

INSPECTION REPORT

WOODEATON MANOR SCHOOL

Oxford

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123329

Headteacher: Caroline Greenhow

Reporting inspector: Mr Tom Smith
21044

Dates of inspection: 17-20 September 2001

Inspection number: 230119

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: For pupils with moderate learning difficulties

School category: Community Special

Age range of pupils: 11-16 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Steven Whatmore

Date of previous inspection: 3 March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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21044	Mr Tom Smith	Registered inspector	Physical Education: Design and technology: Information and communication technology	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
11575	Mrs Catherine Fish	Lay inspector		How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
7465	Mr Richard Brent	Team inspector	English : Geography : History : Equal opportunities	
18206	Ms Elizabeth Mildner	Team inspector	Science : Art : Religious education	How well does the school care for its pupils?
16500	Mr Tom Richardson	Team inspector	Mathematics : Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
23300	Mrs Lily Evans	Team Inspector	Modern foreign language	

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	8
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	14
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?	17
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?	19
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	22
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	26
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	27
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	30
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	25
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN	

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Woodeaton Manor School is a day and residential school that provides education for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. It has places for up to 60 boys and girls aged 11-16 years, who live in the Oxfordshire area. There are 57 pupils on roll. Nationally, only 14 per cent of similar schools provide boarding accommodation. On admission each pupil has a Statement of special educational need (SEN). Some of these pupils have additional needs, such as visual impairment. It is unusual for similar schools to admit pupils with such needs. The majority of pupils are of white European origin and no pupil uses English as their second language. On admission pupils have low or very low attainment; individuals attain in line with national averages, but only in some subjects. All pupils have significant learning difficulties on their arrival and prior to this they may have experienced disruption to their lives – either socially or academically. Approximately one-third of pupils are entitled to free school meals.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Woodeaton Manor is a good school that enables pupils to achieve good standards in relation to their identified needs. The leadership and management of the school are good and through their skills and expertise the school presents as a vibrant and purposeful place of learning. The headteacher leads the school with clear purpose and demands the highest standards in all areas of its work. A high proportion of the teaching is either good, very good or excellent and this enables pupils to make good progress in their learning and social development. Together this contributes to a good ethos within the school that enables pupils to become mature young adults by the time they leave. The very good residential provision works in complete harmony with the academic side of the school and fully complements the work done there – the outcome is one of seamless and good quality provision. The school gives good value for money because it has high aims and values that are delivered with quality.

What the school does well

- Teachers provide good quality teaching that enables pupils to make good progress.
- Progress of pupils is well monitored and the school consistently seeks improvement in all of its work. The school management provides an environment in which the work of all staff is valued.
- The ethos of the school encourages pupils to behave well and have respect for each other. Staff encourage pupils to have good attitudes to their learning. Consequently their personal development is good and this encourages pupils to have appropriately moral views of the world in which they live.
- Provides very good integration links with other mainstream schools.
- The residential provision is very good and fully supports the work of the school.

What could be improved

- The development of literacy skills used by pupils in all subjects.
- Whole school target setting.
- Linking of assessment in lessons more clearly with subsequent teaching and learning.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the action plan prepared by the appropriate authority.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Already described as a good school in the last report Woodeaton Manor has continued to make good progress. The management have successfully addressed issues identified within the last report. They have raised standards of provision and because monitoring and evaluation are now more effective the quality of teaching has risen further. Good planning by teachers now takes full account of pupils' individual needs and attainment. Pupils develop into mature and considerate individuals – though the opportunities for personal autonomy could usefully be extended. Assessment procedures are now secure and staff have a good understanding of progress made by individual pupils.

STANDARDS

The table summarises inspectors' judgements about how well pupils achieve in relation to their individual targets by the time they leave the school.

Progress in:	by age 16	Key	
speaking and listening	C	very good	A
Reading	C	good	B
Writing	C	satisfactory	C
Mathematics	B	unsatisfactory	D
personal, social and health education	B	poor	E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	B		

Most pupils enter the school with attainment levels that are below or well below average for their age. Comparison of the school year on year test data using national tests and accreditation shows that pupils achieve well. Pupils with particular needs as well as those from ethnic minorities also achieve well. Standards are mostly above average when compared to similar schools.

Standards of literacy are average for this type of school. By age 14 years, pupils have made satisfactory progress in speaking and listening; by age 16 years most pupils express themselves adequately and sustain conversations and dialogue. When used in subjects other than English the weaknesses in pupils' literacy skills are more evident. Their poorer writing and reading skills inhibit progress in these subjects. The school is aware of this and has put measures in place to redress the issue. As yet it is too early to evidence any positive results. Pupils' achievement in mathematics is steadily rising, helped by use of the National Numeracy Strategy for younger pupils. The evidence suggests that standards will continue to rise. Pupils also use number in different contexts, such as French and geography, and this extends and enhances learning in those subjects. Standards in science, information and communication technology (ICT) and French are good. Average standards are evident in creative arts, geography, history and religious education. Standards in design and technology are below average because the range of the curriculum is restricted. In physical education standards are above average. There is good quality provision for pupils' personal and social development that provides a strong foundation for the whole curriculum. By the time they leave pupils have good moral standpoints and consideration for others. Many pupils, even those recently admitted, gain feelings of positive self-worth because of the high quality work done by dedicated staff. Individual education plans are effective in setting realistic yet challenging targets for pupils and also as a means of identifying the progress made. The school successfully achieves its aims and is instrumental in helping pupils to achieve well. Information from national test and accreditation data indicates that standards are continuing to rise.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good; pupils enjoy the school and do their work enthusiastically.

Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good; pupils contribute, through their behaviour, to an atmosphere of calm and order.
Personal development and relationships	Good; positive relationships between adults and pupils enable pupils to have a constructive approach to their own development.
Attendance	Satisfactory in comparison to other schools.

Pupils develop a sense of order and purpose to their lives and by the time they leave they have made constructive relationships based on greatly enhanced feelings of self-worth. Pupils realise that working hard brings rewards and success and this further encourages them to greater effort. Staff are very good role models for pupils and the positive relationships that stem from these gives pupils the experience of trust and mutual respect. There is good racial harmony between pupils. By the time they leave, pupils have developed feelings of security and confidence in their own abilities and many successfully continue their lives in further learning or employment.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged 11-16
Lessons seen overall	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.

There is a high proportion of good, very good and occasionally excellent teaching that impacts positively on pupils' learning and subsequent progress. Of the 60 lessons observed 30 were good, 6 were very good and 4 were excellent. The remaining 20 were satisfactory, though some of these also contained elements of good practice. This good quality teaching is evident throughout the school. Teaching of English, mathematics and science is good overall. The development of pupils' literacy within other subjects could usefully be developed to further raise the rate of progress made by pupils but their numeracy skills are developed well. The quality of teaching in PE is excellent and results in pupils making outstanding individual progress. Some pupils attain levels in individual activities that are at national standard. The quality of teaching in religious education is satisfactory. Insufficient teaching was seen in the creative arts to form conclusive judgements but the outcomes as seen in pupils' work suggests that this would be good. There is no provision for teaching of resistant materials in design and technology – but the school is actively addressing this issue. Teaching of the other elements of this subject is satisfactory. Pupils' learning in geography, history, ICT and French benefits from good teaching and as a result they make good progress in these subjects. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. Use of ICT is satisfactory but where teachers have access to the computer suite the learning is better. Where misbehaviour by some pupils became an issue in lessons staff were able to call upon immediate support that ensured the behaviour was dealt with and the learning

of other pupils continued undisturbed. Personal, social and health education is well provided and the ethos of the school continually enhances and underlines the development of these issues. Much of this is dealt with through the high expectations of pupils held by teachers and because of this the needs of all pupils are well considered.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good in all subjects, except design and technology.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good; spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Social development is good and pupils' moral development is very good. The provision ensures that pupils develop into mature individuals, sensitive to the needs of others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good; the school provides quality support across the range of its care procedures. The residence is particularly effective in this regard.

The school has a vibrant and effective relationship with its parents who, despite living over a wide geographical area, provide good levels of support for the work of the school. They have a high level of confidence in the school to do the very best for their children. As a result they recognise that their children enjoy being at the school. The inspection team strongly endorse these views.

The curriculum provided by the school is broad and offers many good opportunities for pupils to learn beyond the academic content. Pupils with additional needs also have good opportunities. There is a weakness within design and technology – though the school is doing its best to redress this. Personal and social development of pupils is particularly strong and this is under-pinned by very good relationships between staff and pupils. Subjects, such as PE, contribute significantly to this development because of opportunities it provides to pupils for inclusion in mainstream school. The school has good procedures that monitor academic and social progress in pupils. Its strength lies in the consistency of its application to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good; the headteacher leads the school with vision and purpose that results in high standards. Senior management are skilled and effective in their roles.

How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governing body is ably led and comprises skilled and knowledgeable people who efficiently carry out their responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Self-evaluation and improvement is central to the school's work. Whole school targets could be more rigorous.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are used effectively and efficiently – they make a satisfactory impact on pupils' learning and progress.

The accommodation, beautiful as it is, has limitations. There is no gymnasium to enable pupils to follow the whole PE curriculum. Its listed status, and the laws relating to this, place severe restrictions on further development. Despite this the school uses the accommodation well and at times turns perceived disadvantages to the benefit of pupils. The school has sufficient staff to provide for the needs of pupils and they are well supported through systems such as induction procedures. Learning resources are satisfactory and used satisfactorily to support pupils' learning. There are good procedures to ensure that money is spent well and in everything it does the school ensures the principle of good value. As a result the school provides good value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That their children are happy at the school and make obvious progress. • They believe the behaviour in the school to be good. • They have confidence in the teachers. • They like the high standards. • They feel included in all discussions about their children and have a good understanding of the progress made by them. • They believe that their children have a feeling of personal responsibility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents hold diverse views about the amount of homework given to their children.

There is a high degree of satisfaction among parents about the work done by the school and they have positive and supportive views that the inspection team endorse. While some hold differing opinions about the amount of homework provided to pupils, the evidence indicates that the school regularly provides this. It may be appropriate for the school to re-state to parents the current satisfactory position.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards have risen since the last inspection. Compared to similar schools for pupils with moderate learning difficulties many pupils of Woodeaton Manor achieve better results. Within individual subjects, such as physical education, some pupils achieve in line with what might be expected of pupils in mainstream schools. In the examination round for 2001 almost one third of pupils achieved at least one GCSE within the range A-G. As a percentage this is well above the national average of 19.8% for such pupils. Since that time the school has increased the range of opportunity for pupils to sit for GCSE accreditation.
2. In addition to GCSE, Year 11 pupils have also achieved well in a range of nine other subjects in the Certificate of Educational Achievement (CoEA). Most notable among these is science where 75 per cent of pupils achieved a level of distinction. Seventy five per cent of pupils also achieved a distinction in Rural Science; 80 per cent achieved distinction in French. Of the other subjects, such as rural science, geography, English, mathematics, design technology, information and communication technology (ICT) and history, the majority of pupils achieved the higher order grades of 'merit' and 'distinction'. When compared to the results of 2000 the proportion of pupils gaining higher awards has increased and this has also been achieved across a wider range of subjects. In 2000 seven subjects were attempted by pupils, in 2001 this had increased to nine with the addition of history and ICT. Since 1997 the achievement of pupils in CoEA has shown a year on year improvement.
3. On admission to the school the majority of pupils start from a low baseline of knowledge and understanding. With good teaching based on high expectations they make good progress and achieve well in the majority of subjects they study. Along with low academic achievement on arrival, pupils also have a low baseline of personal and academic skills. By the time they leave pupils have made good progress. Their speaking and listening skills are better developed and they hold conversations with ease. Younger pupils, up to the age of 14 years are less confident in these skills. Some subjects, such as geography or science, present a difficulty for pupils as they seek to explain what they learn. The school is very much aware of the need for pupils to have good literacy skills and is making considerable effort to remedy this deficiency so that pupils will have more effective learning skills across a wider range of subjects.
4. By age of 14, the majority of pupils are working within the range of levels 1-3. Achievement in English is within this range. In science and mathematics,

however, they work within the range of levels 3-4. In part this reflects the lower dependency of these subjects on the use of literacy. Within the last two years (1999-2000) there has been a slight overall improvement by pupils who undertook the national tests (SAT).

5. By age of 14, pupils' achievements are good in mathematics, science, ICT and French and very good in physical education (PE). In art and design, geography, history and religious education pupils' achievements are satisfactory. Achievement in design and technology is also satisfactory but this is across a narrower range of the curriculum, as no teaching of resistant materials is available. The school is urgently seeking to redress this omission. Achievements remain broadly similar for pupils up to 16 years except in history and PE where outcomes are better. In PE particularly the achievement by a high number of pupils, within individual activities, approaches and often exceeds the achievements of similar age pupils within mainstream schools.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

6. The school has maintained within pupils the good attitudes, values and personal relationships reported in the previous inspection. Pupils show good and positive attitudes to school and talk appreciatively of the many things the school has offered them, both in class work and the leisure part of the day. They are especially appreciative of the extra out of school activities organised by the school. These include annual journeys to France as well as opportunities for cross Channel sail training. Even pupils new to the school are confident to join in all activities and are already making friends and settling to work.
7. Behaviour in lessons is predominately good or better and pupils become willing and enthusiastic learners. This is most noticeable among older pupils though it is also evident in the majority. They listen attentively and have the confidence to participate in discussions. They quickly settle to tasks, organise themselves effectively and diligently complete the set work. They enjoy lessons and take pride in producing good quality work. The less mature pupils are dependent on adult support but as they become older they are more able to work independently. There were some good examples of collaborative work, for instance, when older pupils had the task of sowing grass seed as part of their Land Studies course. The behaviour of the pupils in and around the school is good. Pupils are courteous and friendly to each other. Interchanges with adults and their peers are positive and encouraging. Exclusions are used as a last resort and the number of temporary exclusions is decreasing. The reasons for any exclusion are carefully evaluated so that pupils can be effectively supported to make a successful return to school as soon as possible.
8. The quality of relationships throughout the school is good and emanates from the good role models provided by all staff. Pupils show respect and concern for each other and develop trusting friendships. As part of this there is good racial harmony within the school. These constructive relationships and the relaxed and good-humoured atmosphere in the school have a very positive impact both on the pupils' academic progress and on their social development. Throughout the school there is an ethos of taking personal responsibility and making choices on how to act and behave. Pupils often support each other in making correct choices. There are few opportunities for pupils to take real responsibility in the day to day running of the school but the school community is in the process of setting up a new School's Council, with representatives from all age groups.
9. Attendance at school is satisfactory. The level of attendance for the last academic year has improved on the previous year. The rates for both authorised and unauthorised absences have declined. These rates are broadly in line with the previous year's data for similar schools. Much of the unauthorised absence is vested in a very small number of pupils; their cases are well known to the school and education welfare service and

appropriate action follows. Some unauthorised absences are attributed to the school's consistent policy of only authorising up to ten days holiday a year for each pupil, when these are taken during a term. Day pupils are brought to school on local authority transport; this generally arrives on time allowing the school day to start promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

10. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Of the sixty lessons observed forty were good or better, of these six were very good and four were excellent. No unsatisfactory teaching was evident. This represents a good improvement since the time of the last inspection. The learning achieved by pupils closely matches the quality of teaching. This favourable picture is found throughout the school and because teachers provide tuition in their subjects to all ages, this quality is consistently provided.
11. Teachers and learning support assistants (LSAs) are fully committed to offering pupils the best opportunities for learning and this is a significant strength in ensuring the learning and progress of pupils. The good quality relationships between staff and pupils helps learning, because when pupils are unsure about something they have the confidence to ask. In effect this extends and consolidates their understanding. The majority of staff teach their subject from a good base of expertise and subject knowledge. This is most clearly seen in subjects such as physical education and mathematics, where specialists teach the subject throughout the school. The quality of learning undertaken by pupils in PE is at times outstanding and would bear favourable comparison to many mainstream schools.
12. LSAs are well briefed by teachers and before lessons begin they have a clear understanding as to the focus and purpose of their role. Where appropriate, teachers ask them to give time to individual pupils in order to support particular needs, such as literacy. Consequently these pupils gain a fuller understanding of the lesson content. Occasionally this support can also be provided for pupils who have difficulty in concentrating and whose behaviour may distract others from learning. The LSAs effectively manage such situations and ensure that whole lessons continue undisturbed, to the benefit of all pupils in the class. As a group the LSAs provide expertise of high calibre. For example, in the computer suite the LSA works very effectively alongside the teacher and in one particular example was able to maintain the concentration of the group while the teacher provided attention for one disturbed pupil. Such an approach is a model of teamwork that has good impact on pupils' learning.
13. The overall improvement in the quality of teaching has been brought about by several factors. The senior management know their teachers very well and readily identify the strengths they have. There is good monitoring practice that starts with good induction procedures for new staff. Discussion with senior management, during the inspection, brought little

new knowledge to their understanding of the quality of teaching in the school.

14. The curriculum is under-pinned by good quality lesson planning that clearly picks out what it is that pupils should learn by the end of each lesson. Assessment is included within lessons by the majority of teachers and this enables them to have a good understanding of what pupils have learned. The practice of using this knowledge in subsequent lessons could be further extended, although some teachers also include a good preamble to lessons that refreshes pupils' previous learning. The good planning also focuses teachers' attention to the sequence in which knowledge can be provided to pupils and this enables pupils to have a clearer understanding of the logic and purpose to their study.
15. Planning by teachers includes the particular or additional needs of individual pupils. For pupils with needs, such as those related to visual impairment (VI), this planning is good. Such pupils are supported by specific, trained as braillists, who ensure that these pupils take a full part in the curriculum and associated activities. For example, in a swimming lesson a VI pupil was sensitively supported to the extent that he was enabled to use his ability to the full. Consequently, he made good progress in developing his confidence in water, to the extent that he swam unaided across the width of the pool.
16. Expectations on pupils are uniformly high. There can be few pupils in the school who believe that second best will do. This is also confirmed in the unanimous view of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire. They believe that the school encourages pupils to do their best. Teachers provide a satisfactory range of teaching methods so that pupils gain a good understanding of their learning and raise their levels of achievement. For example, in French lessons pupils are required to listen to the language, key words are learned, pupils practise their French accent, they divide word cards into groups of 'le' and 'la' to show gender and if their attention flags the teacher encourages them to sing French songs. What results is an effective and enjoyable learning experience for pupils. Such a variety of approaches is not uncommon in other lessons.
17. Teaching of English is good and pupils make good progress within these lessons. The awareness by teachers, of opportunities within other lessons in which literacy skills might be used, could usefully be developed. The picture, overall, is one of both strengths and weaknesses. For example, in physical education (PE) lessons pupils are required, whatever their attainment, to comment on the performance of others and suggest ways in which it might be improved. They are also called upon to lead warm-up sessions and encourage others to maximum effort. In such ways the speaking and listening skills of pupils are encouraged alongside the confidence this brings.

18. Mathematics teaching is good and the opportunity to use numeracy within other lessons is well considered. For example, in food technology pupils accurately estimate and measure quantities of ingredients. Simple data is used in geography to compile graphs. Informally, teachers count out loud and so engage pupils in understanding the concept of number. For example, a pupil was heard to count the number of people who came through a door from the play area. This feat was unremarkable, but for the fact that she was doing it in French.
19. The length of lessons disadvantages learning, as does the placement of some lessons on the timetable. It is not unusual for pupils to have three lessons of the same subject on the same day. Sometimes, pupils have two double-period lessons of the same subject. There is evidence to suggest that where lessons occur under such circumstances the second of the periods is less effective for pupils' learning. This is a provision that the school could usefully re-examine.
20. Homework, and its use to extend and consolidate pupils' learning caused diverse views among parents. The evidence indicates that the school is keenly aware of the benefits of homework – and a timetable is published for when it should be done – but reference to it in lessons is not extensive. Some good practice was seen however, when teachers encouraged pupils to continue their research on a topic. On other occasions, such as in science pupils were simply required to finish a work sheet.
21. There were no consistent weaknesses in any of the teaching. Lessons were only less effective when the attention of pupils began to wane. This could have been the result of sessions, in some cases, being too long or in others where the lesson was the second of the day in that particular subject.
22. Several teachers are new to the school and relationships with pupils have yet to be fully established. Because of the support provided by senior management as well as effective induction procedures these teachers, along with their experienced colleagues, also provide good quality learning opportunities for pupils. The effort and expertise of all teachers ensures that the ethos for learning is both exciting and challenging for all pupils.

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

23. The school provides a curriculum that is, overall, of good quality. Within this curriculum there are strong aspects of great benefit to the pupils as well as some minor areas where improvements can be made. Where the curriculum is strong:
 - Pupils are able to gain accredited awards in most subjects (in Year 11), that include GCSE and the Certificate of Educational Achievement (CoEA).
 - Pupils who show appropriate levels of knowledge and understanding are able to follow courses in their subject at a mainstream secondary school. This high quality

provision is particularly beneficial in helping pupils to attain, for example, GCSE awards in physical education.

- Excellent provision is made for physical education and this leads, in turn, to pupils achieving significantly high standards in the subject.
- Careers education and guidance of good quality is provided throughout the school, with very good arrangements for work experience for pupils in Years 10 and 11.
- Pupils are enabled to follow link courses in a College of Further Education that is near their home and are, therefore, prepared effectively for leaving school and going on to college.
- Pupils make guided choices of the subjects they would like to study between the ages of 14-16 years. These include appropriate vocational as well as academic courses.
- There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities. Whilst these are mainly run as part of the residential programme, they are made available to all pupils and enable them to experience much more than most schools usually provide. These activities include events such as outings to theatres, visits to historical buildings, learning to sail, outdoor pursuits and excursions to theme parks. These experiences add significant value to the development of the pupils and prepare them very well for their adult life.
- The school works hard and ensures that pupils have a good equality of access to all activities and areas of the curriculum. Where pupils show they are capable of returning to mainstream education, they are enabled to do so and, similarly, the school makes some of its facilities available to some mainstream pupils who may benefit from the programmes offered.
- There is a good programme of personal, social and health education that includes appropriate emphasis on sex education, drugs and substance misuse and citizenship.
- Those pupils who are resident gain great benefit from the consistency of the very good 24-hour curriculum provided. Teaching and residential staff share their knowledge of the pupils and work together to meet their academic, personal and developmental needs at all times.
- Good links are maintained with the village so that the school is well thought of and pupils gain benefit from, for example, being able to perform carols at Christmas in the local church.
- The school hosts the main office for the East Oxfordshire Education Business Partnership. This results in very beneficial links with a wide range of local businesses that increase the options available for pupils on work experience. The partnership also hosts events in which pupils from the school are included that help to raise pupils' self-esteem, confidence and provide experience of the world of work. Also, the school is well known and respected by others in the partnership and this is of benefit in admitting pupils to the school and integrating pupils in mainstream schools.

24. The National Curriculum is followed effectively in almost all subjects. The only exception is currently in design and technology where pupils in Years 7 to 9 have no access to working with resistant materials, such as wood and plastic. The National Literacy Strategy is being implemented satisfactorily for pupils up to age 14 years. The National Numeracy Strategy is going well and already having a positive impact on standards in mathematics. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils with special educational needs over and above the moderate learning difficulties and behavioural needs of most of the pupils. Where necessary, the school seeks and acts upon specialist advice and does its best to include these pupils with the others. The areas of the curriculum where improvements can be made are as follows:

- To meet statutory requirements in design and technology, pupils in Years 7-9 need to learn to design and work with resistant materials.
- Within the programme for creative arts for pupils in Years 7-9, more emphasis is needed on each of the individual subjects followed (especially to art and music). This is so that pupils who go on to study these subjects in Years 10 and 11 begin their courses with a stronger foundation of knowledge and skill and can, therefore, gain higher-level awards by the time they leave school.

- There is a good balance of time allocated to each subject over a week. However, this time is not always distributed to the best advantage. For example, some mathematics lessons are one and a half hours long and both pupils and teachers are growing weary towards the end! Some classes may also have two double lessons of one subject on the same day.
25. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through assemblies and many other aspects of its work. This enriches the curriculum and enhances the growth of pupils' self-esteem. Since the previous inspection the school has maintained the strengths in its provision and improved that in the spiritual.
 26. The spiritual development of the pupils is satisfactory. This is a school where individuals are valued and their achievements are celebrated. Religious education provides sound opportunities to explore the values and beliefs of others and assemblies enhance spiritual awareness. The school fulfils the requirements for a daily act of worship and in this pupils are invited to reflect on the moral and spiritual dimension of their personal development. Pupils are helped to appreciate the wonders of nature through a range of subjects, including science and teachers make full use of the school's beautiful rural site. The school is developing arrangements to ensure that individual subject planning includes guidance for teachers on meeting the school's aims in this area. Prior to the start of their lunchtime meal pupils have a period of quiet calm before they volunteer their own brief prayer of thanks for food and a chosen grace is said.
 27. The very good provision for moral development noted at the time of the previous inspection has been maintained. Teachers and adults provide excellent role models and their expectations help pupils know from an early age what is right and what is unacceptable. Parents are correct in thinking that behaviour is good. Pupils understand that good work and behaviour are praised and that actions have consequences. The "Top Banana" award celebrates kindness and sharing as well as good work. Concern for the environment is demonstrated through collecting paper and cans as well as specific studies in geography. Consideration for others less well off than themselves is encouraged and often involves effort: pupils collect for charities, including the British Legion on Poppy Day.
 28. Throughout the school there is good support for pupils' social development. They support each other very well, share friendships at recreation time and show genuine concern when somebody is either ill or upset. Catering and care staff contribute to pupils' social development by setting expectations both at meal-times and in the residences. The school offers good opportunities for pupils to experience mainstream lessons, as in physical education, and there is a well-established work experience programme for older pupils. Overall, the rich range of activities and visits, combined with residential stays in this country and abroad, make a positive contribution to pupils' social development.
 29. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils' cultural development. Teachers increase pupils' understanding of their own local and national geography and history. Visits to France and language lessons help their awareness of

France and its culture and there is a wide range of visits to theatres and museums, such as the Imperial War Museum. Art and music foster knowledge of other cultures and work in religious education helps pupils' understanding of faiths such as Hinduism. Currently, however, provision to prepare boys and girls for life in a multi-cultural society is limited.

30. Links with the local community and colleges are good and these impact well on pupils' chances to extend learning. Pupils take an active role in the community, joining in with such events as bonfire night in November. The school is well regarded by local people who comment favourably on the good behaviour of the pupils. Links with the local colleges are good. Pupils experience taster days in colleges near to their homes in preparation for further education. They may also attend longer courses at their local college whilst still at school. Currently, some Year 11 pupils are attending a motor mechanics course.
31. The school has very good links with a local secondary school. These are very beneficial to pupils in both settings. The main focus is to enable pupils at Woodeaton Manor to take General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) in physical education (PE). Twice each week, pupils in Year 10 and Year 11 go to the secondary school where they are fully integrated into the appropriate PE class. Staff from both schools share the teaching. In addition, mainstream sixth form students, as part of their course, organise a sports and swimming day for the Woodeaton pupils, again this is of benefit to both sets of pupils. This link is developed further for a pupil at the secondary school. He spends two days each week on work experience as a Learning Support Assistant at Woodeaton Manor. He also goes with the Year 11 pupils to the motor mechanics course, as well as the PE course at his mainstream school. These links show that, where there is willingness, very productive, mutually beneficial links are achieved.
32. The school also runs a very good activity week for their own Year 9 pupils together with pupils of similar abilities in other schools. This enables them all to build friendships for the future when they move into college education.
33. The school has good links with some local primary schools through a partnership scheme; this enables the school to access primary strategies and resources that can be used to advantage with their own pupils, and they in turn can give support relating to special educational needs matters to the primary schools.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. The school has maintained the high quality of support for its pupils reported in the previous inspection. All pupils have good relationships with staff and vice versa. Pupils feel secure and happy in the school and they

see it as a supportive and encouraging environment in which they can learn and develop as individuals.

35. Issues of health, safety and child protection are well managed and procedures are good. There is a nominated person for child protection and a policy, which gives clear guidance to all adults in the school so that everyone is aware of procedures should they have any concerns. Pupils are confident to talk to staff knowing that their worries will be dealt with sensitively and effectively. Health and safety procedures are secure and risk assessments carried out as necessary. Pupils are also made aware of risk as, for instance, in science investigations when all in the class discusses hazards and safe procedures. Whilst the school site and the age of the building inevitably include some hazards the school employs procedures that are used to minimise risk. In addition there is a safety conscious ethos.
36. The school is very effective in promoting good behaviour in all pupils through a well established and popular reward system. All staff have a consistent, firm but low key approach to unacceptable behaviour. Pupils are encouraged at all times to behave with consideration for others and to take responsibility for their own behaviour. Any disruptive behaviour is well managed and is not allowed to interfere with other pupils' learning. Pupils who misbehave are well supported to enable them to get back on task quickly. There is unobtrusive but effective supervision of pupils at all times. Pupils report that bullying is rare and that they are confident to talk to staff who will deal with the problem. All incidents are carefully recorded and details effectively disseminated to all staff. Information from these documents is carefully evaluated so that the school can be pro-active in helping pupils make progress in controlling their own behaviour. Pupils returning to school after a period out of school, either through exclusion or any other reason, are well supported to get back into the school routine.
37. There are good procedures for monitoring academic and personal development. There is consistency throughout the school in the way in which pupils' strengths and weaknesses are identified. The school makes good initial contact with potential pupils and has an effective induction programme to ensure that they are placed appropriately. Targets for pupils are written into individual education plans (I.E.P.s), which act as a baseline for judging progress thereafter. Although these procedures have improved since the last inspection, the school intends to sharpen its target setting so that higher attainers, in particular, are challenged more effectively.
38. Procedures for the annual review of pupils' Statements are good: they meet fully the requirements of the Code of Practice. When pupils are about to move to Year 10, the transition plans are comprehensive. They involve pupils, parents and careers officers appropriately. Procedures for assessing attainment are good and have improved since the last inspection. All subjects have effective and well-identified links with the National Curriculum. As a result, planning for the development of essential

skills and knowledge is made easier. Currently, however, individual lesson planning, even for small classes, does not always incorporate the results of this assessment or the subject targets on I.E.P.s. Pupils' files contain valuable information on the progress they make in both the subjects of the curriculum and in their personal and social development. In turn, this is used to help inform the annual report to parents.

39. The school has good procedures to monitor and promote good attendance. Because pupils are marked off on a list as transport arrives at school, any absences are immediately picked up, and telephone calls made or letters sent. Registers are correctly and clearly marked. The head teacher monitors pupils' attendance well, using a computer printout of individual records. This information is studied for any patterns in absence and is also checked against the pupil's timetable to establish if anything happening at school could be causing difficulties. The head teacher does have some concerns about parents colluding with pupils, or keeping them away from school, for example, to look after another child. However, she knows the pupils and parents very well and generally uses a personal approach over the telephone to effectively tackle any such problems.
40. The school has good relationships with the educational welfare service. Regular monthly meetings are held between them. A letter, sent by the educational welfare officer to parents reminding them of their responsibilities, reinforced the action taken by the head teacher to monitor and promote attendance. The school rightly takes a firm line on the amount of holiday taken each year; anything in excess of the ten days over which the school has discretion is correctly marked as unauthorised.

Residential provision

41. The school has very good residential provision that is utilised to the full. The majority of pupils who are eligible for residential education stay in school for two or three nights each week on a rota basis, ensuring that beds and rooms are used effectively and that as many pupils as possible benefit from the quality of the provision. Overall, inspection findings show that the residence provides pupils with the best features of a good home. Equal attention is given to the personal, social, emotional and academic development of each individual. The standard of care is very high, and clear benefits are seen in the performance of residential pupils in school.
42. Since the last inspection, staff have continued to monitor, evaluate and refine what they do. As a result, systems are now in place that makes sure that all pupils develop to the best of their ability. On entry to the residence, comprehensive assessment is carried out that shows clearly what each pupil can do and what they should improve next. From this, staff and pupils together select the priorities for the next stage of development and agree targets to be achieved. These form the basis of the individual care plan and are addressed thoroughly by pupils and staff together. Regular reviews of progress are made, new targets are set, and pupils are able to see how much they have achieved and how well they have done. In this way, the personal development of each pupil, and their academic development in basic skills, is monitored very well. This raises the pupils' self esteem and helps them to do better in school. A number of pupils have emotional and behavioural difficulties as well as other special educational needs. These specific needs are worked on

very effectively in the residence and pupils are generally able to come to school each day ready to learn and with a positive frame of mind.

43. Staff in the residence, and teachers on duty, provide good role models. Pupils follow their lead and treat one another with courtesy and respect. The older pupils also influence the younger ones and help them to calm their behaviour and develop better attitudes to learning. Set routines also assist this process. For example, pupils take turns to say grace before each meal and wait until the room is quiet before starting. Other pupils respect these occasions and quickly quieten, listen and join in the response of 'Amen'. Where, for example, pupils are enuretic, staff respond with sensitivity and make sure that individual dignity is preserved. These attitudes 'rub off' on the pupils and they are most accepting of a wide range of individual behaviours, feelings and beliefs. The result is that the residence is orderly, pupils are well behaved, they show respect for one another and bring these very good attitudes and behaviour into the classroom as well.
44. For pupils in the residence, life is a pleasurable learning experience as a result of the very good 'teaching' provided by staff. The targets set for each pupil are known well by the staff and addressed as often as possible in whatever activities being undertaken. Some pupils keep charts of how well they are meeting their targets and staff add 'smiley' faces each day when progress has been made. The activities planned for pupils in the evenings are chosen with regard to the needs of the pupils and staff make sure that each individual works towards meeting their personal targets as well as learning a wide range of valuable skills.
45. The activities provided in the residence complement the school's timetable and pupils follow a 24-hour curriculum that is of very good quality. These activities are very well chosen, very varied, exciting and valued by pupils. Included in the programme are opportunities for social interaction with teenagers from other schools and towns, development of individual sporting skills, visits to places of interest, outdoor pursuits, time and support for completion of homework and full support for the development of basic literacy and numeracy skills. These experiences add significantly to the school's provision for the social and moral development of the pupils. In addition, pupils are encouraged to visit art galleries, attend concerts and appreciate a wide range of artistic and cultural events and this enhances the pupils' appreciation of the arts and their aesthetic development. These activities are open to all pupils in the school, with parental consent, and staff do their utmost to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the planned events.
46. Very good support and guidance is provided for pupils and the school ensures that the level of care is of a consistently high quality. In particular, staff monitor how well pupils are doing in their personal development. Pupils in turn know how well they are doing and, together with staff, work hard to achieve even higher standards and levels of development. The procedures for monitoring and promoting this level of personal development are excellent, and provide a model to aspire to for the monitoring of other aspects of academic development in class. All aspects of pupils' development are communicated very effectively with parents. Very good links are maintained and staff routinely visit pupils' homes, for example, when taking them home after an evening activity on a day when they were not resident.
47. The acting head of care provides very good leadership for the staff team and is, in turn, supported and effectively led by the head teacher. There are very good procedures for the induction of new staff who quickly develop their expertise and are then supported in their continuing professional development. Regular meetings and supervision sessions of very good quality ensure that staff learn from one another and carry out their work with the best interests of the pupils at heart at all times. A measure of the success of the leadership is seen in the willingness of staff to give much more than their job description expects for the benefit of the pupils. Staff enjoy a high level of job satisfaction and this, in turn, leads the pupils to benefit from the high quality of residential provision they receive.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. The positive picture of this aspect given at the time of the previous report has been maintained. Parents responding to the questionnaire and attending the meeting prior to the inspection show very good levels of support for the work of the school. One aspect with which all respondents to the questionnaire were very happy is the expectations the school sets for their children. Many other aspects are highly regarded, with few complaints in any significant area. However, there is some concern expressed about homework. Inspectors looked at all the areas set out in the questionnaire and discussed by parents at the meeting prior to the inspection and agree with all the positive comments made by the parents. In relation to homework, this is found to be satisfactory. The amount set is appropriate. Parents are given a pamphlet that sets out how they can help their child, and help is always offered to parents by the school at parents' meetings and annual pupil reviews. The school has recognised that some parents are unable to support their children over the issue of homework and arrangements are made for these pupils to attend the homework club at school. Pupils who spend any time as a boarder are well supported by the staff in that setting.
49. The quality of information that parents receive is good. The annual report sent in July to parents, although relatively brief, contains good details of what pupils can do, what they have covered and their attitudes to the subject. Comments are made about how each pupil is developing within school. Discussions about this report take place at the start of the next school year. Of higher quality is the report that parents receive at the time of their child's annual review. This contains more detail within subjects and also gives targets in some areas and these are incorporated in the Individual Education Plan drawn up after the review meeting. These may also contain targets set by parents or pupils. They are always available to parents. Other information provided for parents is generally good,
50. The school has an open door policy and strives to establish and maintain good relationships between home and school. Unusually, the normal induction programme run for both pupils and parents did not take place this year. This was due to the school not having early information about new pupils. Good day-to-day contact is maintained through home-school books, used principally in the residence, and the homework book that parents are asked to use for exchange of information. This is in addition to the regular use of the telephone to keep parents up to date with how their children are doing. If parents have any concerns or problems they are able to telephone the school. Most telephone calls are responded to within eight hours, if an immediate answer cannot be given. Parents comment favourably about how welcome they feel when they approach the school. Telephone calls are very well documented and records of these are kept. Parent governors also foster contact with parents. They have a good knowledge of the

school, are known to other parents and are contacted by them about any concerns.

51. Parents are invited and expected to contribute to their child's annual review. Most parents attend this meeting because the school provides transport for those unable to attend otherwise. The end of year award ceremony is very well attended by parents and there is a good turn out for social and fund raising events. Evenings for parents to discuss their child's work with teachers are held termly, but the attendance at these meetings is low. It is difficult for parents to help in school due to the wide catchment area of the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The head teacher, along with her senior staff, leads the school with considerable purpose and vision that results in good outcomes for all pupils. She demands high standards from all, including pupils, and such is the ethos within the school that these demands are readily fulfilled.
53. The school has undergone rapid and recent change with the departure of five experienced staff. It is a mark of the head teacher's skill in managing change that the potential upheaval from this has been minimised. The new staff are in post and already providing an effective service to pupils. The outcome is that the school appears as a calm and orderly community in which much valuable work is carried out.
54. Staff are fully included in decision making processes and consequently carry out decisions to great effect. This leads to a vibrant system of self-management in which those teachers who are subject co-ordinators carry out those responsibilities with considerable expertise. Individual staff have a clear understanding of their responsibility as well as an understanding of the effect that their effort makes to the collective whole. In this regard staff present a united front in their work on behalf of the pupils. The work they do fully supports the aims of the school.
55. The governors have considerable and deserved confidence in the head teacher and her senior colleagues. They carry out their duties and obligations satisfactorily and have an awareness of those areas of school activity that are either strong, or in need of further improvement. The targets they set for the school could be more rigorous and challenging because not only would these further raise standards but also, the school leadership and staff are wholly competent to meet such targets. The committee structure they employ enables them to monitor the work of the school but as yet the process of evaluating outcomes is not fully embedded in their practice. In areas, such as the maintenance of the listed building that the school is, they have great expertise and empathy. It is apparent that at all times they consider both the needs of the pupils with the need to preserve the building. They constantly have to consider the balance

between providing the best opportunities for pupils that challenge their learning against the statutory demands of a listed building. To date they have been successful in achieving this balance.

56. The school has sufficient teaching and non-teaching staff for the teaching of both the National Curriculum and 24-hour residential curriculum. Within the last two years, there have been a significant number of changes to the teaching staff. These are mainly due to some teachers' perceptions that the school is admitting more pupils with increasingly challenging behaviour and a number of teachers being successful in applying for promoted posts in other schools. Replacing these people has been difficult, but the school began this academic year with a full quota of teaching staff with appropriate qualifications and experience.
57. There are good arrangements in place for the induction of new staff, and all new teachers speak highly of the support they receive and feel increasingly prepared for their work with the pupils. These arrangements are particularly good in the residence where newly appointed staff follow a clearly defined programme of induction that enables them very quickly to carry out their tasks with enjoyment and confidence. Within the residential provision, staff benefit from weekly team meetings and 'supervision' sessions. These discussions are very useful and enable staff and team leaders to be supported and to further develop their skills and professionalism.
58. Teaching and non-teaching staff have annual discussions with their line managers and, from these, personal development plans are drawn up that are implemented effectively over the course of the following year. These sessions are now being linked effectively with the school's procedures for performance management so that a satisfactory process is in place for routine appraisal and performance management. Learning support assistants have good expertise and work effectively as a team with their teachers. Throughout the school, staff express satisfaction at the support and guidance they receive. They feel valued, and a measure of job satisfaction is seen in the way that all staff routinely give more to the pupils than their job description demands. For example, some residential staff have volunteered to take pupils to medical appointments on their day off and teachers often give added support to evening and weekend activities.
59. The school is housed in an extremely attractive grade 2 listed building, set within large and elegant grounds with beautiful views towards Oxford. This setting provides an atmosphere of calm and tranquillity that has a significant impact on the pupils as well as staff who work there. Inspectors remarked that the beauty of the site adds a 'spiritual' dimension to the pupils' development and helps them to appreciate wider aspects of life beyond the boundaries of their home towns and villages. However, the attractiveness of the site is balanced by some disadvantages that are becoming increasingly problematic over time. These disadvantages are:
 - the school has to use existing buildings and some specialist facilities, for example a gymnasium, cannot be provided;
 - prior approval has to be sought for modifications to the building and work, such as installing cables for a computer network take longer than would be the case in other schools.
 - the cost of repairs and maintenance are extremely high when compared to other schools and, despite limited financial support from the local education authority, these are a constant drain on the school's financial resources; and
 - there are increased health and safety risks owing to the age of the building and site.
60. The school does what it can to alleviate these problems. For example, by using facilities in other schools when needed, prioritising repairs and maintenance and introducing effective routines, procedures and supervision for pupils that minimises health and safety risks.
61. The school is appropriately stocked with computers and books and there is a sufficient amount of resources provided for teaching and learning in each

subject. Staff with responsibilities for the residence and for subjects spend their allowances wisely and ensure that there are always sufficient resources to meet the learning needs of the pupils.

62. Good administrative procedures are in place that ensure smooth day to day running of the school and secure financial control. Throughout the school computer technology is used effectively to support pupils' learning and assist in administration. Governors and senior management ensure that financial resources are targeted at raising standards and improving achievement by pupils. Where major expenditure is anticipated there is a clear protocol to ensure best value will be obtained. The current large underspend is already identified for improvements that will raise standards and is also being used prudently to satisfy the requirements of specialist repairs to the building.
63. When considering the efficiency of the school as well as its outcomes the following points, among others, can be considered;
- the quality of management is good and provides effective monitoring and evaluation procedures that raise standards.
 - there is a high proportion of good teaching that leads to effective learning by pupils. In some subjects, such as physical education, standards are exceptionally high for this type of school and would stand favourable comparison with mainstream schools.
 - the residential provision is very good and provides an environment in which pupils flourish.
 - the staff are committed to the needs of pupils.
 - improvement since the last inspection has been good and sustained.

The school, therefore, provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

64. The governors, head teacher and staff should continue to further improve the school by;

Raising the standard of pupils' use of literacy within all subjects by;

- ensuring that teachers plan opportunities within lessons that develop pupils' skills in writing and reading.
- Ensuring a coordinated approach to the teaching and use of literacy in all subjects of the curriculum.
- monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of these measures.

Refer to paragraphs 3/17/68-9/84-5/119/142

Improving whole school target-setting by;

- set targets that enable school management to evaluate the effectiveness of its effort with groups of pupils and other areas of its work.

Refer to paragraph 55.

Ensuring that the present assessment procedures link more closely with lesson plans so that;

- pupils have an increased awareness of what they have to learn within single lessons.

Refer to paragraphs 79/94

The school may also wish to address the following aspects for further development.

- Ensuring pupils' full entitlement to the design and technology curriculum.

Refer to paragraphs 24/98

- Re-consider the structure of the current timetable so that it
 - ensures a better balance of subject provision,
 - provides pupils aged 11-14 years with increased experience in art, music and design and technology that will provide good foundation for study when aged 14-16 years.

REFER TO PARAGRAPH 24

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	60
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	6	30	20	0	0	0
Percentage	7	10	50	33	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents just less than two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	57
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	27

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	4.3

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 9)

Year 2001

Task / test results											
Percentage of pupils at each level											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	EP	Dis.	Abs
English	All pupils were assessed, on tasks, within the range of Level 1-3										
Mathematics	0 (23)	7 (18)	43 (32)	3 (23)	0 (5)						14
Science		(23)	50 (23)	43 (50)	7 (5)						

Figures in brackets refer to results of similar tests / tasks carried out by pupils in 2000. Care should be taken in interpretation of these percentage figures because the number of pupils sitting each test is small.

Certificate of Achievement results : Year 11 ; 2001

Percentage of successful pupils

	Pass	Merit	Distinction
English	10	60	30
Mathematics	18	45	37
Science	12	12	75
Rural science		75	25
Geography	34	66	
French		20	80
Design and technology	25	50	25
History	25	50	25
Information and communication technology	40	30	30

Figures may not add up to 100 because of rounding. Care should be taken in interpretation of these figures because the number of pupils sitting these examinations is small.

Pupils also successfully followed accredited courses in the Youth Award Scheme;

- 5 achieved bronze level
- 3 achieved bronze / silver level
- 1 achieved silver level

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	55
Any other minority ethnic group	0

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	2	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	15	1
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	5.4:1
Average class size	7

Education support staff: Y7–Y11

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	328

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001
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	£
Total income	967,772
Total expenditure	962,512
Expenditure per pupil	15,277
Balance brought forward from previous year	110,837
Balance carried forward to next year	116,097

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	16
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	16

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term	0

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	49
Number of questionnaires returned	11

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	82	9	9	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	36	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	73	27	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	45	18	9	0
The teaching is good.	82	18	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	73	18	0	9	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	82	9	9	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	100	0	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	82	9	0	9	0
The school is well led and managed.	73	27	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	73	27	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	82	18	0	0	0

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

ENGLISH

65. Standards in English are average for this type of school and have been maintained at this level since the last inspection. This is shown by the results of national tests and teachers' assessments when pupils are aged fourteen and sixteen. Pupils achieve satisfactorily from a very low base and by the age of fourteen those assessed at National Curriculum Level 3 are marginally below the expected numbers. Pupils take the Certificate of Educational Achievement at the end of Year 11 and all were accredited in 2001. However, the school does not enter pupils for GCSE and so valid comparisons are not possible. Overall, girls do better than boys. Results over the last few years have remained constant for all pupils and overall they do not do as well in English as they do in science and mathematics.
66. By the age of 14 years, pupils have improved their skills in speaking and listening and are able to join in a range of discussions. They have a sufficiently wide vocabulary to discuss other subjects of the curriculum and this was evident when Year 8 pupils exchanged ideas about Tudor food. This also gives them the confidence to explain themselves and their point of view. By the age of fourteen, pupils' writing shows both strengths and weaknesses. Many are confident enough to write poetry with some success and use it to express their thoughts and feelings. However, although most write simple sentences with legible, mainly even, handwriting, they cannot use joined up script and correct grammar and punctuation.
67. Although teachers emphasise the acquisition of vocabulary, the recent whole-school emphasis on giving pupils the tools to express themselves for a range of purposes is not yet bearing fruit. As a result, literacy skills in a range of other subjects remain limited: for example, pupils find it difficult to explain their findings in science. By the age of fourteen, reading has not become an integral part of each pupil's life and some find it difficult to enjoy literature. Fewer pupils than average are beginning to read with discernment. The subject staff are aware of this and the improvement of reading skills is a current priority. Teachers emphasise the importance of reading and it features in lesson planning but there remain insufficient opportunities both for silent and guided reading and for teachers to teach specific skills. Pupils' reading habits are insufficiently monitored across all age groups.
68. By the age of 16 years, pupils successfully complete the Certificate of Educational Achievement, which is also enhanced by the effective use of drama, role-play, poetry and story writing. Good examples were seen of pupils' creativity in poems such as "Litter's Revenge" and in stories they

write for younger pupils. Speaking and listening skills are good, as seen when Year 11 pupils questioned each other about the wording of a poster. However, there was less evidence of higher order skills such as the ability to read with expression and to describe the thinking of other writers. Lack of basic writing skills inhibits the progress of some pupils, not only in English but also in other subjects such as history, ICT and geography, where the ability to research information is required.

69. Teachers help pupils' achievement by providing a range of interesting experiences such as theatre visits to see "Hamlet", poetry writing competitions and drama productions such as "The Millennium Bug", where pupils write some of the script. Progress is assessed well, although its results do not always feature in some lesson plans. ICT and use of the electronic library are used well to help less confident and older readers. Steps have been taken to establish the National Literacy Project for pupils up to age fourteen to give these pupils a consistent and better-developed foundation in basic skills. There was evidence during the inspection that activities such as the systematic organisation of class reading, independent activities and an end of lesson discussion are having a positive effect upon pupils' quality of learning because skills' teaching is more explicit. The co-ordinator is also seeking to expand the choice of novels and plays to sharpen language awareness.
70. The inspection coincided with the arrival of two new members of staff and the quality of teaching seen was good. This is an improvement since the earlier report. All teachers plan a range of activities but there is insufficient emphasis on the thorough and focussed teaching of reading and writing. Speaking and listening is taught well: in a Year 9 class pupils enjoyed discussing the main character in "The Highwayman" whilst pupils in Year 11 all contributed to a picture of Conradin. Teachers assess pupils' work regularly and they are aware of their strengths and weaknesses; however the information is not always used to guide subsequent lesson planning for individual pupils. Relationships between pupils and staff are excellent and class management is very good. Teachers listen to pupils and support their contributions thus enabling them to gain confidence in themselves. For example, a teacher patiently dealt with a difficult Year 11 pupil before fully involving him in an enthusiastic reading of "Dracula". Moral and social development is encouraged by discussion of a range of issues such as fox-hunting and the production of storybooks by older pupils for younger ones. Support staff are deployed well and contribute substantially to pupils' achievement. During a lesson a Year 11 pupil with visual impairment was helped with his tape recorder and made good progress in understanding the character under discussion.
71. Pupils respond to this teaching well. Although some older boys are not keen to read, most work hard and persevere with written drafts. Their presentation has improved since the last inspection but there remains room for improvement. The school is aware of this and is developing a handwriting scheme. In group discussions pupils take turns and are

sensitive to others in the group. In one example where it became necessary for the teacher to briefly leave the classroom one pupil invited another to read to them all. These positive attitudes play an important part in improving the quality of learning and raising achievement.

72. The subject co-ordinator works hard and has been instrumental in sustaining standards during a period of staffing and organisational difficulty. In particular, foundations have been laid for the development of the National Literacy Strategy and steps taken to enhance the contribution of other subjects to the development of pupils' literacy. With strong support from new and effective staff, it now remains to continue improvements both in the use to which assessment is put and the teaching of specific reading and writing skills. Provided that these are addressed, the subject has a good capacity for improvement.

MATHEMATICS

73. Since the last inspection, there has been a steady year on year increase in pupils' attainments in mathematics. For example, in 1997, 67 per cent of pupils in Year 11 passed their Certificate of Educational Achievement in Mathematics. This pass rate is now routinely 100 per cent. The proportion of Year 11 pupils awarded merit or distinction grades in 1997 was 37 per cent. This has now risen to 80 per cent of pupils in 2001. In addition, the school has now introduced a suitable GCSE course and a number of pupils in the current Year 11 are likely to achieve results in 2002 within Grades D to G. Each year, most of the pupils in Year 9 attain Levels 3 or 4 in their National Curriculum assessments. The school has recently introduced the National Numeracy Strategy for pupils in Years 7 and 8 and this is already proving effective, so that standards for these pupils should rise over the next two years. This improvement in standards over time is due to the school giving more priority to developing the subject. This has resulted in increased expectations of what the pupils can do and teachers are better aware of how to motivate the pupils to learn more.
74. Analysis of the work seen in pupils' books shows that pupils work hard, are productive and keep their work neat and tidy, in well cared-for exercise books. The work they do also reflects the standards of the examination and test results they attain and show that most pupils achieve well over their time in school. Some pupils make quite rapid gains in their knowledge and understanding. For example, one pupil last September was only able to add and subtract whole numbers less than ten. By the February following, this pupil was able to calculate correctly with hundreds, tens and units. A younger pupil also made very good progress in a few months from using whole numbers of hundreds, tens and units to being fluent in the manipulation of four digit numbers to three decimal places.
75. The following examples were seen during the inspection. Pupils in Year 7 enjoy the challenge of finding interesting ways to make, for example, nineteen and understand clearly that $(10 + 5) + (10 - 6) = 19$ and that this can also be achieved by $(2 \times 10) - 1$. In Year 8, pupils calculate the combined costs of different items and are pleased when their homework is to use this knowledge to record and check their subsequent purchases from the school tuck shop. Pupils in Year 9 build on their knowledge of coin values and come to understand that, for example, £2.50 can be realised by using a minimum of two coins and a maximum of 250 coins. Higher attaining pupils are confident with numbers to ten thousand and recognise them as numerals or when written as words. In Year 10, higher attaining pupils follow their GCSE coursework and place six digit numbers correctly in sequence. Lower attaining pupils are challenged by number games similar to those in a popular television programme and use the five numbers given to calculate the target number. Pupils in Year 11 use multiplication squares correctly and read the table with increasing speed during the lesson. Higher attaining pupils use all four quadrants to reflect

and rotate shapes with accurate angles and dimensions and do this work very neatly and carefully.

76. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Four teachers, under the guidance of the co-ordinator, teach the subject. There are, however, some variations between teachers in the quality of their work. The school has recognised this and already has appropriate measures in place to improve consistency between staff. Two of the teachers are new to the school this term and the co-ordinator has only held the post since April 2001. The best teaching was observed in lessons taught by the subject co-ordinator for Years 8, 9, 10 and 11 and by the teacher for Year 7. The following points were noted in the best lessons.
- Teachers have high expectations and show accuracy and attention to detail in their own work. This leads the pupils to try their best to improve the accuracy of their work and to concentrate for long periods of time.
 - Teachers use a wide range of methods in a lesson, for example, writing numbers on white boards; manipulating numbers cut out on paper; enabling pupils to write their working on the board for all to see. This variety keeps pupils interested and enjoying the challenge of improving their number skills.
 - Pupils are clear about what they are meant to learn in the lesson. One teacher makes good use of 'WALT and WILF' and this leads pupils to know from the outset: 'We Are Learning To ... and, What I Am Looking For'.
 - Teachers plan the lessons well and organise the activities, pupils and other staff effectively so that everyone is involved, know what to do and are 'on task' at all times. These lessons also move at a brisk pace and pupils begin new activities before their concentration limits are reached. As a result, pupils behave well throughout and stay focused on improving their mathematics.
 - Teachers know what each pupil is working on and set different work in class that is matched to their learning needs. This helps pupils to build on their previous knowledge and more quickly gain new understanding.
77. In the lessons where teaching can be improved, the pace was slow and the pauses between activities too long. This led pupils to become distracted and the teacher then had to spend more time bringing the class back on task. In another lesson, the activity was not suited to the age of the pupils. They felt it was too easy and, consequently, they did not give of their best. The further use of appropriate ICT programs would extend the challenge for these pupils.
78. Since the last inspection, the curriculum has been improved and pupils' attainments are now assessed thoroughly. Development in the subject has accelerated since the appointment of the new co-ordinator and her good leadership is setting a clear direction for continued development and improvement in the subject. The National Numeracy Strategy is being implemented well and all teachers of mathematics are adopting its best features in their lessons. There are, however, two areas that the school should consider in their plans for improving the subject. Firstly, some lessons are too long and some pupils have too many periods of mathematics in one day. Secondly, the good quality targets on pupils' individual education plans are based on good assessment of what pupils know and what they should work on next. However, the pupils themselves are insufficiently aware of what they are working on and ought to be more involved in their own learning.

SCIENCE

79. Standards science are above average for this type of school. Achievement by pupils, as shown by national tests at age 14 years, is above those of similar schools. The results achieved by pupils aged 16 in the Welsh Joint Examination Council (WJEC) Certificate of Educational Achievement in Science as well as in Land Studies are consistently good. Pupils of all ages achieve well in their learning in all aspects of the subject as they work

through a well-planned programme, which progressively builds their understanding and skills as they move through the school. The good standards reported in the previous inspection have been maintained.

80. By age 14 years pupils are confident to use investigation and experiments to confirm their predictions. The youngest pupils, making jelly realised that a solid could be melted to a liquid with hot water and that if allowed to cool it would set to a solid again. Older pupils learning about forces and friction were able to set up a fair test to discover the effect of pulling an object over a variety of surfaces. They could make realistic predictions based on previous experience, carry out the test ensuring that their criteria for a fair test were constant and then they were able to measure accurately in Newtons and draw up a table to show their results.
81. By age 16 years pupils develop a secure foundation of understanding in all areas of the subject. Year 10, when studying the human eye, knew the name of each part and its function. They used correct vocabulary and labelled the diagram accurately and neatly. Another group had completed an experiment to test the conductivity of heat in a range of materials. In the lesson seen they logged data from that experiment into the computer and from this compiled a graph. This they used to evaluate their different results. Discussion of the discrepancies in these results enabled them to realise the faults in the original testing and to work out a more effective method. Pupils in their final year in school have already successfully completed some modules towards their WJEC certificate exam.
82. The school also offers the WJEC course in Land Studies to its older pupils and it is a popular choice. Pupils showed great enthusiasm working in the vegetable garden and the greenhouses and a large group were able to consider the necessary conditions for planting grass seed including working out the amount of seed needed as well as the dilution rate of fertiliser and fungicide. Pupils showed a good ability to work as a group in this activity, sharing ideas and making decisions.
83. Pupils' attitudes to their science lessons are always good. They listen carefully and follow instructions. They are keen to participate and with support are learning to collaborate and to be more independent. They show very sensible behaviour during investigations and experiments and in those with any risk such as using hot water or a Bunsen burner are able to list the potential risks involved and minimise them with careful procedures. Pupils complete work diligently and although some older pupils are able to present work neatly and write their own account of an investigation, this represents an area in need of improvement for the majority of pupils that might further be enhanced through the use of ICT.
84. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory and more frequently good or very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The subject is taught with enthusiasm and a commitment to learning through practical experience. Lessons are well planned with a range of

activities, which keep pupils involved and interested and thinking. Investigations relevant to real life make the subject come alive, for example, using the school grounds to measure friction on outdoor surfaces as well as indoor. Teachers use topical anecdotes too, for instance, in helping pupils think about their recent swimming sessions when they were trying to identify the pulling and pushing forces made by the human body in a range of sporting activities. Teachers always use and encourage correct and accurate vocabulary so that pupils are confident to use them in their answers. There is now a need to help pupils extend their science literacy skills so that they are more confident to write complete sentences and paragraphs for themselves when writing up their experiments.

85. Where teaching is very good teachers raise the level of challenge for pupils by asking well chosen questions which both check understanding and encourage pupils think for themselves, so they make realistic predictions and set their own criteria for a fair test. Teachers have secure subject expertise and are confident to demonstrate experiments while involving pupils as much as is possible so that the learning is embedded by actual experience. All work in the science rooms is done with due consideration to health and safety needs and procedures.
86. The planning and teaching of the science curriculum continues to be good. A system of end of module testing gives accurate data throughout the pupil's time in the school and targets are set for each term based on the module of work to be taught. The co-ordinator is considering ways to involve pupils in this process and how these individual targets can be incorporated into the lesson planning. The co-ordination of the subject is effective. Some joint teaching occurs and the co-ordinator is aware that since the subject is taught by a number of teachers there is a need to ensure that subject expertise and experiences are consistently shared so that standards of both teaching and learning will rise. Resources for the subject are adequate at present as is the accommodation and both are well used by staff. At present the co-ordinator does not have support designated for the science room to help maintain the equipment, prepare materials for lessons or to help run experiments.

CREATIVE ARTS

87. As at the time of the previous inspection the pupils' experience of art and music is through a creative arts programme taught on two afternoons per week. As one of these afternoons fell outside the inspection time only two lessons could be observed. Judgements made therefore are based on these lessons as well as consideration of pupils' past work and discussions with staff. Overall, standards in the provision are average.
88. Achievement in art is at least satisfactory with some good work evidenced by pupils in Years 10 and 11. Changes in staff over recent years and the allocation of time for pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 has resulted in those pupils

not having gained sufficient range of skills and experience to support their continued artistic development in Years 10 and 11. However, a number of pupils in year 11 have taken up art as an option and will sit the Welsh Joint Examination Committee (WJEC) Certificate of Educational Achievement at the end of this academic year.

89. Pupils up to the age of 14 years are now developing a good range of art skills because of the expertise of the current teachers who have a good level of experience in painting, drawings, ceramics and textile design. Pupils are given confidence by this expertise of their teachers and as in one group seen, surprised themselves at the quality of their drawings of fruit using a range of media including pencil, crayon, pastels and aquarelles. As the work developed over the lesson pupils' observational skills improved and individual interpretations of the texture, colour and tone of the objects led to exploration of both technique and effect. Those pupils compiling portfolios have taken a number of images, for example, personal portrait and explored their potential with a variety of techniques and styles using line drawings, photography, textile prints, block prints and painting. Some pupils also included making articles such as cushions with their final image. Three-dimensional work displayed in both ceramics and other materials shows how they interpret ideas with some originality, for example, the Olympic sports logos in a range of tiles and the concept of recycling and waste in the frame of a mirror.
90. There is now a team of skilled and enthusiastic teachers who encourage pupils to explore and experiment in their art. They encourage a 'can do' attitude as well as imparting skills and techniques necessary to produce quality work. The art club, held at lunchtime, is an example of the commitment by staff to encourage this development in pupils. Insufficient teaching of the subject was available for observation and consequently no firm judgement can be given as to the quality of this. The evidence gained by looking at pupils' completed work indicates that such teaching is at least good.
91. Currently standards of attainment are satisfactory and remain similar to those of the previous inspection but there is now better potential to raise those standards in the future. A new co-ordinator has just been appointed. A development plan is being drawn up to audit resources, staff skills and the needs of pupils so that the scheme of work, which is already in place, can be fully implemented. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop resources especially books of artists' work and to incorporate ICT into the art experience of the pupils, as well as to provide the full programme of study for pupils up to aged 14 years, so they are fully prepared for the more demanding examination work in Years 10 and 11.
92. Pupils up to the age of 14 years study music as part of a programme of creative arts. One afternoon each week is spent following courses in art, music, dance and drama. Pupils in Year 9 choose to follow a Certificate of Educational Achievement (CoEA) course in music or art in Years 10 and 11. There are currently four pupils taking the music course, two in Year 10 and two in Year 11. Not enough emphasis is given to music within the creative

arts programme for pupils to build continuously on their skills. Consequently, for pupils up to age 14 years, achievement in music is unsatisfactory.

93. Since the last inspection there has been little change to the provision made for music. A co-ordinator for the subject has now been in post for a year and, during that time, development in the subject has, rightly, focused on making the subject more relevant and enjoyable for the pupils. Further work is needed on this as pupils mentioned they lack the confidence to extend their skills and only a few choose music as an option to study in Years 10 and 11.
94. The timing of the inspection meant that it was only possible to see the older pupils in lessons. These pupils enjoy their lessons and work hard to, for example, provide musical and sound effects to accompany the reading of a story. They record their performance, listen to it and make valid suggestions for further improvements. The standard of their work is sufficiently high and the pupils are likely to attain a good grade in the CoEA.
95. The quality of teaching, in the lessons seen, is good. The teacher is confident and generates enthusiasm in the pupils to encourage them to listen more carefully and value the contributions they each make to performance. Information from the co-ordinator and subject files shows that the work of all pupils is now assessed against National Curriculum objectives and teachers are now able to identify much more clearly the skills of each pupil.
96. To further develop music as a subject, the school should consider the following points.
- Giving more emphasis to music in creative arts in Years 7 to 9 so that pupils attain higher standards and are more confident to select the subject as an option to study in Years 10 and 11.
 - Extend the use of computers for pupils to compose, arrange, and record their own music.
 - Improve the facilities for recording music so that the quality of the playback matches that of the original performance.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

97. Standards are average when compared to schools of similar type. Within the range of the taught curriculum pupils achieve satisfactorily. Since 1999 there has been a steady improvement in the percentage of pupils attaining the higher grades within the CoEA examination. The school has recently lost the services of a qualified teacher who was able to use the workshop facilities within the school. Consequently the full range of the subject curriculum is not available to pupils.
98. Analysis of the work done by pupils shows that at all ages they produce artefacts of good quality. This supports the steady rise in standards noted through the examination results for older pupils.
99. Two teachers provide opportunities for pupils to learn skills in textile design and food technology. In textile design pupils make a range of stuffed toys having chosen and planned their own designs. In addition they extend their skills to include a montage of materials in the form of pictures. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory. Older pupils, who use clearly identifiable stages in the development of their ideas, use the design processes more effectively. Some of the higher attaining pupils in this age group use

computers as an aid to develop their ideas – this is a considerable advantage to these pupils because they do not rely on hand drawn designs and they adapt and change designs more readily.

100. In food technology the achievement of pupils is satisfactory. The provision is well planned and pupils learn to produce a range of nutritious food – often with a seasonal or international flavour. Analysis of their work shows they have produced food for a summer barbeque, such as baked potatoes with a range of different fillings. During the inspection pupils made an upside down cake and the majority of these looked and reportedly tasted good. Within this aspect of design technology there is insufficient evidence of pupils engaging with the planning process. Older pupils however make visits to local supermarkets in order to purchase some of the items they will need for their lessons.
101. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are well planned and introduced. Each begins with a short summary of the previous lesson and in the case of food technology the element of safety is given high priority. This is valuable because the small size of the food technology room makes it necessary to make pupils conscious of personal safety and responsibility. Good opportunities are used to extend pupils' numeracy skills by insisting that measurements of ingredients or materials are accurate. In food technology this is taken a stage further, by asking pupils to estimate the weight of different ingredients. Consequently, higher attaining pupils fully understand that 100g of sugar does not look the same quantity as a similar weight of flour. This is a good development of this particular concept. Weaknesses in teaching exist where the pace of lessons is slow. Pupils work at different rates and those who are quicker become restless while they wait for others to catch up. In part this is exacerbated, in food technology, by the facilities within the room. In textile design this is less of an issue because pupils tend to work on individual projects that are not affected by time.
102. Currently the full range of the curriculum is not available to pupils because the school is having difficulty in recruiting a specialist teacher for resistant materials. The outcome to this is a weakness in that it does not enable pupils to have the opportunity to learn the full range of necessary skills. The previous teacher of resistant materials left within the last year and prior to his departure he ensured that older pupils had the opportunity to sit for appropriate accreditation. This they did in Year 10.
103. There is no clearly identified co-ordinator of the subject and this is a weakness in the provision. Two teachers, who share the teaching responsibility, manage and organise well their respective elements. Recording of pupils' progress is secure in both aspects and it is possible to track a consistency in this progress as they become older. There is no substantial difference in the achievement of boys or girls and it is evident from observation that the majority of pupils enjoy the subject

104. Standards in the subject have remained static since the time of the last inspection. The issue relating to resistant materials is one that the school management is acutely conscious of and they are currently trying to redress.

GEOGRAPHY

105. The teachers' assessments for pupils up to age 14 years, in 2001 show that the pupils' knowledge and understanding of geography is average for similar schools. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. Compared to the pupils' attainment at the age of 11 years, the subject secures good value added over time. By the time they are 16 years, the pupils' performance in 2001 is broadly at the standard of schools of a similar type, with the majority of pupils securing good results in the Certificate of Educational Achievement (CoEA). This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to be overall unsatisfactory. These improvements are to be found in better teaching and a good scheme of work, which ensures that pupils are taught well about geographical skills, themes and localities.
106. The standard of work for all pupils, seen during the inspection, is average but pupils achieve well, making generally good progress in their work. They show strengths and some weaknesses. Pupils learn from an early stage the importance of skills, such as recording, and the subject contributes strongly to the development of their numeracy skills. For example, they chart population figures, average farm sizes and weather patterns. Later, they increase their knowledge and skills well. They study the village of Woodeaton and compare it to Bicester and Shotover. Good work is done on the effects of geographical change on the environment and aspects of physical geography are covered well.
107. The most significant weaknesses observed were linked to problems of spatial awareness. For example, many find map work difficult. Additionally, weaknesses in literacy mean that individual research skills are weak. The co-ordinator is addressing this through the purchase of large maps and aerial photographs. The curriculum has also been enhanced so that pupils can research subjects closer to their own interests, such as the building of Oxford United's new stadium. Geography teaches specific vocabulary and encourages pupils to develop their writing as when writing persuasive letters to leaders of countries with large areas of rainforest. Pupils use ICT to produce graphs in the computer room, create posters about a drought crisis and study Indian villages and farming.
108. The ethos of the subject reflects the school's aims very well and teachers and adults provide very good role models. The personal development of pupils is well provided for with group investigations when on visits to a farm at Banbury, to Barton-on-Sea for coastal work and to the Rover car plant at Cowley. Pupils study social geography such as the societies in Brazil and

Japan. Because of this the subject makes a good contribution to the social and cultural development of pupils, particularly because of its emphasis on local, regional, national and international features.

109. The quality of teaching is good for all pupils. Teachers have good knowledge and enthusiasm and help pupils understand important issues, as when Year 10 pupils studied the effects of unemployment in South Wales and compare rich countries to poor ones. Topical issues are used to stimulate interest and good work was seen about coastal erosion in Scarborough and flooding in the U.K. In particular, teachers use field based and other practical work to help strengthen opportunities to collect and process data.
110. There has been very good progress in the subject since the last inspection when weaknesses in standards, pupils' responses, curriculum and teaching were noted. The co-ordinator has worked effectively to develop a curriculum that reflects the more important skills and knowledge. She has produced an effective assessment system so that staff can check pupils' progress although insufficient use is made of it to set targets for pupils. Overall, the subject has a good capacity to build upon its recent improvements.

HISTORY

111. The teachers' assessments in 2001, of pupils up to age fourteen, show pupils' knowledge and understanding of history to be average when compared to similar schools. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. Compared to the pupils' attainment at the age of eleven, the subject secures good value, added over time. By the time pupils are sixteen years old, their achievement, according to assessments in 2001, is satisfactory when compared to schools of similar type. However, this is the first time that pupils have entered for the Certificate of Educational Achievement. Standards in Year 11 are good and the trend is rising.
112. By the time pupils are 14 years old, standards of work seen during the inspection are at average levels. The standards for pupils up to 16 years old are good. The reasons for this improvement are linked to some impressive teaching, which is derived from an excellent scheme of work. This has been developed by the subject co-ordinator who is also a specialist. At all levels, however, pupils achieve well, making generally good progress in their work. They show strengths and some weaknesses.
113. Older pupils investigate subjects using a range of resources well. For example, Year 11 use census information to show how local people populated a street in nearby Islip a hundred years ago but now the houses are occupied by residents, most of whom were born far away. Speaking and listening skills are good for all pupils. These help pupils develop a range of ideas. For example, pupils noticed in a picture that Tudor food

was dirty and an interesting discussion led them to understand why meat was flavoured. The most significant weaknesses observed were linked to a lack of understanding about the significance of events. This is mainly the result of poor comprehension skills because of literacy difficulties. The co-ordinator is aware of this issue and is in process of further developing writing frames to promote different forms of writing. Notwithstanding, history teaches specific vocabulary and encourages graphic writing on subjects such as the blitz, Similarly, pupils use ICT to draft their work and investigate Native American tribes and the World Wars. The subject makes a good contribution to numeracy development: pupils produce pie charts and time-lines, which help them, develop an elementary sense of time.

114. The ethos of the subject reflects the school's aims very well and teachers and adults provide very good role models. The personal development of pupils is encouraged and there are good arrangements for co-operative working, for example when Year 9 pupils work in groups on the First World War .The subject incorporates the study of a range of societies and makes a good contribution to the moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
115. The quality of teaching is good for all pupils. The major strengths of teaching are good planning and expectations and the very good use of assessment. All are based on excellent relationships. Teachers understand what is necessary to motivate classes and pupils gain much from visits to Bayeux, The Imperial War Museum and Warwick Castle.The subject benefits from sound resources and specialist teaching; both have a positive effect on standards.
116. There has been good progress in the subject since the last inspection. Standards have improved by the time pupils are sixteen and the overall quality of teaching is better. In particular, the subject enjoys clear and effective leadership; the co-ordinator is committed to raising standards and has good systems for monitoring the work of the subject. There is a strong commitment to improvement and history is in a good position to advance still further.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

117. Information and communication technology (ICT) is taught as a separate subject throughout the school. Standards within the subject are above average when compared to pupils in similar schools. Pupils of all ages achieve well and are competent users of the technology. A weakness exists in that ICT is not always well planned into other subjects and its systematic use in these tends to be sporadic. For the first time, this year, older pupils have had the opportunity of accreditation in CoEA. Sixty per cent of pupils achieved either merit or distinction awards in this examination. The majority of pupils work within the range of levels 1-3 of the National Curriculum.
118. In lessons pupils show good skills and understanding of the work they do. On arrival at their workstation they log on to the network and load the work they need from an appropriate file. Higher attaining pupils have better key board skills but even those of low attainment are still capable of producing a good range of work. Younger pupils, up to the age of 14 years, select and edit text. For example, they successfully use Word Art to compose covers for their ICT folders, they open programs such as Talking First Word and competently respond to on-screen instructions. Higher attaining pupils within this age group download pictures from the World Wide Web and successfully incorporate these within other projects – such as that on ‘sports cars’. Some of this work shows a good mechanical understanding of the process needed to do this. The fact that some of this work appears as a direct copy indicates that some pupils do not fully understand the content because of their lower literacy skills.
119. Pupils aged 14 years and over also download images from the Web and having edited these, for size and colour, include them in their projects. Lower attaining pupils enlarge these images almost to the point of distortion and show a poorer understanding of their purpose. Higher attaining pupils develop their skills and knowledge well and produce good quality projects, such as that relating to a current and well-known pop group. This included a well thought out contents page that was appropriately referenced to the text. The pupil, in addition to drawing information from the Web, also included much of her own research and was able to put this into her own words. This particular work showed a good command of the Publisher program.
120. The teaching of ICT is good. Lessons are well planned and they include a good pace that provides a balance between theoretical explanation and practical activity. This has a good impact on pupils’ learning because they sustain concentration for long periods and enjoy the final outcomes. The teacher is well supported by a technician who has considerable and valuable expertise in the subject. There were many instances when this support included teaching new skills to individual pupils. It is evident that pupils enjoy the subject because the teacher sets each pupil an appropriate challenge, based on their prior attainment. The result is that

pupils make good progress because they are gradually learning a solid base of skills that they use within different contexts of the ICT lessons.

121. Assessment of pupils' learning is good and enables the teacher to have a clear understanding of the rate and quality of pupils' understanding. Feedback to pupils about what they learn is also good and this takes place at the end of each session. This is a good way of consolidating pupils' understanding and pupils are keen to show what they have learned.
122. The planning of the subject is good and provides a good framework within which it will further develop. Facilities to teach the subject are good and the range and quality of computers available are sufficient to challenge the whole range of pupils' understanding. Most classrooms also have access to a computer, though use of these within other subjects is variable. Classrooms, other than the computer suite, are not connected to the Web and this means that pupils and staff need access to the computer suite whenever they have to use this particular facility. Access for other purposes is well planned into the computer suite timetable and no subject is disadvantaged. Because the building has listed status, further development of a network throughout the school would be prohibitive in cost.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

French

123. Standards of attainment in French are above average for all pupils when compared to similar schools. Pupils are motivated to learn the language because they know that they will have at least one opportunity a year to visit France, residential and day trips, sometimes linked with a local school. Pupils achieve well in speaking and listening, reading and writing, as they have good opportunities to practise all of these in this subject. By the end of year 11, all pupils enter and gain certification in the Certificate of Educational Achievement. In the last two years, 80% of pupils gained distinction, the other 20% gaining merit. At present, one pupil is taking French GCSE at a local secondary school. During the inspection it was not possible to observe lessons in years 7 to 9, and therefore evidence is drawn from documentation, discussion with pupils and scrutiny of work, and performance of Year 10 pupils in lessons.
124. Pupils start to learn French in Year 7 and gradually become more confident and fluent in responding to greetings in French as they progress through school. At the beginning of Year 8 and 9 they sing songs they have memorised and explain how the songs help them to remember, for example, counting, days of the week. Through role play and from first hand experience they know how to order drinks and food in a French café, and the usual greetings and courtesies, *Bonjour monsieur/madame, s'il vous plait and merci*. High attaining pupils are more confident about stringing words and phrases together, whilst lower attaining pupils are confident about key words and phrases. They calculate the equivalent money from

pounds to francs, and have an idea of the likely cost of items. By the end of Year 9, they return a greeting and response to questions in French, can say what they are called, and whether they have brothers sisters or not. They read familiar vocabulary well, identify clothing and transport, and know the names of common jobs and shops.

125. By the beginning of year 10 most pupils are fluent and fast in their responses to *Comment ca va?* When asked *Vous etes combien dans ta famille?* a higher attaining pupil responded with accurate gender pronoun *On a cinq dans ma famille* without prompting, whilst others reply in the brief form *On a cinq*. By the time they reach Year 11, pupils are listening and understanding native speakers asking for train tickets. Most can successfully discriminate between requests for tickets *allez simple* or *allez retour* and higher attainers translate sentences such as *Je voudrais quatre billets retourne `a Lille* without help, whereas lower attainers have support to do so.
126. Teaching and learning are at least satisfactory. In three lessons observed, teaching and learning were satisfactory in one lesson and good in the other two lessons. A particular strength is the link with personal and social development. The preparation for regular trips to France gives everyone a real purpose for studying the subject and it was clear that their desire to learn to read the French words is promoting literacy skills in a powerful way. The systematic teaching of the language and regular practice in listening, speaking, reading and writing ensures skills and knowledge are carefully built upon. The teacher makes learning objectives for the lesson clear at the start and returns to these at the end, by way of a summary. Although pupils are clear about what they have to learn, they are not always involved in assessing their own success. Although higher attainers have the same learning objectives as others, they do complete more work independently and are extended by questioning, they do not have enough opportunities for independent conversational French with their peers.
127. The ongoing assessment of pupils' performance recorded in lessons is used effectively, as a planning tool and routine module tests from Year 7. Most pupils show remarkably little embarrassment and try hard to improve their spoken French and they are respectful of each other's efforts. In the two out of three lessons observed, the speaking practice, involved waiting turns to speak to the teacher in French, slowing the pace, and limiting opportunities to communicate with peers.
128. The teacher makes good use tape recordings of native speakers, music, recordings of lessons for visually impaired pupils, and modular tests, but pupils' own use of tape recorders is underdeveloped. There is a small range of interactive software enjoyed by the pupils as well as video stories. Work sheets are appropriate, clear and support learning well. Use of the Internet has yet to be developed through the Comenius project. The classroom used for French lessons has a good range of prompts on the walls, and pupils use these to help them occasionally. Support staff join in

with pupils they support within lessons and effectively encourage pupils to 'have a go'.

129. Since the last inspection there has been good improvement. Accreditation opportunities for all pupils have been running for three years. The Friends of Woodeaton have purchased a mobile home and sited this in France for the pupils. Pupils make regular visits to that country and this not only extends their learning and achievement but also gives a good purpose to learning the language.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

130. Standards in physical education are above average throughout the school. They are higher than schools of similar type. Many pupils, especially those aged 14 years and over achieve very well in individual sports. Often they perform at levels that stand more than favourable comparison with mainstream peers. Since the last inspection there has been a steady rise in standards overall. Older pupils have the opportunity for accreditation in GCSE. In 2000 three pupils were successful in this examination and this academic year (2002) six pupils will enter for this same examination.
131. Younger pupils aged 11-14 years are competent swimmers. The achievement of a high proportion of these is very good. They swim both front and backstrokes using a good style. In the lesson seen that included pupils from Years 7/8/9, girls particularly showed a high level of proficiency and style. Lower attaining pupils have significant confidence in water and develop this to swim widths of the pool using a breaststroke. Pupils with particular needs, such as visual impairment, are fully included within these lessons and they too make good progress.
132. Older pupils, aged 14 and 15 years have the opportunity to extend their learning and performance through inclusion with similar age pupils at a local mainstream school. In such sessions they integrate very well with their peers and it is apparent that good friendships develop based on mutual respect. In badminton, for example, individual pupils from Woodeaton School are acknowledged as excellent players. In their play they show a mastery of the complete range of badminton shots – from high clear and smash as well as the more delicate close-net touch play and serves. Similar standards are evident in their play on the hockey field. Pupils run confidently with the ball and keep it under close control. Higher attaining pupils pass with accuracy over distances of 25m or more. They have a good understanding of tactics and show this in their play as they move up and down the pitch as a cohesive unit.
133. The attitude of pupils and the manner in which they learn is excellent. Despite inclement weather they were attentive to what the teacher was saying and put their understanding of this into effective practice. Individual pupils organised the warm-up sessions at the beginning of each lesson

and their peers participated fully in this. The levels of sportsmanship shown during games were outstanding. Without prompting, pupils applauded the efforts of others, whatever their attainment. They shouted encouragement to team-mates and did not become discouraged if their team was in a losing position – on the contrary, they appeared to re-double their effort.

134. The achievement and progress enjoyed by pupils is the direct result of excellent teaching. The quality of organisation throughout the subject is of a high standard – from planning of the work done by pupils to the provision of individual lessons. The teacher has the highest of expectations and pupils respond by showing an exemplary keenness to do well. Pupils of all attainment are fully included in all lessons. It is a mark of the quality of the provision that pupils who are not naturally inclined to games or PE take part in lessons with gusto. The teacher has excellent subject expertise and this becomes evident in the manner in which she is able to both demonstrate and explain coaching points. In this regard her use of language, readily understood by pupils, is very good. The range of methods used is also excellent and the result is that the attention of pupils never wanes.
135. The learning by older pupils also benefits by inclusion with a local mainstream school. This enables Woodeaton pupils to follow a course with GCSE accreditation and also to use the better facilities of the larger school. This initiative is very successful because of the importance attached to it by senior staff within both schools. In outcome, pupils from both schools mingle with each other and friendships are formed. In terms of social development by Woodeaton pupils the outcomes are excellent. The benefits and outcomes for pupils that result from this integration make it an excellent model of practice.
136. Assessment of performance is a strength of the provision. This is a twofold process in which the teacher provides immediate feedback to pupils. For example she called out to pupils in the course of a hockey game ‘That was a level 7 performance’. Pupils in their turn also have a very good concept of the quality of their own performance and they too will judge ‘That was level 6, miss’. Invariably they were correct. Each session concludes with a summary of what has been learned. While this is disguised as a discussion about ‘man of the match’, its outcomes enable pupils to fully understand what they have learned and done well. Each pupil casts a vote for their ‘man of the match’ and explains briefly why they voted that way. Speaking and listening skills are thus developing well. On the announcement of the ‘man of the match’ pupils spontaneously applauded the winner.
137. The facilities to support the development of the subject are satisfactory and ICT is used well to record outcomes of pupils’ learning. This enables trends in pupils’ progress to easily be identified. The school does not have an adequate gymnasium that supports the full range of required activities. These disadvantages are wholly negated through the effort and organisation of the co-ordinator. She arranges access to local facilities that

in addition to extending the quality of pupils' performances also enhances their social skills. Because of this high degree of organisation the curriculum is provided in its entirety.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

138. The standards of attainment in religious education are average when compared to similar schools. Achievements of all pupils in religious education are satisfactory. This represents a good improvement since the previous inspection. There is now sufficient time allocated to cover the scheme of work based upon the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The subject is being taught with enthusiasm and consistency and standards are now more secure. All pupils make at least satisfactory progress in their learning in lessons and when the teaching is more confident and pupils are building upon past knowledge progress is good. This is mainly true for younger pupils aged 11-14 years.
139. By the age of 14 years pupils have learned about a number of the world's major religions. The youngest pupils know the story of Rama and Sita, which relates the ideas of good over evil, and the pupils realise that the Hindu festival of Diwali celebrates this. Older pupils know the different denominations within the Christian church and some are considering the need for rules in society through thinking about the Ten Commandments and its relevance in their lives today.
140. By the age of 16 years pupils are beginning to be able to think about prejudice and how they could easily make the wrong judgement about a person from just their looks or clothes. They have thought about the need to be responsible for others through finding out about the work of charities. Some of the older pupils in learning about Islam are beginning to show empathy and tolerance when they discussed a brief film on the arrangements inside a mosque.
141. Pupil's response and behaviour in lessons is invariably good and this is a good improvement since the previous inspection. The majority of pupils are keen to participate and although they may find it hard to express their ideas they try their hardest. They are beginning to be able to consider the opinions of others. Written work is normally completed although there is room for improvement in the neatness of the presentation.
142. The quality of teaching is satisfactory with some examples of good teaching. This is a good level of improvement since the last inspection. Teachers have sufficient subject knowledge so they are able to encourage discussion and questions, which extend pupils thinking about their own impressions and attitudes. In the good lessons teachers use a wide range of materials and ideas including videos, stories and artefacts to enable the pupils to understand not just the facts of a religion but also the effect the religion has on the lives of those who follow it.

143. The current co-ordinator has worked effectively to ensure that teachers of the subject, two of whom are new to the school, are supported by the scheme of work and suitable resources. There is about to be a hand over of co-ordination and future developments include establishing a consistent assessment model for the subject, which also involves the pupils' evaluation of their achievements. There have been recent developments in the locally agreed syllabus, which it is planned to incorporate into the school's scheme.