstructured interview type and then examined suitable sampling frames. This was followed by a discussion on the constraints on interviewers and interviewees. By the end of the lesson, the majority of pupils used this learning so that they could conduct satisfactory interviews in practice for coursework. Higher attaining pupils understood ethical constraints, use of body language and the value of evaluation and began to interact positively. Lower attaining pupils needed individual support to improve techniques in their interviews and lacked confidence in their delivery. By the sixth form, pupils confidently put forward their points for discussion with strong arguments; for example in a Year 13 lesson, pupils argued the functionalist case in explaining deviance. Most pupils understood the complexities involved and contributed with confidence. A few lower attaining pupils found the idea that crime was functional, complicated to comprehend but were not afraid to supply pertinent points and test their judgements.
235. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, as do lower attaining pupils generally, because of the constant encouragement they receive, the repetition of teaching points and the clear explanations. Re-emphasis and small pieces of teaching are well received and assimilated by all pupils but this is particularly well targeted at lower attaining pupils. This was most evident in a Year 10 lesson where pupils at the beginning of their course were taken steadily through an understanding of methodological choices and constraints. Plenty of examples and situations were given by the teacher to illustrate and make clear all the factors involved in the pupils' complete understanding of the topic. As a result, the achievement of these pupils is good.
236. Overall, the teaching observed was good. Teaching was most effective in the sixth form where teachers had a clear focus on examination syllabus requirements and the criteria for success. Teachers have good subject knowledge, and so give clear explanations and lead discussions well. They also question pupils skilfully to check and extend their understanding. For example, in a Year 13 lesson, a teacher questioned the responses of pupils to make them think and justify their arguments. In another Year 13 lesson, the teacher put forward controversial issues, like the Jamie Bulger killing, to provoke pupils into further discussion on the moral and social impact on society incited by media response, as well as leading them into an understanding of how different socialisation experiences may have brought about such a tragedy. The weaknesses observed were mainly concerned with combining evidence, collected in discussion, in a structured way to formulate hypotheses and then to come to clear conclusions. Progression was not always evident and the impact of eminent sociologists' work was not always included to lend consolidation to learning. For example, in a Year 12 lesson, pupils contributed a mass of information on social class and made clear stereotypical views; this was recorded, but conclusions were not evident nor was the work linked to that of other sociologists.
237. As a result of the sociology teaching, pupils' learning is also good. Pupils appreciate their understanding of the subject, with one Year 12 girl explaining that society was like 'a jigsaw' and she now had an understanding of 'the puzzle of society' where all the different 'bits fit together ... you understand how society works'. In a Year 10 lesson, there was clear evidence of drives to improve literacy and numeracy; for example, pupils highlighted key sociological words: these were explained carefully and pupils were encouraged to learn them and make use of them. In the sixth form

and in Year 11, pie charts, block graphs and statistics were in regular use to support course work. Examples of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development were evident in group work and in discussion. In a Year 11 group, Jesus was portrayed as a deviant in his society to help illustrate different cultures' view of deviance, as well as stimulating pupils' thoughts and discussions by putting forward controversial and challenging ideas. Pupils in the sixth form have the support of a CD-Rom on social trends to assist with coursework and homework.

238. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. They respond enthusiastically to the challenging work set, and take particular care over their written work. Pupils respond well to the style of teaching in the department which allows them to take an active part.
239. Sociology was not inspected in the previous inspection. However, the department has a clear view of where further improvements in the teaching and in the curriculum need to be made. Extension work, to assist pupils with coursework in Year 13 and Year 11, has been introduced at lunchtime. Sixth formers attend the 'Update' revision conferences held in Manchester in preparation for the A-level examination. The department has appropriate schemes of work. A display of Year 11 work was dominant in one of the teaching rooms and gave real impact for the subject, but the accommodation for sociology is shared with other subjects. This lack of a real base restricts display work, which could provide a valuable indicator of achievement and standards for younger pupils to follow. Books and resources are barely adequate and limit the variety of lesson activities. Photocopies, on occasions, were badly reproduced and source and date information were omitted; the information source is necessary for inclusion on coursework. The library provides weak support to coursework for Year 13 and Year 11 pupils.