

INSPECTION REPORT

ROYDS SCHOOL

Leeds

LEA area: Leeds

Unique reference number: 108081

Headteacher: Peter Roberts

Reporting inspector: Roy Hedge
2932

Dates of inspection: 28 January – 1 February 2002

Inspection number: 243757

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	11 to 18
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Pennington Lane Oulton Leeds
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Robert Seymour
Date of previous inspection:	20 November 1995

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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2932	R Hedge	Registered inspector		<p>What sort of school is it?</p> <p>Schools results and achievements</p> <p>How well are pupils taught?</p> <p>How well is the school led and managed?</p> <p>What should the school do to improve further?</p>
9874	M Milwain	Lay inspector		<p>Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development</p> <p>How well does the school care for its pupils?</p> <p>How well does the school work in partnership with parents?</p>
30702	P Bowyer	Team inspector	Mathematics	
19874	J Fitzpatrick	Team inspector	English	
30512	M Bailey	Team inspector	Science	
11969	J Hardy	Team inspector	Information and communication technology (ICT)	
31129	J Pickering	Team inspector	Art and design	
31831	J K Watson	Team inspector	Design and technology	
29972	J Webster	Team inspector	Geography	
4355	F Earle	Team Inspector	History Religious education	
27665	A Lees	Team inspector	Music	

1210	W Walton	Team inspector	Physical education Special educational needs	
11044	J Hedge	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Sixth Form Coordination	
20287	D Harris	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Royds School is a larger than average comprehensive school of 1293 boys and girls with a sixth form of 124 students. The standards reached by students at the time they enter the school in Year 7 are average, as are standards of literacy and numeracy. An average number of students is eligible for free school meals. The proportion of students identified as having special educational needs is below the national average and the proportion for whom statements of special needs are maintained is average. The proportion of students speaking English as an additional language is low and there were no students at an early stage of English acquisition at the time of the inspection. The number of students from minority ethnic background is very small.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Royds is a sound school with more strengths than weaknesses. Standards are average at the end of Years 9 and 11, and above average in the sixth form. Teaching is good. The school is very well led and management overall is good. The school offers sound value for money. In October 2000 two students were killed while under the supervision of staff leading a walk in the Yorkshire Dales. The impact on staff and pupils at the school has been considerable. At the time of the inspection, the school was still dealing with the potential for legal or disciplinary consequences.

What the school does well

- Teaching is very good in art, music and physical education. Standards are above average by the end of Year 11 in music and physical education and well above average in art.
- The quality of teaching and learning overall is good.
- Some aspects of management – leadership, financial and development planning – are very good.
- The school makes every effort to include all students in its activities, irrespective of their qualities and needs.

What could be improved

- Standards in modern foreign languages are below average because too little time is allowed for middle attaining students in Years 7 to 9 to make adequate progress in their main foreign language.
- Attendance is below average.
- Some areas of accommodation are in need of refurbishment: the standard of lavatories for students' use is unacceptable.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection in November 1995. There has been a gradual improvement in standards. Teaching is now much better: in 1995 almost one lesson in five was unsatisfactory. Financial and development planning is very much improved. Curriculum arrangements are much better, particularly for religious education and ICT, where provision did not meet statutory requirements. Resources are better, particularly for ICT. The monitoring of teaching is also much better organised and more thorough. The quality of provision for art has improved considerably. Provision for students' spiritual development is much better planned. Behaviour outside lessons is still something of a problem, in part because of the nature of the buildings.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 11 and sixth form students at the end of Year 13 based on average point scores in GCSE and A-level/AS-level examinations.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
GCSE examinations	C	C	C	B
A-levels/AS-levels	A	A	N/A	

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

In the National Curriculum tests taken at the end of Year 9 in 2001, overall standards were average. English, mathematics and science results were all average. Results are improving faster than is the case nationally. Standards overall were above the average of other schools with a similar proportion of students eligible for free school meals. Standards in lessons observed during the inspection were above average in music and physical education, and average in other subjects. Standards are below average in modern foreign languages, not because of poor teaching, but because too little time is allocated to the subject. Standards are also still below average by Year 9 in ICT because of low standards on entry to the school. Students make good progress from Year 7, when standards are average as they enter the school. Students with special educational needs achieve well. Girls do better than boys overall, though the gap is about the same as is the case nationally. Talented students make good progress. The very small number of students of minority ethnic heritage achieve as well as other students. In 2001 students did better at GCSE than those from other schools at a similar standard in Year 9 two years earlier. The proportion of students gaining at least one GCSE pass at grades A* to G was above the average of similar schools. Results are improving faster than they are nationally. In the years since 1998 girls have done better than boys by a similar margin to the national picture. The proportion of students achieving at least five GCSE passes at grades A* to C was below average in 2001, average in comparison to similar schools and fell short of the challenging target the school had set itself. Standards observed during the inspection in Year 11 were well above average in art, above average in music and physical education and below average in modern foreign languages and religious education. Overall students' achievement is good. The average points score of students entered for two or more GCE A level examinations was well above average in 1999 and 2000. Results in 2001 were only slightly below those in 2000. Taking A level and vocational courses together, results were above average. Taking into account standards on entry to the sixth form students' achievements are good.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Students like school, are generally courteous, pay attention, work hard and concentrate. They ask and answer questions readily and are able to work collaboratively or individually as required.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in lessons is good. Outside lessons there is some unruly behaviour which is difficult to manage because of the difficulties inherent in the dispersed buildings.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Students relate very well to one another. There is occasional bullying but teachers move swiftly to deal with it. Inspectors saw no instances of racist or sexist behaviour.
Attendance	Below average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 7 – 9	Years 10 – 11	Years 12 – 13
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Good

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

Teaching is good. Of the lessons seen by inspectors in Years 7 to 11, about six out of ten were at least good and almost a quarter were very good or excellent. Only about one lesson in 20 was unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching in the core subjects of English and mathematics is good and science teaching is satisfactory. English teachers set demanding and challenging activities to students, including those who are gifted and talented. Lessons are well prepared and structured. As a result students develop sound literacy skills. Mathematics teaching is also good and leads to sound standards of numeracy, though homework is not always consistently set and marked, especially with lower attaining sets. The management of students and classroom organisation are good. Teaching of science is sound, though there is some inconsistency across the department. Teachers insist on high standards of work and behaviour. However, in a minority of lessons a small number of students distract others from their learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge and explain scientific concepts clearly, relating them to the students' everyday experience. Some science teaching is too teacher-dominated with too few opportunities for students to work independently. The quality of teaching and learning across the curriculum is remarkably consistent. There are no subjects where teaching is unsatisfactory, though in history and religious education teaching quality does suffer somewhat from the extensive use of temporary and supply staff. Teaching is very good in music, art and physical education. Teachers across the curriculum seek to ensure that lessons meet the needs of all students. The very small numbers of students of minority ethnic heritage and those for whom English is an additional language learn effectively. Teachers know students with special educational needs well and are familiar with their individual education plans. Throughout the curriculum teachers plan their lessons carefully. They give considerable thought to ensuring that the work they devise is appropriate for students at different levels of attainment. The grouping of students according to attainment levels across the curriculum is helpful in this respect, though it does result in the bringing together of challenging groups of lower attaining students, often containing a number of students who find it difficult to sustain appropriate behaviour unless they are very well taught. Occasionally, these groups are disrupted by poor behaviour which teachers struggle to contain and learning is unsatisfactory.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. National requirements are met except that there is no religious education in the sixth form. Too little time is allocated to studying modern languages in Years 7 to 9 and standards suffer. The sixth form curriculum offers students a very good choice of subjects.
Provision for students with special educational needs	Good. There is good support in lessons though some teaching assistants are inexperienced. Students achieve well and succeed in GCSE examinations.
Provision for students with English as an additional language	There are no students at an early stage of English acquisition. Other students do as well as their peers.

Provision for students' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Provision for moral and social development is good. Teachers set a good example. Provision for spiritual development is very well planned. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are sound standards of care for students. Academic and personal development and behaviour are monitored well. The school has satisfactory relationships with parents. The nature of the buildings and the poor state of some facilities hinders the school in its care for students.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher has led the school through a very difficult period with skill and sensitivity. Leadership, development planning and the setting of appropriate priorities are very good. Too little use is made of the skills and experience of heads of department in managing the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors play their full part in setting a strategic direction for the school and monitoring effectiveness. They are supportive and know the school well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. There is good analysis of test and examination results to determine overall effectiveness and the success of departments. The quality of teaching is regularly monitored.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning is very good. Care is taken to ensure that the school obtains the best value possible in buying goods and services.

The buildings that make up the school are dispersed over a wide area, leading to a great deal of movement between lessons, often across outside areas. These spaces are difficult to supervise and there is some inappropriate behaviour as a result. Some buildings have dark and dingy corridors and sitting areas. In these areas litter becomes a problem particularly after break and lunchtime. Some students' lavatories are in an entirely unacceptable condition and are locked for most of the day.

Levels of resourcing are satisfactory, though access to computers can be difficult. The teaching staff is well qualified and meets students' needs, though about a quarter of the teachers have left the school in the last year and at the time of the inspection eight posts were being filled by temporary or supply staff.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are expected to work hard and achieve well. Students make good progress. Students like school. Teaching is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents are not well enough informed about students' progress. The school does not work closely enough with parents. There is concern about disruptive behaviour in some lessons. There are not enough activities for students outside lessons.

Inspectors endorse parents' positive comments. There are annual reports about students' progress, which is enough, but in some subjects there is too little detailed advice about how students might improve their work. The school works reasonably closely with parents and very closely with the parents of students with special educational needs. In the main, behaviour in lessons is good, though there is some disruption in groups of lower attaining students. There is a good range of activities in which students participate outside lessons.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SIXTH FORM

At the time of the inspection the school had 124 students in the sixth form. Teaching is organised in collaboration with Rodillian School and the Joseph Priestley College as the Rothwell Partnership which is now in its second year. These arrangements enable the school to provide a broad range of academic and vocational subjects. The number of students entering the sixth form has increased in recent years although the proportion of Year 11 students choosing to stay into Year 12 was 10 per cent lower in 2001 than in the previous year. About 60 per cent of the students joining Year 12 in 2000 stayed on for a second year. There are few students of ethnic minority heritage in the sixth form. The background of sixth form students is similar to that of the rest of the school. About half of students have part time jobs.

HOW GOOD THE SIXTH FORM IS

The sixth form is successful and cost effective. A level results of students entered for at least two A levels in 2001 were well above the national average. Standards of work seen during the inspection were mostly average or better. Most students learn effectively and achieve results that are at least satisfactory given their attainment on entry to the sixth form. Examination performance is improving in art and design, English Literature and English Language. Teaching in the sixth form is very good in art and design, English Literature, English Language and history at A2. It is good in mathematics, chemistry, business, computing, and French. Relationships between teachers and students are very positive and students are well supported by subject teachers. Leadership and management are effective and the vision of senior managers in negotiating partnership arrangements with two other institutions has resulted in a much broader range of academic and vocational courses than the school could support by itself.

Strengths

- The overall points score of A level students in 2000 was well above average.
- Teaching overall is good. It is very good in art and design and in English Literature and Language.
- The broad range of academic and vocational courses offered by the partnership.
- The management and development of the partnership.
- Relationships between teachers and students are very good.

What could be improved

- Monitoring of teaching across the partnership is not yet established.
- Curriculum development in the partnership is patchy.
- Procedures for monitoring attendance are not satisfactory.
- There is no teaching of religious education in the sixth form.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan. Strengths and areas for improvement in individual subjects are identified in the sections on individual subjects in the full report.

THE QUALITY OF PROVISION IN INDIVIDUAL CURRICULUM AREAS

The table below shows overall judgements about the provision in the subjects and courses that were inspected in the sixth form. Judgements are based mainly on the quality of teaching and learning and how well students achieve. Not all subjects in the sixth form were inspected.

Curriculum area	Overall judgement about provision with comment
Mathematics	Satisfactory. Teaching and learning are good. Standards are average. Students' achievements are satisfactory.
Chemistry	Good. Teaching and learning are good although there are too few opportunities for students to make progress at their own speed. Students' achievements are satisfactory.
Advanced Vocational Certificate in Business	Good. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have good knowledge and enthusiasm for their subject. Students make good progress.
Computing	Good. Students achieve well. Teaching and learning are good although teachers do not always give students enough responsibility.
Art and design	Very good. Attainment is above average. Teaching and learning are very good. Achievement is good. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection.
History	Very good. Results in the most recent examinations were well above average. Teaching and learning are good. Achievements of students in the present Year12 and 13 are satisfactory.
English Literature	Very good. Standards are above average and examination results are improving. Students achieve very well as a result of very lively teaching.
English Language	Very good. Teaching and learning are very good and students respond well. Standards are above average. Students' achievements are very good.
French	Good. Students are achieving well as a result of strong teaching. Standards are above average in Year 13.

Work was sampled in physics, biology, design and technology, business studies, economics, music, geography, law and German. Teaching is very good in music, good in physics, biology, geography, German, and business studies and at least satisfactory in law, economics and design and technology. Provision for music is very good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SIXTH FORM

Aspect	Comment
How well students are guided and supported	Procedures for assessing students' work are good. There are common systems for monitoring progress across the partnership. Students have clear targets in all their subjects. Information and advice prior to joining the sixth form is good but students feel they are not well prepared for sixth form study. Students feel that teachers are accessible and give help with any difficulties.
Effectiveness of the leadership and management of the sixth form	Overall leadership of the sixth form is very good. The partnership has enabled the three schools to offer a greatly enhanced range of courses. Day-to-day management is good. Monitoring and reporting on students' academic progress is good. Communication across the partnership schools is improving.

STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SIXTH FORM

What students like about the sixth form	What they feel could be improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of available courses • The quality of teaching • The help and encouragement they are given • Teachers are accessible and approachable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students do not feel they are treated as young adults • The range of enrichment activities beyond the curriculum • Access to a careers advisor

Students are generally positive about the sixth form. They speak very well of the teaching they receive and their relationship with teachers. Inspectors agree with these views expressed by students. There was no evidence to support the view that students are not treated as young adults – in discussion students did not express this view although many did in response to a questionnaire. Inspectors think that overall the range of enrichment activities is good but students need more access to careers advice.

COMPARING PROVISION IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Inspectors make judgements about provision in subjects and courses, and about leadership and management, in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. Excellent and very good are equivalent to the judgement "outstanding" in further education and sixth form college reports; poor and very poor are equivalent to "very weak".

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Results of national tests taken in Year 6, and the range of tests taken in Year 7 indicate that students join the school in Year 7 at an overall average standard. They make good progress in their first three years in the school. In national tests taken at the end of Year 9, standards in English, mathematics and science in 2001 and over the three years from 1999 to 2001 were average. Standards were above the average of other schools with a similar proportion of students eligible for free school meals in 2001. The school does not monitor the relative achievements of students of differing ethnic heritage but observations made during the inspection indicated no significant differences. Girls do better than boys overall, by similar smaller margin to the national picture. Results are still improving, at a faster rate than is the case nationally.
2. Observations made during the inspection indicate that standards at present in Year 9 are above average in physical education and music and average in most other subjects. Standards in modern languages are below average in spite of good teaching because too little time is available to allow middle-attaining students to make sufficient progress. Students enter Year 7 with widely differing levels of attainment in ICT. In spite of the good progress they make, in Year 9 standards are still below average.
3. Students' average points score in the 2001 GCSE examinations was average and above the average of similar schools. In 2001 students did better at GCSE than those from other schools at a similar standard in Year 9 two years earlier. In 2001, the proportion of students gaining at least one GCSE pass at grades A* to G was above the average of similar schools. Results are improving faster than they are nationally. In the years since 1998 girls have done better than boys by a similar margin to the national picture. The proportion of students achieving at least five GCSE passes at grades A* to C was below average in 2001, average in comparison to similar schools and fell short of the challenging target the school had set itself. Standards observed during the inspection in Year 11 were well above average in art, above average in music and physical education and below average in modern foreign languages and religious education.
4. Observations made during the inspection indicate that standards of speaking, listening, reading and writing are average and that students have the necessary skills to enable them to work successfully. They generally listen with good levels of attention and most offer their views on subjects with confidence. Individual boys and girls in every year group are capable of putting forward original viewpoints and defending them vigorously against criticisms. Reading standards are sound overall and a significant proportion of pupils attain standards that are above average. The range of attainment, however, is wide and lower attaining students sometimes need support to cope with relatively simple texts. The standards achieved in writing are generally sound with a significant proportion of writing that is above average relative to students' ages. Standards of numeracy are sound and students achieve well in mathematics. Standards in science are average: boys do better than girls by the end of Year 9 but the pattern is reversed by the end of Year 11.
5. Students with special needs make sound progress and their achievements are satisfactory. In GCSE in 2001, 44 students on the register of special needs averaged

five passes. Progress and achievements are good in physical education, ICT, mathematics history and geography in Years 7 to 9. They are always at least satisfactory.

Sixth form

6. The average points score of students entered for two or more GCE A level examinations was well above average in 1999 and 2000. Results in 2001 were only slightly below those in 2000. Taking A level and vocational courses together, results were above average. In 2001, A level results in economics and English language were well above average and in history were very high. Chemistry results were well below average. Taking into account standards on entry to the sixth form, students' achievements are good. A satisfactory number of students went on to study in higher education.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. In the classroom the majority of students have a good attitude to work and teachers have a good relationship with them. Some lessons, particularly with lower attaining students, do not fully engage the attention of all the students, and this sometimes leads to unsatisfactory behaviour. Students like school. In a Year 10 assembly students showed an appreciation of the contribution made by a visiting speaker. Students are quick to recognise the successes of their peers, for example in an award assembly the presentation of a prize to a student was greeted with spontaneous applause.
8. The behaviour of students in most lessons is good, and in some lessons it is very good. However, outside the classroom behaviour is often less than satisfactory. Movement between classes is disorderly with students often ignoring the presence of their peers and adults to push their way through the crowd. The layout of the site and the narrowness of some corridors, particularly in the north block, frequently give rise to unruly behaviour. Students frequently have to move between buildings at lesson changes. Outside areas are difficult to supervise and this makes possible a degree of unruly behaviour. There is a significant difference between the behaviour of students in lessons and outside the classroom and this was a feature of the last inspection report.
9. The school's behaviour management procedures ensure that students have an understanding of the effect that poor behaviour has on their peers. During the inspection there was no evidence of bullying. Most students report that although some bullying occurs, staff deal with it promptly. The school uses short-term exclusion more than most schools to ensure that students understand clearly the need for good behaviour and to maintain contact with parents. Permanent exclusion is rare.
10. Almost all students with special educational needs have very good attitudes towards school. They respond very positively to teachers who take great care to ensure that they understand lesson objectives and provide well sequenced, progressive tasks and are given lots of positive feedback. Younger students in gymnastics were very pleased when their successes were recognised by the teacher and they worked very hard. Many students with special needs have short attention spans but they maintain concentration and make good progress in one-to-one situations and when tasks are varied and interesting. In some classes comprised solely of low attaining students, though, there are occasions when students lack self-control and disrupt the lesson.

Most students with special needs, though, are confident, take a full part in activities and have good self-esteem.

11. Students help in the library and the school office and act as class monitors. Other than these there are few opportunities for students to develop a sense of personal responsibility.
12. Relationships between students are good. In lessons they work well together as a whole class or in groups and share ideas and resources. While rehearsing a sketch the students in a Year 10 drama class organised themselves well. They were able to make constructive criticisms of each other and showed a mature attitude to their work.
13. The attendance rate for the last reported year was well below the national average; attendance has deteriorated since the last inspection. This unsatisfactory level of attendance does have a negative impact on the learning of those students concerned.

Sixth form

14. Students are generally positive about the sixth form and most are mature and independent workers. They are interested in their work, have good listening skills, and sustain concentration well. Their work is generally well organised and presented. They persevere with tasks even when they find them difficult at first. In lessons such as English literature or language where teachers create structured opportunities for pair or group discussion, students respond very well. They co-operate well together and are willing to volunteer ideas. Generally, however, students are not very confident of their abilities, oral skills are not well developed and in more formal situations students are often reticent in expressing opinions. Independent study skills are not well developed.
15. Students are polite and willing to discuss their concerns. They feel that they are well taught and are given good support and advice. Students on vocational courses do not feel less valued than those taking academic subjects. They value the enhanced opportunities created by the partnership and do not feel that the travelling involved is a problem. They feel that arrangements in the partnership have improved since last year. They cope well with the more complex personal organisation required as a result of the cross partnership teaching arrangements. Attendance at lessons is satisfactory.
16. Students socialise together and support each other in a friendly and constructive way. Relationships between teachers and students are very good and students speak highly of the support and encouragement they receive from teachers. Although a significant number of students expressed the view through the questionnaire that they are not treated as young adults, in discussion, hardly any students felt that this was a problem.
17. A number of students serve the school and the community through the sixth form council. The council initiates social events as well as fundraising for charity. Some students help younger students with their reading, the annual school production involves others. These activities contribute to students' personal development.
18. A significant number of students have part time jobs in the evenings and at weekends.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

19. Teaching is good in all years. In six out of ten of the lessons observed by inspectors in Years 7 to 11, the teaching was good or better. There was teaching of this quality in over three-quarters of the lessons observed with the sixth form. In over a quarter of lessons teaching was very good or excellent. In only about one lesson in twenty was teaching unsatisfactory. As a consequence of this good quality teaching, students' learning was at least good in six lessons out of every ten observed with students from Years 7 to 11 and in almost eight out of ten lessons with the sixth form.
20. The quality of teaching and learning across the curriculum is remarkably consistent. There are no subjects where teaching is unsatisfactory, though in history and religious education teaching quality does suffer somewhat from the extensive use of temporary and supply staff. Teaching is very good in music, art and physical education. In physical education, for example, teachers use their good understanding of the subject to prepare challenging and well-sequenced lessons. They are very skilful at managing students, know them well and establish good relationships. An excellent learning environment is created as a result, and students learn and achieve well, especially in gymnastics, where standards are very high.
21. The teaching of English is good. As a result, standards of speaking, listening, reading and writing are sound. Teachers set demanding and challenging activities to students, including those who are gifted and talented. They maintain a good pace, which helps students to make good progress, and employ a variety of approaches, including brainstorming, working in pairs and whole class reading and discussion. In the best teaching there is lively interaction with the students, a good use of praise, a high level of student involvement in question and answer sessions, and an air of excitement and discovery; teachers in these lessons were good at teasing out deeper and more considered responses from students, stretching them and enabling them to reach a level of meaning they had previously not experienced. Lessons are invariably well prepared and structured; in this respect the influence of the National Literacy Strategy has been beneficial.
22. Mathematics teaching is also good and students attain sound standards of numeracy, though homework is not always consistently set and marked, especially that of low attaining sets. Most lessons are well planned but some lessons do not effectively build on prior knowledge. The management of students and classroom organisation by teachers are good. Lessons start with effective and well-structured question and answer sessions that involve all students in the session and the impact of the National Numeracy Strategy is evident.
23. Teaching of science is sound, though there is some inconsistency across the department. A key strength of the majority of lessons is the way in which teachers manage their classes; they insist on high standards of work and behaviour. However, in a minority of lessons a small number of students distract others from their learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge and explain scientific concepts clearly, relating them to the students' everyday experience. This motivates students to work hard because the teaching captures their interest. Some teaching is too teacher-dominated with too few opportunities for students to work independently.
24. Throughout the curriculum teachers plan their lessons carefully. They give considerable thought to ensuring that the work they devise is appropriate for students at different levels of attainment. The grouping of students according to attainment levels across the curriculum is helpful in this respect, though it does result in the bringing together of challenging groups of lower attaining students, often containing a

number of students who find it difficult to sustain appropriate behaviour unless they are very well taught. Occasionally, these groups are disrupted by poor behaviour which teachers struggle to contain and learning is unsatisfactory. Such lessons were observed in history and modern foreign languages. Closer monitoring of the progress made by such groups is needed and support for teachers who find this teaching difficult would help to alleviate the problem. Generally, though, students are managed well in lessons: expectations, relationships and behaviour are good though there is some lack of challenge to higher attaining students in Year 10 geography. Teachers generally mark and assess students' work carefully, though in science teachers' comments on work contain too little advice on how to improve.

25. Teachers across the curriculum seek to ensure that lessons meet the needs of all students. The very small numbers of students of minority ethnic heritage and those for whom English is an additional language learn effectively. Teachers know students with special educational needs well and are familiar with their individual education plans. In art and geography in Years 7 to 9 plans are subject specific and work is under way to make them more useful in design and technology. Matching of work to students' needs is always satisfactory and often good. Support from teaching assistants is widespread and well used. It is particularly effective in design and technology and history. Some assistants are only recently appointed and more training and experience is required to make the best of their time. In almost all cases teachers have good relationships with students with special needs. Tasks are appropriate to their levels of achievement and they are fully included in the work of lessons. In these conditions students feel confident, valued and well supported and their learning is good. Overall, teaching of students with special needs is good.

Sixth form

26. The quality of teaching in the sixth form is good. In art and design and in English literature and language teaching is very good. Of the lessons seen over three quarters were good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. Four out of ten lessons were very good. Teachers have very good knowledge of their subjects. In French, for example teachers are proficient in the language and use it skilfully in the classroom. Art teachers are practising artists, well aware of recent developments in the subject. Lessons are often presented with enthusiasm and teachers show creativity in the way they present material. In English, students began some work on the modern drama by acting out the opening scenes of *The Birthday Party* to explore how intonation can change meaning. Lessons are well planned, carefully structured and learning activities varied so that in A2 history for example, students' knowledge is extended, concentration and interest maintained and good study skills developed. Tasks in business are matched to learners' needs. Relationships in the classroom are very good. In chemistry and art this leads to a positive attitude and interest in the subject and enhances learning.
27. Marking is generally good and students understand how well they are doing and what needs to be done to improve. In English literature comments on students' work are detailed so that they can see how to improve but some marking, in chemistry, for example is not always sufficiently detailed to help students see where their work lacks depth. Teachers give good attention to improving key skills. Many students do not have well-developed oral skills and are not confident in expressing their point of view. Where teachers structure opportunities for discussion and the expression of ideas they respond well but in some areas, computing and history, for example, they are not given enough responsibility for their own learning or opportunity to improve their oral

skills. In French and in English Language students are able to pursue independent research but study skills are not well developed in history.

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

28. Since the previous inspection the school has made changes to the curriculum which have put right the unsatisfactory features referred to in the report. Information communication technology now has sufficient time and is better co-ordinated across the subjects. The whole curriculum itself is now subject to closer analysis and scrutiny.
29. Overall, the curriculum provides good breadth of experience and caters well for the needs of different groups of students. The National Curriculum is in place throughout the main school and all statutory obligations are met. Beyond the obligatory subjects students in Years 7, 8 and 9 benefit from weekly sessions of drama and a good programme of personal, social and health education. A second language, German, is added to French in Year 8 for all students except those in the lowest band. While this broadens the experience of these students, it has necessitated reducing French to one lesson each week. This is proving inadequate for a large number of students of modest attainment and as a result standards are too low.
30. The arrangements for grouping students into three bands based on their prior attainment are broadly successful in providing for individual needs. Particular curriculum arrangements have been adopted to meet the needs of talented students. In mathematics, French and German, students in the highest set in each year group are 'accelerated', and a third language, Spanish, is added in Year 9. This involves working at a faster and more demanding pace than usual with a view to enabling students to take GCSE a year early in Year 10. So far this has worked well and the first group of such students achieved high grades at GCSE in 2001. Sets in the third band are smaller than the rest and allow teachers to concentrate better on individual needs.
31. The curriculum in Years 10 and 11 provides well for all students and is broad and relevant. In addition to the subjects that most students follow to GCSE level, the school offers a good choice of vocational and life skills courses to those students for whom conventional GCSE courses are less appropriate, with GNVQ courses at foundation as well as intermediate levels. Following these courses helps to foster independence and good study habits in students who often need them most. All students take a full or short course of religious education to GCSE and this contributes well to their awareness of other cultures and faiths. The lack of a GCSE course in physical education is due to be remedied from September. However, opportunities for all students are enhanced by the availability of the nearby sports centre.
32. Almost all provision for students with special educational needs is made within the system of banding students for lessons according to levels of attainment and almost all support is provided in class. A small number of students are withdrawn from part-lessons for support with reading and literacy. A flexible system also provides for students to be supported outside lessons to meet their needs of the moment or longer term needs. These arrangements generally work well, though the concentration of lower-attaining students, many with special needs, in classes together can present teachers with considerable challenges in terms of control and discipline. Sometimes these lessons can be unruly and the quality of learning is

diminished. The school goes to great lengths to keep students in education and has a wide range of sensitive curriculum arrangements for students who are not attracted by the standard curriculum. Some students study for the GNVQ foundation course in science and others follow bespoke vocational courses at a local college. The school has plans to extend this provision. With its provision for talented students through accelerated learning courses and the extra-curricular programme, and the arrangements for students with special educational needs and behavioural problems, the school is doing well to ensure that appropriate learning opportunities are provided for students with different individual needs.

33. Across the curriculum, standards of literacy are sound. Over the past year the teaching staff have had training in the importance of language to learning and in most subject classrooms there are displays of key words and technical vocabulary. In most but not all classes reference is made to these lists and students' grasp of the meaning of key terms is consistently reinforced. Throughout the school teachers are more aware than they were at the last inspection of the need to help students develop their linguistic skills of speaking and listening, reading and writing alongside the skills and knowledge in the various subjects.
34. Students show their numeracy skills in departments other than mathematics, mainly in geography, science, and physical education. The use of numeracy in geography shows much good practice. Here students use a wide range of skills in collection, presentation and analysis of data, and are encouraged to think about the appropriateness of the graphs that they use. Higher attaining students in Years 10 and 11 are familiar with work involving the use of Spearman's rank. In physical education students confidently make routine measurements for athletics, they use measurements of heart rate to construct graphs and tables and they can calculate the number of calories used in exercise. The use of numeracy in science is prosaic. Here, students collect information from experiments, perform routine calculations and construct appropriate graphs. There is no strategy in place currently so that numeracy is taught consistently across the curriculum although the issue is being addressed by the mathematics department and will involve all staff in training. The aim is to develop an effective cross-curricular numeracy policy.
35. A good range of extra-curricular activities extends personal interests and provides additional challenge to the many students who take part in them. Several groups and ensembles exist for the large number of students who learn a musical instrument and they have numerous opportunities to play and sing in school events such as parents' evenings, concerts and the big school production in March. There are also good opportunities for students to keep themselves fit through team games, clubs and a health related fitness programme at the sports centre. Other subject departments, for example history, geography and religious education arrange visits to places of interest such as Middleham Castle and York. Students can join theatre trips and visits to museums and art galleries; the modern foreign languages and music departments organise visits abroad to Paris and Belgium.
36. There is good provision for personal and social education. The programme is followed by all students up to Year 11, is well planned and covers all of the ground which is required. Teaching is by a specialist team. The programme makes a good contribution to students' social and moral education. Issues of moral import are raised and discussed as well as more practical matters such as health and safety. Work experience is arranged for two weeks of Year 10. Careers education is integrated into the personal and social education programme. It is well planned to

cover the necessary ground though no lessons were available to be seen during the inspection.

37. The school makes use of the local community for the benefit of students. This is particularly true of the vocational courses in Years 10 and 11, and in the sixth form where students regularly visit local primary schools and retirement homes as part of their work-related programme. The history department maintains good links with the Leeds Museum Service and many students benefit from the use of the local cricket ground and coaching in rugby by members of the Leeds Rhinos. Many students work alongside members of the wider community during their use of the sports centre for physical education lessons. There is scope for even greater contact for the benefit of the science and technology departments through links with industrial and commercial organisations.
38. The school has good relationships with its partner primary schools and sixth form partner institutions. The head of Year 7 - now a fixed post to ensure continuity - takes time to visit primary schools to gather information about new students and to talk to staff and children. This helps the process of transition for Year 6 students moving up to Royds School who have a number of opportunities to visit the school for science and ICT lessons taught by Royds staff as well as an open evening. In addition to this, and as part of its bid for Investor in Pupils status, the school is arranging a good induction programme for new Year 7 students to help them settle into the school. Relationships with the other institutions in the sixth form partnership are constructive and are maintained by regular contact at senior level. Subject departments, also, are beginning to forge links with these institutions, but these are not yet as well established or regular as they need to be to ensure the best communication for the benefit of students.
39. The provision for students' spiritual development is satisfactory. The school has responded positively to the finding of the last inspection that this was an area needing development. A very comprehensive policy has been drawn up and all staff are encouraged to consider how they can implement this in their lesson planning and teaching. The school has drawn extensively on national documentation in framing this guidance and useful definitions of key terms help to clarify the aims of spiritual development in the school. Practice, however, is less effective. Some teachers consider the opportunities which their subject presents to further students' spiritual development. Good examples were seen in art, when students were encouraged to reflect on how masks are used in ritual and in music, where students' enjoyment in making music was palpable. In religious education many lessons provide opportunities for students to reflect on significant questions about meaning and purpose and they respond well to the opportunity to offer their own views on such topics as suffering and evidence for the existence of God. In general, however, practice does not match the schools' aspirations in this area of provision. Many opportunities for the enrichment of students' experience are being missed. Careful planning goes into year assemblies which have a clear moral and religious message, based on the broad traditions of Christian belief. Students listen attentively and show interest in the theme though they are not always given opportunities for quite thought or reflection. Good support is given to teachers for a "thought for the day" to be used when classes are not in assembly. Implementation of this is patchy and not all staff fulfil the schools' requirements. The school is not currently meeting the statutory requirements for collective worship.
40. The provision for students' moral development is good. The school mission statement emphasises the importance of honesty, respect and consideration of

others in creating the ethos in which moral development can take place. Students are clearly being taught the difference between right and wrong and they are encouraged to respect the feelings and beliefs of others in their daily life in school. The PSE programme makes a strong contribution to this aspect of students' development and students are encouraged to develop responsibility towards themselves and others. Programmes of sex and health education and teaching about the dangers of drug dependency and abuse help students to place their own actions into a wider social context. Learning in many lessons is often placed within a moral context. In modern foreign languages several topics of ethical concern are discussed and staff are good role models in their relationships with students. Students are encouraged to consider the moral issues posed by new technology in ICT lessons and the relationship between religious principles and business ethics in business studies. In geography they are able to compare lifestyles in rich and poor countries; in physical education emphasis is placed on fair play, consideration and respect for others. Many opportunities are presented in religious education for students to discuss moral issues and many of them are able to give pertinent examples from their own experience in response to the issue being considered. Students are developing a wider sense of their moral obligations through support for a range of national and local charities. They have expressed their moral concern in practical ways by supporting St. Gemma's Hospice, Children in Need, Comic Relief, Cancer Research and the Special Care Baby Unit of St. James' Hospital and Amnesty International.

41. The provision for students' social development is satisfactory. Opportunities are provided in the PSE programme for students to understand their developing social responsibilities as they move through the school. They are also helped to learn about their rights and obligations as young adults in work, leisure and as consumers and participants in social life. In many lessons they are helped to develop good social skills and a mature attitude. This is particularly evident in physical education where students work very well together in groups and are responsible and mature in using the facilities of the Rothwell Recreation Centre. Good social relationships are a feature of many lessons including those in ICT, geography, history, modern foreign languages, personal and social education and music. Students do have some opportunities for showing initiative and responsibility in the life of the school, but these are limited. Students in Year 8 help in the school office, students are also able to help in the library and there are opportunities for them to contribute to the local community through the Community Work Programme in Years 10 and 11. Overall, however, there are few opportunities for them to exercise responsibility and initiative in the general life of the school. There is at present no school council for older students and that for younger students is inactive.
42. The provision for students' cultural development is good. Significant contributions are made by music, art and religious education. In modern foreign languages students can e-mail friends in partner schools in France, Germany and Italy. In geography students consider cultural diversity in their study of the developing world and in history they are introduced to their own cultural heritage through lessons and visits to sites of historical importance. Students are encouraged to take part in theatre and cinema visits which enhance their cultural awareness. Students studying music have many opportunities to perform in concerts locally, nationally and abroad. Students are introduced to a range of cultural traditions through art and music and to aspects of cultural diversity in history and geography. A significant contribution is made by religious education to raising students' awareness of the cultural and religious diversity of modern society. In general, however, this is not a strong area of provision. Much good work is being done in several subjects to enhance students' cultural

experience. More could be done to celebrate and to extend students' cultural achievements in the wider life of the school community.

Sixth form

43. The school's partnership arrangements allow a very wide range of opportunity to its students. The range provides for students at all levels of attainment and a wide spectrum of interest and aspiration. Most students follow AS and A2 level courses leading to university entrance. Many students do not yet perceive the GNVQ as an attractive route to higher education or vocational opportunities but the courses offered are relevant to employment in the area. In addition to the traditional range of academic subjects students may take Italian, business studies, drama, media studies, sociology, psychology, economics, law and general studies. Computing is offered at A level as well as a course for technicians and students may choose from hairdressing, health and social care, hospitality and catering, and the public services diploma. Courses are taught at the school, at one of the partner institutions or partly in both. The partnership enables the school to significantly extend the range of courses available to students and arrangements for travelling have been made so that students can follow courses at all three sites. Some subjects find the present time tabling of three consecutive hour long teaching periods difficult. Overall the quality and range of opportunities offered by the school is very good.
44. Most students opt for 3 or 4 AS courses in Year 12. In addition to examination courses all students attend a tutorial session for one period each week. The programme covers study skills, targets setting, careers guidance and support for university entrance. There are opportunities in this time for individual and group tutorials. An optional key skills programme is offered in Year 12 or students may resit English and mathematics at GCSE. After the first term of Year 12 students may have up to four hours study leave off site. There are opportunities for enrichment activities on one afternoon each week. The school does not fulfil its statutory obligation to provide a course of religious education.
45. The foundation courses provide good access points for students with special educational needs but at present there are no students on the register of special needs on sixth form courses.
46. Opportunities arise in the curriculum for students to participate in a range of additional activities such as field trips, visits to the theatre and foreign exchanges. There is an annual production and students raise funds for charity. In addition, the school encourages students to participate in enrichment activities on one afternoon weekly. These include, for example, work in the community, sporting opportunities, paired reading with younger students in the school, and some musical activities such as the choir and school band. There is an active sixth form committee convened by students. There is some opportunity for work experience. Together these activities make a contribution to students' personal development and provide some opportunity for reflection on spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues. At the time of the inspection about a half of students in Year 12 and 10 per cent of Year 13 were involved in some non-examination activity. Significant numbers of students expressed the view through the questionnaire that school fails to provide worthwhile activities. The school feels that many students do not participate willingly in extra curricular activities but in discussion most students valued the enrichment programme. The school has found that the heavy demands on time imposed by Curriculum 2000 have affected the enrichment programme, which is to be reviewed in

the partnership. There is no religious education provision, in breach of statutory requirements.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

47. The monitoring of students' academic performance is good. Carefully kept records of test and examination results and other assessment and test data are analysed and used to provide individual targets for students to aspire to in national tests taken at the end of Year 9 and GCSE. These analyses are also effectively used to determine those teaching groups organised by attainment levels, to monitor the effectiveness of departments and to provide a basis for planning. Targets are known to teachers and students, though the procedures are quite new and are not fully embedded in the routines of some departments. In English, for example, targets are not modified on the basis of what teachers know about their students. In other departments, such as art, targets are used more successfully as part of teaching and learning. Monitoring of students' progress is very good in modern languages, art and history and inconsistent in mathematics and geography. Although the use of targets has some way to go before its full potential to raise standards is realised, a start has been made and the procedures are beginning to have impact. Class and form tutors work with individual students and give encouragement and support.
48. The school has good policies and procedures to ensure the welfare of students. The systems for child protection are in place and the staff are aware of the procedures to be followed. There are members of the teaching staff with overall responsibility for the pastoral welfare of the students. The relationships between staff and students ensure good pastoral care at an individual level.

49. The learning mentors make a good contribution to the pastoral welfare of the students, in addition to providing academic support, particularly for students in Years 10 and 11 thought to be heading for the borderline between grades C and D at GCSE. The school has a well-organised learning support unit. This provides focused help for those students with behavioural problems and is very successful in ensuring that these students continue to be included in the opportunities that the school offers. The staff of the unit work hard to ensure that the students referred to the unit are well equipped to return to mainstream education.
50. Care for students with special educational needs is good. The school receives good support from outside agencies though the time available from the educational psychology service is very limited. Pastoral care for these students is very strong; the support team is very sensitive to students with special needs and provides powerful advocacy for them. Teachers are kept well informed by an audit of special needs. There are regular reviews of progress as well as daily monitoring by the support team but there are no formal arrangements for review against objective criteria. Formal procedures would helpfully supplement informal assessment of support arrangements and provide objective measures of the success of support arrangements. Procedures for the initial assessment of students referred to the special needs department are good.
51. The school has the services of a full time education welfare officer, who monitors attendance and follows up cases of persistent absenteeism through letters and home visits. This is a relatively new post in school and has as yet had little impact on the poor level of attendance. The school uses a sophisticated electronic system of recording attendance and registration is carried out at the start of every lesson. Monitoring of the attendance of sixth form students is unsatisfactory because of inadequate and slow liaison between the partner institutions.
52. The school has a system of sanctions and rewards, which is well implemented, as a result of which behaviour in the classroom is good. The complex layout of the buildings and the size of the site make supervision at break and lunch times difficult. Because of this, behaviour outside the classroom is often less satisfactory. When oppressive behaviour is reported it is satisfactorily dealt with. No instances of bullying were seen during the inspection.
53. Students' personal development is well monitored, and good use is made of planners. The school is piloting the Investors in Pupils scheme in Year 7; through this students are becoming responsible for agreeing their own development targets. This enables students to consider ways in which they can improve their performance.
54. There is a good personal and social education programme that enables students to consider their individual role in the wider community. In a Year 7 class students were discussing the theme "Working well together". There are good links between the personal and social education programme and careers guidance in Years 10 and 11. The careers co-ordinator and the local authority careers officer work together to provide advice on future careers. Good careers advice is available and there is help for students in making decisions about their future at the end of Years 9 and 11.
55. The areas used by students during wet break times are bleak and poorly maintained. Toilets are in an unacceptably poor condition, and their use is restricted; they are kept locked during lesson times. This situation is wholly unsatisfactory and demeaning to students.

Sixth form

Assessment

56. Procedures for assessing students' work are good. Work is regularly and accurately assessed and students are given good feedback on their progress and how to improve. There are effective common systems across the partnership for monitoring students' progress, setting targets and action planning. Students discuss their overall progress with their tutor and parents are informed of the results of monitoring. Clear target grades are given for each of their subjects. A more formal written progress report with comments by both teacher and student is sent to parents in both Years 12 and 13 and followed by a parents evening. Students have access to a computer which gives the grade predicted for each examination subject based on GCSE performance and updated through the monitoring process.

Advice, support and guidance

57. Overall the information and guidance about subjects and courses students are given before joining the sixth form is good. The process begins in Year 10 when students and their parents are invited to an open evening. There are departmental presentations and displays by all partnership schools in Year 11 which are followed by one to one interviews for all students. The first three to four weeks of Year 12 are regarded as a probationary period when students may change courses. However, an induction week and opportunities for students to attend taster lessons has not run since the partnership began. Some students felt that they were not given enough advice and information in preparation for sixth form study. The great majority of students feel that teachers are accessible and give help with any difficulties they encounter with their work.
58. Students meet briefly each day with their tutors. This time is used mainly for registration and routine business. A weekly assembly is held. Outside speakers are invited to address students – during the inspection a speaker from the Youth Service addressed students about the youth parliament and there was a good turn out for a talk about the gap year.
59. Procedures for monitoring attendance are not satisfactory. The electronic system currently employed in the school for recording attendance is not used in the other schools in the partnership. Although a register is taken in all lessons across the partnership it is not possible at present to adequately monitor attendance or to know if students are on site.
60. In addition to the registration period students have an hour each week with their tutor following a well-designed programme covering study skills and careers guidance. This time is also used to give individual guidance on careers and academic monitoring as well as an opportunity for personal advice and support. Any problems are notified to the tutor through a 'cause for concern' system. The programme is, however, not always well presented or time always well used. Tutor groups are large. Further academic counselling is available to support students whose progress is giving concern. Most students feel that the tutorial programme is useful to them.
61. Students have access to up to date information on higher education in the careers library and in the sixth form study area. They feel the help they are given by the head of sixth form and their tutor on university application is very good. Students say that they receive good advice from the careers advisor but there is too little time available to them - interviews can only be had on one morning each week by appointment.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 62. Parents make a satisfactory contribution to students' learning through homework. In some subjects there is a useful dialogue with parents through use of the students' planner. The progress of individual students is reported to parents through annual end of year reports. In some subjects these provide useful information to parents about their children's progress, and give guidance for future action. The annual parents' evening gives parents the opportunity to discuss students' work with staff. An additional open evening is held for the parents of Year 7 students as part of the induction process. This meeting enables parents to discuss any concerns with form tutors and the head of Year 7.
- 63. Good contact is maintained with parents of students with special educational needs. Contact is established while students are still in primary school and all parents of students with special needs are kept informed of the results of reviews and of changes proposed for their children as they progress through the school.
- 64. A well-produced prospectus provides new parents with useful information about the school. Parents are kept informed of events in school through regular newsletters.
- 65. The Royds Association is very active with an enthusiastic committee. The school benefits as a result of considerable fund-raising by the association. The association's recent contribution has enabled the school to buy some outdoor furniture that will greatly benefit the students during the summer months, as well as enhancing the school's surroundings. Social events are organised with a focus on involving the whole family.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 66. The leadership of senior staff under the direction of the headteacher has been very good since the tragic deaths of two students while on a residential week in the Yorkshire Dales in October 2000. The tragedy has clearly had tremendous impact on the school. Students and staff have been considerably affected. At the time of the inspection, the school was still dealing with the potential for legal or disciplinary consequences. Calm, sensitive and skilful leadership has ensured that the main business of the school has been carried on with as little disruption as possible in these uniquely distressing circumstances.
- 67. The school has a clear sense of direction and there is a purposeful focus on raising standards. There is regular and effective monitoring of the quality of provision. Annual reviews of departmental performance are undertaken against the background of skilled analysis of performance in tests and examinations. Teaching is monitored regularly and feedback is given to teachers to help to increase quality. Performance management systems and regular appraisal are fully in place. There is full commitment to principles of equality of opportunity, evidenced by considerable efforts to meet the needs of talented students, those with special educational needs and those with behavioural difficulties. The learning support unit plays a major part in ensuring that students who find it difficult to behave appropriately have opportunities to continue to be included in the school's provision, and then returned to mainstream lessons. As a result, permanent exclusion is rare – only one student was permanently excluded last year.

68. The school's development planning is very good. Plans set appropriate priorities, are costed and evaluated. Departmental plans are also very good, and are fully integrated into the overall picture. Energetic action is taken to meet the planned priorities set out in plans. Financial planning is also very good and every attempt is made to ensure best value in the school's purchasing of goods and services. Throughout the staff there is good, shared commitment to improvement, reflected in the changes made since the last inspection.
69. Within this generally strong picture, there is one area of weakness. Heads of department, a number of whom are relatively new in post, are too little involved in whole-school issues and many feel detached from decisions which affect their work. The system of banding students by levels of attainment, for example, though amply justified in documentation and in practice, is a bone of contention with many heads of department, who would wish to see a more flexible system based on attainment in their subject. The important issue is not whether or not the system is appropriate, but that the allegiance of key staff to the decision has not been secured. These are skilled and committed staff and departmental management is generally good. Senior staff believe that they encourage ideas and debate, but even so, arrangements to consult, to involve heads of department in decisions and to use their experience and expertise need to be improved.
70. Governors discharge their responsibilities well. They take a strategic view of their role and strike a proper balance in their effective relationship with the headteacher and senior staff, who in turn serve them well. Their role in development planning has been particularly helpful. They know and support the school well and have a good understanding of priorities, strengths and weaknesses. With the support of the headteacher, they monitor effectiveness and financial systems.
71. Provision for students with special educational needs is well managed. The school is aware of the new code of practice and arrangements have been made for the special needs co-ordinator to be appropriately briefed and trained in its application. There is a comprehensive register of special educational needs and a good audit of need. There are good arrangements for the communication of information through departments to individual teachers. Communications among members of the support team are very strong. Some members of the support team are relatively inexperienced which limits their contribution in the classroom at present. There is a need for a rigorous system of monitoring of their work and further training to improve their effectiveness. Other members of the team provide very helpful support to students.
72. The provision for staffing is good overall. Several departments, English, art, modern languages, and particularly physical education and music have good or very good teams of teachers providing expertise and experience in teaching their subject. At

the conclusion of a difficult year in 2001 over 20 of the teaching staff of the school resigned. New recruits, including teachers new to the profession, have enlivened the teaching body bringing new and creative ideas and methods. These teachers have been very well supported by the school, the local education authority and particularly by the departments themselves. The same quality of support is also given to teachers in training of which the school has a number each year. While several departments such as mathematics, English and information technology are beginning to feel the benefit of a more stable teaching community, there is still some way to go with recruitment. The history department, for instance, has had eight supply teachers since September and this is now having a discernible negative effect on the standards in the subject. There is adequate administrative and technical support within the school except for too little technician time in the science department. More training is required for the support staff for special educational needs, some of whom are inexperienced.

73. Accommodation is unsatisfactory overall. Subject accommodation has strengths and weaknesses. Most subjects, especially English and geography have rooms close together. Modern languages are a room short, leaving one teacher without a base, so restricting teaching and especially the use of audio-visual equipment. The physical education department has good accommodation although it has lost a section of the playing field area through the erection of a boundary fence. It also loses the use of a gymnasium during examinations. The music accommodation has been improved since the last inspection through the use of a larger classroom. Both teaching rooms are very well and flexibly used, enhancing the quality of the music provision. However practise rooms for small group work are very limited. Information technology rooms are not large enough to accommodate more than 18 computer work stations, restricting individual access particularly in Years 7 to 9 and in extra curricular activities. In art, although the size of the rooms has been improved, they are still too small for the larger groups. Design and technology accommodation is in urgent need of refurbishment. Benching is old and damaged in the resistant materials area and here there is no dust extraction resulting in dust settling on shelves and surfaces. The food studies area is inappropriately shaped and the work surfaces are in need of replacing.
74. The buildings that make up the school are dispersed over a wide area, leading to a great deal of movement between lessons, often across outside areas. These spaces are difficult to supervise so there is some inappropriate behaviour. Some buildings have dark and dingy corridors and sitting areas. In these areas litter becomes a problem particularly after break and lunchtime. Some students' lavatories are in entirely unacceptable condition and are locked for most of the day.
75. Resources are satisfactory overall. The music department has a very good range of percussion instruments, xylophones and glockenspiels, which enhance learning. English has a good range of recent or new texts and art has good resources for the full range of activities. Modern languages and physical education are well resourced. The ratio of computers to students is near the national average. The way that these are set up, however, and the fact that information technology is taught as a discrete subject limits access for students in lessons and for extra curricular activities. The geography department, for instance, finds it difficult to get access because of other block bookings. More portable computers are required for data logging in science, and design and technology has limited hardware and software. There are insufficient computers in music for the effective delivery of composition in Years 7 to 9.

76. The library accommodation is satisfactory. It is small, however, with a limited number of books. Older books have been replaced by newer texts for which the librarian has sought the assistance of students, particularly in the sixth form. Some departments make good use of the library for curriculum support and the librarian compiles dedicated selections on various topics for this. There are three computers, all networked and linked to the internet. Printers, a scanner and photocopier are available for students to use. There is a careers library and magazines and broadsheet newspapers are available for students' use. Students act as library assistants.

Sixth form

Leadership and management

77. Overall leadership of the sixth form by the school's senior management is very effective. The new partnership has enabled its three institutions to greatly extend the range of courses available to students. Although there have been some initial problems associated with setting up the partnership, careful planning and a willingness to review the practicability of arrangements has ensured that generally things work well. Students recognise and appreciate the broad choice of courses available to them. The partnership has appointed a director responsible for issues across the partnership but oversight of the sixth form at Royds, planning and responsibility for day-to-day management are very effectively carried out by the head of sixth form. Communication across the three schools is improving. The head of sixth has regular meetings with her counterpart in the partnership and where subject teaching is shared there are scheduled meetings between heads of department. Liaison about curriculum matters between teachers in the partnership is improving but is still patchy. There is much informal discussion by telephone. At present the difficulties of collaboration across three separate institutions have not been resolved. Departments should ensure that there is good curriculum planning and development. Teaching is monitored within the school but as yet there is no overall monitoring to ensure the quality of teaching across the partnership. Development planning for the school sixth form is good and the views of students and teachers have been sought. Attainment, the recruitment to, and retention on courses are monitored and good use is made of assessment data to provide predictions of A level results and to calculate value added. Governors take an active interest in the sixth form.

Resources

78. The sixth form is cost effective and financial planning is good. Arrangements within the partnership to staff the shared curriculum are very good. Teachers are well qualified and experienced. Students travel to the other schools for some of their lessons but on some occasions teachers come to Royds. Accommodation for the sixth form is good: there is a social area equipped with computers which although quite elderly will provide Internet access, a pleasant and well used study area and a sixth form office. The sixth form area is well used and reasonably maintained by tutor groups on a rotational basis. Overall resources for teaching are good although more books are needed for design and technology in the sixth form. The sixth form section in the school library has been recently updated with the help of the students. There are books to support the curriculum including vocational studies as well as videos, magazines, circulars and newspapers.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The school's senior managers and governors are in a strong position to ensure that the weaknesses identified in this report are remedied. In order to raise standards and improve the quality of provision further, they should:

- (1) ensure that there is enough time for middle-attaining students to make sufficient progress in their first modern foreign language in Years 7 to 9;
Paragraphs: 2, 29, 157, 158, 163.
- (2) continue their efforts to raise the level of attendance and reduce unauthorised absence;
Paragraph 13.
- (3) improve the general state of tidiness and appearance of the buildings and surroundings and refurbish lavatories for students' use.
Paragraphs: 55, 74.

Sixth form

- (1) develop monitoring systems across the partnership schools which will ensure that teaching is of consistently high quality.
Paragraph 77.
- (2) support subject departments in improving curriculum planning and development across the partnership schools.
Paragraph 77.
- (3) improve the procedures for monitoring attendance across the partnership schools.
Paragraph 51.
- (4) fulfil its statutory obligations by providing opportunities for religious education.
Paragraph 41.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	Years 7 - 11	165
	Sixth form	46
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils		50

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
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Years 7 - 11

Number	7	36	65	48	7	0	0
Percentage	4%	22%	40%	29%	4%	0%	0%

Sixth form

Number	0	17	18	11	0	0	0
Percentage	0	37	39	24	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.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils on the school's roll	1169	124
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	160	

Special educational needs

	Y7 – Y11	Sixth form
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	29	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	194	0

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	26
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	35

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.3
National comparative data	8.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	2.8
National comparative data	1.1

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 (Year 9)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	2001	123	106	229

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	52	92	87
	Girls	53	66	69
	Total	105	158	156
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	46 (68)	69 (69)	68 (63)
	National	64 (63)	66 (65)	66 (59)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	16 (33)	45 (39)	34 (35)
	National	31 (28)	43 (42)	34 (30)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	79	86	87
	Girls	80	68	80
	Total	159	154	167
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	70 (66)	68 (73)	74 (43)
	National	65 (64)	68 (66)	64 (62)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	31 (29)	42 (36)	50 (12)
	National	31 (31)	42 (39)	33 (29)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 (Year 11)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 4 for the latest reporting year	2001	116	99	215

GCSE results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A*-G	1 or more grades A*-G
Numbers of pupils achieving the standard specified	Boys	39	104	112
	Girls	45	93	98
	Total	84	197	210
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	39 (44)	92 (92)	98 (96)
	National	48 (47)	91 (91)	96 (96)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	37.8
	National	39.0

Attainment at the end of the sixth form (Year 13)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of students aged 16, 17 and 18 on roll in January of the latest reporting year who were entered for GCE A-level or AS-level examinations	2000	61	58	119

Average A/AS points score per candidate	For candidates entered for 2 or more A-levels or equivalent			For candidates entered for fewer than 2 A-levels or equivalent		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
School	19.2	26.4	22.9 (20.7)	5.3	4	4.8 (4.2)
National	17.8	18.6	18.2 (17.9)	2.6	2.9	2.7 (2.7)

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

Vocational qualifications		Number	% success rate
Number in their final year of studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all those they studied	School	5	20
	National		73.2

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	0
Indian	4
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	1282
Any other minority ethnic group	0

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	200	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 – Y13**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	81.85
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15.8

Education support staff: Y7 – Y13

Total number of education support staff	22
Total aggregate hours worked per week	645.15

Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y13

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	75
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Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y13

Key Stage 3	22.6
Key Stage 4	20.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001
	£
Total income	3,502,883
Total expenditure	3,446,802
Expenditure per pupil	2,712
Balance brought forward from previous year	65,570
Balance carried forward to next year	121,652

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	25.8
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	27.2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	8
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	8

Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	1,282
Number of questionnaires returned	282

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	25	66	7	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	32	62	5	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	14	53	18	5	10
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	13	65	17	4	1
The teaching is good.	16	66	10	1	8
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	19	49	26	5	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	34	52	10	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	44	53	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	13	51	29	2	5
The school is well led and managed.	13	63	10	4	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	22	64	10	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	48	16	4	8

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4

ENGLISH

Overall, the quality of provision in English is **good**.

Strengths

- Good quality teaching
- A well qualified team of teachers
- Good leadership and management
- Joint planning and a cohesive approach
- Good rooms and resources
- Sound standards in English across the curriculum

Areas for improvement

- Standards by the end of Years 9 and 11 could be better
- There is a small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching
- Not all targets are accompanied by the means for their improvement

79. In the 2001 national tests at the end of Year 9 the school's results in English were in line with the national average for all schools; in comparison with results in similar schools, the school's results were above average though they were not as good as the school's science and mathematics results. Results in the same test were above the national average for all schools in 2000 and in line with it in 1999. In the past three years, English results have been close to results in mathematics and science. Girls have attained higher scores than boys but boys' scores in relation to the national average for boys have been similar to girls' scores in relation to the national average for girls.
80. In the 2001 GCSE examinations at the end of Year 11 the school's results were well below the national average in English and below the national average in English literature. If the last three years are taken together, the school's results have been below the national average in English; results in literature have been closer to the national average but still below that level. A high proportion of students are entered for both GCSE examinations. Girls attain a greater percentage of grades A* - C than boys but their results have been below the national average for girls as boys' results have been below the national average for boys.
81. At the time of the inspection the standards attained by students were in line with the national average both in Years 7 – 9 and in Years 10 – 11. This is similar to the standards attained at the time of the last inspection. Both boys and girls attain at a satisfactory level in English language and in English literature. The improvement that has taken place since 2001, notably in Years 10 – 11, has been due to the greatly improved staffing situation in the English department. The addition of several new and well qualified teachers has created a team of 11 specialist teachers. There has been less staff absenteeism and the students are enjoying a more continuous and secure experience of learning in the subject. In consequence students of all levels of ability, including those with special educational needs, are making better and more secure progress and achieving standards in line with their previous levels of attainment.

82. Students' standards of speaking and listening are sound. They generally listen with good levels of attention and most offer their views on subjects with confidence. Some average and higher attaining students enjoy the cut and thrust of debate and are able to sustain well argued contributions to whole class discussions. Individual boys and girls in every year group are capable of putting forward original viewpoints and defending them vigorously against criticisms. In some of the mixed attainment classes, however, as well as in some of the classes of lower attaining students, answers to the teacher's questions tend to be brief and some students struggle to express their views with clarity.
83. Reading standards are sound overall and a significant proportion of students attain standards that are above average. Higher attaining students read difficult texts, such as Shakespeare's plays, with a good level of understanding. They grasp the meaning of poetic metaphors and older students detect irony and subtleties of meaning in the text. The successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy in Years 7 – 9 is helping younger students to identify with confidence parts of speech as well as figures of speech and other devices used to achieve particular effects. Generally speaking, students of all levels of attainment are keen to read aloud in class; they project their voice well and most read with good levels of fluency and accuracy. The range of attainment, however, is wide and lower attaining students sometimes need support to cope with relatively simple texts.
84. The standards achieved in writing are generally sound with a significant proportion of writing that is above average relative to students' ages. Students in all year groups produce a good volume of writing in a wide range of styles: stories, letters, diaries, playscripts, analytical writing of various kinds as well as notes and writing plans. Higher attaining students often write at good length and many show good qualities of imagination and creativity. Both middle ability and higher ability students achieve sound standards of presentation and most have a good command of spelling and punctuation. The writing of lower attaining students and of those with special educational needs is supported by teachers of lower band classes; these students are set simpler and more straightforward writing tasks and teachers often provide writing frames and close guidance to help them complete their work successfully. Teachers mark students' writing with care; for the most part they offer a grade for effort and make useful comments on how the work might be improved; the best marking also offers students a National Curriculum level indicating the standard that has been attained.
85. Students generally show good attitudes to English. They are eager to answer questions, take part willingly in discussions and respond well to teaching that is generally of good quality. Teaching is a major strength of the school's provision in English and has improved since the last inspection. Some is of a very high standard, most is good and only one lesson was seen where teaching was less than satisfactory; this last was a miscalculation by an inexperienced teacher who allowed students to dwell for too long on unchallenging, low grade activities. For the most part teachers set demanding and challenging activities to students, including those who are gifted and talented. They maintain a good pace, which helps students to make good progress, and employ a variety of approaches, including brainstorming, working in pairs and whole class reading and discussion. They make good use of the board and of the overhead projector to explain and clarify ideas and also to build up a collection of ideas and suggestions elicited from the students which students can draw on in their writing activities. Very good teaching was characterised by lively interaction with the students, a good use of praise, a high level of student involvement in question and answer sessions, and an air of excitement and discovery; teachers in

these lessons were good at teasing out deeper and more considered responses from students, stretching them and enabling them to reach a level of meaning they had previously not experienced. In one very good lesson, Year 10 students successfully engaged with a difficult poem by a West Indian poet. With the help of the teacher's commentary and skilful questioning they penetrated beneath the surface meaning to what the poem was really about and developed their grasp of some of the devices used in the poem as well as their general appreciation of poetry. Lessons were invariably well prepared and structured; in this respect the influence of the National Literacy Strategy has been beneficial. Teachers also manage time and resources well.

86. Individual students are set targets aimed at their attainment in the national tests in Year 9 and in the GCSE examinations in Year 11. These are statistically generated, based on the students' attainment in previous tests. While they provide helpful direction to students and teachers, these targets are not based on a close scrutiny of students' relative strengths and weaknesses in English and the process of setting the targets does not reveal the means by which the targets can be achieved. In setting targets, the teachers of the students need to be more closely involved so that they can suggest the areas of strength on which students can build and the areas of weakness where improvements are needed; in this way the setting of targets would be more beneficial to the students and would more successfully achieve the objective of raising standards.
87. The department is well led and managed. The addition of new subject specialists this year has greatly strengthened the teaching force. The provision of a clear subject handbook and of guidance on themes and approaches in each year has helped to create a cohesive, team approach to the subject. The head of department and second in charge work closely together, observing teaching and monitoring the quality of students' work. There is close collaboration between teachers in standardising marks and applying National Curriculum levels to students' work, which is assisted by a portfolio of assessed work. The three newly qualified teachers in the department have received good support and guidance. There are eight dedicated rooms in close proximity, all suitable for teaching the subject, with good displays of students' writing as well as book and theatre posters. Resources are in good supply with particularly good sets of Shakespeare plays, dictionaries and novels. Access to and use of information and communications technology are good. Rooms are well maintained and orderly. There are occasional visits to the theatre and the cinema. The recent improvements and on-going strengths of the department make it well placed to improve on the standards attained in recent years.
88. Across the curriculum, standards in English are sound. Over the past year the teaching staff have had in-service training in the importance of language to learning and in most subject classrooms there are displays of key words and technical vocabulary. In most but not all classes reference is made to these lists and students' grasp of the meaning of key terms is consistently reinforced. Throughout the school teachers are more aware than they were at the last inspection of the need to help students develop their linguistic skills of speaking and listening, reading and writing alongside the skills and knowledge in the various subjects.

Drama

Overall, the quality of provision in drama is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- The contribution to students' powers of listening and speaking
- Support is provided for progress in English generally

Areas for improvement

- The Drama room has shortcomings
- GCSE groups have tended to be small and results well below average
- There is a lack of clarity concerning the place and purpose of drama in the curriculum

89. Results in GCSE examinations in 2001 and recent years have been well below the national average. GCSE classes have been relatively small in size and the ability of the students in these classes has been skewed to below average. Students have tended to achieve in line with their previous levels of attainment.
90. All students in Year 7 have one period of drama a week as part of their English programme of lessons. In Years 8 and 9 they have one period of drama every two weeks. In Years 10 and 11, drama is taken by those opting for the subject at GCSE level. In addition to the full GCSE course there is also a short course which is at present being phased out. The subject is helping students develop their powers of listening and speaking and also adds to their self-confidence and poise. Although little drama teaching was observed, the teaching seen was of good quality. Students were well organised, activities were well planned and the students worked industriously and with enthusiasm and made good progress.
91. Although the room set aside for drama is bigger than the average classroom it is still too small for groups of fifteen or more. It has blackout but the lighting system is very restricted and there is no sound system. Accommodation for drama was criticised in the last inspection report. The resources for the subject are modest. In its present form, the subject is a helpful adjunct to English but little more. However, there was good commitment shown to the subject by the present Year 10 GCSE class. The department and the school together need to review the purpose of drama in the curriculum and make decisions concerning its future.

MATHEMATICS

Overall, the quality of provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- The department has high expectations of students.
- The management of the department is strong, showing clear vision.
- There are positive student attitudes in lessons.

Areas for improvement

- The provision of ICT is inconsistent.
- The timetabling arrangements which mean that some students have more than one teacher.

92. The mathematics department has undergone considerable change over the last few years. Currently there are eleven members of staff who teach the subject, six of whom are in their first year at Royds. Further, the head of department has only been in post at the school for five terms. It does appear, however, that the department is now entering a period of stability.

93. The previous report in November 1995 noted weaknesses in teaching where some lessons were too didactic, lacked pace and the objectives were not explicit. The expectations of students were too low and the department lacked adequate resources. Since then there has been an improvement in all of these areas, teaching has improved so that the pace is good, objectives are clear and all students are involved in lessons. There are sufficient textbooks for all students.
94. The standards on entry to the school in Year 7 are broadly average. The examination results at GCSE in 2001 were below the national average. When compared with similar schools using free school meals as an indicator these GCSE results were average. In 2001 boys significantly outperformed girls in a reversal of the national picture where girls generally outperform boys. The national test results at the end of Year 9 in 2001 were broadly average. However, when compared to similar schools using free school meals as an indicator this represents well above average attainment. At this level there was little difference in the performance of boys and girls. In Years 7 to 9 the achievement of students is good; in Years 10 and 11 achievement is satisfactory. The overall achievement of students within the school is satisfactory.
95. Scrutiny of students' work indicates that they are being challenged well and that the department has high expectations. This is especially notable in Year 7 (where the impact of the National Numeracy Strategy has clearly had a beneficial effect) and with higher attaining students. For example, in Year 7 the highest attaining set has successfully covered work on powers and indices, straight-line graphs and sample space diagrams. In Year 9 the middle-attaining set of nine has successfully covered work on Pythagoras' theorem, trial and improvement methods and the angle properties of polygons. The highest attaining set in Year 9 can understand standard index form and trigonometry. Standards in the present Year 11 are average. The middle-attaining set has successfully covered simultaneous equations and cumulative frequency graphs. The highest attaining set, working above level 8 of the National Curriculum, understand the trapezium rule and can calculate the standard deviation of a set of data. A small group of higher attaining students has already taken GCSE in Year 10 and is currently studying AS level mathematics in Year 11.
96. Most work seen in exercise books is neat and tidy throughout the school showing students take a pride in their work. There is some very good coursework in Years 10 and 11. Although most work has been marked there are inconsistencies across the department in terms of thoroughness of marking. Further, there is little evidence of diagnostic comments and work is not related to National Curriculum levels.
97. Teaching is good. All teaching seen during the inspection was at least satisfactory; some teaching was good and some very good. Most lessons are well planned but some lessons do not effectively build on prior knowledge. The management of students and classroom organisation by teachers are good. Lessons start with effective and well-structured question and answer sessions that involve all students in the session. As a result students' attitudes are positive, and the overall attitudes in most lessons are good or very good. This consistent good behaviour by students in class constitutes a major strength of the department. Students' homework is not always consistently set and marked, especially that of lower attaining sets.
98. Currently there are five mathematics groups in the school that are shared between teachers; one group in Year 8 has all three lessons per week taught by different

teachers. This results in difficulties in continuity between lessons. This timetabling arrangement is unsatisfactory.

99. The teaching of numeracy within the department is good. Year 7 lessons follow the National Numeracy Strategy of a three-part lesson with numeracy reinforcement and this promotes good learning of basic skills. Where the three-part lesson has been adopted outside Year 7 it has proved effective. The use of numeracy in geography is often good. Students use a wide range of skills in collection, presentation and analysis of data, and are encouraged to think about the appropriateness of the graphs that they use. Higher attaining students in Years 10 and 11 are familiar with work involving the use of Spearman's rank. In physical education students confidently make routine measurements for athletics, they use measurements of heart rate to construct graphs and tables and they can calculate the amount of calories used in exercise. The use of numeracy in science is prosaic. Here, students collect information from experiments, perform routine calculations and construct appropriate graphs. There is no strategy in place currently so that numeracy is taught consistently across the curriculum although the issue is being addressed by the mathematics department and will involve all staff in in-service training. The aim is to develop an effective cross-curricular numeracy policy.
100. The progress made by gifted and talented students is helped by the use of accelerated groups that allow them to take GCSE a year early. The first cohort to take their GCSE examination a year early was in 2001 so it is too soon to judge the effectiveness of this policy. Gifted and talented students also have the opportunity of taking part in the UK mathematics challenge, open to all years. Last year there were entries at senior and intermediate level; next year, in addition to an increase in candidate numbers, some Year 7 students will enter the junior level. Currently two students in Year 8 are attending *Masterclass* sessions at Leeds University.
101. Students with special educational needs are often helped by learning support assistants in lessons. Assistants are used effectively in the classroom and, together with good teaching, help lower attaining students to make good gains in knowledge.
102. The positive ethos of the department means that students respect property and do not abuse equipment. They work well singly, or in pairs, are generally polite and conduct themselves in a mature way. There is a lack of multi-cultural stimuli in the mathematics area; worksheets and wall displays do not reflect a multicultural society.
103. The leadership of the department is very good. The scheme of work is comprehensive but accessible and the departmental development plan is clear and relevant. Important issues (such as the continued implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and the improvement of ICT use) are addressed appropriately. The mathematics department contains a mixture of young, inexperienced staff and experienced teachers; with continued good leadership it has the potential to become a very strong team.
104. The schemes of assessment are satisfactory, though the setting of targets for students is in the early stages of development. Assessment data are used to indicate progress and set targets, and students are informally made aware of these targets. Some progress reports are inadequately written and contain too little guidance for parents.
105. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching in the subject follow the school format whereby the head of department observes other staff teach, discusses

the strengths and weaknesses of the lesson and records the results of the discussion. Some use has been made of peer lesson observation and this is something that might usefully be extended with the aim of dissemination of good practice. The procedures adopted for the induction of newly qualified staff are very good.

106. The use of ICT in the subject is unsatisfactory. There are plans to involve all students with some spreadsheet work and with geometers' sketchpad. At present, however, the use made of ICT facilities varies in quality from teacher to teacher. There has been, however, some very good use made of graphical calculators and also of a computer linked to a data projector. In one Year 7 lesson the mundane topic of multiplication of decimals was made stimulating by the imaginative and effective use of a spreadsheet program projected onto the whiteboard. The equipment used here is new and the department needs to continue to explore ways of using it effectively. The routine use of calculators in mathematics lessons is appropriate.
107. The standard of accommodation is satisfactory; most classrooms are spacious and well lit. Most walls have pleasing displays of students' work as well as some instructive wall charts. Key words of the subject appear on all classroom walls but insufficient use is made of them in lessons. There are sufficient textbooks in the department so that all students have one each. The process of adding to the resources by producing high quality, shared, worksheets has only just begun and is hampered by the lack of a central department staff room or resources area.

SCIENCE

Overall, the quality of provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- Science results in the national tests at age 14 have improved significantly since the previous inspection report.
- Lessons are well structured with a variety of activities and the lesson objectives are made clear to the students, which focuses their learning.
- Good relationships and classroom management ensure a positive learning ethos.

Areas for improvement

- The quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent across the department.
- The marking of work does not show students how to improve.
- Teaching methods sometimes do not adequately meet the learning needs of all students.

108. Results in the national tests at age 14 have improved significantly since the previous inspection. They are now in line with the national average for all schools and well above the national average for similar schools. These results represent good achievement for students during the first three years at Royds. In 2001, boys performed better than girls in relation to their respective national averages. Results in science are similar to those in mathematics and better than those in English.
109. The overall performance in science at GCSE is in line with the national average. The majority of students take the dual award course. These results rose in 2000 but fell in 2001, when the percentages of A*-C and A*-G grades were below the national average. Girls' results were better than those of the boys. Twenty nine students were entered for the three separate science examinations in 2001. Results have

fallen since 1999, when students all attained A*-C grades in all three subjects. In 2001, the percentages of A*-C grades were below the national average for these subjects. Girls performed better than boys in biology and chemistry but worse in physics. Students' performance in biology and physics was below that in most other subjects in the school. A small number of students took the biology and chemistry examinations a year early, at the end of Year 10. They all gained A*-C grades. The overall GCSE science results are in line with the national average for students of similar prior attainment and this represents sound achievement.

110. The standard of work seen in Years 7, 8 and 9 was average and is consistent with the national test results. Students have good practice in developing their experimental skills and they have a good understanding of the processes involved in a scientific investigation. They have sound planning and observation skills and can apply the principle of a 'fair test'. Students can predict what might happen and higher attaining students can use their scientific knowledge to explain their results. However, further improvement is needed in their facility to know how to improve the quality of their investigations. Students in Year 9 have a good knowledge and understanding of the difference between atoms and molecules and elements and compounds. Higher attaining students can use the kinetic theory to explain changes of state and transfer of heat. Lower attaining students learn key scientific facts, but often their understanding is incomplete, which hinders their long-term recall.
111. Work seen in Years 10 and 11 was of average standard. Investigative skills are being developed in a structured way and are good. Higher attaining students reach a very good standard across all four skills. Average and lower attaining students' planning lacks detail and their observation and recording of results lack accuracy. Students are cooperative and collaborate well in practical work, which is carried out safely and sensibly. Carefully structured teaching enables all students to develop their understanding of science concepts and of the contribution science makes to society. Year 11 students can apply their knowledge of how animals are adapted to their environment to animals that they have not previously studied. They can explain the difference between continuous and discontinuous variations in characteristics. Students following the GNVQ Foundation course make sound progress. They know that different activities require different amounts of energy and can use data to select a meal to provide given requirements of energy.
112. Literacy skills are sound for most students, although weak for lower attaining students. There is some planned development of literacy in science with an emphasis on the correct use and spelling of science key words. Strategies need to be developed to support the effective use of numeracy skills in science. Good attention is, however, given to developing students' graphical skills in a structured way. By the time they are 16, higher attaining students have a good understanding of the 'line of best fit'. Average attaining students cannot always draw a 'best-fitting' line. Lower attaining students have problems with choosing an appropriate scale when drawing line graphs. Students are competent in using ICT to research and analyse information but they do not have sufficient practice in using computers for modelling and to collect measurements. Students with special educational needs generally make the same progress as other students due to good support from teachers and support assistants. A better match of resources to their attainment levels and the use of writing frames would further enhance the learning of these students. The opportunity given to higher-attaining students to enter GCSE a year early has provided a challenging stimulus to their learning. More enrichment activities involving problem solving and the application of knowledge to new situations would make more demands of higher-attaining students.

113. Overall, teaching is sound throughout the age range and just under half the lessons seen were good or better. A key strength of the majority of lessons is the way in which teachers manage their classes; they insist on high standards of work and behaviour. However, in a minority of lessons a small number of students distract others from their learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge and explain scientific concepts clearly, relating them to the students' everyday experience. This motivates students to work hard because the teaching captures their interest. For example, in a Year 11 lesson on inheritance and selection, students prepared their own identity cards before using them to discuss variation. Because the teaching is structured in short steps, involving student participation, students sustain concentration well and stick to the task set. In a Year 9 lesson with lower-attaining students, they learnt about immunity by watching a video on the plague. The lesson was carefully structured. Students completed a worksheet constructed to meet their learning needs. The questions were grouped in fives and the teacher stopped the video between each set of questions so that all the students could keep up. Students concentrated well and enjoyed the lesson and consequently their learning was very good. The very good relationships between teachers and students engender a positive attitude and interest in science. Teachers are encouraging and supportive, making good use of praise to boost students' confidence. This ensures that most students feel comfortable in volunteering answers to teachers' questions, which enhances their learning. This was apparent in a Year 7 lesson on the Solar System, in which students acted out the rotation of the sun, earth and moon. These lower attaining students were actively involved in the lesson and responded well to the teacher's questions. They were well motivated and their learning was very good.
114. Lesson objectives are generally made clear to the students, and reviewed at the end of the lesson. This focuses students' learning. In a very effective Year 11 lesson, students were asked the question, "Why wouldn't you find an elephant in the sea?" The simple answer given was that elephants can't swim. The teacher explained that by the end of the lesson students would be able to give scientific reasons for an elephant's natural habitat. This lively introduction captured students' interest and motivated students to learn. During the lesson they developed a clear understanding of adaptation and could predict where an animal would live by considering how it is adapted. Very good learning was seen because of focused teaching and the students' positive attitude. Written work is regularly marked but comments are not specific enough to show students how to improve their work. In some lessons teachers do not match resources and activities well enough to meet the learning needs of students of all attainment levels. In some good lessons, different learning objectives for different groups of students gave a clear focus to the learning. In other lessons, however, tasks are the same for students of all attainment levels so they are not all challenged sufficiently and, in consequence, make less progress. The teaching methods seen during the inspection were often teacher-dominated and students have insufficient opportunity to develop independent learning skills. Students generally enjoy science and good teaching motivates and captures the students' interest. When this happens students demonstrate good listening skills and come to lessons prepared to work. In some lessons, teachers set deadlines for tasks, and these motivate students to work productively, but other lessons lack pace when these deadlines are not set.
115. Leadership and management of the science department are sound. Developments are thoughtfully prioritised in a good departmental development plan. The monitoring and evaluation of the work of the department, however, needs to be more systematic and rigorous in order to share good practice and provide all students with a more

consistent learning experience. Procedures for assessing student attainment and progress are satisfactory, but the department needs to develop a greater understanding of National Curriculum standards in order to get a closer match between teacher assessment and national test results. The use of assessment to inform curriculum planning is good. There is a need to provide classes with a greater continuity of staffing, particularly in Years 10 and 11, in order to provide more effective monitoring and support of student progress.

116. The location of science laboratories in two separate buildings makes resourcing more expensive and communication within the department difficult. Accommodation is satisfactory overall, although there is a need to work harder to remove graffiti on benches and electrical sockets as soon as it occurs. The level of resourcing has improved since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory. However, more ICT equipment is urgently needed to allow the students experience in data logging. Laboratory technicians work hard to organise the resources efficiently but there is insufficient technical time allocated. This was a problem at the time of the previous inspection. Improvement since the previous inspection report is satisfactory. The national test results at age 14 have improved, as has the standard of coursework in Years 10 and 11. Two issues raised in the previous report, marking of work and teaching which is too prescriptive still need further improvement.

ART AND DESIGN

Overall, the quality of provision in art and design is **very good**.

Strengths

- Standards have risen.
- Teaching and learning.
- The leadership and management of the department.
- Investigation and experimentation in sketchbooks.

Areas for improvement

- Opportunities for students to work with print, textiles and ICT.
- The accuracy of assessment at the end of Year 9.
- Links with partner primary schools.

117. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 show that almost every student is meeting or exceeding expectations though these assessments are very generous.
118. The 2001 GCSE results for both boys and girls were well above average with the boys' results being especially good. Every student was awarded a pass between grades A* and G. These results are better than the previous year and those at the time of the last inspection and are amongst the best in the school. Fewer than average numbers were entered for the GCSE examination.
119. The work seen during the inspection was good. A positive response to challenging work is characteristic of the students. By the end of Year 9 standards are average. All students keep a sketchbook to record their observations through drawing. Investigation into methods and materials is fundamental to their work. The great majority of work is centred on painting and drawing. Students are increasingly confident using pencil, chalk, charcoal or pastels to capture tone and form in their observational drawing. Studies are well annotated and students further improve their literacy skills when discussing their work at the beginnings of lessons. The students are also given vocabulary tests around words that particularly apply to art and design.

Students look at work by a range of European and multi-cultural artists, using this work to influence their own work. Year 8 students made good progress when looking at a selection of masks from Egypt, Indonesia, Thailand, India and Greece, making use of the shapes, colours and ideas to design their own masks.

120. By the end of Year 11 work is well above average. These older students improve their investigations into the work of other artists, increasingly experimenting with drawing materials, collage and "found" materials. A Year 11 class made a very positive response to the spiritual qualities in Aboriginal dreamtime paintings. Students also make their own sketchbooks from old textbooks and reclaimed paper. The girls' sketchbooks are usually more personal and inventive, reflecting the extra care they take. The students' open-minded approach and readiness to accept new ideas allow them to produce original, innovative compositions with very good use of imagery and materials. Students are confident discussing their work and have clear views of what they are doing. Most use their initiative to learn for themselves or each other, relying less on their teachers than in Year 9.
121. Students enter school having had varied, often limited experiences of art in their junior schools but by the end of Year 9 their achievement is good. The achievement of students in Years 10 and 11 is very good. Their work is well above average. Those who have special educational needs make good progress in art; their teachers recognise their needs and modify class work so that they might learn. Year 9 students made good progress copying sections of paintings by artists such as Degas, Kandinsky or Monet. Although their practical skills were not so well developed as higher attaining students, they enjoyed the lesson and increased their understanding of the artists' work. Gifted and talented students do well in art and above average numbers gain the highest A* grade in the GCSE examination.
122. Teaching and learning are very good and have improved since the last inspection. Teaching and learning in Years 7 to 9 are good and sometimes very good. Teaching and learning in Years 10 and 11 is very good and occasionally outstanding. Lessons are very well planned and teachers make maximum use of the resources available. Year 9 students made very good progress when their teacher used her very good subject knowledge to explain how Gaudi based his buildings on shapes and forms found in nature. The class went on to watch a television programme that reinforced the teacher's presentation and then to make high quality, carefully observed drawings of shells, emphasising tone and shape. Year 10 students, preparing a woodcut in the style of Expressionist drawings, made excellent gains in understanding of the intentions and techniques of a number of German artists. The planning and management of the activity and the response of the class were outstanding. Their willingness to accept new ideas also led them to use "found" objects such as grass, fur, cardboard and wire, imaginatively painted, to produce exciting worksheets exploring texture.
123. The curriculum is satisfactory with a strong emphasis on two-dimensional processes with little evidence of textiles or more advanced printmaking. There are insufficient opportunities to use computers with specialist software to generate or manipulate imagery. The information gained from the regular assessment of students' work is very well used for setting targets and monitoring students' performance. The management of the department is very good. The head of department is ambitious for her subject and has a very clear, well-planned vision for the future. The curriculum and the quality of teaching and learning are monitored regularly to ensure standards continue to rise. All of the teachers joined the school within the last year and have quickly become a strong team working together to make the subject yet stronger.

There has been very good progress since the last inspection. Standards have risen and teaching and learning have improved. The department is in good hands.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Overall, the quality of provision in design and technology is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- Teachers have secure knowledge of the subject
- Students respond positively to the subject and have good relationships with their teachers and other students.
- The head of department has a positive vision for the future development of the department.

Areas for improvement

- There is too little use of computers.
- Boys' standards and achievement are not high enough in the study of resistant materials
- ICT is not used enough as a resource within students study.
- Re-development of electronics/systems study in both Key Stage 3 and 4.
- Re-organisation of resistant materials study within Key Stage 3 Design and Technology provision.

124. Standards of work seen during the inspection were average overall by the end of Years 9 and 11. Students in the first three years make useful progress as a result of good teaching. They develop an understanding of the basic skills of designing and making. In Years 10 and 11, these skills are put to further use as students become more familiar with and adept at developing investigative problem solving tasks in more detail. Students within food studies demonstrated some good examples of such work. Students with special educational needs also make sound progress and benefit from the attention and industry of their teachers.
125. In 2000 GCSE results were below average and girls outperformed boys. In 2001 results were below average and although girls' performance had fallen slightly below that of previous years it remained at a higher level than boys. Boys' attainment fell significantly in 2001. Most students gained a grade at A*-G.
126. In work observed in lessons during the inspection, students by the end of Year 9 were achieving standards typically expected of students at that stage. They are able to approach problem solving situations with understanding and can make use of simple investigative and analytical strategies to create a variety of possible solutions. Students of all levels of attainment gain new information and skills through participation in well thought out tasks. In graphical work, techniques are acquired to present and explain designs. Observation and recording skills are developed through the sensory analysis of food. Design and make tasks provide students with important basic skills in the handling and use of all materials. Within resistant materials there are some students who are not always sure how to express a range of ideas and make judgements, resulting in insufficient detail when illustrating the links between initial ideas and their development towards manufactured outcomes. Students gain some basic skills in electronics and textile study, although work in these areas is under-developed.
127. Standards of achievement by the end of Year 11 are average in food study and in graphical products. Students produce well considered design folders containing

some useful research, investigational work, extended writing and some evaluations of an objective nature. Students have an appropriate knowledge of the design process and relevant understanding of materials and processes and incorporate this knowledge into their design work. In resistant materials there are some well-made practical outcomes and students can generate design ideas for their coursework tasks but these are often limited in number and some students are uncertain and superficial in their approach to making decisions about their work and are reluctant to co-operate fully in design and make situations. They have some difficulty in handling the personal planning, management of information and planned practical activities that are required in developing examination project work. Students in all years have very limited opportunities to make use of ICT applications in the development of their work.

128. The quality of teaching in the department is satisfactory. Teachers have good subject knowledge; in Years 9 - 11 the subject is taught with a common approach and there are good levels of challenge and high expectations with secure classroom management and concern for students. Teachers encourage students to think and they structure lessons to provide opportunities for them to discuss and apply their designing and making skills. In Years 10 and 11, although there is a common approach to design and technology study, it is not as cohesive as in Years 7 - 9 and the organisation, challenge and use of time available are more variable across the subject areas. In all years students with special educational needs are supported well in class and are able to work at their own pace, with support staff making a valuable contribution.
129. Students learn in a variety of ways. In Years 7 to 9 there is much encouragement to make use of technical terminologies and to consider and question the purpose of technology. Students learn to make short annotations alongside sketched outlines of their ideas to explain their intentions. There are active discussions where students' opinions and judgements are encouraged and analysed. Good examples of such work were observed in Year 11 food studies. Teachers make every effort to include all students and produce worksheets and project tasks that enable students to make valid progress. Students can concentrate well, work hard and are attentive when required to be so. They enjoy their time in design and technology and look forward to their work which they undertake in a safe and sensible way.
130. The newly appointed head of department has clear plans for improvement in the department. There are current developments in the monitoring of students learning in Years 7 to 9 and a re-structured approach to the development of designing and making skills in Years 10 and 11 resistant material study. Students' design notebooks and folders are marked regularly but although teachers' comments frequently offer useful advice, this is not always so. Teachers in the department co-operate well.
131. The department has undergone some changes since the previous inspection. Some work has been undertaken in monitoring the progress of students' learning and there is useful provision for students with special needs. The suitability and cleanliness of the accommodation remains a concern and the use of ICT is not purposefully integrated into students' design and technology experience.

GEOGRAPHY

Overall, the quality of provision in geography is **good**.

Strengths

- There is good teaching especially in Years 7 to 9 and in the sixth form.

- Provision for students with special needs is particularly good in Years 7 to 9.
- Geography makes a strong and planned contribution to the development of basic skills.

Areas for improvement

- The overall achievement of boys.
- The use of ICT.
- Strategies for meeting the needs of all students in Key Stage 4.

132. The standards achieved in geography are satisfactory overall and are rising. Not all students have a secure grasp of geography when they enter the school. Aided by a progressive syllabus which puts due emphasis on place, distance and direction, they quickly acquire map skills and knowledge of contrasting environments so that, by the end of Year 9, their attainment is almost in line with the national average although girls significantly outperform boys. Lower attaining students and those with special needs make good progress because they are taught together, are appropriately challenged and well-supported in lessons.
133. Slightly less than half the year group continues with geography into Year 10 following either a full or a short course. Students are encouraged to analyse geographical knowledge and to understand the process which underlies it and make satisfactory progress. Results have risen in recent years and, in 2001, were broadly in line with national averages although girls significantly outperformed boys. Girls' results were above girls' national averages whilst the boys' results were below boys' national averages. Boys and girls both achieved higher grades in geography than in other subjects they were entered for. Gifted students gain high grades but the match of work to students' levels of attainment in mixed ability classes is less effective than in earlier years and strategies need to be developed to meet the needs of all students. There is no significant variation in the attainment or progress of students of minority ethnic heritage.
134. The quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 3 and satisfactory in Key Stage 4. Objectives are shared with students and lessons begin with a review of previous work through question and answer sessions in which students willingly participate. A well planned Year 9 lesson on natural hazards, for example, captured students' interest by referring to recent gales in Leeds. Clear instructions enabled pairs of students to share ideas and understanding of the problems associated with winter weather in Britain and to bring forward solutions which they confidently shared with the rest of the class.
135. A lower attaining Year 8 group was appropriately challenged by a card-sorting exercise designed to convey knowledge of physical and human features of Brazil. Thought had been given to the reading demands of the material and understanding was recorded in the form of a postcard to a friend describing a visit to the country so that the lesson achieved its secondary aim of strengthening literacy. Support assistants complemented the teacher and resisted the temptation to provide answers, encouraging all students to think for themselves. The teacher's anecdotal references to football and carnivals sustained the interest of a potentially challenging class and the lesson was sufficiently well paced to keep students engaged throughout and so ensure that effective learning took place.
136. A higher attaining class in the same year group was challenged to draw a line graph of population growth in Brazil. Most succeeded without help and careful structure enabled the drawing out of the ideas of rapid growth and youthful population so that the students were constantly refocused and kept on task.

137. In Years 10 and 11, some teaching is less successful at meeting the range of need. Higher attaining students, for example, were not stretched in a Year 10 lesson on the demographic model where too long was spent on a relatively undemanding exercise, colouring descriptions of birth rate and death rate, and not enough time on relating these descriptions to stages of economic development. As a result, whilst average and lower attaining students made good progress, others who finished quickly, wasted time. Opportunities for using ICT are increasingly identified though this is an area in which the department recognizes the need for further development.
138. Year 7 students contribute to lessons with enthusiasm but lack confidence in making judgements and seek help too readily. By Year 9, encouraged by the use of enquiry exercises, their productivity has improved and the standard of their written work reveals interest in the subject, increasing understanding of it and greater effort. Their response sometimes slips in Years 10 and 11 with less precision and poorer standards in written work, especially when teaching is undemanding. Students have a leaner base on which to assess their own progress than in Key Stage 3.
139. The seven teachers work well as a team so that the current head of department is positively supported and effective. Assessment is better developed than at the time of the previous inspection, especially in Years 7 to 9 with end of term tasks, revised level assessments and student input through self-evaluation. Whilst satisfactory, assessment lacks consistency in Years 10 and 11. Sixth form students have the benefit of residential fieldwork; students in Years 10 and 11 are involved in data collection for coursework but in Years 7 to 9 students are largely denied the opportunity to broaden personal horizons and to put their geography into the real context of the field. Many weaknesses in teaching have been addressed and the high quality of displays of students' work testifies to the wealth of pro-active learning as opposed to the passive style reported at the last inspection.

HISTORY

Overall, the quality of provision in history is **good**.

Strengths

- Very good management provides effective leadership to all teachers of the subject and good support to non-specialists.
- The great majority of students are interested in lessons and work hard.
- there is good provision for students with special educational needs.

Areas for improvement

- The performance of boys at GCSE.
- Consistency in assessment of the work of students aged eleven to fourteen.
- improving the pace of some lessons for students aged eleven to fourteen so that students progress at a rate which matches their potential.

140. Examination results in the full GCSE course have varied in recent years. The overall pass rate has been close to or better than the national average in the past three years. Results at the higher grades have matched or exceeded the national average in three of the past five years. The overall pass rate in 2001 was above the national average, with all students entered gaining a pass but results at the higher grades were below the national average. Girls' results were better than boys and were close to the national average for girls. Boys' results were below the national average for

boys. Students' results in history are better than in most of their other subjects. The percentage of the year group taking the GCSE examination is larger than the national average, making this achievement particularly commendable. Results in the short GCSE course in recent years have been well above the national average both overall and at the higher grades. In 2001 all students entered gained a pass grade and half gained a pass at the higher grades. As in the full course, girls' results were better than boys'. The proportion of students aged fourteen reaching the nationally expected standard matched the national average in 2000 but was slightly below in 2001. Girls' results were slightly better than boys in 2001 and significantly better in 2000. Overall, standards by the end of Year 11 are average.

141. The standard attained by a majority of students aged eleven to fourteen is average. They can recall previous learning effectively and have a sound grasp of the main events and developments of the periods they are studying. They are weaker at explaining how events may be interpreted differently from different viewpoints. Gifted and talented students attain standards which match their ability, especially in written work related to historical source materials. The achievement of students with special educational needs is very good. This is because of well-planned teaching and effective classroom partnership between the teacher and the learning support assistant. The attainment of most students on entry to the school is average. Satisfactory progress is being made by the majority of students in developing subject knowledge and in learning how to handle source materials to study the past. Numerous changes of temporary staff in recent months, however, have had a negative impact on the attainment and progress of some students who are not attaining the standard of which they are capable. This is particularly the case with the written work of boys.
142. The majority of students aged fourteen to sixteen are reaching average standards of attainment. They can use historical source material to glean relevant information about the past and higher attaining students know how to judge the reliability of the sources they are using. Most students have a sufficiently good grasp of subject knowledge to understand the implications of the events and developments they are studying. They are stronger in written work than in speaking and answers to questions in class are often brief. They are able take relevant information from historical sources in order to construct a narrative of historical events but are weaker at critically analysing the sources they use. Student achievement is sound in all years.
143. The quality of teaching and learning for students aged eleven to fourteen is satisfactory and on occasion very good. The specialist teachers' good command of their subject enables them to plan lessons which help students to make clear progress in learning about the past. Very good support is provided for non-specialist teachers. Most lessons are purposeful and good management of classes creates a stimulating atmosphere for learning. The great majority of students work hard, concentrate on their work and evidently enjoy lessons. They take a pride in their work. Good ICT skills enable many of them to present special pieces of work in imaginative and lively ways. Very good teaching in a Year 7 class of lower-attaining students enabled them to experience success in using historical sources to develop their understanding of the Norman Conquest. Very good planning, good support materials and carefully structured activities made the lesson accessible to all students and good support was given to students with special educational needs. Teaching which is only satisfactory has some weaknesses. The pace of lessons is slow and some students do not progress as quickly as they could do. Students whose concentration wanders are not brought back to task quickly. Poor behaviour by a minority of

students in an unsatisfactory lesson was not effectively dealt with by the teacher. This prevented those students who wanted to learn from making satisfactory progress. The assessment of the work of students aged eleven to fourteen is generally good and often has helpful comment to guide future improvement. There is some inconsistency, however, in the quality of assessment between teachers. In some classes comment is very brief, targets are not clearly set and students are not given sufficient guidance on how they may improve their work.

144. The quality of teaching and learning for students aged fourteen to sixteen is good. Lessons are carefully planned to provide a variety of learning activities which enable students to make clear progress in their knowledge of the past. Good support is given to students with special educational needs through suitably adapted materials, well-structured teaching and clearly defined tasks. The great majority of students work hard in lessons, have good levels of concentration and collaborate well together in group activities. Very good teaching in a Year 11 lesson on the expansion of the American frontier helped students to recall learning from earlier years and to extend their subject knowledge through well planned use of visual source material. The teacher's good command of the subject and high expectations of students created a very purposeful atmosphere in which students worked quickly and with evident interest.
145. Students' class-room experience is enhanced by visits to York and Middleham Castle. Students in Year 11 may attend a revision conference in preparation for the examination. Good use is also made of the Leeds museum loan service and the West Yorkshire archaeological service. The curriculum is very well planned and very good documentation provides teachers with clear guidance in preparing lessons which focus upon key historical questions. The subject is making a significant contribution to students' moral and cultural understanding through the study of a range of different cultures and of political events which have shaped the present. The use of ICT to develop students' understanding of the past is good. The scheme of work provides for significant use of information technology both as an aid to the study of history and to develop students' ICT skills.
146. Management of the subject is very good. The head of department is providing effective leadership to history staff and support for non-specialist teachers is good. Accommodation is good and displays of students' work create a stimulating environment for learning in the specialist rooms. Resources are good and good use is made of ICT facilities.
147. Improvements have been made since the last inspection in the quality of teaching, the use of ICT, the achievement of students and the provision for students with special educational needs.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Overall, the quality of provision in information and communication technology is **good**.

Strengths

- Monitoring of students' performance.
- Leadership and management of the subject.
- Achievement in both key stages.
- Cross-curricular provision of ICT in the majority of subjects.

Areas for improvement

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deployment of equipment.• Opportunities for independent learning. |
|--|

148. Standards of work are below those expected of students by the age of 14 years. Students come into the school from a number of schools, and many have low levels of ICT skills. By the time they reach the end of Year 9, students' knowledge and understanding has improved, but overall, remains below average. Standards were poor at the time of the last inspection but have improved. There is little difference in the performance of boys and girls. Girls, however, perform less well than boys, when compared with national averages.
149. Students attain average standards in the GCSE short course. For GCSE in 2001 the number gaining A*-C was broadly in line with the national average. At the time of the last inspection no accreditation was offered at 16. Every student is now given the opportunity to gain a qualification in ICT by the end of Year 11. Students with higher-level skills have the opportunity to take the full course GCSE. This applies to both boys and girls.
150. The standard of work seen in Years 7, 8 and 9 lessons was variable. Year 7 students have made good progress in their time in the school. They can log on to the system and manipulate the keyboard with a degree of accuracy, if not speed. Their knowledge of the software is basic although a number of higher attaining students have a greater understanding of the features of, for example, their word processing program. Lower attaining students are able to access particular web sites, given step-by-step guidance, and place images from the site into a Word document.
151. Students in Year 8 have made further progress, benefiting from the improved equipment levels. They are confident users showing an increasing level of competence. They have a sound, if basic understanding of Power point, and are able to produce a range of slides, supporting text with imported images. Average and lower attaining students are beginning to understand that selecting the right quantity of information to support their presentations is important. During the observations no students made use of the animation or sound features of the software. Year 9 students make satisfactory use of a range of generic software. They are developing their understanding of databases through the use of Pinpoint. Most are able to create a record with accuracy. Higher attaining students respond quickly to methods of interrogating the established database available. They move accurately through the exercises set. Equally they are able to identify the benefits of databases to the business user.
152. Sound examples of use of spreadsheets, databases, word processing and the Internet are evident in students work. The learning that takes place in ICT lessons is further enhanced by the developing cross-curricular opportunities in the school. Students as a matter of course make use of ICT in most subjects. The planned programmes most subjects ensure that National Curriculum requirements are met and that students who enter the school at a low level end this stage of their education approaching the average. The good progress made is the result of more stable staffing and sound subject knowledge, which benefits students directly. Since the last inspection the quality of the cross-curricular work and the skills of the teaching staff have improved considerably. Students regarded by the school as gifted and talented are identified, but not necessarily according to their ICT skills. Their progress broadly matches that of others in their year group.

153. Standards are further improved throughout Years 10 and 11. Lower attaining Year 10 students are the least well motivated although they do have a sound basic knowledge of the hardware and software in use. In Year 11 students demonstrated good understanding of basic control, building and testing a program. All were able to build and refine their programs by the end of the session. All students have the opportunity to achieve accreditation, the majority at the national average. Students are beginning to be discerning users of ICT. They are made aware in the good, well-planned lessons, that along with ICT skills come responsibilities. All students sign up to the 'acceptable use policy' and know the seriousness of misuse. Breaches of the policy are rare because good attitudes and behaviour prevail in the majority of lessons. There are occasions when a lack of clarity in outlining the learning objectives means that students do not fully understand the purpose of the work they are set. However, overall teaching within the subject is satisfactory and on occasions good. Teachers provide good oral feedback in lessons which helps students to develop their understanding and improve their coursework. The majority of students know the criteria by which their work is to be examined. They are appreciative of the support available from their teachers, who display a high level of commitment.
154. The subject is well managed by the recently appointed head of department. There are very effective assessment procedures for tracking student performance. Developments in the assessment of work across the curriculum are beginning to impact on the quality of work completed. Some areas such as mathematics, art, music and design and technology have to develop further in order to provide students with their full entitlement. Whilst the school has equipment levels that are close to the national norm, the way in which equipment is deployed leads to a large amount of paired working. These arrangements reduce the amount of practical work individual students can do. This does impact on overall standards attained. Technician support is adequate to meet the needs of the school. The school had made considerable strides since the last inspection. It now meets national curriculum requirements; equipment levels almost match national average. There are now very good assessment systems in place. ICT is becoming firmly embedded in many subjects across the curriculum, for example physical education, English and modern foreign languages. Overall, improvement since the last inspection has been very good.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Overall, the quality of provision in modern languages is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- Teaching of French and German has improved and is now good overall.
- Standards and achievement among higher attaining students have improved as a result of the recent policy of entering them for GCSE in Year 10.
- The department has introduced good measures for enriching the experience of keen learners, particularly the teaching of Spanish and Italian.
- The department is well led and efficiently managed.

Areas for improvement

- Students of average attainment are under-achieving because too little time is allocated to French and German in Years 7, 8 and 9.
- Some inexperienced teaching results in the poor behaviour of a few lower attaining students.

155. In 2001 and the previous two years a very high proportion of Year 11 students was entered for a foreign language at GCSE and the large majority achieved at least a grade G. Those gaining grades A*-C were below the national average in both French and German, although most students did as well in a foreign language as in other subjects. Results in French and German have been consistently similar over the past three years and results of girls have been better than those of boys by a wider margin than nationally. Students taking the Spanish short GCSE course, consistent with the national picture, gained very few A*-C grades. The small number of very strong linguists who took Italian at GCSE in 2001 gained mostly A* and A grades.
156. Work seen during the inspection, both in class and from looking at students' written work, shows that standards overall in French, German and Spanish in Year 11 are below the national average. Higher attaining students, however, particularly those in the 'accelerated' groups in Years 10 and 11 who are taking GCSE one year early, are currently at a high standard of attainment and achieving well. Students in the Year 11 French highest attaining set, for example, most of whom have already passed GCSE at high grades, are starting the AS Level course and coping well with its more rigorous demands. The equivalent Year 11 German group is smaller and less advanced than in French although standards are above the national average and students are well motivated. Higher attaining students studying Spanish in Year 10 are achieving above-average standards, although those in Year 11 on the short course are below average in their understanding and active use of Spanish.
157. Students of more modest attainment are not all reaching standards expected of them in either language. This is principally due to the low allocation of time they receive in Years 8 and 9 which prevents adequate coverage of work. Where their teachers use the foreign language consistently these students understand basic French and German spoken slowly and are able to respond and make themselves understood in familiar or prescribed situations. Most students have difficulty with the pronunciation of French, German and Spanish and would benefit from more systematic drilling and practice in oral work.
158. In Year 9 higher attaining students are currently learning three languages, having added Spanish at the beginning of the year. These students, like their counterparts in Years 10 and 11, are achieving to their capacity and reaching high standards in all three languages. They are able to use both past and future tenses with facility in speaking and writing. Students of average attainment who start a second foreign language in Year 8 are under-achieving in both languages because they have too little time for either French or German and are not progressing adequately from one week to the next. The exercise books of many Year 8 students, for example, do not contain enough written work for them to reach expected standards by the end of the year.
159. Teaching is good overall. Of the lessons seen two thirds were good or better. The rest were satisfactory with the exception of two lessons where inexperienced teaching failed to manage students successfully and led to poor behaviour and unsatisfactory learning. At its best, teaching of French, German and Spanish is very good and gives students the opportunity they need to practise new language in a secure and orderly context. This was true, for example, of a Year 9 German lesson where thorough and challenging teaching, using German appropriately and getting students to practise copiously through the medium of colourful visuals, enabled lower attaining students, some of them with special educational needs, to speak confidently about which food and drink they liked and disliked. Teachers are competent speakers of the foreign language and in many cases use it for most of the lesson so that students have plenty of exposure to it. In such cases they learn better and have good understanding, such as in a well taught Year 10 Spanish lesson where students

made swift progress in learning how to get by in a Spanish market as a result of the teacher's persistent use of the language. Teaching of lower attaining students and those with special educational needs is generally sensitive and appropriate to the pace at which they learn.

160. Most lessons start in a brisk orderly way with a clear statement of what students will be learning. In many lessons, too, teachers set a fast challenging pace which involves everyone and leaves no room for inattention. Firm but friendly management of students' behaviour ensures, in most cases, that students learn in a calm environment and concentrate well. The department's policy of sitting boys and girls together in most classes has worked well and is encouraging better behaviour. Most teachers have a wide and engaging repertoire of methods and materials for capturing students' attention. Pair work, for example, is used skilfully to encourage students to rehearse what they have learnt, as in a successful French lesson where the teacher's clear explanation of the task resulted in a brief but productive exchange in French about the subjects students like and dislike at school.
161. In a few important respects the quality of teaching could be even better. In some lessons teachers do not use the foreign language enough in the classroom or insist that students themselves use it to ask for things routinely or apologise for being late. In such cases students learn less because they hear and actively use too little of the language. A small amount of teaching centres too heavily on the teacher and does not allow students enough opportunity to practise. A significant number of lessons lack visual impact and rely too much on the written and spoken word, or on the textbook. In such cases students, particularly boys, are less interested and take less part in the lesson. In a small number of lessons inexperienced teaching fails to manage students appropriately and as a result time is wasted in lessons trying to restore order and dealing with individuals who disrupt. When this happens teachers are too nervous of poor behaviour to use methods that often work successfully with lower-attaining students, such as games, surveys or role-play.
162. In the large majority of lessons students behave well and respond positively to teaching that engages and involves them. They rise to the challenge of rigorous teaching, co-operate with the teacher and each other, and work unsupervised without needing to be reminded. In many cases, such as those who e-mail pen friends abroad and do research on their own computers, students are showing good signs of independent work. Relationships in the classroom are generally very good and most students are respectful to their teachers, responding in kind to the polite professional way in which they are treated. In a few classes, however, especially those with a high proportion of lower attaining students, a few boys are rude, disruptive and unwilling to co-operate. In such cases inexperienced teachers need more support than they are currently getting.
163. The opportunities offered to students for learning foreign languages are unusually broad and enriching. This applies as much to activities outside the timetable, such as use of e-mail and Internet and trips to Europe, as it does to the curriculum itself, which offers four European languages to those who are keen and able enough to study them. 'Accelerating' the highest attaining sets caters well for the needs of these students. The effect of these initiatives has been to increase the number of students learning more than one language in Years 10 and 11 and to raise the profile of languages within the school. Standards are undermined, however, by the very low allocation of time to the main foreign language in Year 8 where all except the lowest attaining students study French for only one period each week. Long gaps occur

from one lesson to the next, making it hard for many students to remember what they have learned and too little work is completed in their exercise books.

164. Management of the department is very efficient and committed to raising standards, encouraging self-analysis and the sharing of ideas and resources. The department benefits from the vigour and dedication of eight well qualified specialist teachers and two part-time assistants, one for French, the other for German. Assessment of students' performance and the recording of their results are very thorough, encouraging them to evaluate their progress and set targets for future effort. In this respect and in others the department has made good improvements since the previous inspection and is well placed to continue moving forward, provided that it concentrates its efforts on raising the performance of average attaining students.

MUSIC

Overall, the quality of provision in music is **very good**.

Strengths

- Standards in music are above average and are rising steadily.
- Teaching and learning are very good.
- Students' attitudes to music are very good and they enjoy what they do.
- Extra curricular music is of high quality and enriches the life of the school.

Areas for improvement

- There are insufficient computers to teach composition effectively in Years 7 to 9. Students are insufficiently involved in the otherwise good assessment process.

165. All students taking the GCSE examination in 2001 achieved a grade and 9 out of the 17 achieved a grade between A* and C. GCSE students achieved good grades when compared to other subjects. Comparisons with national averages are unreliable because of the small number taking the examination.
166. Standards in class in Year 9 are above average. Performing is good. In the song 'Imagine', some students played the bass part while others played the chords in a broken chord format. A group of boys and girls sang and a boy played the drum kit. In Year 8 standards of improvisation are very good. In their extended improvisation based on Indian music, students were sensitive to changes in timbre, texture and volume. They responded very expressively to the unfolding piece. In Year 7 standards are high. When playing Arriba, they listened well to each other, playing a variety of instruments. Their responses to clapped syncopated rhythms and melodies were ready and precise and improvised responses were confident and imaginative.
167. Standards in Year 11 are above average. Students' compositions are of a good standard. They are successful with listening and performing. In Year 10 standards are very high. Sampled compositions are very good indeed. Performing skills are strong with several students playing more than one instrument proficiently. In their class performance of Salsa they listened well to each other. Their knowledge and listening skills are well above average.
168. Standards are high because teaching and learning are very good at all stages. Half of the lessons observed were very good or excellent. There was no teaching less than good. Students are acquiring very good knowledge and skills in music because

their teachers find interesting and stimulating ways of passing on their own very good knowledge. Students know what they are expected to achieve because they are given clear instructions. High demands are made of them at all levels. The methods used provide great variety in lessons, stimulating students' interest in music and helping them to concentrate well. In Year 8 lessons students concentrated intensely through a twenty five minute improvisation based on Indian music. They worked hard, responding well to the changes in texture, timbre and volume. In these fascinating lessons, all students had the opportunity to play and improvise on the tal and the rag. In one lesson six students also used their own instruments effectively, especially the violins and guitar. Teaching in these lessons was excellent and the students' learning was enhanced by very good percussion instruments, glockenspiels and xylophones. A pre-recorded drone and rag were also effectively used to support the sound. Other strategies used in lessons include team games to motivate lower attaining students and those with special educational needs to concentrate well. Teachers give very good demonstrations by singing or playing so helping students to learn quickly. Theory and practice are closely linked and through the build up of activities in a lesson students develop very good understanding and skills. Using this approach, students in Year 7 were able to improvise a short rhythm and melody easily. Students in Year 10 moved effectively from a class performance of the Salsa to effective composition in small groups. Students with special educational needs learn well in lessons. In a Year 8 lesson students with special educational needs found playing together in small groups difficult until the teacher changed tack and rehearsed as a class. A good strong beat was established, providing confidence, and although only briefly, students played successfully together. This was good teaching, responding well to the situation to create success for the students through which they learnt well. In Year 11 students compose effectively using computers and although the department has several, more are needed to enable effective use for composition in Years 7 to 9.

169. Teachers provide opportunities during and at the end of the lessons to review and evaluate what they have done. This is a strong feature of most lessons. Teachers advice to students in the lesson is very good and helps them move forward at all stages. In Years 10 and 11, students become familiar with the grading criteria for the examination and know their strengths and weaknesses as a result. Students in Years 7 to 9, however, do not know what their practical grades are and they are unfamiliar with the national curriculum levels in music. Students need to be drawn into the whole process of assessment of their work so that they can set themselves effective targets for improvement.
170. Students are very well behaved in lessons and are also very well managed by the teachers. Students enjoy music greatly. They leave the classroom still humming and even moving to the music playing them out. They appreciate and take great satisfaction from their performances, as was shown by their silence and then applause at the end of their long improvisations. Their enthusiasm for music is shown in the increasing numbers of students choosing to do music at GCSE level and learning to play instruments. Extra-curricular activities are very well supported and there are thriving jazz, training, and stage bands, string ensemble and a pop choir, all of high quality.
171. The department produces a musical each year. The current show under rehearsal is The Wiz and a strong feature of this is very good quality and enthusiastic singing including that by boys. Other performances are held during the year and there are regular visits abroad to perform in the summer.

172. The improvement in all aspects of the department since the last inspection is very good. This is due to the energy and drive of the head of department now ably supported by an assistant teacher, and their expressed intention to foster the creative and practical nature of the subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Overall, the quality of provision in physical education is **very good**.

Strengths

- Levels of attainment are above average. Standards of gymnastics are very high.
- Teaching is very good; skilled teachers are well prepared, enthusiastic and committed to high standards.
- Relationships in classes are excellent. Well-motivated students work hard, are well behaved and enjoy the subject.
- The management of physical education and level of co-operation among staff are very strong.

Areas for improvement

- There is no opportunity to study physical education in the GCSE.

173. The sixth form courses in physical education are taught entirely at other institutions in the sixth form partnership. In 2000 two students on the register of the school were entered in the A Level examination and were successful. In 2001 all six students were successful at A Level but their average points score was a little below the national average. Also in 2001 ten students were entered for the first year of the A/S Level examination. Seven students were successful and three students obtained the highest grades A/B. No national comparisons are available for A/S Level results.
174. Standards at the end of Key Stage 3 as measured by teacher assessments against national criteria were better than average in 2000 and in line with national averages in 2001. Boys did better than girls in both years. Students reach high standards in team events and as individuals. The school has had significant successes in a number of sports at area and regional levels in recent years and individual students have reached area, regional and national standards in a range of events.
175. Standards of work are above average by the end of Years 9 and 11. Standards in gymnastics are very high. In all years, boys and some girls perform head-springs, handsprings, somersaults, through and astride vaults over apparatus with confidence and good style. In Years 10 and 11 boys are able to maintain very good skills under pressure at basketball. Boys and girls in Years 10 and 11 have a good knowledge of badminton and a good grasp of a range of basic skills. Boys and girls also show good levels of fitness and understanding of the effects of exercise in health-related exercise sessions. Girls have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and are able to use the computer to produce attractive information booklets. Boys in all years show good tactical understanding and very good personal skills in soccer practice and games.
176. Students in all years make good progress and levels of achievement are good. Girls in Year 7 make very good progress in developing confidence and improving the difficulty of their balances in gymnastics. Groups with many students on the special needs register make very good progress. In badminton, gymnastics and short tennis good motivation and concentration enable students to make significant improvements in their personal skills and knowledge of the games. Boys and girls achieve well in Years 10 and 11 and in their early years in the school but in Year 9 some girls are not as well motivated as boys and boys make better progress. Gifted and talented students respond well to opportunities to fulfil their potential; they make good progress and their achievements are high.

177. Standards of teaching are very good in all years. All teachers have a good command of their subjects and the work is very well distributed between them. Lessons are very well prepared, well sequenced and progressive. Class management is very skilful. Teachers know students very well and management strategies respond to the maturity of students. In many Year 10 and 11 classes the atmosphere is relaxed but purposeful but in one Year 10 basketball class the teacher maintained a very tight regime. The approach was entirely appropriate and resulted in an excellent learning environment in which students achieved very high standards. In a Year 7 gymnastics class with many students on the special needs register, the teacher took great care to give clear instructions, with plenty of consolidation, ensuring that students understood exactly what was required of them. The teacher gave lots of positive encouragement and praise. The students worked very hard, enjoyed their successes and made very good progress. In a Year 9 badminton class the teacher placed much pressure on students and they enjoyed the demands made of them. They worked hard, enjoyed the competitive element to the work and were surprised at the improvements they made. Relationships in classes are excellent and students reciprocate the high level of respect given to them. Tasks always allow students to perform at their own level and make progress. All students are fully included in all aspects of lessons and the range of resources such as different types of racquets and balls, enables all students to tackle the work.
178. Students enjoy the subject and they have confidence in their teachers. They readily engage in discussion and are prepared to offer views and answer questions. They are good listeners and respond quickly and appropriately to teachers' requests. They are able to concentrate on tasks and work productively. They work with minimum supervision and are well organised. Students co-operate very effectively in pairs, small groups and teams. Most Key Stage 4 students are mature young people who readily take full responsibility for their work. Standards of behaviour and levels of respect in classes are very high.
179. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets National Curriculum requirements. It is particularly strong in Years 10 and 11 where regular access to the facilities of the nearby recreation centre significantly enhances the breadth and quality of opportunity. At present there is no GCSE option which is a serious weakness since this is an area of work which would be very popular with students and provide a good steppingstone to sixth form opportunities. It is understood that GCSE PE will be offered in September 2002. There is a strong extra-curricular programme that is well supported by students. Management of the department is very strong and there is very good co-operation in a well-balanced team of well-qualified and very enthusiastic teachers. They share a commitment to care for students and to achieving very high standards. They feel that they are not always consulted by senior management in matters that affect them, such as the use of one gymnasium for examination purposes. Standards of accommodation are generally good although curriculum flexibility is reduced by the loss of a gymnasium for part of the year. The absence of any netting around the tennis courts causes an unnecessary loss of time in any practices of ball games.
180. Provision has improved since the last inspection. The criticisms levelled at the curriculum have been rectified and standards of teaching are much higher.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Overall, the quality of provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- Enthusiastic and lively teaching in many lessons contributes to students' spiritual and moral development.
- The curriculum raises students' awareness of religious and cultural diversity.
- Provision meets statutory requirements and gives all students aged fourteen to sixteen the opportunity to gain a qualification.

Areas for improvement

- GCSE results – especially those of boys.
- The assessment of students' written work so that it is consistent across all classes and gives clear guidance on how to improve.
- The pace of some lessons for students aged eleven to fourteen so that all students make appropriate progress.
- Long term use of supply teachers has impaired students' progress.

181. Students have only been entered for public examinations in religious education in the last two years. Overall results in the short GCSE course have shown improvement over this time and matched the national average in 2001. Results at the higher grades are significantly below the national average. Girls' results are better than boys, though boys' results in 2001 improved on the results in 2000.
182. The standard attained by a majority of students aged eleven to fourteen in lessons is average. Progress over time, however, has been poor in those classes which have had a succession of temporary teachers and overall, standards attained by these students are below average. The majority of students can recall basic information about key features of the religious traditions they have studied and they can relate some beliefs and practices from these traditions to their own experience. They are weaker at linking together aspects of belief and practice to present a coherent view of a religion. The general standard of written work in classes affected by staff changes, especially of higher attaining students, is below average. In classes which have benefited from specialist teaching most students reach average standards of attainment and the standard reached by gifted and talented students is above average. These students have sound subject knowledge, express their personal views effectively and offer reasons to support their opinions. The achievement of students with special educational needs is satisfactory where specialist staff give help and encouragement to individuals.
183. Students aged fourteen to sixteen may opt to follow either a short or full GCSE course. The standard attained by a majority of those in the final year of the full course is below average. Several changes of temporary staff during the first year of the course has inhibited the progress of these students in acquiring an appropriate subject knowledge and in developing confidence in speaking and writing about the subject. Consequently, they have difficulty in recalling accurately information from previous lessons and in understanding and using specialist terms correctly. Students in the first year of the course are reaching average standards of attainment. Good specialist teaching helps them to understand the moral implications or religious teaching. They are able to relate this to their own experiences but are weaker at recalling relevant information from previous learning to explore issues which arise in class. The standard attained by a majority of students in the short course is below average. Their written and oral skills are weak and responses to questions are brief and undeveloped. The standard reached by higher attaining students is average. Good specialist teaching enables them to understand key ideas of religious belief. They are able to express their own ideas about such issues as the problem of evil and suffering in ways which indicate that they understand how religious believers may

answer these questions. The achievement of students with special educational needs is satisfactory.

184. The quality of teaching and learning for students aged eleven to fourteen is generally satisfactory and on occasion good or very good. The specialist teachers have good subject knowledge enabling them to plan effective lessons which engage students and develop their knowledge of religious belief and practice. They use a variety of methods and learning aids which enable most students, including those with special educational needs, to make satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding of a range of religious traditions. Very good teaching in a Year 7 lesson on "Looking for God" helped students to link their previous learning to the theme of the lesson. Very good planning and student management created a purposeful and enjoyable atmosphere for learning. Good support material enabled all students to make simple notes and to maintain concentration and interest throughout the lesson. Teaching which is only satisfactory has some weaknesses. The pace of some lessons is slow and students do not always make sufficient progress. Over-long explanations in some lessons provide too much information rather than prompting questions from students. Students who lose concentration are not always brought back to task quickly.
185. The quality of teaching and learning for students aged fourteen to sixteen is good. Teachers express high expectations of student behaviour and commitment and most respond positively to this. Clear explanations, good use of learning aids, including video, and a variety of class-room activities make a range of religious and philosophical ideas accessible to students. Good teaching in a Year 11 lesson on arguments for the existence of God stimulated evident interest in students, many of them offering their own views about the evidence for design in the universe. Good questioning by the teacher helped students to clarify their thinking and to express their views. Students listened attentively to each other and conducted their discussion in a mature manner. Sometimes, however, discussion is not as well structured and teachers too readily accept brief and undeveloped oral responses in lessons.
186. Assessment procedures are being reviewed, but current practice is a weak aspect of provision. Helpful comment is made in some exercise books but this is not consistently done for all classes. Targets for improvement are not clearly set out and many students do not know how to improve the standard of their work. This is particularly the case for those students who have had a number of temporary teachers.
187. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and is based upon the locally agreed syllabus. The scheme of work, which is being re-developed, provides opportunities for students' personal reflection and response to questions of belief and value which arise from their study of religion. Most of them respond positively to these opportunities. The interactive approach to learning which teachers use and the content of the syllabus, which draws upon several major world faiths, make a significant contribution to students' spiritual and moral development and their awareness of religious and cultural diversity.
188. The acting head of department is providing enthusiastic and committed support for other teachers. Management of the subject is satisfactory. Resources are adequate except for textbook provision for younger students, which is poor. Accommodation in the specialist rooms is good but is poor for the third teacher in the department who teaches in eleven different rooms, only one of which is a specialist room. This limits the range of visual and other resources which can be deployed. Students do not have

the stimulus which is provided in specialist rooms or the opportunity of seeing their work displayed.

189. Improvements have been made since the last inspection in the provision for students aged fourteen to sixteen, in the quality of learning and in the specialist expertise of teachers.

PART E: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM

In the inspection, nine subjects and courses were inspected and are reported on in detail. Work in other subjects and courses was sampled and contributed to the overall picture of teaching and learning in the school.

The table below shows entry and performance information for courses completed in 2001.

GCE AS level courses

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
German	1	100	82	0	13	2.0	1.9

GCE A level and AVCE courses

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Mathematics	11	73	87	18	43	4.4	5.8
Chemistry	7	57	90	14	43	2.6	5.9
Biology	6	100	88	17	34	4.0	5.3
Physics	2	100	88	-	40	4.0	5.7
Science	1	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	12.0	9.8
Full Design and Technology	6	100	91	17	30	5.3	5.4
Business	5	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	12.0	10.45
Economics	5	100	89	60	36	6.8	5.5
Computer Studies	3	67	86	-	23	4.0	4.6
Sport/PE Studies	6	100	92	-	25	4.0	5.1
Health and Social Care	6	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	5.0	10.8
Art and Design	5	100	96	60	46	7.2	6.6
Art and Design VQ	3	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	14.0	12.24
Music	2	50	93	-	35	1.0	5.7
Geography	13	92	92	38	38	6.3	5.7
History	7	100	88	86	35	8.6	5.5
English Literature	4	100	95	75	37	8.0	5.9
English Language	12	100	91	50	30	7.3	5.3
French	1	100	89	100	38	10.0	5.6
German	4	100	91	50	40	5.5	5.8

THE SIXTH FORM

SUBJECTS AND COURSES GROUPED IN CURRICULUM AREAS

MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCES

190. The focus of the inspection was on mathematics and chemistry. Physics and biology were also sampled, with one lesson observed in each. Two students took A level physics in 2001 and both passed, although neither gained an A or B grade. Ten students took the AS examination last year and nine have continued on the A level course. The teaching and learning in the lesson seen were good due to clear teacher explanations and the students' positive attitude. In biology, the A level results were below the national average in 2001, although all students gained a pass grade. In the AS examination in Year 12, 74 per cent passed. About half the students have continued to study biology in Year 13. The teaching and learning in the lesson seen were good.

Mathematics

Overall, the quality of provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- The teaching, which is good.
- The positive views of students.

Areas for improvement

- The time tabling of A level mathematics and further mathematics results in very long lessons.

191. The school works in partnership with other schools but the arrangement is that all A level mathematics teaching is done at Royds, resulting in few problems with liaison. Students who wish to retake mathematics at GCSE in order to boost their grades to C or above can do so at a local college after school. As a help to such students the school offers one lesson each week as a resit class. There is also one lesson each week offered for key skills in numeracy but the take up here is very low and the class is very small.
192. Students can take A level courses in mathematics and further mathematics. There is only one group of each in each year group so the actual content of the modular syllabus is determined by the mathematics department. Results at A level over the last few years have been either close to national averages or below. With the standards on entry to the A level course being broadly average in terms of GCSE grades this represents satisfactory achievement. Further mathematics students have largely been successful although there are no national comparisons.
193. Scrutiny of work also suggests that standards are broadly average although it is clear that some students have technical difficulties with algebra. In general, students' positive attitudes to the subject mean that they take pride in their work. Most work is neat and tidy, shows good effort and is marked appropriately. In class there can be some difficulty in relating previous work to new areas of the course, especially in Year 12. In one further mathematics lesson in Year 12, for example, students were unable to recall previous work on series and the use of sigma notation. As a result the lesson had to be adapted to ensure full understanding of the topic and progress was slower than the teacher had intended.

194. The mathematics timetable has caused some problems with the delivery of the syllabus. Part of this is unavoidable – those students studying both mathematics and further mathematics sit in with single A level mathematics students. The requirements of the modular courses means that some topics have to be taught out of order resulting in further mathematics students meeting the same topic twice. In addition the current timetable arrangement means that some students have mathematics for all five of Friday's lessons. Some students admit that this is tiring.
195. All teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory or better and most was at least good. Achievement is satisfactory. The policy of the department is to share the teaching of A level out so there are currently seven teachers who teach mathematics or further mathematics. Lessons are well planned and show very good knowledge of the subject by the teacher. Effective question and answer sessions involve all students in discussion and allow them to demonstrate their learning. Good relationships between students and teachers are evident and this allows lessons to be delivered in an effective way. Students appear to enjoy the subject and they make good effort in class. Students speak highly of teachers and value the challenge of lessons and the encouragement they receive although a minority of students feel that the rate of progress through the syllabus is too fast. Students strongly value the time and help they are given by teachers outside of lesson time.
196. The resources for the subject are good – there are ample modern textbooks of good quality. The development of supplementary resources for both mathematics and further mathematics is only just beginning.
197. Marking of regular work is helpful and thorough. Students are made aware of their progress by regular and informative testing. The setting of targets for students is still in its infancy and needs more development.

Chemistry

Overall, the quality of provision in chemistry is **good**.

Strengths

- Teaching and learning are good; lessons are well structured and the teachers' good knowledge and understanding of chemistry enables them to motivate the students well.
- Students enjoy chemistry; they have a positive and responsible attitude to their work.

Areas for improvement

- There are too few opportunities for varied activities in lessons to meet the needs of students of differing abilities.
- The marking of work is insufficiently detailed and does not show students how to improve the quality of their answers.

198. The A level examination results in 2001 fell well below the national average, but in the previous two years, results were well above the national average with 100 per cent A and B grades. The entries are too few to indicate trends or to make reliable comparisons with national data but there was underachievement in 2001, as many students did not attain the results expected from their prior attainment at GCSE. There was no significant difference between the performance of male and female students. In the new AS examination in Year 12, 90 per cent passed, with 60 per cent attaining the higher grades A and B. The large majority of these students have continued into the second year of the A level course.

199. The standard of work seen during the inspection was above average in Year 13 and below average in Year 12. Students' attainment in both years is what would be expected from their prior GCSE attainment. Overall, student achievement is sound. Students in Year 12 are well supported in making the leap from GCSE work to the greater depth required in the AS course. In a Year 12 lesson, students were learning to use IUPAC rules to name organic compounds. The very good relationship between the teacher and students and the encouraging supportive manner of the teacher meant that the students gained confidence in their own ability and experienced success in a carefully structured lesson. The teacher's clear and confident explanation and the students' positive attitude and interest in the work increased their learning. Students were able to recognise a range of functional groups and learnt to name systematically compounds of increasing complexity. Average and lower attaining students had difficulties with the most complex compounds.
200. Carefully structured teaching builds on previous knowledge enabling students to develop their understanding of chemical concepts and their knowledge of the contribution chemistry makes to society. In a lesson on combustion, a video on the development of catalytic converters related chemical concepts to everyday problems of pollution. The teacher skilfully used questioning to build on students' answers in order to get them to clarify their thinking. This focused and enhanced their learning. Students understood that the combustion of alkanes can be complete or incomplete and that the internal combustion engine produces a number of pollutants. Students' experimental skills are developed in a structured way. In a lesson where students were investigating the reaction of hydrogen peroxide and iodide ions, they demonstrated good manipulative skills and made accurate measurements. Students are able to interpret the information obtained from an experiment and recognise patterns and trends.
201. The teaching seen was good, and this resulted in good learning. A key strength of the teaching is the teachers' good knowledge and understanding of chemistry shown in clear exposition and skilful questioning. The very good relationship between teachers and students engenders a positive attitude and interest in chemistry. This enhances their learning. Teachers are encouraging and supportive, making good use of praise to boost students' confidence. The planning of lessons is good and time and resources are used well. Written work, however, is not always marked in sufficient detail and students are not shown where there are inaccuracies and where their answers lack depth. This has a negative impact on their learning as they do not have a clear idea of how to improve. The teaching methods seen during the inspection involved whole-class teaching and were teacher dominated with insufficient opportunities for students to progress at different rates dependent on their abilities. Students do not have sufficient practice in doing homework examples to adequately reinforce their classwork learning.
202. Students have good listening skills and sustain concentration well. They persevere with tasks even when they find them difficult at first. Students' work is generally well organised and presented. They do not, however, make sufficient use of textbooks to augment their class work. Students are co-operative and support each other well in group work. They lack confidence in their own ability and are not very responsive when answering teachers' questions or in asking questions themselves. More opportunities for students to actively discuss and debate topics would increase their scientific curiosity and enhance their learning. Students appreciate the willingness of teachers to give them extra help when they perceive the need.

203. The subject co-ordinator has only recently been appointed, but has already established a clear lead in the development of the subject and is managing it well. ICT is not used to enhance students' learning because of the lack of computer resources in the science department. The teaching is well supported by dedicated technical staff. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good. Standards have generally improved and the subject is popular with students.

ENGINEERING, DESIGN AND MANUFACTURING

204. Design and technology was sampled. One lesson in Year 12 and one in Year 13 were seen. There are currently eight students in Year 12 and twelve in Year 13 taking the course. Very few students do not complete the course. In 2001 all students were successfully in the A level examination. Attainment was average. Seventeen students were entered for AS level last year. Sixteen gained a grade. Two students achieved A grades and five gained B grades. Teaching is at least satisfactory.

BUSINESS

205. The focus was on AVCE business but AS business studies and economics were sampled. Standards in business studies are average. Teaching is good. Five students took A level economics in 2001. All students gained a grade, two at grade A and one at grade B. Nine students were entered for AS level in 2001. Five gained a grade. Teaching is satisfactory.

Advanced Vocational Certificate in Business

Overall, the quality of provision in AVCE Business is **good**.

Strengths

- Teachers have secure subject knowledge.
- Students make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of business.
- Relationships between students and students and teachers are good.

Areas for improvement

- Students do not take enough responsibility for their own learning.

206. The Advanced Vocational Certificate (AVCE) in business is a new course so comparison with previous performance is not possible. Completion rates for the General National Vocational Qualification, the award that preceded the AVCE, were good. The number of students on the current course has remained fairly constant. Results have also shown a consistency that illustrates good achievement by the students choosing the vocational route.
207. Standards of work seen in lessons and in portfolios are below the average expected of advanced level students. However, given the prior attainment of those on the course they are achieving well and making good progress. There is no difference in the performance of boys and girls. Lower attaining students make good progress.
208. From the small number of lessons observed and the scrutiny of written work it is evident that students benefit from good quality teaching. They are provided with many opportunities to apply their knowledge when given business scenarios to develop. For example, Year 12 students were investigating the area of risk assessment and producing a company handbook on health and safety. Their research skills and

methods used were good but the quality and quantity of relevant information gathered was not always reflected in the final piece of work. Year 13 students were working on two units during the lessons seen, marketing and business planning. As with the Year 12 students, research skills are well developed although students do not have a high level of contact with the business community unless they have cultivated their own contacts. There is no work experience component to the current course. Most students demonstrate sound recall of previous units and are able to draw on previous knowledge to support current units. From scrutiny of work and discussion with students it is evident that whilst their understanding is sound the level of analysis and evaluation they reach is matched more to the lower grades. Relationships between students, who at times work in pairs, are good.

209. Specialist teachers have a good business knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject. They have good knowledge of their students and use methods matched to the needs of individuals. Ongoing assessment and guidance on how to improve assignments are good. However, at times over-direction allows students to become too reliant on teachers' support, which limits their independence.
210. This is a well-managed department that shows clear direction and vision. The work within the subject reflects the aims of the school and those of the sixth form partnership. Staff within the department are committed to high quality provision. Although the department appears to have no fixed base for the subject, requiring staff and students to use a variety of teaching areas, students appear to accommodate this without complaint although it is not satisfactory.
211. Since the previous inspection report the subject has continued to improve, embracing changes to specifications and courses effectively. Results continue to improve and retention rates remain good. Students make very good use of the ICT facilities to support their work. Overall improvements since the last inspection have been good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

A Level Computing

Overall, the quality of provision in A level computing is **good**.

Strengths

- Teachers' knowledge of the subject.
- Quality of teaching.
- Procedures for assessing attainment and progress.

Areas for improvement

- Opportunities for independent learning.

212. Standards in A level computing are in line with the national average. However, the number of students taking the course is small in Year 13 and therefore comparisons can be misleading. The average points scores over the past two years are not significantly different from national averages. As students enter the course with a wide range of experiences and attainment, meeting the national average is a good level of achievement. In recent years only boys have taken the course. Currently there is one girl taking the course in each year.
213. The work seen in the lessons observed, together with the work scrutiny and discussion with individual students confirms that standards are average and

achievement good. Year 12 students, a larger group than in previous years, were able to identify clearly a range of input and output devices to be used in particular circumstances. Working effectively in pairs they were able to justify their choices through analysing issues such as software and hardware demands and security issues. Year 13 students, a group of five students, were able to identify the differing characteristics of server-based networks and peer-to-peer networks. It did, however, require considerable effort, on the part of a competent teacher, to stimulate thinking and provide direction. The higher attaining students in this reserved group had a good understanding of the flow of data in a network. They helped the average attaining students by leading discussions and providing explanations of the open systems interconnection seven layer model. The group also demonstrated a sound understanding of entity-relationship modelling and normalisation techniques.

214. Overall teaching in computing is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and present the course in the most accessible way. Students are provided with good support materials. Teachers have an evident enthusiasm for their subject that, at times, can result in an imbalance between teachers' and students' contributions to lessons. They provide good individual support when students are working on their own and use these opportunities to check the students' levels of understanding. On occasions teachers do not give enough responsibility to students for their own learning and tend to tell students what they know rather than ask them.
215. The subject is well lead by a recently appointed head of department, supported by very experienced and able teachers who know the demands of the specifications and plan accordingly. General levels of resources are adequate to meet the needs of the subject.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS AND MEDIA

216. The focus was on art and design but music was sampled. Provision for music, which is taught to AS and A level is very good. Two or three students in most years take the course and the examination. Teaching and learning are good and most students are successful in achieving a grade at AS or A level. Students learn well independently and are supported well in this by teachers. Module choices are relevant and attractive to the students. Their progress is monitored closely by the teachers.

Art and design

Overall, the quality of provision in art and design is **very good**.

Strengths

- Standards of attainment.
- Teaching and learning.
- Leadership and management.
- Students' personal response through observation, investigation and experimentation.
- Teachers' knowledge of the work of contemporary artists.

Areas for improvement

- Use of computers to generate and manipulate imagery.
- Opportunities for students and students to work with print, textiles and ICT.

217. The results gained by sixth form students in the advanced level GCE in 2001 were above average for the first time in recent years and an improvement since the last inspection. While three of the five candidates were awarded grade B passes, none was awarded the highest grade. The results gained by students entered for the Advanced Vocational Certificate (AVCE) examination were also above average reflecting the steady annual improvement since the last inspection.
218. By the age of 18 students' work is above average. The over-riding impression is of open-minded exploration of materials and the work of classical, modern and contemporary artists. Drawing skills are good and sketchbooks contain many examples of above-average drawing in a variety of styles, scale and media, including pencil, chalk, charcoal, ballpoint pen and paint. Students draw to collect information, to experiment or plan future work, as preparation for painting, or to exploit and often exaggerate the qualities of objects. Subject matter is firmly based on observation and includes close analyses of lobster claws, hands, teeth and noses. The wide ranging exploration and disguising of materials such as pasta, fur and string also figure largely in students' investigations as they produce study sheets to highlight texture and colour. Many work with subject matter designed to stir strong emotions. There was much reflection by AVCE students looking at larger than life-sized sculptures of babies and smaller than expected angels made by Gavin Mueck. A level students also reflect on the content of other artists' work or images taken from magazines or film. One student painted a set of school lockers then placed hand-made objects behind each door to comment on the public and somewhat different private life-styles of pop singers. Another student used imagery from Vietnam to comment on the horrors of war. Students' achievement is good. After some difficulty adjusting to the greater challenge of sixth form work, Year 12 students settle to working with increasing confidence. Towards the end Year 13 they have firm, independent views and quite individual styles but not all of them have done sufficient reading and research to develop the personal view of art and artists so necessary at this level.
219. Teaching and learning in the sixth form are very good. Relationships between students and teachers are also very good. The teachers have a genuine feel for their subject and are able to generate very positive attitudes in their students. Teachers plan their lessons meticulously and are committed to the success of their students. Students made very good progress working on their individual sculpture projects after making connections between their own work and that of famous artists. One student was making good progress after relating her work to representations of human flesh in the paintings of Jenny Saville, another used Leonardo da Vinci's drawings of male

torsos to help him refine his sculpture of an angel. Students derive great benefit from their teachers being practising artists with an up-to-date knowledge of current developments in art.

220. The curriculum is balanced with many opportunities to work in mixed media with a good range of two and three-dimensional processes. The partnership arrangements with other institutions enrich students' understanding of art as well as offering a wider range of courses. Without these links there would be insufficient opportunities for students to work with computers, creative textiles or those more sophisticated printmaking processes that are common enough in art education today. The information gained from the regular assessment of students' work is very well used for setting targets and monitoring their performance. The management of the department is very good. The head of department is ambitious for her subject and has a very clear vision of the measures needed to ensure standards continue to rise. She provides very strong leadership which staff and students alike are pleased to follow: all of the teachers joined the school within the last year and have quickly become a strong team working to make the subject yet stronger. The take-up of places on the range of courses is increasing and the majority of students successfully complete their courses. Students are well prepared for higher education or the next stage in their career. The curriculum and the quality of teaching and learning are monitored well.
221. The department has made very good progress since the last inspection. Standards in both AVCE and A level GCE have improved and are now above average. Teaching was satisfactory and is now very good. Opportunities involving information and communications technology, a weakness at the last inspection, are still weak. The number and quality of books and other reference material have improved. The accommodation has been improved by the removal of under-used wall mounted cupboards, and students have a studio and individual working spaces. The display of students' work in the department and public areas of the school enhances the cultural ethos of the school.

HUMANITIES

222. The focus was on history but geography and law were also sampled. Geography is a popular subject at AS and A2 levels. Nearly all students complete the course. Good teaching encourages independent learning. Recent results have been well above average. Examination results in law at AS level last year were disappointing. Eight out of ten students gained a grade at the lower levels. Four students took the A level examination in 2001. All passed and one student gained a grade B. One lesson was seen and teaching was satisfactory.

History

Overall, the quality of provision in history is **very good**.

Strengths

- Very good management of the subject is providing students with an effective education in history.
- Results in the most recent examination at both AS and A2 were well above the national average.
- Students have a positive attitude to the subject, are enthusiastic and work hard.

Areas for improvement

- Opportunities for independent learning at AS level.
- Students' confidence and ability in speaking and discussion.
- The quality of analysis in students' written and oral work.

223. Results at the A level examination in 2001 were well above the national average at the higher grades and all students entered gained a pass grade, as has been the case in the last four years. Average points were also very much higher than the national average. Usually more girls than boys are entered for the examination, though overall numbers are quite small. No significant difference between the performance of boys and girls emerges from analysis of results in recent years. Results at AS level in 2001 were very good. Ten of the eleven students entered gained a pass and over half of these were at the higher grades. Average points for boys and girls were the same, though boys' performance at the highest grade was better than girls'.
224. The majority of students in the current AS class are on target to gain a pass grade in the examination. The standard attained in lessons and in written work is average. Their knowledge of the themes and issues studied is sound and shows clear progression from work they have done in earlier years. Most of them write in a clear and straightforward style. They are stronger at describing events than analysing causes and their written work is weakest when they have to use evidence from sources to make evaluative judgements. Few of them give full and confident answers to questions in class and the oral skills of most are under-developed.
225. The standard attained by the majority of students in the A2 course is average. Students are making clear progress in the development of subject knowledge from their previous course at AS level and are developing sound source analysis skills. They have a good understanding of the periods and themes they are studying. They are able to select and describe key events and they understand that historical explanations draw upon a variety of causal factors. They are stronger in written than in oral work and their responses to questions in class discussions are often brief. Their essays indicate that they understand the major events and developments which they are studying but conclusions, evaluations and judgements based on evidence are the weakest aspect of their written work.
226. The quality of teaching and learning in the AS course is satisfactory. The teacher has good command of the subject matter and lessons are well planned to help students develop their knowledge of the period and personalities studied. Students work hard and are conscientious. They concentrate well, are interested in their studies and work at a good pace. They are making satisfactory progress in extending their subject knowledge and their written work shows that they are developing the skills of source examination which they acquired in earlier years. Their independent study skills are less well developed and though they take copious notes in lessons they are less confident in expressing an opinion or stating a point of view when prompted to do so by the teacher.
227. The quality of teaching and learning in the A2 course is very good. Very good planning and a variety of learning activities in a lesson on the causes of the Russian Revolution helped students to work with high levels of concentration and interest, extending their knowledge and developing good study and essay-writing skills. Well-structured notes challenged students to identify short and long-term causes and helped them to develop a sophisticated and informed understanding of events which led to revolution.

Oral communication skills, however, were not well addressed in this lesson and students do not always express their ideas clearly or with confidence.

228. The management of the subject is very good. Very good course planning is providing an effective education in history for students. Assessment is regular and helpful comment is made on students' written work, though useful procedures such as the students' self-evaluation and the essay review sheet are not consistently implemented. Resources are adequate, though students in Year 12 have to share some of the more specialist textbooks with students in Year 13.

ENGLISH, LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION

229. The focus was on English Literature, English Language and French, but German was also sampled. In German, as in French, very few students have been entered for the A Level examination in recent years. Over the past two years, however, the nine students entered all gained a pass grade or better, and the average point score per student was above the national average. Students did as expected considering their GCSE results. There are currently no students from Royds School studying German. One Year 12 lesson was observed in the partnership and teaching was good, demanding high standards and encouraging students to think and speak in the language. Standards are as expected for this stage of the AS Level course. Students are committed and achieving well.

English Literature

Overall provision for English Literature is **very good**.

Strengths

- Examination results are improving.
- Teaching is very good.
- Students achieve well in response to lively and enthusiastic teaching.

Areas for improvement

- The number of students taking the subject at A level.
- The participation of girls in discussion.
- The monitoring of teaching in the partnership.

230. The number of students taking English Literature at A level has been small in recent years. Only four students were entered in 2001, fewer than in previous years. Students did well, three of the four attained A and B grades. In the last four years the average points score has been above that attained nationally although the small numbers make comparisons with national figures unreliable. Results have improved year-on-year. Last year only one boy took the English Literature. Performance in the new AS examination last year was strong. All students passed and seven out of nine students attained grades A and B – there were five As. No male students took English Literature. One student did extremely well in the Special paper.
231. Overall attainment by the end of Year 13 is above average. Students have good oral skills and respond very positively in lessons. They are articulate and able to explain their ideas. They can sustain a point of view and support it with reference to the text. They experiment with new vocabulary and engage in discussion with enthusiasm. Students in Year 12 have good knowledge and understanding of the text so that they can discuss the development of character in *Antony and Cleopatra* well, posing perceptive questions. They speculate about meaning and mood, for example in the

opening scene of Pinter's play *The Birthday Party*. Students make thorough and detailed notes. By the end of Year 13 they are able to write critically and in an appropriate style. Writing is technically accurate and some reaches a very high standard. Students can develop and sustain their ideas in their essays and draw on the text to illustrate and support their points. They have a good grasp of literary terminology and use it well.

232. Students' achievement is very good. They are lively and interested in the subject. They respond well in lessons and work hard. They participate well in discussion as a whole group and in pairs and are keen to express a personal response to literature. They ask questions freely. Where teaching is more formal boys sometimes participate much more willingly than the girls who are quite reticent.
233. Teaching and learning are very good. Lessons are presented with enthusiasm. Some lessons are presented very creatively and students respond well to the challenging and lively demands made of them. In Year 13, for example, students studied a range of critical standpoints about the character of Othello in preparation for a debate in which each student represented a different point of view. In Year 12 a unit on modern drama began with students acting out the opening scene of Pinter's play *The Birthday Party* to see how intonation and expression changed meaning. Teaching is based on strong knowledge and experience of the subject. Most students respond very well in discussion led by the teacher in an informal but authoritative style although girls can be more reticent than boys in discussion. Understanding is developed through careful questioning, drawing themes together and focusing on the language and content of the text. Students work independently, discuss in pairs or groups and present their conclusions to the class. Teachers know students well, have high expectations of them and challenge their ideas often in lively and constructive debate. Teachers encourage students to use information and communication technology in their writing and for independent research, for example in Year 13 where students were researching the social, historical and political context in preparation for studying to Keats' poetry. Work is very well marked so that students know what standard they are attaining and are clear about how to improve their work. Assessment is used well to set targets and to inform teachers' planning.
234. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. Experienced subject specialists teach the A Level course to groups of students at the school and to groups with students from another of the partnership schools. Departmental planning is thorough and well-prepared and structured materials support and guide students' work. Arrangements for the new AS course are well established and have gone well. Teachers work closely together and monitor and evaluate students' performance carefully. Assessment arrangements are good and students are given very good advice and guidance about their work. Liaison with the other school in the partnership is improving: planning of teaching is shared between the schools, meetings are held every half term, and there are joint visits to the theatre. Teaching in the partnership is not yet monitored.

English Language

Overall provision for English language is **very good**.

Strengths

- Examination results have been consistently well above average.
- Teaching and learning are very good. As a result students' achievements are very good.
- Students respond very well to the enthusiasm of teachers.
- The number of students taking the subject has increased.

Areas for improvement

- Liaison between English teachers in the partnership is improving but teaching is not monitored.

235. Attainment in the English Language examination in 2001 was well above average. Twelve students were entered, all passed and five students achieved grade A. Students did better in English Language than in other subjects. The number of students taking the subject has been increasing steadily in the last three years and results have been consistently well above average. More girls than boys take the subject but more boys take the language course than literature. Girls do better than boys. The department entered twenty-three students for the AS examination in 2001. Students did very well – half the students entered attained grades A and B.
236. Standards seen in lessons are above average. Students write very well and have good understanding of the subject. They understand the meaning of and are able to use terminology well. They apply linguistic concepts to analyse written and spoken language. They are willing to speculate on language constructs drawing on the knowledge they have. In Year 13, for example, students working on political language analysed the text of a speech by Bill Clinton and in another Year 13 lesson students understood and could apply theory to transcripts of young children's speech. In Year 12 students were able to explain features of occupational language, which enable individuals and groups to wield power in society. They have good insight and understanding of how language changes. They express lively and perceptive ideas in discussion and in their research projects, for example, on the language used in email and text messaging. Some investigative work reached a high standard. They make clear and detailed notes.
237. Students work well together. They are confident, willing to volunteer ideas and are keen and interested in discussion and the exchange of ideas. They are well motivated and respond well to the enthusiasm of teachers.
238. Teaching and learning are very good. Students achieve very well. Lessons usually get off to a crisp start. Teachers have very good knowledge of the subject and are able to explain difficult and complex ideas clearly. They are confident with the material and tasks are presented sequentially so that students' grasp of concepts is reinforced. Lessons are rigorously planned and organised and tasks have very clear parameters so students know exactly what is expected of them. Presentation is lively; lessons proceed at a good pace and are challenging so that students' interest is maintained. Students have to think quite hard. Rapport with students is strong and encourages involvement in the lesson so that they are characterised by very free and easy exchange of ideas. Useful feedback on performance was given in a Year 13 lesson where students considered the most productive approaches to examination techniques. Supporting materials are well chosen and presented; they are relevant and quite topical. Marking is good: comments are detailed, provide targets for improvement and focus well on technical terminology.
239. Management of the subject is very good. A member of the department has delegated responsibility for organising teaching and curriculum planning. There is good liaison between teachers for moderation and the monitoring of students' progress. Liaison across the partnership schools works well especially when students are preparing large-scale investigations but monitoring of teaching in the partnership is not yet underway. The department is well informed and well trained. Teachers are

specialists and experienced in the subject. There is a strong collaborative approach to planning. Assessment procedures are thorough.

French

Overall, the quality of provision in French is **good**.

Strengths

- Teaching is good. As a result students are learning well and achieving to their capacity.
- Students are well-motivated independent learners.
- Standards of Year 13 students are well above the national average.
- Good use is made of ICT to encourage independent research.

Areas for improvement

- Liaison between the modern foreign languages departments of Royds and the partner school is uneven and insufficiently regular.
- Year 12 students lack fluency and good pronunciation when they speak French.

240. Numbers of students taking French A level have been small over the past few years. However, since 1998 the seventeen students who have been entered for the examination have all secured pass grades and the average point score per student has been almost one grade higher than the national average. This represents good achievement for these students. AS level results in 2001 were lower than had been predicted and three out of the seven students decided not to continue French to A2 level.

241. Standards among the remaining students in Year 13, however, are well above average. They have a very secure understanding of advanced French spoken at speed by their teachers and through tapes of native speakers. Their grasp of complex French grammar, such as the subjunctive mood, and their use of idiomatic modern French are evident from their written work which shows maturity, depth and independence of thought. When they speak the language they combine fluency with good accent and intonation to sound authentically French. These students are achieving well and fulfilling the promise of their GCSE and AS level results.

242. Year 12 students are uneven in their attainment. They are, on average, achieving standards similar to those expected at this stage of the AS level course. Not all of these students gained high grades at GCSE and these are currently struggling to keep up with the rigorous demands of the course. Of the four principal skills required when learning a language, writing is the one at which these students are currently doing best because of the extensive practice they have been given. Their written assignments show signs of growing maturity of thought and a grasp of the rhythm and complexity of French. By contrast, their speaking is still at a basic level and their pronunciation and accent are anglicised. This is an area where these students need intensive practice both independently and in class.

243. The teaching of French is good in Year 12 and very good in Year 13. In Year 13 the high standards and greater evenness of attainment of the students allow teachers to use French more consistently and to make assumptions about the students' commitment and understanding. Teachers are proficient speakers of French and use the language skilfully in the classroom so that students are exposed to high quality French during lessons and improve their listening skills well. Lessons have clear aims which are shared with the students and are planned with care and imagination

using a rich repertoire of method and resources. The effect of this is to give students varied opportunities of putting their French to active use. In a Year 12 lesson, for example, the teacher used a murder mystery story, in which each student played a key part, to revise the past tense in describing the circumstances of the crime. They then had to use a new tense, the pluperfect, when imagining themselves as lawyers having to use reported speech: 'my client told me that he had not seen the murder weapon'. The students learnt well from this engaging exercise and picked up the new tense quickly.

244. Teachers enjoy a very friendly but professional rapport with their students who reward them with attentiveness and hard work. Most students are mature independent workers. Those in Year 12, however, are not secure enough in their spoken French to develop their responses without more direct intervention by their teachers. They would in some cases benefit from help in the elementary building of sentences and pronunciation of French. Good use is made of e-mail and the Internet to communicate with students in France and to do independent research on topics under discussion, such as homelessness and the environment. Study of these topics, too, contributes well to students' moral and cultural development.
245. The opportunities for learning foreign languages are unusually broad in the sixth form, as in the rest of the school. Apart from the possibility of studying French, German and Spanish at AS and A2 level, the department also offers an accelerated GCSE course in Italian which sixth form students are currently following with considerable success. However, the current timetable arrangements which bunch three one hour periods of French consecutively on a Monday morning are not popular with the teacher or the Year 13 students involved.
246. The management of French is efficient and committed to high standards with a clear vision for the development of the subject in the future. The policy of 'accelerating' the highest attaining sets further down the school is already having a positive impact on numbers considering continuing with French in the sixth form. Students' work is regularly and helpfully marked so that students know how they are progressing and what they need to do to improve. They speak highly of the quality of teaching they receive and the careful tracking of their progress. Liaison between teachers at Royds and those in the partner school are friendly and collaborative, but there is currently too little formal communication between them, and systematic monitoring of the progress of the students in their joint care.