

INSPECTION REPORT

MANOR SCHOOL

Raunds Wellingborough

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 122119

Headteacher: Mr Paul Wingfield

Reporting inspector: David Jones
8197

Dates of inspection: 16th - 20th October 2000

Inspection number: 223946

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Type of school: | Comprehensive |
| School category: | Foundation |
| Age range of pupils: | 11 -19 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| School address: | Mountbatten Way Raunds Wellingborough Northamptonshire |
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| Appropriate authority: | The Governing Body. |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mr Eric Pusey |
| Date of previous inspection: | 27.11.1995 |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The Manor school is an 11 –19 mixed comprehensive Foundation school. The school serves a socio-economically mixed catchment area drawn from the small former industrial town of Raunds and the nearby villages. The school is smaller than average nationally with 788 pupils on role in September 200, just over 55% of students were male. Less than 1% of pupils come from an ethnic minority. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is above average (27.8%), some 3.4% of pupils have statements of special educational need. Attainment on entry is just below the National Average. The school has specialist provision for pupils with physical disabilities and provides support for pupils being re-admitted to secondary education. The school operates as part of a thriving and successful consortium of local schools for post 16 provision.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school, with a number of very good features and aspirations to excellence. The management of the school has raised standards in line with national expectations; it has significantly improved teaching, the management of behaviour and the development of an inclusive ethos that consistently contributes to pupils' achievements. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- The monitoring and evaluation of teaching.
- The quality of pupils intellectual, creative and physical efforts
- The induction of staff, the work of the librarian and the inclusion team.
- The cost effectiveness of the post 16 provision.
- The educational direction aims and values of the school.
- The strategic management of the governing body.
- The leadership and management of the school.

What could be improved

- The distribution of lessons in the timetable
- The depth and rigour of pupils' experience of the statutory orders for geography, history, design technology in year 8.
- The information provided to parents in the prospectus and the governors' annual report.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected at the end of November 1995. The action taken to meet the school's targets as set by the governing body has been very good. The three-year school development plan has been constantly reviewed and appropriately updated. There is a clear educational direction, which is a very good reflection of the school's aims and values. A significant factor in the improvement of students' standards is the rigorous target setting that sets high expectations. The school analyses performance information to set challenging targets and this procedure typifies a continuous drive to achieve improvement.

Strong financial management by senior managers and the governing body has enabled the imminent redevelopment of the school's sporting and community facilities with external partners. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching has been very good. The integration of inclusion and behaviour management strategies has improved the quality of teaching by over thirty percent since the last inspection. The schools pursuit of best value in all financial matters is good.

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 | | | | Key |
|---|---------------|------|------|-----------------|---|
| | all schools | | | Similar schools | |
| | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2000 | |
| GCSE examinations | A | C | C | D | Well above average A Above average B C Below average D Well below average E |
| A-levels/AS-levels. (Please see paragraph 4 below) | D | D | D | | |

Performance in the end of Key Stage 3 national tests for 14 year olds in English, mathematics and science was above average in both 1999 and 2000. The girls' standards have been well above the national average while the boys have been above. Standards have improved in line with the national trends, with those in English and mathematics above average while standards in science have been well above average.

At the end of Key Stage 4 performance at GCSE was just above the LEA and national average in 1999 and it improved against these measure again in 2000. Girls have been above the national average while boys have been close to it. Overall the proportion passing at grades A*-C was just above the national average except for science, humanities, and mathematics where the proportion was significantly above the national average.

The proportion of students passing with 5 or more grades at G and those passing with one or more grades at G or higher grades has been above the national average and the average for similar schools for the last three years. It was well above average in 1999 and 2000, this represents very good added value in relation to the students' prior attainment. Achievement overall is good, with the school entering a higher proportion of students for GCSE examinations than is normally the case.

Post 16 students study for A level and vocational examinations as part of a successful consortium with three other schools. The results of the consortium as a whole were above average in 1999, the small cohort from Manor school makes the D grade given in the table above statistically invalid. Progress is satisfactory when compared to the students' prior attainment and those for the 2000 examinations show further improvement on previous years.

STUDENTS ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school | Students' attitudes to the school are good, they are keen to learn. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Behaviour is good on almost all occasions. Students understand and respect the schools behaviour policy. |
| Personal development and relationships | Personal development is sound, students are quite dependent on their teachers for direction and spontaneously questions are limited. |

| | |
|------------|---|
| Attendance | Attendance is above the national average. |
|------------|---|

They are prepared to learn and are attentive and conscientious in lessons. This positive attitude stems from the quality of teaching they experience in most lessons and contributes much towards their attainment and progress. The level of support received by students with special educational needs contributes significantly to the positive attitudes they display. Students behave sensibly in class and around the school. Attendance is above average, unauthorised absence is low as is the rate of exclusion.

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 overall quality of teaching is good in both Key Stages 3 and 4, and in the sixth form. Across the school, teaching is good or better in two thirds of lessons seen, across all groups and in all Key Stages. Virtually all of the remainder is satisfactory. Good teaching predominates in English, science, music, and art. It is good at Key Stages 3 and 4 in mathematics and modern foreign languages, and is also good in design technology at Key Stage 3. It is very good in information technology in the sixth form. No subject is judged to have unsatisfactory teaching overall. Good teaching features in virtually all areas of the curriculum.

Teachers' command of subject is usually strong and where expectations are high there is positive impact on student progress and achievement. A variety of teaching strategies are used, lessons are generally well paced, often with effective questioning. Literacy and numeracy are appropriately developed in most lessons. Collaborative work features strongly in drama, physical education, and in some English and science lessons.

The use and application of information technology in most subjects is under-developed. Teachers' planning is a general strength of the school, and tasks are mainly well matched to the need. There is need to continue to ensure that higher attaining students are fully extended. Assessment and marking are generally good and homework is used effectively in most subjects. The management of pupils in the classroom is a consistent strength of the teaching.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|---|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | The quality and range of the curriculum is satisfactory overall. There is limited access to some aspects of the National Curriculum in Key Stage 3. The unbalanced weekly distribution of the timetable is inhibiting continuity. The range of curriculum opportunity post 16 is very good. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | The provision for those with special educational needs is good. The work of the inclusion team is a strength of the school. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | The provision for students' personal development is good. Particular strengths included the provision for religious education, counselling, personal social and health education. The use of form tutor time is good. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | The procedures for child protection and welfare are good with particular strengths in personal support and guidance. |

Generally the school works well with parents. Most parents are satisfied with the quality and effectiveness of the education the school provides for their children. The majority of parents expressed positive views of the school. The curriculum is generally broad but unsatisfactory arrangements for the weekly distribution of lessons across the curriculum affect many subjects. In Key Stage 3 limited time in year eight affects the depth and rigour of pupils' experience of the statutory orders in art, information technology, design technology, geography and history.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The leadership and management of the headteacher and senior staff is very good. Focussing on; teaching, the management of behaviour, inclusion strategies and the enhancement of the schools facilities have been appropriate priorities pursued with vision and energy. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | The effectiveness of the governing body is good with particular strengths in strategic management. The fulfilment of statutory responsibility is satisfactory with limitations in Key Stage 3. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching has been very good. The integration of inclusion and behaviour management strategies has improved the quality of teaching and standards. |
| The strategic use of resources | Very good financial management procedures have supported the schools curriculum and pastoral priorities in recent years. |

The match of well-qualified staff to the curriculum need is good. Resources and accommodation are satisfactory overall. The leadership of senior managers ensures a clear educational direction, which is a very good reflection of the school's aims and values. Delegation to middle managers is satisfactory. Following the schools successful focus on behaviour management and the quality of teaching there are now opportunities to link their work to the new senior management focus on standards in Key Stages. The schools pursuit of best value in all financial matters is good with consistent support for local suppliers.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like the school • The school expects their child to work hard • Teaching is good • Their child is making good progress | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school working closer with parents • More information on how their child is getting on. • An improved balance in homework requirements. |

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views. The view expressed by 99% of parents that their child likes school is unusually high and born out by both student comment and observation. Inspectors feel the school tries very hard to work with parents and are generally successful. They feel the information parents receive is satisfactory as is the policy on homework.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Information from tests carried out by the school shows that the students' standards on entry to the school are broadly average, albeit a low average. The school has fewer students in the above and above average range than is usual. The proportion of students with special educational needs is above the national average. The standards of the current Year 11 were below average on entry.
2. By the end of Key Stage 3 the overall mean points score in the national tests for 14 year olds in English, mathematics and science was above average over the period 1997-2000. The girls' standards have been well above the national average while the boys have been above. Standards have improved in line with the national trend. During this period standards in English and mathematics have been above average while standards in science have been well above average.
3. In 1999 standards fell to a level that was broadly average, but this nevertheless represented good achievement by the year group in question, given their below average standards on entry. Overall standards were well below average in comparison with students from similar schools, reflecting the above average proportion of students with special educational needs in this year group. Standards in science were above the national average but below the average for similar schools. Standards in English and mathematics were in line with the national average but well below the standards for similar schools.
4. In the 2000 national tests results show that overall attainment improved at Key Stage 3 in the national tests for English, mathematics and science. Overall standards in English matched the well above standards achieved in 1997 and 1998. Standards in mathematics and science improved to above average level and were in line with similar schools
5. At the end of Key Stage 4 the GCSE points score has been just above both the LEA and national average for the last two years. Girls have been above the national average while boys have been close to it, although this trend was reversed in 1999. The improvement in the average point's score has not been rising as fast as the trend nationally. From 1996-98 the proportion passing GCSE with 5 or more grades at C or higher has been in line with the national average but has been above in 1999 and 2000. It was, however below the average for similar schools in 2000 and was below what would have been expected from the students' prior attainment in 1999 at Key Stage 3.
6. The proportion passing with 5 or more grades at G or higher has been above the national average for the last three years and was well above in both 1999 and 2000. It was above the average for similar schools and represents very good added value in relation to the students' prior attainment. The proportion passing with one or more grades at G or higher was also well above the national and similar schools average and also represents very good added value in relation to prior attainment. Achievement overall is good given the school's above average proportion of students with special educational needs and its policy of consistently entering a higher proportion of students for GCSE examinations than is normally the case in most schools.
7. Overall the proportion passing at grades A*-C was just above the national average except for science, humanities, and mathematics where the proportion was significantly above the national average, and for information technology where it was significantly below that is the case in most schools.

8. In 1999 and 2000 the students tended to do better in English, mathematics, science, German and humanities than in their other subjects and less well in design technology and English literature. In the 2000 GCSE examination results show that the average points score improved as did the proportion gaining 5 grades A*-C. There was a small decline in the proportion passing with 5 or more grades A*-G as three students left before completing their course but the proportion of those passing with 1 or more grade A* -C remained above the national average.
9. In the Sixth Form students study for A level examinations and vocational qualifications as part of a consortium with three other schools. The results of the consortium as a whole were above average in 1999. The Raunds students constitute a small proportion of the consortium as a whole. Separate data of their achievements against national expectations indicate their results tend to be below average but this judgement requires caution given the very small sample of candidates. Progress is satisfactory when compared to the students' prior attainment. The results for the 2000 examinations show an improvement on previous years.
10. In work seen during the inspection standards of English are above those expected for 14 year old at the end of Key Stage 3 and in line with expectation at Key Stage 4. Students achieve well at each key stage because they are consistently well taught by teachers who have high expectations of them. Targets are set clearly both in terms of National Curriculum levels and GCSE grades and the skills each student needs to improve.
11. Students' standards of literacy at the end of Key Stage 3 are above those expected for 14 year olds. At Key Stage 4 they are in line with those expected for 16 year olds. At both key stages this represents improvement given the students' attainment on entry. The English and inclusion departments support for students with special educational needs make a major contribution to this improvement. The English department stresses the importance of accurate spelling, appropriate punctuation and well-organised and planned writing. At the same time the English teachers encourage the students' personal responses and give them many opportunities for extended writing. Inclusion support staff give appropriate support and teaching to those students whose reading skills are less advanced often, on a small group or one to one basis. This leads to these students making good progress, especially in reading, spelling and extended pieces of writing.
12. In addition, the support for literacy from different subjects is better than usually seen. Students make good progress in structuring their writing through the use of good resources such as writing frames that guide the planning and development of essay and inquiry work. Another strength is the promotion and learning of the correct vocabulary within each subject. The well-stocked and attractive library makes a good contribution to the development of reading. A recently introduced weekly silent reading session for all students is an effective way of promoting the importance of reading in their lives. It was implemented well during the inspection, reflecting a good whole school commitment to this important area.
13. In mathematics standards meet expectation at Key Stage 3 and 4. Standards of numeracy are poor, but improving. Students often have a range of strategies for working out arithmetic problems in their heads, but are impeded by lack of consistent practice, and poor recall of multiplication tables. There is some good use of data handling across the curriculum, with bar charts used in science and history. In geography students use estimation to help them understand statistics involving large numbers. There is currently a policy to link mathematics teachers with the other departments both to advise on how best to use numeracy to enhance learning in other subjects, and also on how those other subjects can contribute to the improvement of standards of numeracy. The results of this new policy have yet to be seen but the staff commitment to this is evident from the numeracy summer school organised to support the new intake of pupils in September 2000.

14. In science standards are above expectation at Key Stage 3 and 4. Teachers use assessment well to set expectations and to monitor progress. Their expectations are high and their teaching methods lively and stimulating.
15. During the week of the inspection standards in other subjects were above expectation at Key Stage 3 and in modern foreign languages, humanities and art at Key Stage 4. Standards are below expectation in Key Stage 4 information technology. Elsewhere standards match expectations.
16. The above average standards in Key Stage 3 music result from consistently good teaching. At Key Stage 4 GCSE A*-C pass rates rose from the national average in 1999 to 100% in 2000. In modern foreign languages at Key Stage 4 students' above average standards result from good teaching that sets clear targets. Better use of assessment has led to the development of teaching and learning materials that address the students' learning needs in a more focused way. Additional support has helped to improve standards of speaking and listening. In art standards are above average at Key Stage 3 and 4 because of the quality of feedback and guidance received.
17. In information technology standards are below expectation because the students do not study systems and control as required by the National Curriculum. In addition the grounding that the students had during Key Stage 3 was not sufficiently comprehensive to provide a better foundation for further progress. Shortcomings in the Key Stage 3 curriculum still persist, especially in computer aided design, computer - aided manufacturing and systems control. Consequently the students are not achieving as well as they should be in information technology.
18. The standards seen in specialist information technology lessons at Key Stage 4 is below national expectations but are in line with expectations at key stage 3. Students develop a suitably broad range of skills, but standards are affected by their lack of opportunity to develop skills in Computer Aided Design, Computer Aided Manufacture, (CAD and CAM) Systems and Control. Although teachers identify opportunities to use information technology in other subjects across the curriculum, there is need of further development in music, geography, history, design and technology.
19. Although standards in history and geography match expectation at Key Stage 3 the students' standards are constrained because the time allocated within the humanities provision is not as high as in most schools. Consequently students are not covering the range of work in the depth that is normally seen and non-specialists deliver some subject units. Students' standards in religious education meet expectation and this represents good achievement given their prior knowledge and understanding. Progress is helped by the fact that religious and ethical issues permeate the humanities curriculum.
20. In 1999, GCSE examination results in humanities show standards are above national expectations. Boys attain well above national averages and they out perform girls. This trend continues with the 2000 results.
21. Overall achievement is good at Key Stage 3 and 4. The school is effective in moving forward students of generally a low average attainment on entry to standards that are at least a high average and often above average. The relative standards of boys and girls show a mixed picture. Girls tend to do better than boys in design technology, information technology and mathematics at Key Stage 3. Good targeting in modern foreign languages is leading to higher standards from boys at Key Stage 4. In GCSE English the boys outperformed girls in 2000.

22. A significant factor in the improvement of students' standards is the rigorous target setting that sets high expectations. The school analyses performance information to set challenging targets and this procedure typifies a continuous drive to achieve improvement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

23. The majority of students have a good attitude to their education. They are keen to come to school, and go to their classes without wasting time. They are prepared to learn and are attentive and conscientious in lessons. This positive attitude stems from the quality of teaching they experience in most lessons and contributes much towards their attainment and progress. Students settle quickly at the start of sessions. During well-taught lessons they sustain interest in their studies and are keen to participate through answering questions. For example, in an English lesson identifying stylistic similarities in texts by George Orwell and Martin Luther King, they participated fully in making suggestions, listening carefully to points put forward by others in the class. They settle promptly to written work and are able to work in silence when required to do so. They respond positively to teachers who have high expectations of them in both work and behaviour, but in the very few instances where teaching is less satisfactory, students can lose interest and misbehave. The level of support received by students with special educational needs contributes significantly to the positive attitudes they display. An unusual example is the student who has rejected other schools but is able to get something positive from the school day in the inclusion unit.
24. Students are very aware of the school's behaviour management programme, called "Choices", and its effective application underpins the good behaviour of students. They behave well in most classes, enabling teachers to use available time productively rather than spend excessive time in lessons maintaining order. Students behave sensibly at lunchtimes and around the school, with just the very occasional inappropriate incident. Students, parents and staff are agreed that although the occasional bullying incident does occur, the staff deals with them speedily and efficiently. There have been a number of fixed-term exclusions in the past year for serious or repeated misbehaviour. The school is very successful at keeping students working within the system who might otherwise require this sanction.
25. Students' personal development is sound. Even at Key Stage 4, they are quite dependent on their teachers to give them direction, and tend not to spontaneously ask questions in lessons. There is room for them to take more responsibility for their own learning, largely because many lessons are quite teacher-directed, rather than allowing more freedom for students to have more control over their own learning. This would benefit students when they enter year 12, where some students have yet to develop a more mature approach to their studies. For example, a year 12 lessons on market research techniques saw the teacher's efforts to raise the students' interest fail in the face of their passivity. However in a general studies lesson, very good teacher questioning sustained a well structured student presentation on Siamese twins. Students' capacity to reflect upon their own feelings and discuss their experiences is soundly developed. Students do not always display common courtesies, such as holding a door for somebody following them through it.
26. Relationships within the school are good and students respect their teachers. Students can work collaboratively when called upon to do so. They listen and give due regard to the views of others, even when they are different from their own, and are supportive of one another. They show respect for the school's property, use equipment sensibly and are trusted by teachers to use resources and facilities with minimum levels of supervision. As an example of their basic honesty, piles of pupils' rucksacks are left around the building at lunchtimes unguarded. There is a range of opportunities for students to take responsibility, for example, through the school council and work experience schemes.

27. Students' attendance is good, being above the national average for a school of this type. Unauthorised absence is about half the national rate, with the registration period held at the end of the school day helping to curtail truancy. This has a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress. Students are punctual arriving at school and students do not delay the start of lessons by arriving late. Standards of students' behaviour and attendance are very good and have improved since the last inspection of the school.

HOW WELL ARE STUDENTS TAUGHT?

28. The overall quality of teaching is good in both Key Stages 3 and 4, and in the sixth form. Across the school, teaching is good or better in two thirds of lessons seen, and virtually all of the remainder is satisfactory. Since the previous inspection, improvement in the quality of teaching has been very good, particularly in Key Stage 3 where previously more than 25% of lessons were unsatisfactory and this has been all but eliminated.
29. Positive standards have been consolidated within subjects, and the high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching noted in the last report has been almost eliminated. The impact of the school's monitoring and evaluation of teaching and the improved match of work to students' needs and capabilities has clearly been successful. This significant and widespread improvement in the quality of teaching has been a key factor in the progress made in raising students' attainment, a key issue for the school from the last inspection.
30. Good teaching predominates in English, science, music, and art. It is good at Key Stages 3 and 4 in mathematics and modern foreign languages, and is also good in design technology at Key Stage 3. It is very good in information technology in the sixth form. No subject is judged to have unsatisfactory teaching overall, and examples of good teaching feature in virtually all areas of the curriculum. The very small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching lacked appropriate challenge, and as a result progress and learning were insufficient.
31. Specialist teachers' knowledge and understanding of their subjects are strong generally. Where expectations of pupils' work and behaviour are high there is positive impact on their rates of progress and achievement. This is notably so in science, music, art, and in English where pupils are required to tackle demanding texts and activities which lead to high achievement. This was the case, for example, in Year 10 investigative work in science, and in a Year 9 lesson focused on 'Far from the Madding Crowd'. In the humanities, the work presented sometimes lacks sufficient challenge, mainly when teachers are working outside their particular specialisms.
32. Teachers generally explain to pupils what they are expected to learn. In the better lessons, for example, in English, science, modern foreign languages, mathematics, and physical education good lesson summaries check students' progress and understanding. Teachers use a reasonable range of teaching strategies that are appropriate for the task in hand and for the students concerned. Collaborative work features strongly in drama, physical education, and in some English and science lessons. The development of students' personal skills of research and independent writing are inconsistently developed. Literacy and numeracy skills are appropriately developed in most lessons. The use and application of information technology in most subjects is under-developed but staff expertise and planning in this area is improving with New Opportunities Fund training.
33. Learning is generally good in the majority of lessons, particularly when focussed and extended by good questioning and clear explanations. Pupils with special educational needs learn well in almost all lessons. Appropriate work is provided in all subjects and learning support assistants are particularly effective in challenging and motivating these students.

34. Most lessons proceed at a purposeful pace, often with effective questioning which tests knowledge and understanding, and leads on skilfully to new work. This approach was notably successful in Year 12 general studies work on faith and natural selection, in Year 7 mathematics work on symmetry, and in an English lesson in which Year 10 students critically analysed a chapter from 'Lord of the Flies'. Whilst time is well used in the 50 minute periods, the use of double periods in some subjects leads to difficulties with concentration and productivity. This is not the case in design technology and in physical education where double periods are generally used well.
35. Teachers' planning is a general strength of the school, and tasks are mainly matched well to the needs and capabilities of the majority of students in most subjects. This is an area where there has been considerable progress since the previous inspection. This has been particularly effective in design technology, science and English with the middle and lower attaining students. There is a need to continue to ensure that higher attaining students are fully extended in most subject areas. In most subjects available resources are used effectively to promote learning.
36. Assessment and marking are generally good, and are more consistent across the school than at the previous inspection. Marking is diligent, but does not always provide sufficient guidance for improvement, for example, in science, or in modern foreign languages. Where marking is good, for example, in English, many students understand how their work compares with national expectations at Key Stage 3, or in terms of GCSE grading at Key Stage 4. Homework is used effectively in most subjects to support learning, and is having positive impact on improving students' achievements, notably in science, religious education, and modern foreign languages.
37. The management of pupils in the classroom is a consistent strength of the teaching. Relationships are good and teachers set good examples, relating well to their classes and providing positive levels of support and encouragement. Discipline is good, although teachers have to work hard with a minority of students to maintain full control, and to ensure that the progress of the majority is not disrupted.

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

38. The curriculum is generally broad and makes satisfactory provision for pupils at Key Stages 4. Curriculum provision for post 16 students is very good through the consortium arrangements with local schools. At Key Stage 3 there are some unsatisfactory features in the provision. In Key Stages 3 and 4 the curriculum includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum, with religious education and a programme of personal, social and health education both part of an integrated humanities programme which also incorporates geography, history, and careers education. There is good provision of time for the core subjects at both key stages. However there is inadequate time available in Key Stage 3 for the range of content required by the humanities curriculum in year 8. The depth and rigour of the course provided in art, history and geography are inadequate due to the limitations of time. In Key Stage 3 statutory requirements for ICT are not met for teaching computer-aided design or control systems (CAD and CAM).
39. As reported in the curriculum and teaching sections of the last inspection report there are unsatisfactory arrangements for the distribution of lessons across the curriculum. In many subjects: for example 3 Year 10 classes in mathematics have a double period on Thursday and two singles on Friday and no further lessons for 5 days. There are similar cases in humanities, English and Science. This limits the effective use of the total time available for teaching the subject and to a reduction in the continuity in teaching and learning. In the sixth form there is a very good range of advanced level and vocational courses and this has

improved since the last inspection. The students benefit considerably from well managed consortium arrangements with three neighbouring schools.

40. Access to the curriculum in Key Stage 3 is good. There is an appropriate flexibility in the grouping arrangements for teaching different subjects, with some mixed ability classes and some sets by ability. In some cases the setting arrangements are constrained by the timetable and the size of the intake, differing from year to year according to the needs of the timetable. Thus in mathematics some years are set in two equal populations, while in another year it is in broad ability bands in a combination with modern foreign languages. This limits the ability of both departments to obtain full benefit from the setting. In Key Stage 4 access to the curriculum is satisfactory, if unusual, due to a system of directing pupils to particular subjects. Student consultation and an appeal process for those who are dissatisfied with the choice made for them is well established. Despite its introduction after a wide-ranging consultation, a limited number of parents expressed disquiet with the system.
41. The humanities curriculum is wide ranging; it is made up of eight subjects, history, geography, religious education, personal and social education, careers, sociology, citizenship and economics. Cross-curricular links make a significant impact upon the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students. However, as geography is taught within the humanities curriculum aspects of map work and physical geography are not studied in appropriate depth. Health and sex education is well mapped across the curriculum in personal and social education.
42. The school's provision for developing literacy is good. Since the last inspection there has been a whole school focus on supporting literacy across subjects. This has involved assessing the reading age suitability of resources, the use of structured writing frames as a foundation for further extended writing and the promotion and learning of key subject vocabulary. A central literacy group effectively led by the headteacher supported by the literacy and numeracy co-ordinators manages these procedures. There is a brief policy that clearly outlines practice. The weekly reading time in tutor groups makes an effective contribution to promoting reading. Students' reading is also well supported by a well-stocked and particularly effective library, which has a good range of material. There is a numeracy policy across the curriculum, driven by the attachment of a member of the mathematics staff to each other department to advise on the development and use of number in that subject. So far this has mainly resulted in improved use of data representation in the form of graphs and charts, and has yet to provide a vehicle for the all round improvement of numeracy, which is improving, but still weak.
43. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development varies according to the curriculum area, but overall it is good. There is a detailed programme of weekly themes to be used in assemblies and in tutor groups for 'reflection'. In practice, these emphasise moral and social issues very effectively, but marginalize spiritual and cultural aspects to some extent.
44. Spiritual development is well provided for in some subject areas, notably English, where texts dealing with tragedy and the self are commonly studied, and in music, where songs dealing with spiritual and emotional aspects of life feature. Provision in religious education is very good, and includes day conferences on spiritual themes for sixth-formers.
45. Provision for moral education is good in most subjects. In humanities, a range of moral and ethical issues appear across the curriculum, including considerations of racism and environmental issues – such as arguments for and against gas or coal-fired power stations. Teachers encourage respect for others and for property.
46. Social development is enhanced by various opportunities in the school, including membership of the school council. Students often work in pairs and groups: in drama and

music this is a key feature of their learning. Social issues are thoroughly considered in lessons, especially in humanities, a typical topic being to discuss the consequences of industrial development in the 18th century.

47. Provision for cultural development is generally good, but there are missed opportunities for considering multi-cultural aspects. In English, for example, although the British cultural heritage and that of America is dealt with well, little is presented from non-western cultures outside the prescribed GCSE texts. Some world music is considered in the music department; the variety of western tradition is thoroughly explored. This is true also in art, where the good provision for world art in the library should also be noted. This includes examples of African, Islamic and aboriginal art, and work by Native Americans. The latter links with work done in humanities on the plains Indians – one of several areas of wider cultural significance studied in their curriculum, which takes in aspects of different belief systems and provides for in-depth studies of particular countries such as Japan and Kenya. Overseas visits, for instance to France, feature regularly in the school calendar, and there are many visits to castles and cathedrals, theatres and concert halls.
48. There is good provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs in both key stages. It is well managed by the head of the inclusion unit and well taught, with a very good contribution from a strong, well-trained and committed group of particularly effective learning support assistants and teaching staff who support students both in class and in the inclusion unit. Teachers use the individual education plans, which are well thought out and provide effective guidance in teaching this group. Other parts of the provision, such as ASDAN in Key Stage 4, and the inclusion unit further enhance the opportunities for pupils with particular needs. There is also some provision for more gifted pupils in mathematics, science and music, and in a summer school for pupils in Key Stage 3. School policy and practice strongly support inclusion.
49. There is a wide range of extracurricular activities to support the curriculum and provide opportunities for personal development for pupils. There are clubs at lunchtime, and a range of day visits to the theatre and other places of interest. There is a full programme of sporting activities out of school, fieldwork, work experience and placements in industry and commerce. There are foreign trips, and residential stays, for example year 7 spend 3 days at the Sacrewell residential centre to develop a sense of community, and to help them settle into school. There is a school council. Personal, social and health education, and careers education and guidance are provided predominantly within the humanities courses throughout Key Stages 3 and 4. There are also well mapped contributions made by the English and science departments. Provision is generally good, benefiting from the opportunity to be delivered as part of an integrated package. Pupils in the sixth form generally feel that they have received good guidance to move on to the next stage of their development.
50. There are good links with the community. Pupils' learning benefits from a range of outside speakers who come into the school. There are some good opportunities offered by a range of local businesses to pupils at the school, for example factory visits, and work placements and shadowing. Pupils have also contributed to community activities organised by the Local Council. Some pupils benefit by using the school facilities as part of the adult activities on the premises. Links with partner educational organisations are also good. The link with three partner secondary schools in the sixth form provides some very good opportunities, which would not normally be available in a school of this size. There are also links with feeder primary schools, for example a range of staff co-ordinate the move to the secondary school, providing curriculum links, pastoral and individual support.
51. Since the last inspection the school has reviewed and improved the curriculum. Provision for English, humanities and mathematics has been improved in Key Stage 3 and in

mathematics in Key Stage 4. GNVQ has been introduced into Key Stage 4 and plans to extend the range of these are appropriate. The post 16 curriculum has been updated to meet the new requirements and students benefit from the wide range of curriculum opportunities available in the consortium. The school has failed to completely resolve the problem of an unsatisfactory weekly distribution of lessons in many subjects across the timetable.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS STUDENTS?

52. The school's procedures for child protection are good. The role of child protection officer is currently being passed between two members of staff, but procedures are in place to ensure that this transition does not affect the provision. Necessary training has been organised. All staff are made aware of their child protection responsibilities and the school has appropriate links with social services in place. All members of staff have also received awareness raising training as part of their induction programme. The school keeps detailed records on students where there are particular causes for concern. For a few pupils, the inclusion unit provides a valuable temporary refuge from the everyday pressures of normal school life.
53. Health and safety procedures are also in place. Risk assessments are carried out within departments. The governors take their responsibilities seriously and have an overview of the school's provision. No unsafe practice was seen in lessons during the inspection. The pedestal utility points in the un-refurbished science laboratories need replacing and the need to move concentrated chemicals from the secure store along main corridors to the science preparation room has health and safety implications. The school takes steps to ensure that work experience placements conform to health and safety criteria.
54. Assessment of students' progress is good. Teachers regularly monitor students' progress in all subjects, through regular tests as well as formal assessments. Soon after they arrive in year 7, students take cognitive ability tests (CATs) and these form the baseline for the school. There is regular use of national curriculum levels from year 7 onwards, supplanted by GCSE grades in Key Stage 4. The results are used to review and re-organise teaching groups in subjects where this is relevant. Procedures do vary depending on the needs of individual departments. For example, in humanities, progress is assessed in one subject per term, with an exam set at the end of the year to evaluate all three subjects. SEN assessment is also good, with the results used to provide well documented individual education plans for each student. Where setting takes place, arrangements are regularly reviewed against students' current attainment. Teachers follow up under performance conscientiously, with contacts with parents where appropriate.
55. The use of this information to guide curriculum planning varies by department. In English, national curriculum levels do not necessarily translate through to guide subsequent teaching but other forms of assessment does, whilst in modern languages such analysis has influenced the curriculum markedly, and has raised standards, particularly in boys' written work. Students are made aware of the school's expectations of them, with GCSE target grades displayed on class walls and in students' folders. There is a good overview from the senior management team.
56. The school makes good provision for the educational and personal support and guidance of students. A particular strength is the personal tutor system. Their tutor moves with students as they proceed through the school, enabling these staff to get to know the students in their class very well and to build a long-term relationship with them. The system whereby each student has regular one-to-one counselling sessions at the end of the school day, although time-consuming, provides a valuable focus within this, creating a time when student and tutor can review progress honestly and set personal targets for future improvement. Senior tutors take their pastoral role very seriously and provide additional support when it is needed. Year 7 student's go on a residential camp very soon after they join the school and

this is seen to be effective in building a positive ethos from the very start. There is good provision to help students gain in maturity through the personal, health and social education.

57. The school has effective procedures to monitor attendance, and in particular, to keep truancy to a low incidence. Computerised attendance registers are completed properly, and there is a good system to involve the Educational Welfare Officer when this is necessary.
58. The school's procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour are very good. The behaviour policy contains clear guidance to the whole school community on the rewards and sanctions and how they will be applied. This "Choices" scheme is well understood by students and has a significant effect on modifying their behaviour. The rewards, leading ultimately to cash rewards to be spent in the school canteen, are effective in motivating students positively, whilst the sliding scale of sanctions – mainly detentions – act as a real deterrent. The school is prepared to persevere with students that elsewhere might be excluded, often with considerable success. The school's bullying policy is generally effective in eliminating oppressive behaviour. The good quality of the school's provision for the care of its students has been maintained since the last inspection of the school. The provision for students with statements of special education need related to mobility is good. All curriculum areas are accessible, learning support assistants are well trained and facilities for medical support are good. The school contracts for a weekly visit by a nurse who provides a drop in clinic.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

59. A relatively small proportion of parents took the opportunity to express their views about the school either at the parents' meeting or through the parents' questionnaire. However, based on the views of those who did so, it would appear that most parents are satisfied with the quality and effectiveness of the education the school provides for their children. They believe that their children like school, making good progress, are helped to become mature and behave well at school. They appreciate the school's leadership and think the teaching is good, with staff having high expectations of the students. Parents generally think that the school keeps them well informed. Generally the school works well with parents. Most parents are satisfied with the quality and effectiveness of the education the school provides for their children. The majority of parents expressed positive views of the school in the recent extensive survey the governing body commissioned the local authority to carry out, although some parents who replied to the inspection question expressed some disquiet.
60. The school provides a satisfactory range of information for parents. It starts when their children are still at primary school in year 6, with good induction procedures for pupils and their parents. This is followed up after students have joined the school with a meeting between parents and class tutors arranged in the September term. There is good provision for regular two-way communication through the homework diaries, which parents are requested to sign on a weekly basis. There are annual consultation evenings to discuss students' progress, which are held shortly after the written reports on progress have been sent home. These reports are of variable quality. They include curriculum coverage, national curriculum test levels or GCSE target grades when appropriate. There is good provision for students to write their own targets in them. However, the comments are not always informative. In maths, for example, the very general curriculum details published are identical for several different year groups. There are good newsletters. The prospectus and Governors' Annual Reports both lack required sections. The school holds a number of useful meetings for parents, such as a recent one for year 12 parents to explain how the 6th form operates.
61. Most parents have signed the home school agreement. Parents do support their children by helping with homework when necessary and most regularly sign the homework diaries. Parents do feel that they can contact the school with any problems or suggestions and that

they will be listened to. There is an active school association, which organises social and fundraising events. Parents of students with special educational needs are appropriately involved in the reviews of their progress and are able to record their views in writing. The quality of the partnership with parents has been maintained since the last inspection of the school and the impact of parental involvement with the school is satisfactory.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

62. The leadership and management of the head teacher and his deputies is very good. The management of the school has raised standards in line with national expectations, significantly improved teaching, the management of behaviour and the development of an inclusive ethos that consistently contributes to pupils' achievements.
63. The effectiveness of the governing body in fulfilling its responsibilities is good with particular strengths in strategic management. The monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance by senior managers is good, effective action has been planned and instigated at many levels. The strategic use of resources, including specific grant and other funding is very good. The principles of best value are consistently applied and well balanced by a policy of consistently seeking local suppliers where possible. The school is appropriately staffed, accommodation is being enhanced and learning resources are adequate.
64. The leadership of senior managers ensures a clear educational direction, which is a very good reflection of the school's aims and values. Delegation to middle managers is satisfactory, notably to those with pastoral responsibility and special educational need. Following the schools successful focus on behaviour management and the quality of teaching there are now opportunities to link the work of heads of department to the new senior management focus on standards in Key Stages, negotiated within the context of the new performance management requirements.
65. The effectiveness of the governing body in fulfilling statutory duties to provide access to the national curriculum and religious education has, on balance been satisfactory. The limited time available for geography and history in year 8 is limiting the depth and rigour of these courses. The management of the time available to teach the design process in Key Stage 3 design technology is inhibiting standards. However, there is very good access to religious education in all key stages and the excellent access to personal and social education. The governing bodies' annual report to parents and the school prospectus require updating where there are omissions to the statutory requirements. The governors' role in shaping the direction of the school has been very good. The strategic development of the school since the last inspection report has been very good. Strong financial management by senior managers and the governing body has enabled the imminent redevelopment of the school's sporting and community facilities with external partners. On balance the governors' understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school is good.
66. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching has been very good. The integration of inclusion and behaviour management strategies has improved the quality of teaching by over thirty percent since the last inspection. Good progress has been made in developing the schools appraisal strategies in order to bring them in-line with the new requirements for performance management..
67. Focussing on; teaching, the management of behaviour, inclusion strategies and the enhancement of the schools facilities have been appropriate priorities pursued with vision and energy. The action taken to meet the school's targets as set by the governing body has been very good. The three-year school development plan has been constantly reviewed and appropriately updated.

68. The senior management team has recently been restructured to take direct responsibility for standards across the school. This complements their very successful work on enhancing the quality of teaching. The shared commitment to improvement and capacity to succeed is very good. The school makes very good use of its links with teacher training establishments to attract talented new staff. Very good induction procedures are in place to support new staff, trainee teachers and learning support staff who all receive the same in-service training and guidance.
69. Very good financial management procedures have supported the schools curriculum and pastoral priorities in recent years. An example, is the way funds, earned through managing its own grounds maintenance and school meals as well as those of its feeder schools have been used to support the schools very good behaviour management policies and improve site security. Good use has been made of the range of central government initiatives to provide access to information technology in all departments. Very good use has been made of the financial resources available through specific grants and the school has consistently provided additional funds from its own resources to, for example, provide additional support for students with special educational needs, the library and staff induction. Very good use is made of information technology to record, analyse and interrogate student attainment data.
70. The match of teachers to the demands of the curriculum is good. The well-trained team of special support assistants and teachers who help deliver the schools inclusion programme are strength of the school. This is also true of the very well organised library which provides subject based research and support facilities for departments, staff and students with considerable elan. Developments in information technology have been enhanced by the provision of strong technical support.
71. The accommodation available is satisfactory overall. The governing body and senior managers have worked very hard to raise standards by appropriately enhancing the schools accommodation. Access to information technology for students, staff and the community has been consistently enhanced in recent years. Very good use of the financial resources available to the school will double the size of the sports hall and improve related facilities by December 2001. Old and very dated science laboratories with worn out pedestal utilities and chemical preparation issues place limitations upon the work of talented teachers. A well thought out programme of small works has improved the accommodation for music and students with special educational needs. There are appropriate resources in all departments

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

72. In order to further improve this good school the Governing body and Headteacher should:

- Ensure that students are provided with the appropriate depth and rigour of experience of the statutory orders for geography, history, design technology and in year 8.
- Review the weekly distribution of lessons in the timetable in Key Stages 3 and 4 in order to provided better continuity of challenge for students and a more efficient use of staffing resources.
- Review and bring into line with statutory requirements the information provided to parents in the prospectus and the governors' annual report.
- Conduct a review of the health and safety issues related to the pedestal facilities in the un-refurbished science laboratories and the movement of chemicals from storage to the science preparation room.
- Examine how the new DfEE proposals for year 7 'catch up' classes might be incorporated into the work of the successful inclusion team.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|-----|
| Number of lessons observed | 126 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 69 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 2.4% | 12% | 55% | 29% | 1.5% | 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 | 788 | 100 |
| Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals | 46 | N/A |

| Special educational needs | Y7– Y11 | Sixth form |
|---|---------|------------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | 20 | 1 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 175 | 2 |

| English as an additional language | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 1 |

| Pupil mobility in the last school year | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 27 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 25 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-------|
| School data | 93.1% |
| National comparative data | 91% |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|------|
| School data | 0.6% |
| National comparative data | 1.1% |

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3

| | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year | 1999 | 70 | 52 | 122 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|--|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above | Boys | 45 | 43 | 41 |
| | Girls | 43 | 39 | 34 |
| | Total | 88 | 82 | 75 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above | School | 75 (58) | 67(57) | 62 (62) |
| | National | 63 (61) | 65 (62) | 59 (55) |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above | School | 28 (25) | 43 (41) | 29 (27) |
| | National | 25 (28) | 38 (38) | 23 (23) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|--|----------|----------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above | Boys | 43 | 41 | 41 |
| | Girls | 45 | 41 | 41 |
| | Total | 88 | 82 | 82 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above | School | 75 (63) | 67 (55) | 65 (65) |
| | National | 64 (64) | 65 (66) | 59 (60) |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above | School | 28 (26) | 43 (37) | 28 (38) |
| | National | 31 (31) | 37 (37) | 28 (20) |

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4

| | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year | 2000 | 63 | 51 | 114 |

| 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 | 29 | 60 | 62 |
| | Girls | 33 | 48 | 50 |
| | Total | 62 | 108 | 112 |
| Percentage of pupils achieving The standard specified | School | 54 (52) | 95(98) | 98 (99) |
| | National | 49 (49) | 90.9 (91) | 95 (95.6)] |

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

| GCSE results | | GCSE point score |
|-------------------------------|----------|------------------|
| Average point score per pupil | School | 40.7 (39.2) |
| | National | 39 1 (38) |

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

| Vocational qualifications | | Number | % success rate |
|--|----------|--------|----------------|
| Number studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and The percentage of those pupils who achieved all those they studied | School | 20 | 100 |
| | National | N/A | N/A |

Attainment at the end of the sixth form

| | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|---|------|------|-------|-------|
| 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 | 2000 | 13 | 9 | 21 |

| 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 | 17.6 | 11.3 | 14.9 (13.7) | 1.5% | N/a | 1.5 (6.5) |
| National | 17.8 | 18.2 | 18 (17.9) | 2.9 | 3.1 | 3 (2.8) |

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

| Vocational qualifications | | Number | % success rate |
|---|----------|--------|----------------|
| Number in their final year of studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all those they studied | School | 27 | 92.4% |
| | National | N/A | 82.5 |

| International Baccalaureate | | Number | % success |
|---|----------|--------|-----------|
| Number entered for the International Baccalaureate Diploma and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all they studied | School | N/A | N/A |
| | National | N/A | N/A |

Ethnic background of pupils

| | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | |
| Black – African heritage | |
| Black – other | |
| Indian | 1 |
| Pakistani | |
| Bangladeshi | |
| Chinese | |
| White | 762 |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 3 |

Exclusions in the last school year

| | Fixed period | Permanent |
|------------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | | |
| Black – African heritage | | |
| Black – other | | |
| Indian | | |
| Pakistani | | |
| Bangladeshi | | |
| Chinese | | |
| White | 21 | 0 |
| 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) | 45.5 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 17.2 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y7 – Y13

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 17 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 418 |

Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y13

| | |
|---|------|
| Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes | 76.9 |
|---|------|

Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y11

| | |
|-------------|------|
| Key Stage 3 | 24.5 |
| Key Stage 4 | 20.7 |

Financial information

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

| | £ |
|--|-----------|
| Total income | 2,256,454 |
| Total expenditure | 2,223,048 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2902.15 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 311,956 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 345,362 |

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 766 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 176 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 30 | 59 | 10 | 1 | 1 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 28 | 60 | 7 | 1 | 4 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 17 | 56 | 13 | 3 | 10 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 14 | 62 | 14 | 6 | 4 |
| The teaching is good. | 20 | 68 | 5 | 0 | 7 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 18 | 53 | 22 | 4 | 3 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 32 | 48 | 14 | 5 | 2 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 44 | 51 | 3 | 0 | 2 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 18 | 43 | 25 | 5 | 9 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 18 | 56 | 7 | 4 | 14 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 18 | 63 | 12 | 2 | 5 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 20 | 55 | 11 | 2 | 13 |

Other issues raised by parents

At the parents evening and in some of the written responses, parents expressed some disquiet with the directed option system used to allocate students to courses in Key Stage 4. A number questioned the appeals system operated by the school on this issue.

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

ENGLISH

73. When they first enter the school the students' standards in English are broadly average, although there are fewer students with above average standards than is normally the case. The school also includes an above proportion of students with special educational needs. Assessment information shows that the standards of the current Year 11 on entry were below average.
74. In the 1999 national tests for 14 year old the students' standards were broadly average, representing good progress given their previously below average standards. These results were not as high as the previous two years when standards were well above average, but they reflect the higher number of below average boys in this year group. Overall standards for the period 1996-99 were above the national average with the girls' results well above average. In 1999 the proportion of students gaining the expected level 5 or better and the higher level 6 or better was in line with the national average. Their results in English and science were broadly similar but were not as high as in mathematics. When compared with students from schools with a similar background the overall standards were well below average. However, this comparison requires some caution because this year group's proportion of students with special educational needs is higher than normally found in similar schools or nationally. The results for 2000 show a significant improvement on 1999 to a level that confirms the well above average standards of 1997-98.
75. In the 1999 GCSE English examination the proportion passing at grades C or higher was in line with the national average. This was a good achievement since the school enters a higher proportion of students than is the case in most schools. Even so this figure is below that of similar schools, but as at Key Stage 3, the above average number of students with special educational needs accounts for this comparison. More girls than boys achieved C or higher. Overall students did better than students nationally by about half a grade. They did better in English than in most of their subjects. The 1999 results were higher than in the previous two years. The results for 2000 show standards have been maintained. The boys' results showed great improvement on the previous year with more boys than girls gaining the higher grades. In the 1999 GCSE English literature examination the proportion passing at C or higher was below the national average, but from an entry that is more than 15% higher than the case nationally. The high GCSE entry rates for English and English literature reflects the departments' high expectations that were consistently evident during the inspection. The results for 2000 show the proportion passing at C or higher increasing significantly to more than 70%, again from a very high entry.
76. In the Sixth Form the students join a consortium of four schools. The consortium's results are above average. The standards of a small entry of Raunds students in 1999 was below average based on their average points score, but the figures for 2000 show a good improvement with the pass rate at both grades A-B and A-E in line with the usual national average.
77. In work seen during the inspection standards at the end of Key Stage 3 are above those expected for 14 year olds and higher than would be anticipated by standards on entry to the school. Standards of speaking and listening are above expectation with most students consistently paying close attention and expressing their own ideas in a well structured way. Students studying 'Animal Farm' switched easily from the informality of discussion with each other into the formality of delivering prepared election addresses. Reading standards are above the expected level overall. Most show that they already appreciate the complexity of characters - such as Bathsheba and her suitors in 'Far from the Madding Crowd' - and that

works of fiction contain implicit meanings and reflections. Standards of writing are above expectation because of good accuracy in spelling and punctuation. Most write lengthy, well-paragraphed pieces. Those achieving the higher levels write with a mature choice of vocabulary that immediately draws the reader into the mood and context of their writing, as was seen in one girl's very wistful and reflective effort based on a piece of music.

78. About 3 out of 10 students, including those with special educational needs, are not reaching the nationally expected level in reading which relies too much on retelling and not enough on analysis. A few are well below expectation because of weaknesses in word recognition. Their writing does not achieve the expected accuracy in spelling and punctuation. Some students, although having the expected accuracy, lack the required consistent control of standard English and expression in their phrasing and sentence construction.
79. Standards based on work seen at Key Stage 4 are in line with those expected for 16 year olds representing good progress over time by these students whose standards were below average on entry. Because of Work Experience it was not possible to make judgements about the students' speaking and listening skills but Year 10 students were above expectation. When discussing 'Lord of the Flies' they gave full, well explained answers. Overall reading standards meet expectation. There is a small group of very high attaining students whose comparative pieces on 'Porphyria's Lover' and 'My Last Duchess' showed the highest standards of detailed analysis. Middle attaining students make good progress in responding to literature. They use quotations well and try to comment on their significance, due mainly to their teachers' clear guidance on structuring answers. Writing skills meet expectation with higher attainers producing work that in terms of accuracy is practically flawless as well as using precise vocabulary and a range of sentence structure. Middle attaining students also increase their range of sentence structure, but some do not meet the expected standards because their expression is undermined by awkward phrasing or inappropriate idioms.
80. Lower attaining students, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. They use quotations to support an opinion about a text but their comments on the significance of the quotations are limited. Their writing tends to be shorter than other students, less accurate and less structured. However, some attempt to write in a way that engages the reader through the use of metaphor or simile. There are a very small number of students whose standards are well below the expected level. They use little punctuation and produce very short pieces.
81. In the Sixth Form standards meet expectation. Students write accurately. They can demonstrate cause and effect in the texts they study. The best are highly perceptive and evaluative. Some are making good progress in producing substantial A level pieces given their relatively lower attainments in GCSE.
82. In work seen across all subjects overall standards of reading are above expectation at Key Stage 3 and in line with expectation at Key Stage 4. There is good evidence of subjects developing reading. In design technology students extract key points from a text and are often asked to read aloud to the whole group. Their reading of packages is well supported by frames and matrices that guide their research. There is a strong emphasis on identifying subject specific vocabulary that enhances the students' standards. Researching texts is used frequently in humanities subjects. As well as good displays of key geography words students frequently read aloud in class. Year 9 students effectively researched information on the theme of energy in a Year 9 lesson. Reading aloud is standard practice in history but some reveal weaknesses in fluency or with unfamiliar words such as 'apartheid'. In art individual research is encouraged. After one lesson three students followed up their study of Rousseau by further reading in the library. Reading in modern foreign languages is well supported through a scheme and supplemented by a series of target notices around the

school. During the inspection there was little evidence of students reading extensively in mathematics or GCSE physical education.

83. Overall writing standards are above expectation at Key Stage 3 and in line with them at Key Stage 4. In modern foreign languages good use of resources such as writing frames helps the students improve their writing in the target language to standards that are above expectation at Key Stage 4. In science writing at both Key Stages is accurate, detailed, well structured and relevant. Appropriate standards are promoted in design technology through the use of writing frames that help students to categorise information effectively. Although there are opportunities for written research in art, the weight of marking faced by the single specialist makes it difficult to provide detailed feedback to all pupils.
84. In geography there is some effective extended writing. A letter writing activity to the head of a railway company resulted in some well-expressed and structured work by Year 11 students. In history students were expected to be more precise in their explanations of causes and effects of the Soweto riots. In GCSE physical education, students present their work well but there are not enough opportunities for independent extended writing. Apart from coursework in Year 9 there were not many opportunities for writing in mathematics.
85. Drama is taught as part of English in Years 7 and 8. There is no drama timetabled in Year 9 but there are opportunities within English. Results in the 1999 GCSE drama examination were below average but the 2000 results show a marked improvement to a level in line with the usual national average. During the inspection the standards shown by one Year 9 class working on monologues met expectations for Key Stage 3, but the work of a Year 8 class was below expectation. Their awareness of key areas of performance was not as strong as usually seen by students of this age. At Key Stage 4 standards met expectation and teaching was good. High expectations regarding presentations were clearly evident. The students were highly motivated. Drama benefits from good accommodation that provides good space. There are lighting facilities that could be used to strengthen the drama ambience and lift performance, although this was not done during the inspection.
86. Standards of teaching in English are good and lead to the students learning well and making good progress at each key stage. The students' positive attitude to the subject is an important factor, but this itself reflects the motivating methods, high expectation and great enthusiasm of the teachers. Students increase their knowledge about texts and how to show this knowledge in writing because of the very good subject expertise of their teachers. They also recognise and respect this expertise and know that if they follow their teachers' guidance they will improve. Good lesson planning leads to busy and active lessons that are clearly focussed on learning objectives. A particular strength is the planning for students with special educational needs. There is real partnership between the teacher and learning support assistant. Teaching materials are adapted to suit the range of attainment in each class. Consequently, higher proportions of students succeed in examinations than is usually the case. Expectations are high. All students are encouraged to focus on how to improve. All students have full access to the department's curriculum and specialist expertise.
87. The atmosphere in lessons is focused and 'business like' so students are thinking for themselves and concentrating. There is a good emphasis on developing accuracy in spelling with regular tests of words from the National Literacy Strategy or words that are connected with the subject. Day to day marking and assessment is good. Students tend to know how well they are doing because of the teachers' frequent use of national curriculum levels and criteria at Key Stage 3 and GCSE grades and criteria at Key Stage 4. In addition the department has devised good monitoring and recording systems. There are very few shortcomings. Some assessment does not consistently set clear targets for improvement and there is some lack of consistency in the department's policy of use of National Curriculum levels at Key Stage 3. In a minority of lessons some work was not tightly

scheduled so there was some loss of pace and momentum. Occasionally the working atmosphere for a writing task was not focused enough.

88. The department has responded well to the last inspection. Marking and the standards of boys have improved. Assessment procedures are more rigorous. There is a clear team approach with weekly meetings the main forum for clear educational direction. There is also a strong determination to maintain improvement reflected by the head of department's - and his teams - review of their work. Department documentation, particularly the handbook, does not support the implementation of good practice and policy, or reflect the developments that have taken place recently. There has been some direct monitoring of teaching and learning but it is not systematic or frequent enough and needs a sharper focus. The schemes of work template is sound, but given recent developments in the teaching of English and particularly literacy, it does not provide a consistently specific focus on learning objectives such as the teaching of writing. However, overall this is clearly a strong and very effective department that achieves good progress and has the capacity to achieve further improvement.

MATHEMATICS

89. In the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 3, 57% of students scored level 5 or above. This is below the national average, although in the other 3 of the last 4 years results have been above the national average. A significant group scored level 6 or above, and this is above the national average. The most recent results (2000) were exceptionally good with 75% scoring a grade 5 or above. In general girls have performed better than boys have at this age. GCSE results at the end of Key Stage 4 in 1999 were good, with nearly 60% of pupils scoring a grade A*-C, well above the national average. Results in 2000 are nearer to the national average, but the 95% of the cohort was entered a higher than average figure, and all scored at grade A*-G. There was no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. Results at A level were also very good, with all pupils entered scoring at least a D, and were even better in 2000 with 4 out of the 6 pupils entered scoring either A or B. All the students this year were boys.
90. In the work seen during the inspection, standards of attainment at Key Stage 3 are in line with national expectations. By the age of 14, students have reached a level in all areas of the mathematics curriculum consistent with their ability. Standards of number work and algebra are good, with high attaining students competent at algebraic operations. Middle and lower attaining students, particularly those with special educational need often have useful strategies to use to work out numerical problems in their heads, but are held back because they do not know their multiplication tables. Standards in using and applying mathematics are less good, with many students lacking practice in independent enquiry, and in the ability to set and test hypotheses in a variety of situations. Data handling is good at all levels. Students' concepts of shape and space are generally good, with particular strengths in understanding the properties of a variety of shapes. Some low attaining students were seen able to visualise and then accurately draw the missing halves of symmetrical shapes. Pupils with Special Educational needs are reaching appropriate levels of attainment in all areas of the curriculum due to the well focussed and carefully planned efforts of learning support assistants.
91. In Key Stage 4 standards of attainment overall are in line with national expectations, although in Year ten standards are higher. Students build progressively on their achievements in the previous key stage. By age 16 there is some more developed work using open-ended investigations, with students showing an ability to tackle a variety of situations and carry the enquiry through to a useful conclusion. Some aspects of numeracy remain a weakness for many students but data handling and shape and space continue to be strengths at all levels, and higher attaining students achieve good standards in manipulating algebraic formulae.

92. In the sixth form standards of attainment are above average. By the age of 18 A level students are competent in the basic skills of pure mathematics and those in algebra and calculus are good. In applied mathematics, students were seen able to solve problems involving the resolution of forces. Some students have become over reliant on calculators and have forgotten some of the basic definitions and applications of trigonometry and were therefore prone to making unnecessary mistakes.
93. The quality of teaching in Key Stages 3 and 4 is good. It is always at least satisfactory, in just over half the lessons it is good, and it is occasionally very good. Lessons have a clear purpose, follow a consistent pattern, and teachers provide clear and precise instructions and model the way answers should be given very well. Relationships with pupils are very good in most cases, and where there are difficult pupils they are sensitively handled, and have only a small impact on the progress and working atmosphere of the lesson. There is a reasonable mix of activities, with whole class sessions, some practical activities and work using ICT equipment, as well as standard individual work on textbook questions.
94. Most lessons start with some arithmetic exercise to remind the students of work done in the last lesson, and give a limited amount of mental arithmetic practice. This could be developed so that number work is a regular feature throughout the lesson. Work is set at an appropriate level, and most lessons have variety and pace so that the students are encouraged to remain involved right the way through the lesson. There is scope for teachers to encourage the students to talk more about their understanding of the topic under discussion, both to improve their learning, and to give the teachers more information on how well the students are making progress.
95. Low attaining students and those with special educational needs are sometimes helped by being allowed to use equipment, like mirrors or connecting cubes to make the task clearer. These students also benefit very considerably from the help of learning support assistants who also provide the teacher with support in the case of the small number of potentially disruptive students, especially in Key Stage 3. Teachers give the pupils regular tests to check progress, and keep records so that they can discuss the progress of individual students to check that they are in the appropriate set.
96. In the sixth form teaching is satisfactory or better. Presentation of new ideas is clear, but sometimes insufficient time is spent ensuring that the students understand the fundamental concepts involved. As a result, some students can solve standard problems, but make elementary mistakes or have difficulties with unusual problems, because they have inadequately understood the principles, or forgotten some basic definitions.
97. Progress in both Key Stages 3 and 4 is closely related to the teaching, and is good or better in 3 out of 4 lessons. It is also related to the good behaviour of the majority of students, and to the pride they take in their work, and their ability to concentrate so that time in the lesson is well used. Students at all levels of attainment have a responsible attitude to work. In the sixth form progress is satisfactory.
98. The teachers in the department are well qualified and committed to their students, and work very hard for their success. They are well led and form a cohesive team, often giving additional time to help individuals. Since the last inspection the department has made good progress in developing a wider range of activities in lessons, including a variety of techniques for developing numeracy including some practical work and the use of ICT as an enhancement for learning. To raise standards further, they should continue to work on these areas, and further develop the pupils' numeracy by introducing more arithmetical practice into classrooms and ensuring that all students are involved in thinking out the underlying concepts as well as being able to follow the processes. The school has a numeracy policy embedded across the curriculum, driven by the attachment of a member of the mathematics staff to each other department to advise on the development and use of

number in that subject. So far this has mainly resulted in improved use of data representation in the form of graphs and charts, and has yet to provide a vehicle for the all round improvement of numeracy, which is improving, but still weak.

SCIENCE

99. Attainment in science is above the national average, in both key stages and in line with expectations in the sixth form. When the students enter the school, their performance at Key Stage 2 is close to the national average. By the end of Key Stage 3, their relative attainment has risen to be above national average, and this is continued through into Key Stage 4. Students' achievement over both key stages is good.
100. At the end of Key Stage 3, in 1999, the average point score in the National Tests was above the national average, although the attainment of girls was significantly better than boys. The percentage of students achieving level 5 or greater, was above the national average and that for level 6 or greater, was also above the national average. The overall performance was, however, below that in schools with students from a similar background. In 2000, results compare favourably with the previous year, with the average point score and the proportions of level 5 and level 6 having increased further. In this particular year however, boys have achieved better than girls. Over the last four years, students' attainment remained above the national average.
101. At the end of Key Stage 4, in 1999, the average point score and the proportion of students gaining grades A* - C in double award, combined science GCSE was above the national average. The percentage of grades A* - C was also above the median range found in similar schools. Girls achieved a higher average grade in this year, compared to boys. In 2000, the overall attainment was higher than the previous year, although the proportion of grades A* - C was slightly less. Over the past three years, the average GCSE grade has steadily increased.
102. In the work seen in lessons, and from students' writing, at Key Stage 3, the standards reflect the above average performance found in the tests. For example, in Attainment Target 1, Scientific Enquiry, a majority of students carry out systematic investigation of chemical neutralisation reactions, making consistent observations and drawing appropriate conclusions. A higher than average proportion use their knowledge well to explain findings, and consider carefully the experimental reliability. In Key Stage 4, students' work in year 10 is observed to be above the expectations for their age, and this reflects the potential for good examination results as in previous years. Many students have a secure knowledge of scientific concepts, for example the structure and function of the human nervous system, and the eye. The work of students in year 11, who were on work experience during the inspection, reveals that their performance is more in line with national average. In the sixth form students study biology, chemistry and physics for A level, as part of the local schools' consortium. They are achieving grades appropriate to their individual abilities. In Year 12 general studies lessons students consistently draw from the scientific vocabulary they have developed as they moved through the school. Many were able to explain energy and environmental concepts. Two girls were able to make a detailed and challenging presentation on Siamese twins that provoked a well-articulated debate from their peers.
103. Progress over each key stage is good for middle and lower ability students. Those with special educational needs make good progress in line with other students because there is a high level of specialist support and appropriate individual help from teachers. Higher attaining students make only satisfactory progress, since the level of challenge is frequently focussed on developing the understanding of the majority and not sufficient for them to realise their potential. The progress of the 1997 -99 cohort from Key Stage 3 to GCSE when compared to those in similar schools was well below but still represented appropriate

value added when measured against their ability on intake and progress across both Key Stages.

104. Attitudes and behaviour in science lessons are good overall. Students are diligent and careful with completion of work. They are very willing to carry out tasks, and demonstrate good motivation with a generally satisfactory level of interest. Lapses occur towards the end of very long timetabled double periods. A number of students were reluctant during the week of the inspection to actively participate in answering or asking questions to further their own understanding. Behaviour in lessons is very good, with due regard for safety, and noticeable respect for staff. Students form good relationships and this is enhanced by collaborative working in small groups for practical sessions.
105. Teaching in the science department is good. Overall, in nearly four fifths of lessons seen during inspection, the quality of teaching was judged good, or very good, and the remainder was satisfactory. No difference was observed in teaching between each key stage. All teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject, and specialist areas within it. Helpful emphasis on the use of technical terminology has enabled students to develop a good standard of literacy, for example when they describe their experimental observations. Lessons are well planned to enable students to make progress, with a variety of task including a significant amount of practical work that enhances their understanding. The duration of a single 50-min lesson ensures a brisk pace and sustained interest. However, the double periods are too long, and irregular spacing within the timetable, inhibits efficient delivery of the curriculum.
106. Assessment is used regularly, to monitor progress, identify underachievement, and reinforce students' understanding. Homework is set regularly, but marking does not provide sufficient guidance to students for them to improve. Lessons are well organised, and students are well managed in their learning process, but questioning techniques do not always encourage students to actively participate in discussion. The level of work reflects teachers' high expectations, and good support is made available to enhance lower attaining students' learning. However, in most lessons, the match of work for the full range of abilities is not sufficient to extend and challenge the higher attaining students. Information and communication technology is increasingly used, especially in year 7, for activities such as desktop publishing and data analysis, but the extent of its use is infrequent and is hindered to some extent, by the lack of computer equipment immediately to hand.
107. Learning by students in both key stages and in the sixth form is good. They mostly work at a brisk pace and are clear about their goals. Students with special educational needs learn well, in line with others in mixed ability classes, appropriate to their own targets. Although there is some variation in attainment of boys and girls from one year to the next, there is no difference in the effectiveness of learning by either group.
108. Leadership of the science department is good. The head of department has clear goals for raising attainment and has built an effective team. Teachers' work is carefully monitored, and assessment data is analysed well, to identify student progress, set targets, and assists with planning. Good support is provided for colleagues, although documentation with department policies and guidance is minimal, and in need of updating. Information and communication technology is not yet integrated well enough into otherwise satisfactory schemes of work.
109. Learning resources are adequate and good use is made of them to enhance learning in most lessons. Computers in the laboratories are too few in number, and access for students to develop ICT skills in science is insufficient. The match of staff to curriculum need is good, they are well qualified, and contribute well to the department's development of effective teaching materials. Technicians are helpful and knowledgeable but the time allocated for them is not sufficient for the efficient support of teaching and learning. Although

accommodation is satisfactory, one laboratory is very cramped, and another too small for full size groups. Some pedestal services are in need of urgent maintenance. Storage facility for equipment is adequate, but that for chemical storage is too small and located in a difficult position for access. These accommodation issues sometimes impede the efficiency of students' learning.

110. Since the last inspection, standards of attainment have improved from being generally in line with expectation, to being above national average in Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. Good provision is now made for sixth form specialist subjects through the consortium. Achievement of students across the school is now greatly improved. Students have access to a greater range of teaching method, with active group work and practical tasks. The quality of teaching has improved, and the management has extended well towards monitoring and use of assessment data. There remains a need to address the match of work for the different abilities of students. A greater emphasis is needed on students actively participating in lessons, taking more responsibility for their own learning. Information and communication technology is not yet well enough established, although improving rapidly. Some issues in accommodation also remain.

ART

111. The pupils' attainments at the end of Key Stage 3 are broadly in line with that expected nationally. At the end of Key Stage 4 GCSE results are well above the national average. Pupils tend to obtain higher grades in art than in the other subjects that they take. Examination results at GCSE have improved since the last inspection and are now higher than those of similar schools. The year 2000 results are particularly good with boys achieving higher results than girls. Examination results at A level, taught as part of the consortium, are below the expected standard.
112. In work seen during the inspection, attainments at the end of Key Stage 3 are sound and in line with the national expectation for 14 year olds. Girls tend to be more focused on their work but no particular differences between the attainment of boys and girls was seen. Pupils at this key stage are introduced to a range of media and work successfully in both two and three dimensions. By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils have a basic knowledge of colour theory and other elements of art and will have gained a range of skills and techniques. They study the work of different artists from secondary sources including that of women artists and the curriculum includes art from cultures around the world. Pupils write about art but few opportunities are given for discussion and for the evaluation of each other's work. Due to the constraints of storage and teaching time work tends to be limited in scale. Good use is made of learning support assistants and the attainments of SEN pupils are satisfactory.
113. Attainments seen at the end of Key Stage 4 are good. At this stage pupils have a growing knowledge about past and current movements in art, though not always in the context of time and are able to make informed decisions about their own work. They select from a wider range of media and scale and are encouraged to produce experimental and individual work. Three dimensional work and mixed media is a particular strength and some highly innovative pieces are produced. Sketchbooks are well developed.
114. Post 16 students work within a consortium. Although students benefit from the cross fertilisation of ideas there is no dedicated sixth form working space, work in progress cannot be left out and on the evidence of work seen there is insufficient development from Key Stage 4.
115. Teaching is good in Key Stage 3 and very good in Key Stage 4. Teaching seen on inspection ranges from good to excellent. Although there is good use of questioning not enough information is drawn out from the pupils particularly in Key Stage 3 where lessons tend to be more teacher directed. Planning is thorough and properly linked to the national

curriculum though drawing and painting from observation and figure drawing are under developed in all key stages. Visits to galleries in Key Stage 4 and with post 16 students have a positive effect on standards of work. Schemes of work meet statutory requirements except in the use of information technology. Procedures for assessing pupils' work are sound and pupils write evaluations of their work. Marking in sketchbooks is good and pupils appreciate the formative comments written. Written feedback at Key Stage 4 and for post 16 students is particularly effective and helps pupils improve their work.

116. Homework is well established throughout the department and particularly good use is made of homework and handouts in Key Stage 3 to compensate for a lack of curriculum time. Although learning is good, attainment remains no higher than sound as there is insufficient time to fully cover the national curriculum.
117. Most pupils at this stage are able to sustain a good level of concentration. Pupils are highly self-motivated at Key stage 4 and lessons have a busy workshop atmosphere. Pupils with special educational needs respond well and work with interest. However expectations and curriculum opportunities in Key Stage 3 are not always high enough for gifted and talented pupils with the result that although their work shows considerable promise, they are not able to achieve enough. In Key Stage 4 the open-ended nature of many of the GCSE projects encourages initiative and talented and gifted pupils make very good progress. Pupils enjoy being asked about their work and most are able to use a subject specialist vocabulary. There is a good range of art books in the library including multi-cultural texts. Good use is made of additional art time offered. Relationships are positive, behaviour is generally good and classes are well managed and orderly.
118. The department is very well led and managed. Effective use is made of the available resources. Since the last inspection attainment at Key Stage 3 has been maintained and research skills remain strength. End of Key Stage 3 levels are reported back to parents. The time allowance for Key Stage 4 is satisfactory now that it is no longer part of the expressive arts cycle, and results have greatly improved. Art is over subscribed at Key Stage 4 and there is the capacity to enlarge using the expertise and specialist facilities for ceramics already in the school. There is greater pace in lessons and more direction in post 16 course. Although Advanced level results remain below the expected standard better results are anticipated this coming year.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

119. In 1999, the proportion of pupils achieving GCSE grades A* to C was below the national average and the results of similar schools. Girls achieved significantly better results than the boys. Pupils achieved lower results in design and technology to those in the other subjects that they studied. However, the trend in results shows that there has been significant improvement over the last three years. The results in 2000 indicate that pupils now attain levels higher than the National Average and the gap in achievement between girls and boys is gradually closing.
120. In work seen in lessons during the inspection, attainment at the age of 14 is in line with the standard expected nationally. The achievement of pupils over Key Stage 3 including those with special educational needs is unsatisfactory; due to the lack of access to the elements of the statutory requirements. Students do not have opportunities to use Computer Aided Design, Computer Aided Manufacture or Systems and Control and the latter is also not well resourced in the department. The work pupils do in design and technology at Key Stage 3 shows an ability to test a range of products for development as seen in a Year 9 food lesson, where pupils were testing their own bread recipes. Pupils at all levels of attainment were able to follow the basic bread recipe and achieve good consistency in the making of the dough. They showed a good level of understanding in making bread and were able to talk about their work confidently.

121. Pupils doing written tasks were able to select the information and use a variety of methods to record their data, including tables and charts which helped them to organise the categories of information they were collecting. Higher attaining pupils are able to draw on their well-developed writing skills to record information. Lower attaining pupils were less structured in their approach and needed the support of the teacher to organise and present their information. They gain a satisfactory range of basic skills in making products of good quality in food, textiles graphics and resistant materials and electronics. Graphic skills are developing and the department has now introduced a module in each Year at Key Stage 3 to enable pupils to develop this aspect of their work. This was seen in a Year 9 graphics lesson where pupils were designing a poster. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to show some degree of accuracy and pay more attention the use of line. Pupils are beginning to apply a range of graphic skills such as use of lettering, rendering and application of textures. There are however few opportunities for pupils to work on 3-D graphics projects. Pupils with special educational needs, particularly those with poor literacy skills make satisfactory progress. This is as a result of the developing range of strategies and methods being introduced by teachers to support them in their work.
122. Opportunities for pupils to use the design process are limited during their Key Stage 3 work. Although teachers provide worksheets for pupils to use as a guide, the stages of the process are often incomplete. Pupils do not link their research well to their own design ideas and in the main do not show their own research in their folders. Projects do not require pupils to follow the process that results in weaknesses in evaluating work effectively against the success criteria contained in their design specification. The gaps in their work adversely affect their overall attainment when they are assessed at the end of Key Stage 3. Some of the work could easily be set as homework tasks. The lack of emphasis on the process also results in pupils being less independent in the way they work compared to other pupils nationally and critically less prepared for the work required at examination level.
123. In the main pupils at the age of 16 achieve good standards over the two years. They are beginning to produce GCSE coursework projects that show increased depth in the content when using the design process. All pupils use a wide range of investigation and research skills and evaluate strengths and weaknesses effectively as they progress with their design ideas. They develop work of a satisfactory quality including a range of making skills and they also consider large scale manufacturing processes. Of the Year 11 work scrutinised, pupils in food technology were designing and creating a range of products including food for people with special dietary requirements. Higher attaining pupils developed a range of products, testing their designs and showing good methods of recording their results in the form of graphs, charts and star diagrams. Lower attaining pupils were guided well with various writing frames provided by the teacher to lead them through the basic process. They are able to design products well suited to the course. Year 10 pupils doing the GNVQ Intermediate Engineering course show a good level of skill in using a range of materials. Some students spent a large percentage of the lesson working on repetitive and mundane tasks that could be finished at home or in the lunchtime. As a result, their pace of learning within the lesson is very slow.
124. Teaching and learning is good overall. The lessons seen at Key stage 4 were Year 10 in the absence of Year 11 pupils on work experience. Pupils in Year 10 were at the early stages of their courses and the work they produced was limited. Teachers are well organised for lessons and have a good knowledge of their specialist subjects. Pupils benefit well from this. The Year 11-examination coursework shows that pupils work in a range of materials and they apply a variety of making skills, which reflect the main requirements of the GCSE courses. Pupils are beginning to use a wider range of investigation and research skills and can evaluate strengths and weaknesses as they progress with their design ideas. The quality of GCSE coursework is improving. Teachers guide pupils in generating and using

numerical data in the form of charts, graphs and food calculations to produce products based on sound market research. Pupils apply additional skills such as questionnaires and interviews to collect information to influence the commercial success of their product. Higher attaining pupils were able to identify very specific features of products, then use tables and charts to categorise the information. Lower attaining pupils apply some basic analytical skills and use the information they gather to influence their own designs. At Key Stage 4 teachers set realistic targets for pupils which is having a positive effect on progress; as pupils are able to focus more individually on ways of improving their work.

125. During Key Stage 3, teaching provides a good foundation in a range of basic making skills at times combining a range of materials. This was seen in a Year 7 lesson where pupils were making stick clown puppets using, ceramics, textiles and wood. Pupils made the heads of the puppets in ceramics while designing and printing their own fabric designs to make the clothing. Higher attaining pupils were able to apply detail and follow specific printing techniques to produce imaginative fabric designs. Lower attaining pupils are able to apply all the basic skills to produce simple drawings and prints. The teacher involved the pupils well in the development of these skills. She encouraged pupils to set some specific targets and timed the tasks appropriately to increase the pace of the lesson. As a result, the pupils responded well, showing a high level of interest and their learning was good. The teacher succeeded in stretching students of all levels of attainment through the use of well differentiated tasks and teaching resources.
126. Pupils form good relationships with their teachers and work hard for them. They behave well because they know what standards are, and are not, acceptable. There is a good display of work around the department to celebrate the success of pupils' work. Teachers also display useful information relating to the projects being studied.
127. The management of the department is good and having an impact on standards. There is an established departmental handbook containing up to date policies and schemes of work. The policies however need to be reviewed to ensure they reflect the overall aims of the school particularly relating to Equal Opportunities. Teachers work well as a team. There is a development plan for the subject but this does not contain criteria to measure success nor is it linked to financial implications. There are inadequate resources to deliver information and communication technology, Computer Aided Design, Computer Aided Manufacture, Systems and Control. This has had a detrimental effect on standards overall. The department needs to review the courses offered at Key Stage 4 to address the limited opportunity for pupils to study vocational courses. Electronics is studied at Key Stage 3 and but not taken up at examination level.
128. Progress made since the previous inspection is satisfactory with a number of good features. Attainment at Key Stage 4 is improving and the gap in achievement between girls and boys is closing. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Work is now differentiated across the subject and management of the department overall has improved. Although the department has increased the use of ICT, there is still insufficient work in Systems and Control, Computer Aided Design and Computer Aided Manufacture.

GEOGRAPHY

129. Geography is taught as part of the integrated humanities programme. During the inspection a limited range of geography lessons were available for observation. During the week of the inspection Year 11 students were engaged in work experience; the rotation of the subjects within humanities curriculum meant no geography lessons could be observed in Year 10; No students in Year 12 study geography. A very small cohort of Year 13 students studies A Level; they were not timetabled during the inspection. The report is based on the limited number of lesson observed, a careful scrutiny of schemes and units of work, interviews with staff, teachers' guides, resources and extensive sampling of students' work.

130. The four adjacent secondary schools work together successfully in a consortium for the provision of GCE A level. In both 1999 and 2000, small cohorts of students from Manor School, working within the consortium of schools attain above the national averages in GCE A level examination; however, the small cohorts in both years make any statistical comparison invalid.
131. In work seen during the inspection, the standards achieved at the age of 14 are at the level expected of students of the same age nationally. By the age of 14, students know fossil fuels are used to create energy and that burning causes different degrees of air pollution. They successfully investigate oil, gas and coal reserves and calculate the world's remaining energy reserves. High attaining students understand the greenhouse effect caused by pollution of the atmosphere by fossil fuels. Students work out the implications of a temperature increase across the world, for example, failures in the anchovy harvest in South America and flooding in East Anglia. They use spider diagrams effectively for brainstorming ideas in order to enhance their notes. Students' knowledge of maps and physical geography are less well developed. Geography is taught through the humanities curriculum, this means that there are instances when students present geographical work without a title, key, scale and direction. A good feature of learning in Years 7, 8 and 9 is that many students successfully link human and economic factors, which shows good understanding of geographical issues, for instance, the factors impinging on the siting of a local power station. Overall, all students, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress as they move through the key stage.
132. Although no geography lessons were observed in Years 10 and 11; a detailed analysis of students work shows that the geographical standards achieved at age 16, are at the level expected of students of the same age nationally. By the age of 16, all students, including those with special educational needs, compare the difference between the more economically and less economically developed countries. Students know some of the indicators that are used to compare more and less economically developed countries, such as birth and death rates, education and gross national product. They understand the reasons for rural push and urban pull when studying migration and the resulting changes in population patterns. Number skills successfully support a case study on traffic congestion in Cambridge. High attaining students collate and analyse traffic data in order to provide possible solutions. Some students make use of different Internet sites to support and enhance their work. In Years 10 and 11 students cover a wealth of detail in specific areas. However, students' depth of geographical knowledge is restricted. They continue to successfully link geographical issues with human, economic and political factors. Overall, all students make satisfactory progress in their learning.
133. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages with some shortcomings. Teachers show secure knowledge and understanding of geography. However, non-specialists teachers teach geography within the humanities department and their limited specialist knowledge, at times, constrains both attainment and learning. As a consequence of insufficient geographical knowledge there are examples where the learning of students, especially high attaining students, is not sufficiently challenged. Where the teachers have good knowledge, they present material confidently, which extends students' horizons, for instance, when studying the location of power stations in Year 9. Teachers challenge, probe and demand high standards of behaviour and work. However, teaching methods are insufficiently developed and do not always involve students in their learning; this constrains their understanding. Lesson planning is thorough but, at times, the range of tasks and activities are not fully developed in order to meet the needs of all students. Geography makes a good contribution to the moral, social and cultural development of students. Literacy and number both make a satisfactory contribution in supporting geographical work. Students' work is regularly marked, however, there are inconsistencies; the best is thorough

with detailed comments encouraging students to do better; however, some marking seen is minimal. Students listen well; they answer questions and ask questions in order to improve their knowledge and understanding. There are good relationships between teachers and students; good relationships link with the positive student attitudes and good behaviour, which creates a good learning environment.

134. Geography is well led by the head of the humanities department. Teaching is well monitored which enables the sharing of good geographical practice. The geography curriculum is insufficiently developed especially at Key Stage 3 as the time allocation constrains the range and depth of the curriculum; information communication technology at both key stages is underdeveloped. As a consequence, the geography curriculum does not meet statutory requirements. The deployment of some non-specialist staff with insufficient specialist knowledge often results in lack of challenge for students. Additional training does not yet compensate for this deficiency. The department development plan does not indicate success criteria through student outcomes; financial costing is also absent from the plan. Assessment of students is not fully developed; an aspect of this is the development of marking.
135. Geography has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. Many of the issues have been addressed. The curriculum has been reviewed and amended in order to support the programmes of study more effectively. Staff have improved their subject expertise; however, the lack of specialist knowledge by non-specialist staff constrains attainment and learning. Improving GCSE humanities results has helped in improving the standards in geography. The time allocation has improved in Years 7 and 9; however, there is insufficient time in Year 8, which constrains the geography programme inhibiting the range and depth of coverage. The humanities department shows both enthusiasm and a good commitment to improving students' learning and attainment.

HISTORY

136. History is taught as part of the integrated humanities course throughout Key Stages 3 and GCSE, and as part of the group consortium arrangements at A level. Attainment of Raunds students at A level is similar to that of other consortium students, but the sample is very small with wide variations from one year to the next. The history component of the GCSE course does not demand the rigour in historical knowledge, skills and understanding of the GCSE criteria for history, but the students' understanding of the broader issues contained in cross-humanities links is above the national average for those entered for the course.
137. The Year 11 students had not, at the time of the inspection, studied any history component of their Year 11 GCSE Humanities course, and so judgements on the standards attained at GCSE are on the basis of results in external examinations and the history component of their course studied in Year 10. In this respect standards have risen since the last inspection, with an improvement in GCSE results.
138. At Key Stage 3, as at the time of the last inspection, the standard of attainment is at expectation in some areas of history, with some competent information retrieval from video and selection of information to write narrative or descriptions of situations. Students use historical terms effectively. Able students work at high levels of cross-curricular understanding, using their historical knowledge to improve their understanding of settlement, industrial development and social conditions. Students with special educational needs are well supported so that their work shows good understanding in relation to their ability in that they understand simple situations and events. There are, however, gaps in students' knowledge, skills and understanding that depress overall standards. The fragmented nature of the history curriculum hinders the development of overview of periods. Although students

in Year 7 are working at expected levels for their age when they analyse causes and results, by the end of Key stage 3 they have not developed beyond the simple statement of single causes, and during Year 10 even able students are still having to be prompted to explain rather than describe or narrate. There is little difference in the standards of boys and girls seen during the inspection. Although the written work by girls is usually more careful, some of the most impressive analysis is done by boys

139. As at the time of the last inspection, students work hard in most history lessons, with attention and involvement. They take pride in the presentation of their work and are anxious to improve. They are confident enough to evaluate their own work and that of other students in mature discussion. A few students showed lack of involvement when they were aware that the work covered was not relevant to the main thrust of their course, or where it was presented as a series of disconnected facts.
140. Teaching was good in a third of lessons, and satisfactory in almost all lessons seen during the inspection. Teachers plan lessons effectively to meet the stated objectives that are made clear to the students at the start of lessons and referred to throughout. They provide a wide range of activities that maintain students' interest and attention. They continue the good practice seen at the last inspection of extending students' understanding by asking searching questions that encourage them to evaluate their own responses and those of others. Teachers and Learning Support Assistants plan and work together very well to meet the needs of students with special educational needs. The subject knowledge of teachers across the humanities department meets the requirements of the humanities course, but their scheme of work does not provide sufficiently clear coverage of the Key Stage 3 orders for history. More able students are not given sufficient guidance about the high standards that they could attain by the end of Key Stage 3. The department is still not planning or implementing the use of information technology to enhance historical standards. Whereas they teach students to evaluate and use video to enhance their understanding of history, they have not developed similar approaches to the students' independent use of Internet and CD-ROM based information. The history component of the humanities curriculum provides well for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students. There were many specific references in schemes of work seen implemented in lessons during the week of the inspection, for example in discussion of the issues involved in the Apartheid system, and in the aftermath of a role-play on enclosure of land in the Agrarian Revolution. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, the approach is insufficiently interesting and there is little feedback to students on the standard of their work.
141. Although homework is set regularly by the majority of teachers, it does not usually serve to extend students' knowledge and understanding, but is usually concerned with presentation, for example of the front page of a research project. The standard of marking is uneven throughout the department, with two teachers using marking to show students how they can improve their standards of history, but the majority of comments by other teachers are general comments on work rate or presentation. Whereas assessments at the end of a year or at the end of Key Stage 3 are in terms of the National Curriculum orders for history, the majority of assessments at Key Stage 3 are in terms of the criteria for GCSE Humanities. The majority of students therefore do not understand what they have to do to improve their history.
142. The humanities department is well managed, with strong and valuable cross-curricular links that provide students with clear understanding of the place of history in the humanities. Teachers co-operate well in planning to provide a coherent and consistent course for all classes that, however, needs to be more closely matched at Key Stage 3 to the needs of today's history curriculum. At the time of the last inspection the department was well resourced for history, but there has been little progress since then, with the result that many of the texts are not sufficiently relevant to the changes since then in the curriculum at Key Stage 3. Factors outside the control of the department such as the uneven timing of lessons

over the week and the insufficiency of specialist classrooms have a detrimental impact on the efficient working of the department. Although timing for Years 7 and 9 have improved since the last inspection, there is still insufficient time in Year 8 for coverage of the history curriculum, and staffing for Year 7 involves split classes that make it difficult to achieve equitable division of units.

143. In order to improve, the department needs, as at the last inspection, to ensure that the Key Stage 3 history curriculum is clearly addressed in planning and assessment, including the requirement to use information technology to enhance teaching and learning of history.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

144. The results for the GCSE Information Technology course taken by pupils in 1999 show that the proportion of pupils attaining grades A* to C was well below the national average and when compared to the results of similar schools. The proportion of pupils attaining GCSE A* to C has improved in 2000, but results remain below the National Average. Girls perform better than the boys. The proportion of pupils attaining A* to G grades are just above the National Average.
145. In the work seen during the inspection, students at the age of 14 attain levels broadly in line with the levels expected nationally and this represents satisfactory progress given their limited levels of attainment on joining the school. However, achievement over time is unsatisfactory as a result of some of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study that are not covered. Since September 2000 students are again being offered Information Technology (IT) as a discrete subject in Key Stage 3 having not been available in the previous school year. It is still very early to judge the full impact of this on learning. However, in the lessons seen during the inspection, pupils are now beginning to cover a better range of skills and use a wider variety of software packages. They are able to use desktop publishing software, spreadsheets, databases and use the Internet. The majority of pupils at all levels of attainment master the main skills of word processing. With some of the more specific skills such as using spreadsheets, pupils progress at varying rates. An example of this was seen in a Year 9 lesson where pupils were setting up a spreadsheet to calculate the sale of chocolates. Higher attaining students grasp the knowledge well, show greater depth in their understanding. They are familiar with the software they use and are able to make adjustments to the information to produce variations in the end results. In addition, they were able to produce a range of graphs to show their results. They learn at a good pace and are able to complete an extended task to consolidate their knowledge further. Lower attaining pupils are less confident, but were able to follow the basic procedures of setting up a spreadsheet with information provided by the teacher. The teacher gave a good level of help to those pupils who found the work more demanding and they were able to complete the tasks at a satisfactory level. Use of the spreadsheet at this stage is limited and pupils are not required to explore the results of their calculations further by varying the data they are using. Although included in the scheme of work, difficulties with staff training and equipment availability have meant students do not yet cover a sufficient range of work involving temperature sensors, data logging, or control systems which does not meet the statutory requirement of the National Curriculum.
146. In the work seen during the inspection, pupils at the age of 16 achieve levels just below those expected nationally. However, this represents satisfactory progress when compared to the levels attained before they enter the school. Pupils are limited in the depth of knowledge they have and skills they master compared to other pupils at this age. This is mainly due to the limited foundation skills they received during Key Stage 3 when time allocated for discrete IT was limited to a short period in the year. The tasks set do not always require pupils to collect and use their own information and lack the opportunities for them to apply their own initiative to adopt more independent learning skills. Pupils do not therefore make

sufficient gains in their learning to work at the level necessary to gain the higher GCSE grades. All pupils at Key Stage 4 now work towards the GNVQ Key Skills certificate in IT at levels 1 and 2. Pupils build their skills gradually through the course. Higher attaining pupils manage to work through the main aspect of their coursework to a good standard. Lower attaining pupils find the work difficult but manage to achieve acceptable levels. Pupils have knowledge of their progress and they are involved in identifying targets, which help them to improve their work further.

147. In the sixth form GNVQ Intermediate course in Information Technology, attainment in lessons is in line with the level expected nationally. Students have a good grasp of the knowledge and contribute effectively to lessons showing a good understanding of how software is used to control computer systems. All students increase in the depth of their knowledge significantly. There is also the GNVQ Key Skills course in IT for the pupils to develop a range of skills using databases, spreadsheets and programs that increase their skills in presenting information to different audiences. These skills are effectively linked to the work they do in other subjects.
148. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at Key Stages 3, good at Key Stage 4 and very good in the sixth form. This brings about satisfactory learning in lessons at Key Stage 3 and 4. Teachers show a satisfactory level of preparation and are well organised for their lessons. In most lessons there are clear objectives that support the pupils in their learning. Teachers explain the technical language of the subject and encourage students to use it correctly to extend their vocabulary in the subject. Worksheets are produced which are helpful in moving the pupils learning forward when they undertake projects. Pupils of varying attainment levels however, do not always benefit fully from lessons due to a limited range of teaching methods and differentiated resources that teachers use in IT lessons. As a result pupils lose concentration and this often results in poor levels of behaviour. Teachers then have limited strategies to manage this behaviour in the classroom. In lessons where work is matched more effectively to the needs of the pupils, their progress is better. Planning differentiated work to guide teachers in other subjects to ensure a more consistent approach in the classroom and the development of subject policies are not yet included in the overall planning of the department. Since information technology is now taught as a discrete subject, the department recognises this as an important aspect for development in the near future. Marking recognises the good features of pupil's work and gives helpful points of how to improve. There is an assessment scheme in place and information is systematically recorded and linked to the tasks that are completed in class. There are regular computer clubs during lunchtimes and teachers give their time willingly to provide this opportunity.
149. The use of computers in other subjects to support the delivery of the national curriculum and to raise standards of GCSE work is satisfactory but inconsistent across the curriculum. Good use was seen in mathematics where teachers have included the use of information technology in their schemes of work. Here pupils use a specialist maths program to construct geometric shapes and are taught to use spreadsheets. In English pupils use word processing skills to present work and in doing so, they show awareness of different audiences. In science, pupils use: word processing, the Internet and use spreadsheets to log data they collect in. They also use databases effectively to research and retrieve information lessons but access to IT in science is limited. Some use of IT was seen in design and technology where pupils use word processing skills and Year 11 pupils use spreadsheets in their GCSE coursework. Limited word processing was also used in foreign languages. Pupils use the Internet effectively to research information in all subjects. The use of IT is still underdeveloped in music, history and geography which means that the use across the curriculum cannot be fully assured. There is a structured Key Skills course for pupils in the sixth form where pupils show a good level of skills, which they apply well to work in other subjects.

150. The leadership of IT within the school is good. There is a clear plan for the development of the subject and this is linked to funding needs. A supportive departmental handbook provides schemes of work that are up to date. There has not been sufficient time however, to embed these fully into classroom procedures. The vast majority of staff will begin training provided by the 'New Opportunities Fund' in 2001. There is good technician support and this has had a positive effect on the efficient management of the network.
151. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. Although attainment of pupils at Key stage 4 is still below the national level there is an improving trend since the last inspection. Teaching is now good overall. There are discrete lessons of IT taught in each year group at Key Stage 3 and there is now a systematic assessment scheme in place. There is insufficient progress in providing experience for pupils to work in Systems and Control, Computer Aided Design and Computer Aided Manufacture.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

152. Overall, students are achieving satisfactory standards throughout the school. In 1999 the proportions of students achieving grades A* to C at GCSE was slightly below the national averages in French and above for German; the percentage of students achieving the very highest grades in French was low. A greater percentage of the cohort is entered for French and German. Over the past three years, results have steadily improved to the point where those for 2000 show that both French and German are above national averages. All students who are entered achieve grades A*- G. Girls do better than boys but the difference is not significant when compared to the national figures. The students following the Certificate of Achievement course have gained good results with all achieving a distinction. Results at Advanced level for German and French were below the national averages but the number of students entered is low and the figures includes students from other schools who form part of the consortium.
153. In the work seen during the inspection, students are attaining around the standard expected nationally by the age of 14. Many students can hold conversations on a range of topics such as their school or what they do in their free time with reasonable pronunciation and fluency. The majority understands at least two tenses. During the key stage students improve their reading and listening skills but make slightly less progress in their ability to speak and write at length and from memory. Students with special educational needs make very good progress as their needs are clearly identified and met; gifted students are encouraged to take the GCSE early and are given extra time with the foreign language assistant.
154. In the work seen during the inspection students are attaining above the standard expected nationally for French and German by the age of 16. Students work on a range of topics and frequently write at length for coursework purposes. The introduction of coursework and the drive to improve speaking through the booster club has directly improved the standards students achieve. The writing and speaking of the highest attaining students is accurate and includes some complex language and vocabulary, especially in German. Lower achieving students perform very well overall but their writing usually has less accuracy in spelling and gender.
155. By age of 18 students are working below the standards expected at Advanced Level but the group is small and the students come from a consortium of local schools. The current A level students from this school learning German are all taught off site and the current Year 13 French group, which is partly taught at this school, does not contain students from the Manor school.
156. The quality of the teaching is good and this brings about good learning. Teachers plan lessons well so that there are a variety of activities and they work hard to incorporate games

and songs which interest the students. The foreign language assistant is well deployed during lessons to illustrate certain points or to help students with their speaking. There are occasions when the most able are not encouraged to work from memory or to produce work unaided but mostly the work is very well matched to the needs of the students. Students with special educational needs are well taught. There were some very good examples seen when sentences and questions were built up using small chunks of language which enabled weaker students to sustain conversations in pairs.

157. Teachers have good strategies to manage the behaviour of students and good use is made of the merit system, consequently students work well and generally listen carefully to the teacher and to each other. Almost all students have good pronunciation because they listen well and because they are following a good model from the teacher. The consistent use of French or German to give instructions means that students have particularly well developed listening skills. Homework is always relevant to the lesson and enables students to consolidate their learning. Marking in books and files tells students where they have gone wrong but does not often identify how they might improve in terms of length or style, although there was some evidence of students redrafting work to improve accuracy. Students are given much helpful feedback about their performance during tasks in lessons and there is a strong emphasis on accuracy in spoken work. Students are aware of how they are performing and what their targets are in general terms, such as the need to improve their writing, but need more precise information about how they might do this. Students are not given many opportunities to work independently of the teacher for example when listening to tapes, and sometimes they are unable to find out the answer to a question because they have not filed their work carefully.
158. The department is very well led. Issues that arise, such as the need to improve the performance of boys or of all students in speaking, are addressed systematically and have resulted in improved performance on each occasion. All staff are committed to working hard to improve still further and the joint initiatives such as the introduction of coursework and the use of writing frames to help students to structure their writing have been very successful.
159. There has been very good progress since the last inspection. Results at GCSE have risen, students now have good attitudes to learning languages and the teaching is consistently good. There is still some work to be done to improve still further the performance of students in Key Stage 3 and to encourage students to continue with languages post 16.

MUSIC

160. GCSE A* - C results improved steadily after the last report with the 1999 results reaching 64 per cent against the national figure of 66 per cent. Results rose more significantly in 2000 with all candidates gaining A* - C grades and boys achieving marginally better than girls do. These results show a continuous improvement over time. There are currently 23 girls and 10 boys studying music in Key Stage 4.
161. In 1999 the only A level music candidate gained a grade B pass. There were no candidates entered in 2000. At present there are 8 students from the 4 schools in the consortium studying music. Only two students are from Manor School.
162. Standards of attainment in Key Stage 3 are above average with more pupils motivated to do well in music. Year 7 pupils eagerly devise signs and symbols for their graphic score on night music and co-operate well together when working out suitable sounds. High standards of class performances of body sounds directed by the teacher encourages confidence building and provides starting points for pupils' own work. Compositions in variation form by Year 9 pupils demonstrate a keen knowledge of style when creating and developing musical ideas. They perform in groups with confidence and appraise their work using musical language such as tempo, drone, round, ostinato, major and minor. Average and higher

attainers succeed better than lower attainers in synchronisation of parts. Learning could be further enhanced if pupils who play instruments use them in the class lesson more frequently

163. The attainment of pupils at Key Stage 4 in 1999 was almost in line with national expectations and has since improved. All pupils are required to play an instrument or take singing lessons in order to meet the practical requirements of the GCSE examination. This is a new experience for many pupils. Work at the beginning of the course is therefore concentrated on laying a secure foundation in pitch, notation and rhythm to support pupils in the early stages of learning instruments and taking individual singing lessons. Year 11 pupils struggle with composition and one pupil visited on work experience found it the most difficult part of the course. This was borne out by examination of the limited written work that was available. Listening to taped recordings of pupils' individual performances however demonstrated a much higher standard of work.
164. Standards of work in Year 12 are very high with students working independently and enjoying their course. They are drawn from the four consortium schools and work well together. Their professionalism was observed in performances for their AS level assessment in music. The singers, pianists, euphonium player, flautist and oboist all acquitted themselves well. The Oboe player from Manor School played a movement from an Albinoni Concerto with style and panache as his chosen piece. All students have harmonic understanding as was demonstrated in their realisation of cadences for Bach chorale preludes. This could be further strengthened by singing the cadences in four-part harmony. At the time of the last inspection report there was no A level taking place.
165. The quality of teaching in music is good at Key Stages 3 and 4 and very good at Post 16 where teaching is shared between the consortium music staff. Clear targets and searching questions remind pupils of past work and provide a focus for the future. Homework is set and marked regularly. High expectations of learning and behaviour ensure a positive climate for progress by most pupils. Inappropriate behaviour is quickly nipped in the bud. There is good understanding of individuals' strengths and weaknesses and this is used to challenge pupils' understanding and improve learning. In all lessons and particularly at Post 16 pupils and students are encouraged to become independent learners. Effective preparation takes place for examinations. Teaching is aimed at inclusiveness and both higher and lower attainers are able to succeed in music, as are pupils with special educational needs. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is good because of the high quality of specialist support given to them and the good understanding that the music teacher has of their needs.
166. Attitudes to lessons are positive and co-operation and good behaviour are apparent with pupils on task almost all of the time. Good listening skills are evident in all lessons and pupils raise their hands to ask and answer questions. Younger pupils are eager to find out their assessment marks when they reach the end of a topic. Practical work is done with pride and good relationships exist within the classroom. Many pupils enjoy music and concentrate on improving their skills and understanding.
167. The department has made very good progress since the last inspection due to strong leadership and management. Teaching qualifications and experience match the needs of the curriculum. The scheme of work addresses all statutory requirements but the use of information and communication technology has been neglected. The recent purchase of a licence to run Sibelius software on 5 computers is making good this deficiency. Good records are kept, work is assessed regularly and reports to parents include an instrumental report when applicable. Much of the practical work is recorded and stored on tape. The music department is now in suitable accommodation and is adequately resourced.

168. A wide range of extra-curricular musical activities takes place at lunchtime and after school which have good support from pupils and students. The senior choir undertook a successful concert tour in southern Germany last summer. Places on weekend trips to London to see shows are quickly filled and Key Stage 4 and Post 16 students run music workshops to encourage other pupils to take up the subject. Liaison with primary schools also takes place during the summer term. About 20 per cent of the school population learn to play musical instruments and take extra singing lessons.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

169. The GCSE examination in physical education was introduced after the previous inspection in 1995, although until this year only boys have taken the course. The initial results in 1998 were creditably high with 84 per cent of candidates achieving A*-C grades. The results in 1999 were lower, but still ahead of the national average, with 62 per cent gaining A*-C grades. Comparison of the boys' results show that their performance in physical education was higher than in their other GCSE subjects, and that this represents positive achievement for these students. The examination results in 2000 show significant improvement with 86 per cent achieving A*-C grades.
170. In work seen during the inspection, attainment in physical education is generally average. Standards at the end of Key Stage 3 are average, with the majority of boys and girls achieving the expected standards in their activities, including students with special educational needs. The teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 3 in 2000 confirm this average attainment for girls, but considerably over-estimate boys' attainment. In Key Stage 4 only Year 10 practical work was seen, and here students' attainment is average overall. The attainment for those boys and girls in Year 10 who are following the GCSE course is above average for both their theory and practical work. This contrasts sharply with the Year 11 standards in theory work which are below average, and reflect the school's own predictions for this group based on their prior attainments.
171. Students' learning skills are mainly satisfactory and ensure that their rate of progress is also satisfactory in Key Stage 3, including for those students having special educational needs. This satisfactory progress continues in the core physical education course in Key Stage 4, and in the Year 11 GCSE group. Progress for those boys and girls taking the GCSE course in Year 10 is good because strong teaching combines with students' good interest and commitment, and results in effective learning.
172. Students are co-operative and behave well in lessons. Attitudes across the school are positive, especially in Key Stage 3, and levels of interest in, and enthusiasm for physical education are high. Participation rates are good, and students have secure learning skills. Their commitment and effort are mainly good, and boys especially work hard in their activities. Both boys and girls work successfully together, listening well to advice from teachers and applying it effectively in improving their skills.
173. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Overall, teaching is now satisfactory and no unsatisfactory teaching was seen. At Key Stage 3 teaching is satisfactory. Subject knowledge and understanding are secure, and lessons are well planned to include a variety of tasks matched well to the range of student needs in classes. Teaching at Key Stage 4 is also satisfactory, and is particularly effective in the Year 10 GCSE course where high expectation and positive pace are strong features. The most successful teaching combines strong subject knowledge with good student management skills, high expectations of their response, and well judged teacher intervention and feedback to promote learning. Where this was the case, for example, in Year 7 football, Year 8 gymnastics, Year 9 gymnastics, and Year 10 GCSE theory work on the modern Olympics, students were notably challenged and engaged by the work presented, took responsibility for their own learning, and made good progress. Relationships and discipline

are strengths, and lessons are usually purposeful and busy, but on occasion are slow to get underway. Although work is mainly matched well to developing the skills and capabilities of the majority of students, a closer targeting of tasks and resources is need to accelerate the progress of the more gifted and the least able. Whilst effective use is made of homework to reinforce and extend learning in examination classes, marking is inconsistent and provides too little guidance for improvement.

174. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Curriculum documentation is improving, and the requirements of the National Curriculum are properly covered. Improved assessment procedures are in place in Key Stage 3, which effectively track students' progress. Day-to-day administration is good, and planning for development has been strengthened since the previous inspection, although costing weaknesses remain. There is regular review of teachers' roles and responsibilities and some structured monitoring and evaluation of teaching.
175. With the exception of Key Stage 4 documentation, most issues arising from the previous report have been tackled. Facilities for the subject are satisfactory, with considerable improvements planned for the near future. Funding and resources are satisfactory, but, as at the last inspection, gymnastic equipment is outdated and requires improvement. Staff are well qualified and hardworking, although current provision requires review to ensure that all students in Key Stage 3 have equitable access to specialist teaching.
176. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory. The successful introduction of GCSE physical education has been strengthened with the inclusion of girls for the first time last year. Teaching has improved, and as a result the underachievement of some students noted in the previous report has been eliminated. The department's commitment to extra-curricular work and curricular provision ensures a good range of opportunities for both boys and girls which promote interest and support raising standards, and has been recognised with the award of the Sportsmark in 1998.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

177. Standards in religious education have continued to improve since the last inspection, and are now in line with national average at all key stages. Although standards on entry are not as high as might be expected, students reach expectations by the end of Key Stage 3 and from then on their achievement is high. All students are entered for GCSE humanities, in which religious education is a major component, and achieve considerable success. Significantly more students reached grades A*-C than did nationally in 1999, with boys in particular being ahead of their counterparts in other schools. Results in 2000 were even better, with boys continuing to perform well: almost two thirds secured A*-C grades, overtaking the girls' achievement, although girls at the school achieved a 100 percent pass rate at grades A*-G. A small number of students take A-level theology within the local consortium, and their achievements contribute to the overall success of the courses: the pass rate has been 100 percent for the past few years.
178. Teaching, as seen during the inspection week, is always satisfactory and is often good; this is particularly so in Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. It was not possible to observe any of the lessons taken by non-specialists – as many of the religious education teachers are – but the written work that was analysed suggests that teaching and learning are at least satisfactory whichever teacher takes the classes. The department benefits from having a religious education specialist to lead the subject and to share his expertise with other humanities teachers. His own secure knowledge and understanding of the subject set the standard; other teachers and their classes benefit from the high quality booklets produced for the religious education modules within the courses. Year 10 students were seen using a well-documented booklet on creation and evolution in their lessons. These and other

resources are used well. Artefacts, for instance, were seen being used to good effect in a lesson on Hindu deities.

179. Lessons are well planned, and good co-operation from students contributes to their success. Relevant homework is set, completed and marked regularly. As at the time of the last inspection, students do not bring a great amount of religious understanding to their lessons, and few show signs of any religious background of their own. This makes their progress even more impressive. Students with special needs are supported in almost every lesson, enabling them to achieve appropriately, even though few tasks are set that differentiate students according to their ability.
180. Most students have a positive attitude to the subject and work hard in lessons, albeit a little too slowly at times to complete all the work they are given. But their learning is focussed; they relate well to the teacher and to each other. This is particularly evident in the sixth form, where students' writing on complex philosophical issues is of a high standard. They benefit from discussing drafts of their work with each other.
181. After the last inspection, it was reported that the school was not complying with the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus for the county, with regard to the time spent on religious education, the units covered and provision for post-16 students. This has now been put right. There is just about enough time to cover the requisite units at Key Stage 3, and ample time at Key Stage 4. The correct balance between Christianity and the other prescribed religions is in place. There is also provision at post-16; as well as the option of theology at AS and A-levels. All students now study religious education components in general studies, and there are 'religious education days' each year when students join others from consortium schools to participate in high quality conferences on religious themes. The provision for religious education within the humanities curriculum meets all requirements. However, religious education is not yet reported on as a discrete subject to parents, and nor are parents informed in the school prospectus of their statutory right to withdraw their children from religious education lessons
182. The subject is well managed within the humanities department, and benefits from the shared resources and accommodation. The cross-curricular nature of the humanities course means that all the staff in the department contributes to teaching all the subjects. Although they share their expertise, and provide excellent schemes of work and teaching materials for each other, there is insufficient provision for professional development from outside the school. Assessment procedures are barely adequate; at Key Stage 4 and at post-16 the examination syllabuses lay down explicit criteria which are communicated to students, but at Key Stage 3 there is some vagueness, and students are not fully aware of how well they are doing in relation to national norms. Overall, however, religious education benefits from being taught in a humanities context. Its status is enhanced in the eyes of the students, there are valuable cross-curricular links, and there are opportunities for all to succeed in worthwhile GCSE courses.

VOCATIONAL COURSES.

183. In the results of students following General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQ) programmes of study, students at the age of 17 produce standards of attainment above national standards for the Business course at Intermediate level, and in line with national standards for the course at Advanced level. Also at Intermediate level last year one student gained a distinction in Art and Design and another a merit in Leisure and Tourism. Whilst numbers accessing vocational courses are low, the drive towards higher level accreditation is to the credit of the school as in the previous year there were no achievements at distinction level. The school also motivates and supports GNVQ students well and retention of students is not a problem for this school.

184. Teaching in vocational courses is generally appropriate and often good. Well-planned work is carefully focussed on the course requirements and supports the development of students' knowledge and understanding. In business studies, careful use of local examples draws students into the local economies of scale, the impact of infrastructure developments and is particularly good at developing appropriate vocabulary. Key Skills are constantly supported and developed with many lessons planned to provide learning opportunities in literacy, numeracy and information technology.
185. In work seen during the inspection standards of attainment in Business Studies are better than those expected for students of the same age nationally. Students have a good knowledge of the topics that they are studying and many have better understanding than expected for their age. Students following vocational courses enter the school with levels of attainment which are broadly average or below average; and their achievements by the age of 18 are better than might be expected in relation to their prior attainment. Students have a good knowledge of the topics that they are studying and many students following the single and full Awards in Leisure and Recreation and Business for the Advanced Vocational Certificate have a better understanding than expected for their age.
186. The school is currently offering Part 1 Engineering as a GNVQ for students at Key Stage 4 as well as the ASDAN Youth Award - both are appropriate accreditation routes that develop key skills - and they help average and below average ability students to recognise their personal achievements.
187. At both Key Stage 4 and post-16 vocational students behave well in lessons. They have positive attitudes, and are courteous and respectful of both peers and staff. They form constructive working relationships with each other and respect each other's feelings, values and beliefs. Intermediate students are beginning to show initiative in the acquisition of evidence and advanced students clearly take responsibility for their own evidence. Assessment within the school is thorough; assessor feedback is detailed and relevant; and verification systems are secure, consistent and meet GNVQ specifications. There was no vocational education report at the time of the previous inspection. The range of vocational courses has been expanded since the last inspection and there are appropriate plans for further development.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

188. There is good provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs in both key stages. It is well managed by the head of the inclusion unit and well taught, with a very good contribution from a strong, well-trained and committed group of particularly effective learning support assistants and teaching staff who support students both in class and in the inclusion unit. The well-trained team of special support assistants and teachers who help deliver the school's inclusion programme are a strength of the school.
189. Inclusion support staff give appropriate support and teaching to those students whose reading skills are less advanced often, on a small group or one to one basis. This leads to these students making good progress, especially in reading, spelling and extended pieces of writing. The level of support received by students with special educational needs contributes significantly to the positive attitudes they display. An unusual example is the student who has rejected other schools but is able to get something positive from the school day in the inclusion unit. Pupils with special educational needs learn well in almost all lessons. Appropriate work is provided in all subjects and learning support assistants are particularly effective in challenging and motivating these students.
190. The integration of inclusion and behaviour management strategies has improved the quality of teaching in the main school by over thirty percent since the last inspection. Teachers' planning is a general strength of the school, and tasks are mainly matched well to the needs

and capabilities of lower attaining students in most subjects. This is an area where there has been considerable progress since the previous inspection particularly in design technology, science and English.

191. SEN assessment is also good, with the results used to provide well documented individual education plans for each student. Teachers use the individual education plans, which are well thought out and provide effective guidance in teaching this group. Parents of students with special educational needs are appropriately involved in the reviews of their progress and are able to record their views in writing. Other parts of the provision, such as ASDAN in Key Stage 4 further enhance the opportunities for pupils with particular needs. There is also some provision for more gifted pupils in mathematics, science and music, and in a summer school for pupils in Key Stage 3. The school's procedures for child protection are good. For a few pupils, the inclusion unit provides a valuable temporary refuge from the everyday pressures of normal school life.