

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **NORTH AXHOLME SCHOOL**

Crowle, Scunthorpe

LEA area: North Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 118093

Headteacher: Mr L F Smith

Reporting inspector: Ms J McKenna  
2485

Dates of inspection: 17 – 20 March 2003

Inspection number: 249200

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 - 16

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Wharf Road  
Crowle  
Scunthorpe

Postcode: DN17 4HU

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr A B Metcalfe

Date of previous inspection: 12 May 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2485	J McKenna	Registered inspector		What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9649	J Smith	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
30996	A Higginbotham	Team inspector	Mathematics	
27983	M Sewell	Team inspector	Special educational needs English	
20380	N Pinkney	Team inspector	Science	How well is the school led and managed?
31096	J Thornhill	Team inspector	Information and communication technology	
31693	T Hanafin	Team inspector	Art and design	
8501	P Hartwright	Team inspector	Design and technology	
1994	H Olds	Team inspector	Geography	
15576	D Nebesnuick	Team inspector	History Citizenship	
19026	B Downes	Team inspector	English as an additional language Modern foreign languages	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
23499	H Seymour	Team inspector	Music	
12985	S Jeffray	Team inspector	Educational inclusion Physical education	
7602	E Milroy	Team inspector	Religious education	

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London WC2B 6SE

## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>12</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>34</b>

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

North Axholme is an 11-16 mixed comprehensive school situated in Crowle, North Lincolnshire. It is smaller than average, with 485 pupils on roll. Virtually all pupils are white. There is one pupil who speaks English as an additional language and does so fluently. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is average, although the proportion with statements is above average. Those with moderate learning difficulties form the largest group, followed by specific learning difficulties and emotional and behavioural difficulties. The socio-economic profile of the area from which the school draws pupils is less advantaged than nationally, although the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is average. The area experiences some rural deprivation. Although the school takes pupils from across the whole ability range, attainment on entry to the school overall is just a little below average. The school is popular within the local community and is fully subscribed in Years 7 to 9.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

The school provides a sound quality of education for its pupils, with several very positive features. It is a genuine community school. Its inclusive ethos is a strength. All pupils are well known and valued and receive good support and guidance. The curriculum is designed to meet the specific interests and needs of pupils and there are very good enrichment activities. Pupils attain average standards overall, and their achievement is satisfactory, although standards are not yet high enough in all subjects. Teaching is satisfactory. The leadership of the headteacher in respect of his commitment to the school and its pupils is very strong. Some aspects of management are not sufficiently formalised and leadership and management are therefore only satisfactory overall. The school provides sound value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The headteacher leads the school by example. He is actively involved in all areas of school life and is instrumental in creating the positive and inclusive ethos which exists.
- The school is particularly successful at ensuring that all pupils achieve some examination success at the age of 16.
- Staff know individual pupils very well and provide good personal support for them.
- There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs, who achieve very well.
- Curriculum enrichment is very good, especially in music and sport and through the provision of instrumental tuition.
- The school has very strong links with parents and the local community, which enhance pupils' education.

#### **What could be improved**

- The quality of teaching is not of a consistently high standard across the school.
- Monitoring and evaluation procedures are not comprehensive and do not identify all inconsistencies in practice.
- Procedures for assessment and the analysis and use of performance data are not well enough developed.
- Current provision for English and history is not satisfactory.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in May 1997. Standards have risen since then, although they have declined in English. The quality of teaching has improved. All of the key issues have been acted upon, although there needs to be continued improvement in most of the areas including teaching, assessment and aspects of middle management. Some strengths identified last time have been maintained, such as the links with parents and the community. Further development is needed in other areas such as monitoring and evaluation. Overall, improvement has been satisfactory.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved at the end of Year 11 based on average point scores in GCSE examinations.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
GCSE examinations	B	C	C	C

**Key**

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

In 2002, results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 9 were average in science, above average in mathematics, but below average in English. Overall, results were average. Results across all three subjects together are improving faster than they are nationally. Standards seen during the inspection at the end of Year 9 are above average in mathematics. They are average in science, art and design, German, music, physical education and religious education and are below average in design and technology, French, geography and history. Standards are generally below average in English, but are well below average for some groups. They are also well below average in information and communication technology (ICT).

GCSE results at grade C and above in 2002 were in line with the national average overall. However, at grade G and above they were well above average. The school is particularly successful at ensuring that all pupils achieve some examination success at A\*-G, ensuring that almost always all pupils leave with at least one GCSE, and many of them achieve five.

GCSE results vary considerably across subjects at A\*-C grades, although A\*-G results are above average. The standards observed during the inspection are above average only in music and in physical education for those pupils taking GCSE. They are below average in ICT, resistant materials and French. Standards in English are generally below average, but for some classes are well below average, and they are also well below average in history. They are average in other subjects. In general, standards are higher in subjects where there is more stable staffing and higher quality teaching. Standards are lower where there are problems with staffing, especially in English, and are often lower where there is non-specialist teaching.

Pupils' achievement in Years 7 to 9 is satisfactory overall, although it varies across subjects. It is good in mathematics, science, German and physical education, unsatisfactory in English and history and satisfactory in remaining subjects. In Years 10 and 11, achievement continues to be satisfactory overall. It is good in science, German, music and for those taking physical education to GCSE, unsatisfactory in English language and literature and history, and satisfactory in other subjects. Achievement is good for pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils. The gender differences which were marked at the previous inspection have reduced considerably overall. Standards of literacy and numeracy are satisfactory, and are improving as a result of the adoption of the national strategies.

The school sets appropriately challenging targets for raising pupils' attainment. They are not always met, however, and standards are not yet high enough in all subjects.



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory overall. Pupils feel known and valued. Good involvement in extra-curricular activities. Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning, but a significant minority do not.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Exclusions are very low. Some pupils display immature behaviour in lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils exercise responsibility well, display initiative and are pleasant and polite. Relationships with staff are positive and friendly.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Punctuality to school is good, but the first lesson of the day often gets off to a slow start.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 7 – 9	Years 10 – 11
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It is satisfactory or better in just over nine out of ten lessons, and is good or better in almost six out of ten. It is very good or better in one in six lessons, with a small amount of excellent. However, in almost one in ten lessons, the teaching is unsatisfactory, and a small amount of it is poor or very poor. This picture is a considerable improvement from the last inspection but teaching is not as strong as it needs to be to improve standards.

Some good or better teaching was seen in most subjects. It is good overall in mathematics, science, art and design, German, music and religious education. It is satisfactory in other subjects, except for history and in English where, due to problems with staffing, it is unsatisfactory. Unsatisfactory lessons were seen across a range of other subjects, with a particular concentration in personal, social, health and citizenship education.

Where the teaching is best, teachers have good subject knowledge and provide interesting activities. They share the objectives of the lesson with pupils, and plan lessons with a clear structure, usually with very effective starter activities. They provide work that is tailored to meet the specific needs of individuals and groups, and ensure that pupils are able to make good progress. They give clear explanations and use perceptive questioning which deepens pupils' understanding. They use resources well. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and work. Classroom management is effective and relationships are good. In these lessons pupils respond well to their teachers, are keen, work hard and learn well. Provision for homework is satisfactory.

Where teaching is less strong, it does not engage the interest of pupils nor involve them actively enough, and their motivation suffers as a result. Individual needs are not well catered for which reduces progress made. Endings of lessons are not so effective. Some pupils are inattentive and engage in low level chatter. In some lessons, this escalates into a level of disruption that is not adequately managed and which reduces the learning of all in the class.

The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. The teaching of literacy is good and the teaching of numeracy is satisfactory.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is designed to meet the specific needs and interests of pupils. Curriculum enrichment activities are very good. Statutory requirements are met, except in English. The integrated course in Year 7 is not fully effective.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good, due to the determined approach to meeting individual needs and careful deployment of the well trained team.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There is only one pupil with English as an additional language for whom the school makes some additional provision. This pupil is fully fluent in English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory and for moral, social and cultural development is good. Provision for pupils' personal development is given a high priority, but the teaching of personal, social, health and citizenship education is inconsistent.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good knowledge of pupils is used to provide good personal support. Procedures for promoting good behaviour are satisfactory and for attendance are good. Procedures for assessment require further development in most subjects. The statutory requirement to report on all subjects in Year 7 is not met.

Careers education and guidance are very good. Appropriate procedures for child protection are in place, as they are for health and safety, except in physical education. There are very good links with local community, industry, other schools and colleges. The school has a very good partnership with parents.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher displays very strong leadership in relation to commitment to pupils and is actively involved in all areas of school life, including teaching. Other managers are committed and hard working. Not all aspects of management are sufficiently formalised. Satisfactory overall.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are very committed to the school and have good general knowledge about it. They have good relationships with staff. They carry out responsibilities well, although there is no regular programme for the systematic review of school policies.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Monitoring and evaluation take place but they are not comprehensive and do not provide a full picture of strengths and areas for development.
The strategic use of resources	Spending is in line with identified priorities and the school's finances are managed and monitored effectively and efficiently.

The match of teaching staff to requirements is good in many subjects, although there is a considerable amount of non-specialist teaching, and there are serious problems with recruitment in English. Accommodation is satisfactory overall, but has limitations and a capital improvement project is underway. Resources for learning are satisfactory. Principles of best value are understood and applied well.

## **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How hard pupils are expected to work.</li> <li>• How well the school is led and managed.</li> <li>• The quality of teaching.</li> <li>• The progress pupils are making.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The extent to which some children like school.</li> <li>• The amount of homework pupils receive.</li> </ul>

The school is held in extremely high regard by parents, and responses to the questionnaire were positive in all areas. These positive views are justified overall, but nevertheless there is scope for improvement in practice. Pupils are expected to work hard, although in some lessons this is not always insisted upon. Parents are particularly positive about the role of the headteacher. He certainly is a figurehead for the school, and plays a pivotal role in the positive ethos that exists. Some aspects of management, however, such as monitoring practice, are not strong enough. While much teaching is good, this is not the case in all lessons. Pupils do make progress and achievement is satisfactory overall. Most pupils like school but some show their disregard for it by being inattentive in lessons. Provision of homework is satisfactory.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. The school takes pupils from across the full ability range, although overall attainment on entry to the school is just below average. The standards attained by pupils at the age of 16 are broadly average at A\*-C grades, although at A\*-G grades they are well above average. Inspection evidence indicates similar standards. This represents satisfactory achievement overall for pupils, and good achievement for lower attaining pupils. However, there are considerable differences in standards between subjects, as outlined below, and overall, standards could undoubtedly be higher.
2. In 2002, results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 9 were average in science, above average in mathematics and below average in English. Overall, results were average. The results in all three subjects have fluctuated since the previous inspection. The trend has been upwards in mathematics and results there are now considerably higher than they were at the previous inspection, and higher than in the other two subjects. The results in science have improved and are now usually around the national average. Results in English are usually below average. They have been consistently lower than they were at the previous inspection, and they declined further from 2001 to 2002. Nevertheless, when the results of all three subjects are considered together, there is a trend of improvement greater than the national rate.
3. In relation to schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free schools meals and those with similar prior attainment, the results in mathematics compare very well, being well above average, but the results in English do not, being below average. In science, results are above average in comparison with schools with similar prior attainment, but average in comparison with schools with similar free school meals.
4. The test results/teacher assessments across all subjects at the end of Year 9 in 2002 are shown in the table below.

Test results/teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 in 2002.			
Above average	Average	Below average	Well below average
Mathematics, Music.	Science, Art and design, Modern foreign languages, Physical education.	English Design technology, Geography, Information and communication technology (ICT).	History.

5. Standards seen at the end of Year 9 during the inspection are indicated in the following table.

Standards in subjects at the end of Year 9 observed during the inspection			
Above average	Average	Below average	Well below average
Mathematics.	Science, Art and design, German, Music, Physical education, Religious education.	English (for some pupils), Design technology, French, Geography, History.	English (for some pupils), ICT.

6. These standards match those indicated by the teacher assessments, with the following exceptions. In French, current standards are lower than the assessments due to staffing difficulties in the subject which have affected pupils' progress. In music and ICT, current standards are lower than the assessments because inflated assessment judgements were made. Conversely, in history, current standards are higher than the teacher assessments because the judgements were a little harsh.
7. In general, in subjects where standards are higher there is more stable staffing and higher quality teaching taking place. Where standards are lower, in some cases there are problems with staffing which are having a negative impact on pupils' learning, especially in English, and more non-specialist teaching. Standards in these subjects are not yet high enough.
8. In the GCSE examinations in 2002, the standards attained overall were in line with the national average. The average points score gained per pupil and the proportion of pupils gaining five or more passes at A\*-C were average. The proportion gaining one or more A\*-G grades was above average and the proportion gaining five or more at A\*-G was well above average. This has broadly been the pattern since the previous inspection, despite some fluctuations from year to year due to the small cohorts of pupils involved. The school is particularly successful at ensuring that all pupils achieve some examination success at A\*- G, ensuring that almost always all pupils leave with at least one GCSE to their name, and many of them achieve five.
9. In comparison with schools with similar free school meals entitlement, overall results are average. The proportion gaining one or more A\*-G grades is above average and five or more A\*-G is grades very high. The proportion gaining five or more grades at A\*-C is below average, however. In comparison with schools with similar prior attainment the comparisons are more positive. Overall results, and one or more A\*-G grades are above average, and five or more A\*-G grades very high. Five or more A\*-C grades are above average. The trend of improvement in results is in line with the national trend.

10. The GCSE results vary considerably across subjects at A\*-C grades, although at A\*-G, results are above average in almost all subjects.

GCSE results (A*-C grades) in 2002			
Above average	Average	Below average	Well below average
Art and design, German*, Music, Physical education (GCSE pupils), Textiles*.	Science, Food, Geography, Graphics.	English language, Mathematics, Business studies, ICT, Resistant materials.	English literature, French, History, Religious education*.

\* Small numbers of pupils entered examinations in these subjects.

11. Standards observed during the inspection also show considerable variation.

Standards in subjects at the end of Year 11 observed during the inspection			
Above average	Average	Below average	Well below average
Music, Physical education (GCSE pupils).	Science, Mathematics, Art and design, Food, Geography, German, Graphics, Physical education (non GCSE pupils), Textiles.	English (for some pupils) French, ICT, Religious education, Resistant materials.	English (for some pupils), History.

12. In some cases, the differences between standards seen during the inspection and the GCSE results are due to the differences between the particular groups choosing to study particular subjects each year, but in others, such as English, French and history, staffing difficulties have an adverse affect on the standards attained by pupils in Years 10 and 11. In English, in particular, the very significant staffing difficulties are leading to overall standards in the subject being considerably lower than would be expected. In religious education, all pupils study the subject and standards for the majority are average. The reason for current standards in mathematics being higher than the 2002 examination results is due to the positive impact of aspects of the Numeracy Strategy being adopted in the teaching of pupils in Years 10 and 11.
13. As at the end of Year 9, standards are not yet high enough in all subjects, due, in the main, to some problems with staffing which are having a negative impact on pupils' learning, especially in English, and some non-specialist teaching. Again, where standards are highest there is generally more stable staffing and higher quality teaching taking place.
14. Pupils' achievement in Years 7 to 9 is satisfactory overall, although it varies across subjects. It is satisfactory in most subjects, and is good in mathematics, science, German and physical education. However, it is unsatisfactory in English due to the

staffing issues mentioned, and in history. Throughout Years 10 and 11, achievement continues to be satisfactory overall. It is good for lower attaining pupils who achieve well at A\*-G grades. It is also good overall in science, German, music and for those taking physical education to GCSE. It is satisfactory in other subjects, with the exception of English language and literature where there is currently serious underachievement due to the problems in staffing the subject, and in history where it is unsatisfactory.

15. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs throughout the school is very good in terms of attainment and the development of social skills. The gender differences in achievement which were marked at the previous inspection have reduced considerably overall, although some differences are still apparent, for example in design technology and French. There is one pupil who speaks English as an additional language who is fully fluent in English, and is making progress commensurate with levels of prior attainment.
16. Standards of literacy and numeracy are satisfactory, and are improving as a result of the adoption of the national literacy and numeracy strategies.
17. The school sets appropriately challenging targets for raising pupils' attainment. Some targets are met, but not all, especially those for five or more A\*-C grades.

#### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

18. Pupils' attitudes to school are satisfactory overall, although they are good in certain areas. Pupils are particularly enthusiastic about the extra-curricular opportunities which the school provides. Numerous pupils participate in the vibrant music scene, sports and other activities and derive great benefit from these. Most pupils find the school friendly and welcoming and they feel that they are known and valued by staff.
19. In the majority of lessons, pupils show a positive attitude to their learning, concentrate well and work industriously. In most mathematics, science and religious education lessons, for example, pupils show interest in the issues they are learning about and their commitment to work and cooperative, mature relationships enable them to make good progress. Most pupils behave well in lessons. In too many lessons, however, the attitudes and behaviour of a significant minority of pupils are unsatisfactory, especially in Years 9 and 11. These pupils display a lack of commitment to their learning and a disinterest in making progress. They behave in an immature manner, for example, continuously chattering, even when the teacher is talking, which slows learning for all. Poor attitudes and behaviour occur most frequently when lessons lack pace and challenge and pupils' interest is not actively engaged, but even in some good lessons a minority of pupils misbehave, despite teachers' best efforts. A factor which has served to demotivate and unsettle many pupils is the number of different teachers they have had for English recently.
20. Behaviour and movement around the school and at lunch time are usually orderly. Most pupils are friendly and polite to visitors. Pupils treat school resources such as computers with care and respond well to the trust which the school places in them. Volunteer litter pickers help to keep the school grounds clean and tidy. The very low level of fixed term exclusions and infrequency of permanent exclusions are evidence of the school's strong commitment to supporting and helping pupils with behavioural difficulties. Incidents of bullying and racism are infrequent and in discussion, pupils said that staff always dealt with incidents firmly and promptly. The school welcomes and values all pupils, and those pupils with special educational needs are very well integrated into school life.

21. Relationships are good. Pupils value the positive, friendly and supportive relationships which they have with their teachers. They have a particularly high regard for the headteacher and feel able to take their problems and worries directly to him. Most teachers show a high level of respect for pupils, although there are occasions when such mutual respect is lacking, with a few teachers speaking to pupils in an unnecessarily sharp or abrupt manner. Although a minority of pupils show a lack of consideration for others through their immature behaviour, most pupils contribute well to the caring and supportive ethos which exists in the school. Older pupils who help Year 7 pupils with their reading through the paired reading scheme show great sensitivity and maturity in the help they give. The hard work which pupils put into the autumn fund-raising initiative organised through the school council is also a demonstration of pupils' consideration for others, as well as their readiness to use their initiative.
22. Pupils' personal development is good. The school provides ample opportunities for pupils to exercise responsibility and initiative; pupils help in the school office and library, they run the school shop, help run school discos, assist laboratory technicians and serve the school community in many other ways. Year assemblies, held once a week, give further scope for pupils to exercise their initiative. The Year 11 assembly held during the inspection on the theme of good and evil, in the topical context of the war in Iraq, was very well written and performed and demonstrated the ability of older pupils to confront important issues with maturity and independence.
23. Attendance is satisfactory. The attendance rate is close to the national average but the irregular attendance of a small minority of pupils is hampering their progress. Punctuality at the start of school is generally good but the first lesson of the day often gets off to a late start. A significant proportion of the first thirty minutes of the day is spent in inefficient movement. It takes a considerable amount of time for the whole school to file into and out of the hall for the daily assembly. Further time is then spent collecting bags from lockers and going to form rooms for registration before setting out again almost immediately for the first lesson of the day which often starts late.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

24. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It is satisfactory or better in just over nine out of ten lessons, and is good or better in almost six out of ten. It is very good or better in one in six lessons, and a small amount of excellent teaching was seen. However, in almost one in ten lessons, the teaching is unsatisfactory, and a small amount of it is poor or very poor. This picture is a considerable improvement from the last inspection, when the teaching in one in six lessons was unsatisfactory and only a very small amount very good. However, the teaching in too many lessons is still unsatisfactory or only just satisfactory, and teaching overall is not as strong as it needs to be to improve standards.
25. Some good or better teaching was seen in most subjects. It is good overall in mathematics, where some excellent teaching was seen, and in science, art and design, German, music and religious education. It is satisfactory in other subjects, except for history and English where it is unsatisfactory. In English, there is a staffing crisis that the headteacher and the local education authority have worked hard to solve. During the inspection some good and some very good lessons were observed being taught by the school's remaining teachers of English and by local education authority specialist teachers who were covering the vacancies. Nevertheless, inconsistencies and weaknesses in the teaching and planning of the subject have a direct impact on pupils' learning. Unsatisfactory lessons were seen across a range of



other subjects, with a particular concentration in personal, social, health and citizenship education.

26. Where the teaching is best, teachers have good subject knowledge which they use to provide interesting activities which engage and motivate pupils. Music lessons, for example, maintain a strong practical focus and the teacher models performing skills well. Pupils were extremely motivated and very involved in an archaeology lesson, helped by the teacher's obvious enthusiasm for and good knowledge of the subject. Teachers share the objectives of the lesson with pupils, and plan lessons with a clear structure, usually with very effective starter activities. For example in a well structured science lesson, Year 7 pupils listed uses for five commonly used metals, reviewed previous work on the reaction of metals with acids, carried out more experiments to compare the reactivity of metals and shared results to reach clear conclusions. Each activity built upon the previous one which helped to consolidate pupils' learning. Teachers provide work that is tailored to meet the specific needs of individuals and groups, and thereby ensure that pupils are able to make good progress. They give clear explanations and use perceptive questioning which deepens pupils' understanding. They use resources well. In an excellent mathematics lesson, for example, Year 8 pupils were able to work out the connection between the gradient of perpendicular lines because of the very good questioning and the effective use of the interactive whiteboard to plot the suggested graphs rapidly. In these lessons, teachers have high expectations of behaviour and work and the pace of learning within the lessons is fast. Classroom management is effective and relationships are good. Pupils respond well to their teachers, are keen, work hard and learn well. Provision for homework is satisfactory. It is often set at the beginning of a lesson which raises its status and importance.
27. Where teaching is less strong, it does not engage the interest of pupils, nor does it require enough active involvement of them and their motivation suffers as a result. Individual needs are not as well catered for, especially those of higher attainment, and this reduces the progress that pupils make. In ICT, for example, pupils are rarely engaged in fruitful discussion of the lesson topic. On occasions in geography, the teaching does not excite the interest of pupils, tasks are too open ended and worksheet vocabulary is not well matched to the abilities of the pupils. The endings of lessons are not so effective, with learning not being consolidated or reinforced. Some pupils do not pay attention or engage in low level chatter throughout lessons, which some teachers ignore rather than dealing with. In some of the lessons that were unsatisfactory, this escalates into a level of disruption that is not adequately managed and which significantly reduces the learning of all in the class. This was the case in history where the unsatisfactory behaviour of a significant minority of pupils who showed little regard for their own or others' learning was not effectively managed, resulting in a narrowing of the range of teaching activities and methods used, a limiting of the amount of pupil participation and a reduction in the time spent on developing pupils' historical learning. This lack of commitment to learning, often despite teachers' best efforts, was evident in other subjects. For example, in resistant materials, some pupils are not motivated and this reflects in the quality of their coursework. Where there is non-specialist teaching, such as in the integrated course in Year 7, teaching is often less effective.
28. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good, and as a result they learn well. The special educational needs co-ordinator and twelve well trained classroom support assistants provide good input and support. Teaching is also provided by a teacher from the local education authority, who provides support three days per week in focused half hourly sessions for pupils with learning difficulties. Pupils are taught via withdrawal from lessons, and this is followed by a two-week

programme devised by the teacher from the local education authority and delivered by classroom support assistants. Some teaching also takes place at a local college. Strong links with external agencies support the work of the special needs staff. Although suitable work is prepared in most curriculum areas, which allows children who learn at a slower rate to be included within the main classes, there is still a need to develop specific work further. Good examples of careful differentiation were seen in science where pupils of all levels of prior attainment were helped to be able to discuss and understand the structure of the eye and how it works and in physical education where special equipment is provided for physically disabled pupils, but work of this quality was not uniform. The teaching of literacy is good. It is provided via progress units, booster classes and additional reading using a paired reading system, as well as attention in class lessons, such as the emphasising of technical words. The teaching of numeracy in lessons is satisfactory overall, but for pupils with special educational needs it needs more focus on their individual plans to ensure a consistent approach to the development of their numeracy skills.

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

29. Overall, the quality and range of learning opportunities offered by the school are good. There is a commitment to offering a curriculum which meets the particular needs and interests of pupils. All subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught to pupils in Years 7 to 9, along with general studies and personal, social, health and citizenship education. All of these subjects are either taught or offered in accordance with requirements in Years 10 and 11, with additional subjects such as business studies and archaeology offered. Creative timetabling arrangements are in place to try to ensure that all pupils are able to follow their interests, with some teaching carried out voluntarily by teachers outside of school hours. In Years 10 and 11, only one vocational course, in manufacturing, is offered with some teaching at a local college. The school reports a lack of demand for more vocational courses, although there are plans to introduce engineering. Most subjects contribute to the development of ICT skills, but not always at a sufficient depth. While statutory requirements are met generally, this is not the case in English because the curriculum does not cover all the required aspects. The curriculum is unbalanced in Year 7. The integrated course, which covers English, history, geography and religious education, results in some non-specialist teaching and planning, which is not always effective enough and does not ensure a thorough enough grounding in all of the subjects.
30. There is very good curriculum enrichment through a range of extra-curricular activities, additional tuition and visits. Participation rates in all activities are high. There are particular strengths in music and sport. The extent to which pupils' music making is embedded in the corporate life of the school and the wider community is outstanding. The number of pupils receiving instrumental tuition, which is provided free by the school, is more than double the national average. An extensive programme of extra-curricular sport provides very good opportunities for all pupils to excel in school and beyond. There are a number of clubs and groups associated with subjects such as drama, mathematics and archaeology. There is a group working on the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. There are also a number of trips abroad such as for skiing and connected with modern foreign languages.
31. The school works hard to ensure that it is socially inclusive through providing equality of access for all pupils. It is generally successful. There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs, for example, through a combination of school based staff, including very well trained classroom support assistants, and local education authority staff. Some extra provision is made for the one pupil who speaks

English as an additional language despite the fact that the pupil is fully fluent. There are some inequalities in provision, however. For example, in subjects that have only one lesson a week, such as art, lessons are of different lengths with the result that not all pupils have the same access to the subject. There is an imbalance in the content of the curriculum in physical education for girls and boys, as the boys spend more time on games and less time on athletics than girls do in Years 7 to 9.

32. The provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education is satisfactory. It is given a high priority. All pupils have one period a week of general studies which embraces personal, social, health and citizenship education as well as other subjects such as drama and information technology, and elements of personal, social, health and citizenship education are also delivered through the three extended form tutor periods each week. A strength of the provision is the way in which the personal, social, health and citizenship education components of the general studies course are taught by experienced teachers who have a specialist interest in them, such as sex, relationships and drugs education, backed up by the use of external agencies. Aspects of citizenship are appropriately planned into the modules. All form tutors are involved in the delivery of personal, social, health and citizenship education in the extended tutor periods, but the teaching of this is not consistent and ranges from good to poor. This reduces its effectiveness and undermines its importance in the eyes of pupils.
33. The provision for careers education and guidance is very good. It is very successful in helping pupils to broaden their horizons and to make informed choices about their options, particularly at post 16. There is a carefully considered and very well coordinated programme beginning in Year 8 through to Year 11, when pupils receive weekly talks given by local colleges, work based learning providers and representatives from many different careers. The very good links which the school has with people from industry and commerce form the basis of the valuable "Job Search Day" held for Year 10 pupils; this enables pupils to hear at first hand about the sort of qualities which potential employers look for in employees. The school receives good support from the careers service; all Year 10 and 11 pupils have at least one interview and more if needed. Advice is backed up by a good range of accessible careers information which pupils are encouraged to use.
34. The school's very strong links with its community enrich pupils' education. The school band has a high profile in the area and plays both at Christmas concerts and at remembrance services. There are also good links with the local churches and with sporting bodies. The excellent links which the school has with local businesses help the school's fund-raising efforts and also provide important support for the careers programme. The community service which pupils do in Year 9 strengthens the very good links with local primary schools and other community groups. The participation of Year 8 pupils in the Lincolnshire Show Challenge helps them to learn some of the skills involved in organising a successful presentation.
35. The school has very good links with its contributory primary schools and with the colleges to which most pupils transfer at 16. Many letters were received from these institutions saying how much they valued these links. There is very good liaison between the Year 7 coordinator and primary schools. Throughout the year she makes regular visits which enable her to get to know Year 6 pupils well. This good knowledge together with the two induction days and many other shared activities ease the transition of Year 7 pupils to their new school very effectively. Curricular links involving the English, science and mathematics departments have helped to ensure continuity of coverage in these subjects, and further curricular liaison is planned. There is also very well organised liaison between the school and local post-16 colleges. Visits, talks and

interviews ensure that pupils have sufficient knowledge to make informed choices about their post-16 destination.

36. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Some subjects, such as citizenship, identify opportunities for reflection in the scheme of work. Pupils' spiritual development is fostered well in religious education and music. Through the study of themes such as evil and suffering, war and peace and the posing of questions such as 'Does God exist?', pupils face up to deep questions of human existence and transcendence. Music develops pupils' creative imaginations well and mathematics seeks to develop a sense of wonder. Most curricular plans, however, do not pay attention to this aspect. The school meets the statutory requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship through a daily, full school assembly. Some assemblies lift and challenge the human spirit. In one, led by Year 11 pupils, issues of the 'just war' in the context of the current situation in Iraq were subtly explored. Mime and very witty role play portrayed the conflict in Iraq from the perspectives of both sides and moved from portraying an incident of bullying in school to questioning international behaviour as well as the human capacity for self-deceit. The theme, 'For evil to succeed it is only necessary for good people to do nothing', came through very vividly.
37. Provision for moral development is good. Pupils are taught to take responsibility around school. The school council has a budget delegated to it so that pupils can more significantly influence change in the school. There are many opportunities for the discussion of moral dilemmas in lessons. In science for example, the pros and cons of locating a wind farm in the area to provide an alternative energy source versus the development of gas power stations was debated. In physical education pupils learn a code of ethics which includes the rules of fair play, the responsibilities of team membership and the values of co-operation and competition. Regular, successful fund-raising events enable pupils to serve those less fortunate than themselves. Classroom support assistants working with pupils with special educational needs are good role models. They raise pupils' moral and social understanding by showing high standards of co-operation and concern for others.
38. The school makes good provision for social development. A very wide range of extracurricular activities and extensive involvement in the community help to develop pupils' social awareness. Some good, co-operative group and partner work takes place, such as in modern languages. Music provides very good corporate experiences. Bands, orchestras and choirs with outreach into the community promote co-operation, disciplined relationships and real commitment. Good sporting attitudes are encouraged in physical education and pupils learn to accept victory and defeat graciously.
39. Opportunities for cultural development are good, especially in art, music and religious education. Visits to France and Germany help pupils to understand other European societies and their cultural expectations. In English, pupils study poetry from a variety of non-European sources. Religious education makes a very good contribution to pupil's knowledge of the cultural origins of world religions. In this virtually all-white school, most pupils lack significant experience of other ethnic and racial groups. They state openly that they do not know anyone from a different ethnic heritage or cultural background and some show narrow perspectives and stereotyped responses because of their limited knowledge. Some topics help pupils to widen their perspective and confront and combat racist attitudes, such as a study of the civil rights movement in the United States. The world wide nature of sport is emphasised. Art and music enrich pupils' aesthetic education and show that creative gifts are widely dispersed in the human population. Overall, however, there is a need to build on the strong local culture to extend pupils' horizons and help them think more globally in their approach to life.

## HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. The school continues to provide good care for its pupils. Many parents commented at the pre-inspection meeting and in letters on how much they value the school's care of their children and how well the school tailors its support to their individual needs. The head teacher sets an example for all by his very good personal knowledge of and care for individual pupils. Hard working and committed year coordinators provide good guidance to pupils and keep in regular touch with parents if there is a need to discuss their children's welfare and progress. All teachers are considered to be accessible by both parents and pupils and to show a commitment to the well-being of pupils. The referral system readily identifies pupils who are giving cause for concern, whether because they are underachieving, are behaving badly, not completing homework properly or for other reasons. However, pupils are so well known and communication between staff is so regular that concerns are often identified and action taken before the referral system has come into effect.
41. Personal support and guidance are good. They are delivered through the personal, social, health and citizenship programme, assemblies and through individual counselling. There are very good arrangements for easing the transition of Year 7 pupils to the school. Guidance on post 14 and post 16 options is well organised. Careers guidance is very good. The award system helps to motivate many pupils. Classroom support assistants give very good support to pupils with special educational need. In a booster class for Year 7 pupils the skilled teaching and plentiful encouragement of the support assistant enabled pupils to make good progress. Pupils who are disaffected or have other problems receive well-directed support and the very low exclusion rate is evidence of the school's commitment to inclusion.
42. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good due to the determined approach to meeting individual needs and the careful deployment of the team who work hard to develop expertise in particular areas. The positive philosophy of inclusion is working well; the number of pupils excluded is very small, the school works hard to avoid situations escalating by providing on-site alternatives plus support in examinations. This positive, caring approach has resulted in nearly all pupils leaving with a qualification. There is good provision for pupils who require additional support in readjusting to school. Individual Education Plans do not include a brief summary of the learning needs. The regular monitoring of Individual education Plans ensures that the pupils continue to make very good progress. The flexibility and care of the provision has resulted in two pupils no longer requiring a statement. The special educational needs department is to be praised for its strong links with the senior management team, the pastoral staff and the governing body. Areas for future development include fuller Individual Education Plans, monitoring the specific teaching of numeracy across the curriculum and further professional development for classroom support assistants.
43. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are satisfactory. Pupils know the school's expectations regarding good behaviour and are regularly reminded of them. Most teachers insist on good behaviour in the classroom but behaviour management is not consistent and this sends mixed messages to pupils. Although the school's behaviour policy has been slightly updated it has not been properly reviewed since 1996. It is not a comprehensive document; for example details of sanctions, rewards and the code of pupil conduct are contained in another policy in the staff handbook. Procedures for monitoring attendance are good. Close monitoring of attendance includes first day calls when no explanation for absence has been received. The educational welfare officer provides good support in cases of irregular attendance.

44. The school has effective child protection procedures and these are known by all staff. Good attention is paid to health and safety matters. Risk assessments have now been completed for most departments, but not yet for the physical education department and for team trips for sport. Careful risk assessments are carried out for other school trips. Governors have taken effective steps to ensure that disabled students are not disadvantaged because of difficulties of access, and a lift is being installed to improve access yet further.
45. The school's procedures for the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress require development in most subjects. There is a school policy which gives guidance on this area, but it is not consistently implemented. Procedures are good in mathematics, science and art. In most other subjects, although assessment of pupils' work takes place there are weaknesses. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent, with some giving grades for effort and others for attainment. Some give diagnostic comments to help pupils. In general, however, pupils do not get precise enough information on how they are attaining or on how to improve their work. Assessment criteria are not shared enough with pupils and National Curriculum levels and GCSE criteria are not used enough in assessing work or giving feedback. There is some involvement of pupils in pupil in target setting although this is not widespread and occasionally targets are not specific enough. Information from assessment to guide lesson and curriculum planning is not comprehensive enough. The assessment of pupils with special educational needs is good.
46. The analysis and use of performance data to measure the effectiveness of the school and promote improvement are developing areas. Some useful analysis is now taking place at whole school level, supported by analyses provided by the local education authority. However, such work is not yet carried out sufficiently within subjects. It is good in mathematics, but in most other subjects is in the early stages of development. Pupils' attainment is formally assessed termly and their progress is tracked by recording the assessments twice yearly on a database to which all teachers have access. However the extent to which class teachers, subject co-ordinators and year co-ordinators are supposed to use the information is not formalised and the extent to which they actually do is not monitored.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

47. The school has a very good partnership with parents. Parents hold the school in extremely high regard and they expressed very positive views through the questionnaire, the parents' meeting and letters of support. Typical comments made by parents include: "the head knows every pupil by name" and "the school takes a personal and individual interest in our children". Parents express particularly positive views about the leadership and management of the school, its openness and the way their children are expected to work hard. A small minority of parents expressed the view that their children do not like school and that they are not given the right amount of homework.
48. Parents give very good support to the school. There is a thriving Parents, Teachers and Friends Association which holds regular social and fund-raising events and raises useful amounts of money for school activities and resources. Parents also give good support to extra-curricular sporting and music events and they help with school productions. Parents give generously to the school's fund raising initiatives and are generous with gifts of resources. Although the majority of parents support their children's education by ensuring they attend regularly and complete their homework, and by attending parents' evenings so that they can discuss their children's progress,

a minority of parents do not provide this kind of support which has an impact on their children's progress.

49. Overall, the information which the school provides for parents is satisfactory. The annual governors' report to parents is particularly informative. However the prospectus is not well presented and does not give a fully rounded picture of the school. Although it fulfils statutory requirements it has insufficient information on the curriculum, pastoral matters and school aims. Parents learn about school events and successes through newsletters and through the local press. Annual reports on pupils' progress have many good features. Comments on progress have a personal touch which reflects good knowledge of individual pupils. The quality of pupil self-assessment is good. There is good information on attainment; National Curriculum levels are included and information is provided on how these relate to national and year group averages. However, targets which show pupils how to improve their achievement are not consistently included and are often not sufficiently specific. Year 7 reports do not fulfil statutory requirements because they do not contain separate comments on the four subjects included in the integrated humanities course.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

50. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall. The leadership of the headteacher in respect of his commitment to the school and its pupils is very strong. He knows all the pupils very well and endeavours to ensure a high quality of education and academic success for them, as well as providing a rich and broad educational experience that will be a sound basis for their future life. The headteacher leads by example. He is actively involved in all aspects of school life and has a substantial teaching commitment. He plays a pivotal role in the positive ethos that exists, sets the tone for others and provides a clear direction for staff to follow. The school is very inclusive. All its pupils are valued and the school has a successful open door policy that ensures the views and concerns of all are shared and attended to promptly.
51. Other managers are committed and hard working. Senior managers have a high profile and play an important part in the efficient functioning of the school. Subject coordinators have clear areas of responsibility delegated to them, and the development of their role has shown some improvement since the last inspection. In most areas, leadership and management are at least satisfactory and in some cases better, such as in mathematics and music where they are very good. All aspects of leadership and management of special educational needs are very good. There are some weaknesses currently in English and history. The school development plan identifies appropriate priorities for the school as a whole, and is supplemented by other plans identifying priorities for development in specific areas, including all subjects. While plans contain much useful detail, some is lacking, such as precise actions to be taken, timescales and success criteria against which implementation will be evaluated. In general, appropriate policies and procedures are formally in place to determine the work of the school and the school runs smoothly on a day to day basis. However, the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the policies and practices and their effectiveness is not systematic enough. Although there is some monitoring and evaluation undertaken at senior management level, it is not comprehensive, and action is inconsistent and insufficient at middle management level. The monitoring of teaching, for example, does not ensure that a full picture of strengths and weaknesses are identified, in order that action can be taken to build on the good practice that exists and to tackle weaknesses. The inconsistencies in the delivery of personal, social, health and citizenship education, assessment, use of performance data and the management of behaviour for example, are not routinely picked up through monitoring.

The constraints of being a small school play a part. Senior managers, including the headteacher, have a heavy teaching commitment, there are limited numbers of management posts for the purposes of delegation and all managers carry a heavy workload. There is no doubt that staff work very hard. Nevertheless, there has been a degree of over-reliance on the fact that it is a small school and the assumption that therefore communications are good, and a resulting lack of formalising of the systems necessary to ensure maximum effectiveness.

52. The governing body is very committed to the school and is knowledgeable about its general strengths and areas for improvement. The governors have a range of useful expertise and have good, open relationships with staff that helps to facilitate their active involvement in the school. Several governors carry specific responsibilities, such as the excellent link with special educational needs, although there are no identified link governors with subject areas, Governors carry out their duties well and the annual report to parents is detailed and comprehensive. They are fully involved in the production of the school improvement plan prior to its publication, and the educational priorities identified. Best value principles are rigorously applied to all spending decisions. Governors ensure that almost all statutory requirements are met, the exceptions being the separate reporting of all required subjects in Year 7 reports, and the full delivery of the English curriculum. Governors do not have a regular programme for the systematic review and updating of school policy documents.
53. The school's finances are managed and monitored effectively and efficiently. Spending is in line with identified priorities, particularly remedying deficiencies in accommodation. A large contingency has been accumulated for this purpose. Best value principles are understood and applied well.
54. Although expenditure per pupil is high compared to national figures, given the below average socio-economic circumstances of the school, the below average attainment of pupils on entry, and their satisfactory achievements, the school provides satisfactory value for money.
55. The fact that the school is small poses particular constraints in regard to recruitment and deployment of teaching staff. There are 29 full time equivalent teaching staff, many of whom have been at the school for some considerable time, with some more recent appointments. While in many areas of the curriculum there is a good match of expertise to requirements, there is nevertheless a considerable amount of non-specialist teaching. An even greater amount is created by the adoption of the integrated Year 7 course where individual teachers teach up to four subjects. Some non-specialist teaching is perfectly adequate, but not all is satisfactory. There have been difficulties in recruitment and problems caused by long term illness, especially in English where current provision is poor with only two specialist teachers, one full time and one part-time, in permanent posts. Despite the best efforts of the headteacher and the local education authority, this situation has not been resolved, with a detrimental impact on pupils' learning in the subject. Long term illness is also causing some difficulties in history and French. Teachers often carry multiple management responsibilities in addition to their teaching load, which creates further pressures for staff. Professional development arrangements have been reviewed since the previous inspection. Some good support and induction is offered to new staff, especially those who are newly qualified. However, supply staff receive less support and induction and this impacts on their effectiveness.
56. Support staff complement the work of the teaching staff well. They have a positive effect on standards. Classroom support assistants, many of whom are very experienced, have been trained to support specific pupils with special educational



needs and do so very well. Good support is given by science and ICT technicians and by the learning resource and library technician. Administrative, caretaking and catering staff provide well for the needs of the school, although many are expected to fulfil other responsibilities as they arise.

57. The accommodation overall is satisfactory overall and, in most areas is sufficient to allow the curriculum to be delivered appropriately, but it has limitations. Most departments have adequate accommodation with, where necessary, specialist rooms, although some are small for the sizes of classes, which limits the teaching styles that can be adopted. There are good ICT facilities with two modern and well equipped rooms, with other ICT resources in the library and design and technology rooms. There are sufficient science laboratories, and one that has been recently refurbished provides very good facilities. The other two are due to be refurbished in the near future, as are the facilities in the design and technology area. There is a shortage of storage space in art. There is a shortage of space generally in music, which, coupled with the lack of sound proofing, results in unsatisfactory accommodation. Physical education has good playing fields and a new sports hall, though teaching time in the gym is reduced by examinations and school productions. Accommodation for special educational needs is unsatisfactory at present, small and cramped, but is in the process of being improved through the planned capital improvements programme which is underway. The dining room and office accommodation are currently being extended, and further improvements are planned. The committed caretaker and the team of cleaners take pride in their work and ensure that the building is in a good state of cleanliness every day, with little litter. Teaching rooms are well maintained with good displays and they provide welcoming and positive learning environments. The fabric of the buildings is in good condition.
58. The resources to support the curriculum are satisfactory and have a positive impact on pupils' learning. All subjects have at least adequate provision. Modern foreign languages and history are well resourced with good quality, relevant text books and a range of tapes, videos and CDs. Constructive budgeting in art supports the introduction of new courses and impacts positively on the breadth of the curriculum. There is a shortage of text books in geography. There are good ICT resources. The ratio of computers to pupils is good and in line with national expectations. In design and technology, there is a range of modern ICT resources for computer aided design and to support the curriculum in textiles. Resources for pupils with special educational needs are good and are used effectively.
59. The main school library is bright and attractive. It is staffed by a part-time librarian. There is an adequate stock of fiction and non fiction books, though there is a need to modernise the collections in some subjects such as religious education. Borrowing is popular with Year 7 pupils, but decreases as pupils grow older. Girls borrow books more frequently than boys but a programme has been established with a focus on fiction books to redress this imbalance. Pupils use the library during lunch time daily and before school and after school two days a week. There are 20 networked computers, which are heavily booked by a number of different departments.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

60. In order to improve the quality of education provided and the standards attained by pupils, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

(1) Improve the quality of teaching by:- (paragraphs 24 to 28)

- Taking steps to ensure that all lessons engage pupils' interest;
- Ensuring that activities demand more active involvement of pupils;
- Ensure that there is planning to meet the needs of pupils of all levels of prior attainment;
- Ensuring that the endings of lessons are used to consolidate pupils' learning;
- Where necessary, improving the management of pupils' behaviour.

(2) Improve evaluation and monitoring by:- (paragraph 51)

- Establishing comprehensive procedures for monitoring and evaluating all aspects of practice;
- Ensuring that all managers are involved as appropriate;
- Ensuring that strengths identified are shared and built upon;
- Ensuring that action is taken to tackle specific and general weaknesses.

(3) Improve assessment and the analysis and use of performance data by:- (paragraphs 45-46)

- Ensuring that appropriate assessment procedures are carried out in a consistently effective manner across all subjects;
- Ensuring that there is more use of data from the tracking of pupils' progress;
- Ensuring that there is comprehensive analysis of performance data at both senior and middle management levels;
- Ensuring that information gained from all of the above is used to promote an improvement in standards.

(4) Improve provision and standards in:-

(i) English, by (paragraphs 61-71)

- Taking further action to ensure a full complement of specialist staff;
- Ensuring that effective arrangements are in place for the management of the subject;
- Improving curriculum planning to ensure that a cohesive course which meets all statutory requirements is in place;
- Improving the quality of teaching and learning;
- Improving arrangements for the assessing of pupils' work and progress;
- Ensuring adequate monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of arrangements.

(ii) history, by:- (paragraphs 126-129)

- Ensuring a wider range of teaching strategies are used;
- Strengthening and developing the range of behaviour management strategies employed;
- Improving the provision for history in Year 7;
- Improving the management of the subject, including ensuring that clear priorities and plans for improving provision are in place;
- Ensuring appropriate monitoring and evaluation of teaching and provision.

In addition to the above key issues for action, there are a number of less significant areas for development that governors may wish to include in the action plan: -

- Improving the delivery of the subjects within the integrated course in Year 7; (paragraph 29)
- Ensuring a more efficient use of time at the start of the school day. (paragraph 23)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	138
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	52

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	22	56	47	10	1	1
Percentage	1	16	40	34	7	1	1

*The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Percentages are rounded to the nearest integer and may not total 100.*

### Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Y7 – Y11
Number of pupils on the school's roll	485
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	51

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Y7 – Y11
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	22
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	83

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.6
National comparative data	7.8

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	1.2

*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	2002	52	38	90

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	30	41	40
	Girls	26	31	25
	Total	56	72	65
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	62 (71)	80 (75)	72 (73)
	National	66 (64)	67 (66)	66 (66)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	21 (26)	50 (40)	34 (33)
	National	32 (31)	45 (43)	33 (34)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	27	45	33
	Girls	24	30	25
	Total	51	75	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	57 (68)	83 (75)	64 (70)
	National	67 (65)	70 (68)	67 (64)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	16 (24)	47 (36)	34 (19)
	National	32 (31)	44 (42)	34 (33)

*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	2002	49	53	102

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	20	47	47
	Girls	26	53	53
	Total	46	100	100
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	45 (42)	98 (97)	98 (100)
	National	50 (48)	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	39.9
	National	39.8

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

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	483	7	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	0	0

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

### ***Financial information***

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	29
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16.75

#### **Education support staff: Y7 – Y11**

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	308

#### **Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y11**

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	80%
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#### **Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y11**

Key Stage 3	25.25
Key Stage 4	18.96

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

Financial year	2001/02
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	£
Total income	1,426,414
Total expenditure	1,309,717
Expenditure per pupil	2,717
Balance brought forward from previous year	180,497
Balance carried forward to next year	297,193

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	10.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	9.5

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*



## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

**Questionnaire return rate 17.5%**

Number of questionnaires sent out	485
Number of questionnaires returned	85

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	34	54	6	4	2
My child is making good progress in school.	46	49	4	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	52	4	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	62	9	1	1
The teaching is good.	41	56	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	54	8	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	28	6	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	27	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	32	56	7	1	4
The school is well led and managed.	64	35	0	1	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	52	42	4	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	38	48	8	0	6

Percentages are rounded to the nearest integer and may not total 100.

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

### ENGLISH

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

#### Strengths

- Resources are good.
- Pupils with weak literacy skills and special educational needs are well served.

#### Areas for improvement

- Standards are too low and achievement is unsatisfactory.
- Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory.
- The quality of pupils' curriculum is unsatisfactory.
- Plans to guide teaching are unsatisfactory and fail to provide a cohesive course.
- There is insufficient monitoring and evaluation to the work of teachers and pupils.

61. The national test results for pupils aged 14 in 2002 were below average when compared to all schools and below average when compared to similar schools. This level of attainment in 2002 represents both a decrease since 2001 and lower standards than at the previous inspection. Current standards for pupils aged 14 are inconsistent across teaching groups but are generally below and in some groups well below average. There has been a narrowing of the difference in attainment between boys and girls.
62. Standards in speaking and listening are well below average for pupils aged 14. There were few examples of good practice. In one such lesson on *Skellig* by David Almond, the skilful teacher questioning encouraged pupils to discuss the description of the characters. As a result pupils were able to explain extracts from the text. However the majority of pupils have limited opportunities to discuss and share ideas. Standards in reading are below average at the age of 14. A range of factors influence standards in reading. There is no cohesive strategy for pupils to record and reflect upon their reading. Reading progress is not monitored effectively and underachievement in reading is not identified early enough. There is limited documentation for Years 7 to 9 which does not outline how pupils' reading skills will be developed. Reading resources are good but insufficient use is made of reading whole texts. There is too much of a focus on using commercially produced extracts, which are inappropriate for one third of pupils. Lower attaining pupils are able to develop reading confidence through a paired reading scheme, when older pupils volunteer to support less experienced readers. Participation in this scheme results in good gains in reading, although progress is not monitored.
63. Standards in writing are below average at age 14. Pupils generally write short, immature responses, which are frequently marred by grammatical and spelling errors. In some classes pupils write in a variety of styles and are producing short creative pieces which are good. There is little evidence of extended pieces of writing or of personal responses to literature, however. Standards are inconsistent and are weaker in classes taught by non-specialist or supply teachers. In these classes the tasks fail to ensure that pupils build on earlier experience and make continuous, steady progress, nor do they cover National Curriculum requirements. There is much evidence of unconnected worksheets and tests but little else. As a result little learning has taken place and pupils' attitudes to the subject have become disaffected.

64. In 2002, English language GCSE results were below average for all schools although they were above average for similar schools. Girls significantly outperform boys. The trend over the last three years has been steady. In 2002, English literature GCSE results were well below average for all schools nationally. Girls significantly outperformed boys. The evidence from the inspection is that current standards are not high enough, being well below average overall.
65. Standards in speaking and listening at age 16 are below average and inconsistent between groups. Most pupils are prepared to sit passively and allow the teacher to do the talking; this is a direct result of lack of planning for speaking and listening activities in pupils' work. Standards in reading at age 16 are below average. Pupils' reading experience is almost entirely dependent on teacher input and this is variable across groups. In one very good lesson, pupils reading 'Presents from My Aunt' learned not only about the conventions of poetry but also about multicultural issues. Most pupils do not read for pleasure nor do they borrow books from the library or use web sites regularly for research. Where media texts are used as in the work on 'Private Ryan', pupils respond well using appropriate media terminology. Overall there is little evidence of pupils reading around a topic, or of independent exploration of a text. The study of literature is stilted and narrowly focused on plot and character and assignments limit the opportunity for empathetic and sensitive analysis. The teaching of analytical and critical skills remains a weakness particularly in the Shakespeare assignment where language is not analysed effectively.
66. At age 16 the standards of pupils' writing is well below average. The writing is entirely focused on GCSE coursework outcomes but does not demonstrate redrafting skills. This focus on the outcome rather than the process leaves writing unextended, immature and pedestrian. Higher attaining pupils are left unchallenged and fail to demonstrate their full potential; there is little evidence of independent learning. Commercially produced worksheets and dictated notes both indicate too much reliance on teachers. Where carefully structured writing activities are used effectively, as in a lesson on the poem 'Stealing' by Carol Ann Duffy, pupils were able to produce effective analytical notes which led to high quality writing. However, in many groups, common errors in spelling and grammar affect the creativity and clarity of the writing. The effect of this is compounded in some groups by ineffective marking. The standard varies between groups; underachievement can be traced back to staffing changes. Three quarters of the cohort has been thus affected and are achieving grades much lower than those predicted.
67. Currently, the majority of pupils do not make enough progress by the age of 14 and their achievement overall is unsatisfactory. Pupils' achievement at the age of 16 in both English language and literature is unsatisfactory. The achievement of pupils at both 14 and 16 represents a significant decrease on last years. Pupils' achievement at 16 varies across teaching groups. In only one group are pupils achieving in line with their predicted grades, while in all others they are seriously underachieving. This is directly related to severe staffing problems. However, pupils identified as having special educational needs are well supported and achieve well.
68. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall. The headteacher and the local education authority have worked hard to solve the staffing crisis but inconsistencies and weaknesses in teaching remain which have a direct impact on pupils' learning. Planning is unsatisfactory for pupils in Years 7 to 9. The Year 7 integrated programme does provide a little focused teaching and pupils are making satisfactory progress in these lessons. However, the planning for Year 7 does not include recent national initiatives and much of the work is repeated again in Year 8. Weak planning has compounded the lack of continuity and progression between groups and fails to

provide a cohesive and comprehensive framework to support the work of all teachers in the department, the majority of whom are non-specialists. During the inspection some good and some very good lessons were observed being taught by the school's remaining specialist teachers of English and by local education authority specialist teachers who were covering the vacancies. In these lessons expectations were high and pupils were challenged by stimulating materials. In a Year 9 lesson on *Macbeth*, a range of audio-visual materials ensured high levels of motivation. In this lesson the brisk pace and challenging materials motivated and inspired pupils and good gains in learning took place. In lessons where teachers build up the learning in steps and demonstrate techniques in writing as one did in a Year 11 lesson where pupils studying the poem 'I wanna be Yours', pupils gained confidence in the manipulation of language and made very good progress.

69. A significant group of pupils misbehave in lessons and this is a major cause of underachievement. There is a direct link between very good attitudes and very good teaching. A good example was in a lesson on *Macbeth* where pupils' attitudes were positive and businesslike, as a result of very carefully structured teaching.
70. There is no consistent approach to day to day marking despite a school policy. Some teachers offer lengthy diagnostic comments whilst others simply tick the work. The good practice of sharing assessment criteria with pupils was only seen in one group. This means pupils do not fully understand how well they are learning and what they need to do to improve. There is no evidence of the use of previous assessment data to influence lesson planning and this is a contributory factor to underachievement in many groups. Homework is set and marked regularly in some classes but the homework that pupils do is seldom of a high enough quality to extend learning.
71. The management of the English department is currently unsatisfactory. At the time of the inspection, the subject co-ordinator was on long term absence and a scheme of work had just been put in place by the local education authority. There is no evidence of a cohesive departmental scheme of work having been used for several years. Assessment is inconsistent between groups and although the headteacher has monitored some teachers the whole process of monitoring and evaluating the work of the department is unsatisfactory. Although the English specialist is hard working and dedicated and has worked extra hours with pupils, much of this additional teaching has been directed towards improving examination outcomes and attempting to compensate for the lack of a broad based, quality curriculum. There are insufficient English specialists in the department, which puts considerable pressure on the only full time teacher to provide extensive support, both for academic work and behavioural management. The school has done everything possible to recruit and retain high quality teachers. The current situation severely limits any opportunities for developmental work. Improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory overall.

## **LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM.**

72. The school was part of the pilot scheme for literacy. Since then all staff have been trained in the National Literacy Strategy and all departments have completed the National Literacy Strategy audit.
73. Standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory. The best oral work was observed in science and mathematics. However, in religious education and English there were too few opportunities for speaking and listening activities beyond the response to questioning and so these skills remained underdeveloped.

74. Standards of reading are satisfactory. There is little evidence of pupils reading beyond their courses. They read with a satisfactory level of understanding both literal and inferential. They are able to select, retrieve and edit information. The best examples were seen in religious education where skills of skimming and scanning were used successfully to interrogate ICT texts. However there is no whole school strategy for reading and apparently no method of monitoring reading progress for all pupils.
75. Standards in writing vary across subject areas but are generally satisfactory. Most subject areas have technical vocabulary displayed to assist the pupils' spelling. The best examples of these were in English and history. The use of writing frames to support pupils' work were reported in geography and English. In geography the work on coastal erosion produced writing of extremely high quality.
76. The presentation of pupils' work is very variable. In the best examples the pupils obviously take a pride in their work and take time to word-process pieces at home in order to improve presentation.

## MATHEMATICS

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

### Strengths

- Teaching and learning are good.
- The use of ICT to enhance learning is good.
- Leadership is very good and teachers are hard working and committed.
- Relationships in lessons between teachers and pupils and between the pupils are good.

### Areas for improvement

- Test and examination results at the end of Year 11 are not high enough.
- The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are not comprehensive and good practice is not always shared.

77. Standards of attainment in the national tests at the end of Year 9 in 2002 were above the national average and well above the average for both similar schools and when compared with the prior attainment of the pupils. Results in these tests have shown a significant improvement over the last few years. There was little difference in the performance of boys and girls. Standards of work seen in lessons and in the pupils' books at the end of Year 9 during the inspection are above the expected level for many pupils. Higher attaining pupils could draw graphs of some equations with good levels of accuracy but the lower attaining pupils had difficulty representing graphs because the axes were not always correctly drawn. Some investigations and problem solving exercises were helping the pupils' understanding. The connection between fractions, decimals and percentages was well understood by most pupils.
78. In GCSE examinations in 2002 the proportion of pupils gaining A\*-C grades was below the national average. The proportion gaining A\*-G grades was in line with the national figures. Boys and girls performed equally well. The standards of work of pupils aged 16 seen during the inspection are at the expected level. Year 10 pupils were able to draw a diagram to show all the possible outcomes in a situation and use this diagram well to answer questions on probability. Year 11 pupils were able to accurately tabulate data using a spreadsheet and then find a general formula for a pattern of numbers. The reason for current standards being higher than the 2002 examination results is due to the positive impact of aspects of the Numeracy Strategy being adopted in the teaching of pupils in Years 10 and 11.

79. Pupils enter the school with results just below the national average. Achievement by the majority of pupils at the end of Year 9 is good. At the end of year 11, achievement is satisfactory. There is little gender difference in achievement. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
80. Teaching is good overall, although the quality in individual lessons ranges from excellent to satisfactory. Good or better teaching was seen in about four fifths of the lessons and there was no unsatisfactory teaching seen. Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives which are shared with pupils. In the best lessons seen, the teachers had high expectations of the pupils, the pace was good and a variety of tasks had been prepared to challenge the pupils. In an excellent lesson seen with a high attaining Year 8 group, the pupils were able to accurately work out the connection between the gradient of perpendicular lines because of the very good questioning and the good use of the interactive whiteboard to plot the suggested graphs rapidly. In a low attaining Year 8 group, the pupils were able to represent data well on a variety of statistical diagrams and given the diagrams they could interpret the data because of the very good planning and teaching. In a Year 7 lesson, the pupils' understanding of transformation geometry was consolidated by a well-planned lesson using the computers. This lesson also incorporated revision of the equations of straight lines and representation of coordinates. Some good starter exercises were seen, for example, a Year 10 group were solving a problem of the most probable scores on a fairground roller ball game.
81. The endings of lessons were generally not so well focused, with pupils' learning not always appropriately consolidated. Teachers make effective use of questioning, encouraging pupils to explain their answers and solutions to the rest of the class. Where teaching was less good the pace and challenge of the work were usually insufficient.
82. As a result of effective teaching, most pupils acquire knowledge of basic skills and concepts which enable them to work on their own to improve their understanding. Literacy skills are improved by the good displays of key words, the insistence of teachers on the use of correct mathematical language and the good oral work in lessons. Most pupils have a positive attitude to mathematics and behave well in lessons and relationships between pupils and with the teachers are good. The quality of homework set is variable, as is the quality of marking. Some marking is informative and designed to help the pupils make progress, while some is too superficial.
83. The mathematics curriculum is satisfactory and meets the statutory requirements. The department is responding very positively to the National Numeracy Strategy which is raising standards though more work needs to be done to share good starting and finishing exercises in lessons. The department handbook and schemes of work are good working documents. Assessment procedures are good and test and examination data are well used to track pupils' progress and set targets throughout their time in school. Pupils are becoming more aware of the National Curriculum levels they are working at. Some good use of the computers was seen in lessons. New text-books are providing a valuable resource.
84. There are good links with feeder primary schools where numeracy work and some locally prepared numeracy tests are shared. The good quality local numeracy tests are then continued in all years in the school. These tests provide good motivation.
85. Leadership and management of the mathematics department are very good. The department is made up of enthusiastic, hard working and committed teachers.

Teachers have a secure grasp of the subject and its requirements. More rigorous monitoring and evaluation and sharing of good practice are now needed to improve standards further.

86. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Teaching and resources have improved. Attainment in the tests at the end of Year 9 has improved. The National Numeracy Strategy is raising standards and the lesson structure recommended is now being used in some lessons in Years 10 and 11. There is now a greater variety of teaching strategies used in all years.

## **NUMERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM**

87. Pupils' standards of numeracy overall are at the expected level. The school is responding positively to the National Numeracy Strategy by involving all departments in action to improve numeracy. The development of pupils' numerical skills forms a specific and increasing aspect of the mathematics curriculum. Most mathematics lessons in all years adopt the three part lesson structure recommended by the strategy. This is helping to increase the level of skill and confidence with number.
88. Members of the mathematics department led a training session for all members of staff on the details of the National Numeracy Strategy. Where pupils need to use number in other subjects of the curriculum, teachers are reinforcing the skills necessary to enable them to do so adequately. For example, in science pupils in all years could draw accurate graphs and analyse and interpret data satisfactorily. In Years 10 and 11 pupils could change the subject of a formula with accuracy. In design and technology the pupils could draw graphs, analyse data and measure accurately and well. A coursework project in geography on the modernisation of Scunthorpe used data collection and graph drawing skills. In ICT and modern foreign languages, pupils analysed and interpreted data effectively. The monitoring of the teaching of numeracy skills for pupils with special educational needs is not undertaken. It is clear, however, that most pupils are transferring their mathematical learning to assist their learning in different subjects. The school is now well placed to continue to make improvements in this area.

## **SCIENCE**

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

### **Strengths**

- Pupils achieve well in science.
- Arrangements for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress are good.
- The curriculum is well planned, particularly in Years 7 to 9.
- The use of ICT is well integrated into the teaching programme.

### **Areas for improvement**

- Teaching is not monitored systematically enough.
- Teachers do not consistently plan for an effective plenary session to review learning objectives.
- Inappropriate pupil behaviour is not always successfully challenged, and pupils are not always fully engaged in lessons.

89. The results in the national tests at the end of Year 9 in 2002 were in line with the national average. They were also average when compared with schools with similar free school meals, but above average in comparison with schools with similar prior

attainment. Boys and girls performed equally well in the tests. Results have shown an upward trend over recent years.

90. Standards of work seen during the inspection at the end of Year 9 reflect the test results and are in line with national expectations. Higher attaining pupils have good understanding of electricity and electrical circuits. They know how electricity is generated and appreciate the various pollution issues related to the use of conventional fuels, and of the need to exploit alternative energy sources. However, many are not aware of the local situation where proposals for a major wind farm are proposed. Lower attaining pupils understand how levers work and can identify several useful examples in everyday life, but their understanding of the relative forces involved is very limited.
91. The proportion of pupils gaining A\*-C grades in the 2002 GCSE examinations was in line with the national average, and virtually all pupils gained a grade in the examination. Boys and girls performed equally well. The results were much better than those in 2001 and have improved considerably since the previous inspection.
92. Pupils' work seen during the examination reflects the GCSE results and is in line with national expectations. Higher attaining pupils have sound understanding of atomic structure. They confidently handle chemical calculations involving molar quantities, and the laws of motion in physics. Lower attaining pupils know that light travels in straight lines, and can explain reflection with some assistance, but have limited understanding of refraction.
93. Pupils achieve well in Years 7 to 9. Standards of attainment in science on entry to the school are slightly below the expected level. The new scheme of work plans well for progression and regular assessment ensures that pupils' progress is well monitored. However the higher attaining pupils are not systematically challenged to strive for higher levels of work. Pupils develop sound practical skills and simple investigations are well planned and carried out. Year 9 pupils carried out a sound investigation of how the rate of photosynthesis varies with distance from a light source. Data handling skills are generally satisfactory, although lower attaining pupils are less confident in recording measurements and drawing appropriate graphs.
94. Pupils also achieve well in Years 10 and 11. Timetable arrangements enable the GCSE modules to be taught by specialist subject teachers to a large extent. Higher attaining pupils become more confident in discussing their work and their data handling skills in investigations are good. Lower attaining pupils are given very good support from teachers and classroom assistants. Work is suitably planned to enable them to gain a grade in line with their potential.
95. The quality of teaching overall is good. In half the lessons observed it was good or very good. One unsatisfactory lesson was seen. Teachers generally plan lessons well, although occasionally objectives are not very clearly defined in terms of specific learning outcomes. Starter sessions are usually effective but sometimes the time allocated to them is out of proportion to the contribution they make to overall learning. The most effective learning was observed when expectations were high, the level of pupil involvement was high, a variety of activities were planned and time was well planned. Year 7 pupils listed uses for five commonly used metals, reviewed previous work on the reaction of metals with acids, carried out more experiments to compare the reactivity of metals and shared results to reach clear conclusions. Each activity built on the one before and helped to consolidate pupils' learning. However, higher attaining pupils are not consistently presented with extension material in lessons to encourage them to broaden or extend their learning. Lower attaining pupils are



generally well provided for with appropriate tasks and a good range of activities in lessons. Pupils in Year 9 reviewed their knowledge of forces, watched a short video on the everyday uses of levers and developed the concept of turning power and efficiency through discussion of the video. Occasionally inappropriate pupil behaviour is not effectively challenged and all pupils are not therefore fully engaged in the learning experiences. Plenary sessions are often not given enough time to review the objectives and effectively assess pupils' learning.

96. The curriculum is well planned, particularly in Years 7 to 9. The new scheme of work provides a well-balanced programme. The development of investigative skills and the use of ICT are well integrated into the scheme. Arrangements for the assessment and monitoring of pupils' progress are good. The data collected is well used to set realistic and challenging targets for pupils which are regularly reviewed with them. A new laboratory provides very good facilities and two other laboratories are due for refurbishment in the near future. Resources are adequate and are very well managed by the technician.
97. The subject is well led. The coordinator has clear commitment to high standards. The national Key Stage 3 Strategy is being successfully implemented with an appropriate emphasis on the literacy and numeracy aspects of the subject, with opportunities for free writing on the lives and work of famous scientists and work on developing data handling skills. Arrangements for the regular and systematic monitoring of teaching are not fully effective and limit the further development of teaching.
98. There has been good improvement in the subject since the previous inspection. Standards in the national tests at the end of Years 9 and 11 have improved. The quality of teaching overall has improved and the monitoring of pupils' progress is proving very effective in enabling pupils to achieve well.

## ART AND DESIGN

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

### Strengths

- Teaching is of a consistently good quality.
- The curriculum is well-planned and structured.
- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The management of the subject is good.

### Areas for improvement

- Pupils' use of ICT across all years is under-developed.
- Three-dimensional studies in Year 7 to 9 are under-developed due to lack of space.

99. The teacher assessments for the end of Year 9 in 2002 indicate that standards matched national average. On the basis of work seen during inspection, standards in Year 9 also match national expectations. Pupils use sketchbooks well to develop ideas for design work, to record specialist art terms and to complete tasks set as homework. They make written evaluations of their work that are well completed by most pupils but are sometimes absent in the books of lower attaining pupils. A common weakness in the folders of lower attaining pupils is the amount of unfinished work. Pupils' design work is strong and good standards are often achieved. A limited range of techniques and materials are used, generally pencil, pen and ink and cut-paper collage. Three-dimensional skills are not sufficiently developed.

100. Results in the GCSE examination in 2002 for pupils gaining A\*-C and A\*-G were above the national average. The number entered was too small to make meaningful comparisons and recent results show a steady fall in the number of pupils entered and no clear trend in standards. However, the marked difference between the results for boys and for girls has narrowed considerably. On the basis of work seen during inspection, the standards that Year 11 pupils are currently achieving are in line with national expectations. Evidence from their folders of work indicates that in Year 10 they were achieving standards below expectations and that they have made significant improvement during Year 11. Their work completed in Year 10 demonstrated a limited range of techniques and very little development work. Final pieces were generally completed in paint. Their work in Year 11 is well structured and addresses all assessment criteria, with pupils achieving much higher standards. For example, pupils have been taught to work systematically from careful observations of plants, through design work examining the work of other artists, into a well-executed 3-colour lino print. Overall standards are average, and improving.
101. Achievement in Years 7 to 9 is satisfactory. Recently introduced and well-planned curriculum changes are resulting in basic skills being systematically taught and revisited through Years 8 and 9. Well-structured lessons and regular assessments ensure that boys' achievement is now similar to that of girls. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons, often with additional support staff, so that they also make satisfactory progress. Achievement in Years 10 to 11 is also satisfactory overall. It has been unsatisfactory previously, but the recent appointment of a new subject coordinator together with the significant improvements that have been made to the curriculum has lifted achievement, so that in lessons seen there was good progress. Achievement across all years is rising strongly.
102. The quality of teaching is consistently good and occasionally very good. Strengths include the careful planning of both units of work and individual lessons to support the achievement of all pupils. Lessons build on previous learning so that pupils can demonstrate understanding of new material and develop sound skills. Lessons often include several timed activities, which generates good pace and ensure that pupils are productive. For example, in a Year 9 lesson a design task was broken into a series of timed stages. By the end of the lesson all pupils had generated additional design work for their studies of Art Deco. High standards are set and pupils challenged to improve and refine their work. Regular detailed assessment monitors pupils' progress and identifies how pupils can improve. Homework is well used to extend and reinforce pupils' work. Weaknesses include missed opportunities to give tasks a real life context and increase pupils' interest. Also, pupils are sometimes insufficiently briefed about the nature and purpose of non-Western art at an early enough stage in their study of it.
103. The subject makes a good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. There are opportunities to work in mixed age groups in art sessions at lunchtimes and after school and to work collaboratively in groups in class. There are units of work based around the study of non-Western art and pupils study the work of major Western artists and art movements. The development of pupils' literacy is a focus of the work of the subject. Pupils record specialist vocabulary and write evaluations of their own work and commentaries about artists and their work. Lessons often include additional activities such as word search games to reinforce the vocabulary associated with the particular work. Numeracy is not a focus for development and pupils' use of ICT is at a very early stage, chiefly accessing information from the Internet.

104. A new subject co-ordinator has just been appointed and the management of the subject is good. There is a clear focus on the raising of attainment across all years. The art curriculum has been systematically re-planned and its implementation is being monitored. The staffing of the subject and the management of learning resources is good. While the teaching space is sufficiently large, light and attractive, its use as an additional technology space means that the storage is not wholly appropriate for art and this restricts the amount of three-dimensional studies that are attempted. Though the quality of teaching is good, the procedures to monitor and develop teaching are unsatisfactory. The time allocated for Years 7 to 9 varies from 45 minutes to 60 minutes and prevents equality of access for all pupils.

## CITIZENSHIP

Overall the quality of provision in citizenship is **satisfactory**.

### Strengths

- Good initial planning provides a comprehensive scheme of work.
- There is a strong emphasis on developing active citizenship through the fund raising and pupil organised activities.
- All teachers are involved in promoting the subject.
- A wide range of visitors provides specialist inputs to the curriculum.

### Areas for improvement

- Teaching and learning are not monitored.
- Assessment procedures are not fully developed.
- There has not been enough training for the teaching of the subject.
- Priorities for the development of the subject have not yet been identified.

105. This is a new subject and there are no external measures available for assessing standards. Nevertheless, inspection evidence indicates that standards are broadly average at the end of Year 9. Pupils have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of becoming informed citizens through the study of the human rights, crime and the law and local democracy modules. The subject is taught in the tutor groups and there are opportunities for all pupils to contribute appropriately in active group work, paired work and through presentational activities. There is evidence of pupils researching and reflecting upon citizenship issues. Pupils give thoughtful responses to the issues of youth crime and its impact, particularly on families. Understanding of the European Union is approached from the standpoint of pupils' own experiences in Europe. Pupils are encouraged to become active citizens through the elections to the School Council, through an extensive programme of fund raising for charity and through planning for a cross curricular day. Standards are broadly average at the end of Year 11. Year 10 pupils, for example, study how the parliamentary system works and this is developed in year 11 with a study of European laws.
106. Achievement at the ends of Year 9 and Year 11 is satisfactory, and there is no significant difference between boys and girls or between different groups of pupils. There are adequate opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills through the subject and there are satisfactory opportunities for using ICT to develop project work. Some good examples of project work are on display around the school.
107. Overall teaching and learning are satisfactory, although there is a range from satisfactory to very poor. In the majority of the lessons, teachers are adequately prepared for teaching and developing citizenship themes. Opportunities are provided

to ensure that Year 7 pupils discuss the role of the police in protecting society. In another lesson, word searches enable pupils to identify key terms and this approach enables a good understanding of juvenile offences to be developed. Some teachers have a good knowledge of the topics but this is not uniform. Some classes work from clear lesson objectives that are shared with pupils and the pupils are challenged and encouraged to reflect upon their own experiences of human rights and to develop their understanding through effective group work. In other lessons pupils are not challenged sufficiently either through the level or pace of work and as a result some pupils become demotivated. In the very poor lesson there was inadequate curriculum support for the teacher who was unfamiliar with the material and this had an adverse impact both on the learning and on the attitudes and behaviour of the pupils.

108. Currently some year coordinators have been trained to deliver the initiative but teachers have not. Although some classroom observations have taken place, there is no planned programme for monitoring the teaching and learning processes to ensure that the team of teachers have the necessary support and guidance to improve practice. The pupils' learning is not currently being reviewed or evaluated to ensure that changes and improvements are incorporated into future curriculum provision. A good range of external speakers has supported the pupils' learning including a member of the European parliament, local politicians and representatives of the police and prison services.
109. A subject audit was carried out last year which enabled the year coordinators with the deputy head teacher to devise a comprehensive scheme of work for this year. The citizenship curriculum is being effectively delivered in conjunction with the personal, social, health and citizenship education programme. The full curriculum has been developed and it provides a good range of experience for pupils across the five years, although resources, particularly book resources, are still being developed. Currently there is no agreed budget, nor is there a development plan for the next stage of the development. Progress this year will be reviewed late in the summer term but the resulting actions have not yet been built into a future planning cycle. Some progress has been made with establishing an assessment strategy. Pupils evaluate their own work at the end of each module and work is assessed to three levels, although action to ensure the accuracy of assessments has not yet taken place. The marking of work does not yet fully follow this scheme. The leadership and management of the subject are shared and there has been a satisfactory response to the introduction of the subject into the curriculum.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

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

### Strengths

- The quality and range of the curriculum are good.
- There are appropriate priorities for developing the subject.
- There is regular marking of pupils' work and recording of grades.

### Areas for improvement

- The achievement of girls is not as good as would be expected.
- The pace of learning in some lessons is too slow.
- The use of ICT in Years 7 to 9 is under-developed.
- There is insufficient analysis of assessment information.
- Standards in resistant materials are not high enough.

110. The National Curriculum assessments at the end of Year 9 in 2002 were below the national average. Current standards at the end of Year 9 are also below national expectations, although they vary in different parts of the curriculum. Design work is below the national average overall. The design projects of higher attaining pupils in particular are underdeveloped because they lack appropriate detail and do not follow the format of a complete design process. Making skills are better and are average. The pupils learn to cut and shape cardboard, wood, acrylic, fibreboard, metals and food and can therefore apply their skills across a good range of materials. Pupils demonstrated average levels of skill when making three dimensional shapes from paper.
111. GCSE results in food technology and graphics in 2002 were in line with the national average. Only one pupil took the examination in textiles and gained a good grade, although the results in the previous year were below average. However, the results in resistant materials in 2002 were below average. Results vary considerably from year to year depending on the specific pupils taking the examination, but in 2002 all pupils gained a grade in the 'A\*' to 'G' range. Current standards at the end of Year 11 are average in food, graphics and textiles. Pupils can communicate through drawing and explanation and their designs are suitably complex. In coursework in these subjects, the design work seen was generally line with expectations. Flowcharts are used and survey results are displayed graphically. Resistant materials coursework was below average due to lack of sufficient detail such as explanations of an appropriate length. Pupils' ability to use ICT in their design and technology work is under-developed as it is little used in Years 7 to 9.
112. On entry to the school pupils' technological skills and knowledge are below national expectations. The standards pupils attain at the end of Years 9 and 11 represent satisfactory levels of achievement overall. Pupils acquire skills and understanding rapidly in Year 7 as they meet new tasks in technology. The use of workbooks is effective at this stage to provide structure to their drawing and writing tasks. Whilst continuing to develop a variety of skills in Years 8 and 9, design work is not always sufficiently well structured to provide a clear idea of the design process. All pupils continue to study a chosen technology subject in Years 10 and 11. Their achievement is satisfactory overall, but they achieve well when working on their final design project. Achievement in resistant material is less strong than in other areas because coursework is underdeveloped. Although girls' and boys' actual results at GCSE are similar, girls perform less well than boys relative to the national picture and achieve less well.
113. Teaching and learning in all years are satisfactory overall, although they range from unsatisfactory to good in individual lessons. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding in their specialist areas, but are sometimes less confident when they teach in other areas. Planning is generally good, although there are occasions when a lack of variety of tasks cause pupils to lose interest. Support staff, when present to help specific pupils, contribute well to the progress of others, as they did for example in a Year 8 textiles lesson. Basic literacy is reinforced by starter tasks that often test pupils' knowledge of keywords. The setting of homework at the beginning of a lesson emphasises the importance of extending working time. Some tasks, such as building house structures with straws, provided an enjoyable and effective challenge for pupils working in small groups. Most pupils have a satisfactory attitude to the subject, and they respond well to practical work. Girls in an all female textiles lesson were particularly motivated. However some pupils in resistant materials are less well motivated and this reflects in the quality of their coursework. Pupils generally show respect for their peers but are sometimes too casual with their teachers. The behaviour of some pupils is challenging, particularly in Year 9. In one lesson, some

Year 9 pupils were uncooperative and wasted time, resulting in the pace of learning being too slow. Pupils' learning skills and application improve rapidly as coursework deadlines approach.

114. The curriculum provides a broad range of opportunities for technological learning through the subjects of graphics, resistant materials, textiles and food technology. The schemes of work meet National Curriculum requirements, although the area of control technology is insufficiently developed. The length of lessons occasionally restricts practical work and sustained coursework in Year 11. The technology curriculum is broadened by a manufacturing course available to Year 10 and 11 pupils, which involves some attendance at a local college. This course involves the casting of small jewellery items in pewter using a computer controlled engraver, with good results evident. Some pupils enter an annual engineering challenge and this year won second prize. The curriculum in food increases pupils' awareness of cultural differences.
115. Assessment is satisfactory, with pupils' work marked regularly and a comprehensive recording system in place, although grades for pupils do not clearly enough distinguish between attainment and effort or record behaviour and response to homework. There is not enough analysis of assessment data.
116. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The coordinator has ensured that appropriate schemes of work are in place. Policies are being established to promote consistency in each of the technology areas and there is good communication between members of the team. Appropriate priorities for improving the subject have been identified, including the need for refurbishment of teaching rooms. The accommodation is barely satisfactory. Although there has been recent improvement in facilities for resistant materials, the textiles room is too small and seriously restricts teaching styles. Storage space is inadequate. Complete modification is planned for the near future, however. The ICT room is underused at present and would benefit from some modification to improve visibility within the room. Learning resources are now satisfactory after recent additions and replacements. There are sufficient appropriately qualified staff to teach all areas of the technology curriculum, due to the flexibility of teachers, some of whom are able to teach several technology subjects. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory, and health and safety issues have improved considerably since then.

## GEOGRAPHY

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

### Strengths

- Boys' GCSE examination results have improved.
- Starter activities in lessons are stimulating and lesson summaries are good.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- Pupils respond well to good class management.

### Areas for improvement

- Standards in examinations are not high enough.
- Marking is not consistent between classes and does not always provide sufficient guidance for improvement.
- Monitoring of teaching is not frequent enough.

117. In 2002 teacher assessments of standards in geography at the end of Year 9 were below the national average. Current standards at the end of Year 9 are also below average. From the lessons observed and the work seen, a good range of geographical skills are introduced. For example, in Year 7, pupils conducted a geographical enquiry into their class's holiday habits. This work included geographical descriptions, graphs and cross-sections. By Year 9 many pupils still find an atlas difficult to use effectively, although higher attaining pupils have developed competent mapping skills and a good knowledge and understanding of geography. They can describe, for example, the attractions and problems of tourism in Venice. Higher attaining pupils are also beginning to appreciate the connections between human and political issues and can write well on these issues. They completed some interesting and demanding population studies in China and Brazil. Pupils of average attainment continue to find it difficult to measure scale and make too little progress because their work is insufficiently structured to match their individual needs.
118. GCSE results in 2002 were near to the national average for grades A\*-C and all pupils attained a grade from A\*-G. The boys' results had improved from the previous year. They completed their coursework more thoroughly than previously and attended revision classes. There was little difference between the results of girls and boys. In 2001 GCSE results were well below the national average. Pupils who were entered the higher tier paper all gained A\*-C grades but those following the foundation paper did less well than expected. A large proportion missed a higher grade by a very small margin. In previous years results fluctuated and they have declined since the last inspection.
119. Current standards achieved by pupils towards the end of Year 11 are average. Pupils acquire appropriate knowledge and understanding of geographical information, concepts and skills. For example, pupils demonstrate a very clear knowledge and understanding of renewable and non-renewable resources to compare sources of power. Higher attaining pupils, particularly girls, emphasise the advantages of clean air from wind power. Lower attaining boys describe the impact of wind turbines on the quality of life for farmers. Pupils prepare written notes and then give confident oral presentations in favour or against change. There are good examples of extended writing. Work on coastal erosion produced writing of extremely high quality. The lessons on wind power installations produced powerful, persuasive writing. ICT is used in GCSE coursework although not extensively.
120. Pupils enter the school with below average standards in Year 7, and the standards they attain by the end of Year 9 and 11 demonstrate satisfactory levels of achievement overall given their prior attainment. However, lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well over time due to well focussed support.
121. Teaching is satisfactory overall. It was satisfactory or better in over nine out of ten lessons, with some good and very good lessons seen, although one lesson was unsatisfactory. In Years 10 and 11 in particular, teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and of examination requirements. Most lessons are well planned to include stimulating starter activities. Pupils respond well to good class management. They become rapidly engaged in the crisp lessons. For example, in a Year 9 lesson, pupils with special educational needs were encouraged to recall geographical terms during a short bingo session. Good and very good lessons are interesting, and often include worthwhile group activities. Generally, lessons conclude with a clear, emphatic summary of what has been learned. However, on occasions the teaching does not capture pupils' interest. The worksheet vocabulary is not well matched to the abilities of the pupils. Tasks are too open ended for pupils to achieve

as well as they should or there are insufficient copies of texts or resources for the below average pupils.

122. The leadership and management of the department are satisfactory. Schemes of work have been revised and responsibilities delegated for humanities in Year 7. However, there are not enough specialists in other subjects to deliver this course effectively. Teaching is not monitored sufficiently to allow all pupils to have a similar experience of learning. Marking and assessment is carried out regularly but this does not always include evaluative comments to explain how pupils could improve their work. Reports to parents in Year 7 are not subject specific. Target GCSE grades are estimated to be near the national average for A\*-C in 2003 but to achieve this boys and girls will need to exceed the improved standards of 2002.
123. Since the last inspection improvement has been satisfactory although GCSE results could be higher. Lessons are better planned. However, lesson materials need further review to meet the needs of all pupils.

## HISTORY

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

### Strengths

- There is a comprehensive range of fieldwork and local history opportunities.
- Increasing numbers are studying history in Years 10 and 11.

### Areas for improvement

- GCSE standards, especially at the higher grades, are not high enough.
- Teaching and provision are not monitored.
- A narrow range of teaching strategies is used.
- Behaviour management strategies are not effective in all lessons.
- The provision for history in Year 7 through the integrated course is not effective.

124. In 2002, teachers' assessments at the end of Year 9 indicate standards that are well below the national average. There is evidence that these assessments were a little harsh. The work seen during the inspection indicates that current standards are below national expectations rather than well below. By the end of Year 9, pupils develop a range of historical knowledge and skills, including the understanding of chronology, the handling of primary and secondary evidence and an appreciation of the impact of social and economic factors, but all to a lower level than expected. Pupils' understanding of, and ability to explain, the significance of events is often limited. For example, some pupils are able to discuss the impact of the holocaust on Jewish society but at a relatively superficial level. Others find it difficult to identify industrial entrepreneurs from a series of historical clues.
125. GCSE results in 2002 were well below the national average overall, although the proportion of pupils gaining A\*-G grades was a little higher than average. The proportion gaining A\* to C grades has declined for the last three years. Current standards are also well below average. Some pupils are able to identify relevant sources in the history of medicine paper, however others find it more difficult to use the sources accurately to analyse public health developments. Several pupils have found the introduction of the twentieth century German option an improvement on the previous syllabus, as their knowledge and understanding can build upon earlier learning in Year 9.



126. Pupils' achievement in history is unsatisfactory throughout the school. In Year 7 pupils are taught by non-specialist teachers. In some cases, their lack of specialist knowledge, coupled with a curriculum that is lacking in specific historical content and skills, means that pupils do not start off with a good enough grounding in the subject. By the end of Year 9 pupils have not acquired sufficient historical knowledge and their understanding and skills are not secure enough. Throughout Years 10 and 11, achievement remains unsatisfactory, although a recent change in the GCSE curriculum provided is increasing the interest and motivation of some pupils with signs of improving achievement. Pupils with special education achieve satisfactorily due to some good support from classroom support assistants.
127. Teaching is unsatisfactory overall, although it is better than this in some lessons. In the better lessons, teaching is based on secure knowledge and enthusiasm about the subject. This is communicated well to pupils. These lessons have probing and challenging questions with good opportunities for pupils to develop their enquiry skills. These lessons promote good progress through effective paired work and through group presentations, where pupils work well together. However, this good practice is seen in a minority of lessons. In other lessons, deficiencies in planning and classroom management result in unsatisfactory learning. Starter activities are too long, specific learning objectives are not clearly established and too little is expected of the pupils. Lessons are mainly teacher led with the majority of pupils contributing little, either orally or in written work. Pupils' progress in history is adversely affected by a significant minority of pupils who show little regard for their own learning and who disrupt the learning of the peers. Their unsatisfactory behaviour is not effectively managed. It results in a narrowing of the range of teaching activities and methods used, a limiting of the amount of pupil participation and a reduction in the time spent on developing pupils' historical learning.
128. The numbers studying history in Years 10 and 11 have steadily increased over the past four years and a higher number take the subject than the national average. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are promoted through the teaching of history, and ICT is used to assist pupils' learning.
129. Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory, as there has been a decline in the quality of teaching, pupil attitudes and examination standards. There have been some positive changes, however. The amount and range of fieldwork and visits have improved and a greater emphasis is given to local history sources. The range of artefacts and resources used have improved and the learning environment in the main history room has been enhanced. However, the development plan is not detailed enough. It does not identify all necessary priorities for developing the subject such as improving of the Year 7 provision, does not identify dates for implementation of actions to bring about improvement or indicate how progress in the subject will be reviewed. Teaching is not monitored sufficiently. The leadership and management of the department are unsatisfactory. There is not enough emphasis on tackling areas requiring development, particularly the improvement of standards and teaching.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Overall, the quality of provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

### Strengths

- The curriculum has been improved by the introduction of the National Curriculum ICT strategy in Years 7 and 8.
- Facilities and resources for ICT are good.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about using ICT.
- There is recognition of the areas that need development.

### Areas for improvement

- The school's strategy for ICT is not resulting in high enough standards.
- Aspects of management, such as monitoring teaching and support for the non-specialist teacher, are not strong enough.
- Assessment procedures, including individual target setting, are not fully established.
- Procedures for planning, teaching, managing and monitoring the effective delivery of cross curricular ICT are not adequate.

130. The National Curriculum teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 in 2002 indicate standards attained by pupils were below the national average. Evidence from lessons and work seen during the inspection indicate that current standards in Year 9 are well below average, and that the teacher assessments made in 2002 were inflated.
131. Year 7 pupils create satisfactory multi-media presentations about themselves and their families with text and appropriate graphics, adding sound where relevant. Although they are able to edit the presentations, they cannot fully explain why certain considerations are important to an adult audience. Year 8 pupils can present data from a spreadsheet in graphs, though without recognising that it is important that appropriate graphs are used and that they are easy to read. Year 9 pupils create a satisfactory sequence of instructions to control a ghost train ride on a fairground. They use a spreadsheet to structure the various stages in the ride and have extended the instructions to cope with more than one car on the train. They write instructions, but have not yet appreciated the need for precision in framing the sequence of the instructions. They do not fully understand how to programme the instructions to react to sensors, so as a result the programme does not run effectively.
132. In the short course GCSE examinations at the end of year 11 in 2002, the proportion of pupils gaining grades A\* - C was just below the national figures. Evidence from lessons and work seen during the inspection indicates that current standards are still below national expectations.
133. Year 10 pupils now have separate ICT lessons taught by an ICT specialist, but only for one fifth of the year. They can write a sequence of instructions to control a set of traffic lights, but these are not extended and do not include more advanced features. Year 11 pupils are not taught by ICT specialists, but prepare for the coursework element of the examination through a range of other curriculum subjects. They can create a database on second hand cars, but at a very low level. They can produce data capture forms which are merely a list of the fields in the database and would not be useable in a practical situation. They can undertake simple sorts and searches, but do not complete the full investigation. There is little evidence of modification and there is no validation or verification of data input. The work just meets the requirement of

the examination syllabus, but does not extend the pupils' appreciation of the use of ICT in a range of situations or their skills in using the more advanced features of software.

134. Since September 2002, all pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 have received one period a week of separate ICT, although Year 8 are not taught by an ICT specialist. Pupils enter the school with varied, though below average attainment, but in Years 7 and 8 now progress satisfactorily as a result of the introduction of the National Strategy for ICT. Year 9 pupils have not had a full entitlement to ICT, but are now catching up on missed opportunities, and their progress is satisfactory. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 work towards the requirements of the examination, but do not extend their knowledge and skills in the broader uses of ICT, so achievement overall is only satisfactory as standards are still below average expectations. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils. Numeracy skills are considered when dealing with spreadsheet issues, though pupils are not always expected to check that calculations actually produce reasonable results. Literacy skills are not well defined. There are no lists of subject specific words on classroom walls and spellcheckers are not well used.
135. Teaching and learning overall are just satisfactory, although one unsatisfactory lesson was seen. There are outline plans for all lessons. Teachers do not evaluate how well pupils have progressed in previous lessons, however, and rarely engage pupils in fruitful discussion of the lesson topic. They have a reasonable knowledge of the subject and set tasks which pupils can manage, but which only extend the pupils' knowledge and understanding of ICT to a limited extent. They do not always explain fully the task or question pupils to establish if they understand how to complete the task. Worksheets are provided, but they are not always appropriate to the topic or extensive in content. Pace of lessons is satisfactory and teachers generally manage pupils well, providing individual support, though there is little variation in classroom activities.
136. There is some assessment of progress in lessons, but no formal procedures for discussing, setting and monitoring individual pupil targets. Examination classes are given some indication of what they have to achieve but other pupils are not aware of how well they progress in sufficient detail. Marking is limited and does not guide pupils about how they can develop their work. Pupils are enthusiastic about using ICT. Behaviour is satisfactory or better, and there is a willingness to learn. They concentrate on tasks independently, but are ready to help each other. Most pupils can engage in class discussion and eagerly answer questions when given the opportunity. They have good relationships with teachers and enjoy the subject, which ensures they concentrate well.
137. There is wide use of ICT in other subjects, although the emphasis is placed on enhancing the presentation of the work of the pupils rather than extending their knowledge and skill in the subject itself. There is good practice in whole class teaching with the use of interactive white boards. Music and religious education offer pupils good experiences with the use of specialist software and internet research. Design and technology has a range of relevant equipment including smart boxes and computer controlled engraving devices, while science provides opportunities for pupils to undertake measurement and control. There is good use in data handling in mathematics. The level of ICT in other subjects is limited mainly to low level presentation skills. This use of cross curricular ICT ensures that statutory requirements are just met and pupils in all years have access to relevant experiences, although not necessarily at an appropriate level. ICT resources in the library are well used and the two specialist ICT rooms are booked by a number of departments.

138. There has been significant financial investment in the extension of ICT facilities and courses and the pupil to computer ratio is now broadly in line with the national expectations at 5:1. There are two networked rooms equipped with modern hardware and software. There are suites of computers in the library and in design and technology and good technician support to manage the large curriculum network. There is no departmental structure and the co-ordination and monitoring of teaching, assessment and progress are limited. The current leadership and management of ICT are satisfactory, although aspects of management, such as monitoring teaching and support for the non-specialist teacher are inadequate. Further significant developments are essential to ensure the management and delivery of good quality specialist and cross curricular ICT to raise standards at all levels.

## MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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

### Strengths

- Teaching of German is good.
- Pupils achieve well in German.
- Leadership is good.
- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' social and cultural development.

### Areas for improvement

- Standards in French are too low.
- Boys' achievement is still well below that of girls.
- Procedures for assessment are limited.
- Teaching is not monitored enough to share and develop good practice fully.

139. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 indicate that attainment in modern foreign languages is broadly average. Inspection evidence indicates that current standards are average in German at the end of Year 9, while current standards in French are below average. There has been some instability of staffing and long-term staff illness that has affected standards in French more than those in German.
140. By the end of Year 9, pupils answer questions about such topics as their families and pets, descriptions of people, types of entertainment and their daily routine. The majority of pupils can listen to and understand the language being taught. There is a tendency in some lessons, especially in French, for the teacher to repeat the instructions too often in English, and this lessens the effectiveness of this method of learning. Pupils answer questions in the foreign language and try hard with pronunciation. Examples of longer, more sophisticated conversations using a variety of language and a range of tenses are limited. Pupils develop their reading skills mainly through reading textbooks and worksheets to find the answers to questions. Most pupils understand simple authentic texts and use language dictionaries by the end of Year 9. In their written work a majority write short passages from memory. Higher attaining pupils in German write about the local area well and write letters to imaginary pen friends about their likes and dislikes. They are beginning to use a range of tenses and write accurately with good agreement of adjectives and correct order of words with tenses. It is this area of pupils' work that has been most affected by the instability of staffing in French, and standards of written work are lower in French than in German, especially for higher attaining pupils.

141. In the 2002 GCSE examinations, results at A\* to C were well below average in French. Results at A\* to G were slightly above average. Boys do significantly less well than girls in French examinations. Because pupils study either French or German as their main language in alternate years, there were only three pupils who took German in 2002. Three pupils were entered and all passed, with two at higher levels. This equates to an above average pass rate, but the numbers are too small to make meaningful comparisons. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are average in German at the end of Year 11. Standards in French are below average.
142. By the end of Year 11, pupils build on their understanding of topics covered in earlier years and add others such as buying clothes, parts of the human body, illnesses, the differences between French, German and English schools, and booking holidays. Most pupils carry out conversations with others confidently. They carry out clear conversations about booking into hotels and asking about facilities, for example. Most pupils write fairly accurately with correct tense, verb endings and agreement of adjectives. As a result of the amount of temporary teaching, standards of writing are lower in French than they are in German and this is the main difference between attainment in the two languages. In general pupils do not write at length with a range of styles to produce accounts, descriptions and stories and this limits opportunities for higher attaining pupils to develop more advanced writing.
143. Pupils achieve well in German and satisfactorily in French. Boys achieve less well than girls. Inspection evidence indicates that this gap is narrowing, especially in Years 7 and 8, as a result of a focus on teaching methods to improve boys' attainment. Higher attaining pupils do not achieve as well in writing in French because of more limited opportunities to develop individual writing styles. There are no other major differences across the four aspects of the subject. Pupils with special educational needs achieve in line with other groups of pupils. Evidence of this is seen in the good results achieved at A\* to G in GCSE examinations.
144. Teaching is good in German and satisfactory in French. One unsatisfactory lesson in French was observed during the inspection. Good class control is a feature of the vast majority of lessons, helped by the teachers being very clear about what they want pupils to learn, and a good range of activities that keep pupils' interest. There are a few pupils whose attitudes to work and behaviour are unsatisfactory and they are managed well in lessons so that there is no interruption to the work of others. The vast majority of pupils show good attitudes to work and behave well in lessons. There are good opportunities in lessons for pupils to work together, share and take turns. The previous inspection reported many lessons that were affected by poor class control and this has clearly improved since that time. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs has also improved since the previous inspection where insufficient support was reported. In the one unsatisfactory lesson the work was not sufficiently challenging and the pace was slow. Pupils spent a long time revising what it was clear they already knew. The teacher spoke too much English which reduced opportunities for pupils to listen to and understand the language being taught. Although pupils' work is regularly marked and corrected, there is limited use of this type of assessment to give pupils advice on how they can improve, or on the use of national curriculum levels for setting targets. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' literacy development. In lessons, careful attention is paid to spelling and grammar and pupils are encouraged to write accurately. Pupils use basic arithmetic to work out the cost of clothing and meals in Euros. They also carry out surveys of pupils' likes and dislikes that are recorded in graphs. This makes contribution to numeracy development. There is satisfactory use of computers for refining and editing work and for research through websites, and the subject is well resourced.

145. There are limited procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and this makes target setting and checking the progress of different groups of pupils more difficult. More monitoring and support of teaching is necessary to share and develop of good practice. Some teachers teach in a number of different rooms in different parts of the school. As a result time is lost and the teacher cannot carry essential equipment from room to room, thus restricting the teaching methods available. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' social and cultural development, strongly enhanced by trips to France and Germany and by connections with a school in Germany. The management of the subject is satisfactory. A new scheme of work is being developed and standards have held up well. There are still issues to be resolved. The subject coordinator has shown good leadership in maintaining standards through a period of some difficulty. She, and other members of the department, have given freely of their time to maintain standards in classes that have been taught mostly by supply teachers. The subject has made satisfactory progress since the previous inspection.

## MUSIC

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

### Strengths

- The profile of music within the school and the contribution it makes to the community are outstanding.
- There is some good teaching which motivates pupils and enables them to make good progress.
- The range of extra-curricular opportunities is very good.
- There is extensive provision for instrumental teaching.

### Areas for improvement

- Accommodation is inadequate for the scale of the department's work.
- The curriculum in Year 9 is less good than in other year groups.

146. Teacher assessments for Year 9 pupils in 2002 indicate standards above national expectations, but the quality of work seen during the inspection suggests that this judgement is a little inflated and that standards are about in line with national expectations. Pupils establish a sound base of knowledge and skill in Year 7. They learn to read musical notation and use it in well structured performance activities on keyboards; one seen was innovative, simulating a gamelan style ensemble piece. Performing and composing skills continue to develop. In Year 8, for example, pupils created a rhythmic collage piece related to a topic on African drumming. There is some loss of momentum and progression in Year 9, partly because some work loses a specifically musical focus. An example of this was when pupils were working on a jingle for an advertisement, when the music content was diluted by other considerations.
147. In 2002, results in GCSE examinations were above the national average. The current Year 11 pupils are working at an equally high standard. Most are performing to a standard at least equivalent to grade 5 of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music and this includes one girl with special educational needs. Within individual lessons pupils are given a variety of tasks. Secure subject knowledge and listening skills are being developed to enable pupils to respond critically to music they hear and in composition they learn to handle sounds creatively. There is a strong emphasis on independent learning and students respond positively and with maturity and develop their own learning independently.

148. In spite of some slowing of progress in Year 9, overall, pupils' achievement by the age of 14 is satisfactory. GCSE pupils achieve well in the three areas of the course. Computer software is assisting them to develop their composition skills as seen in some dance movements for instrumental ensembles. These pieces show that stylistic awareness and sense of structure are developing securely. All groups have access to the music curriculum, with boys and girls responding and achieving equally well overall. Pupils with special educational needs are effectively catered for and some achieve very well in music as they move through the school.
149. Teaching is good overall. Work is well prepared, varied and carefully matched to the needs of pupils. For example, a keyboard ensemble piece for Year 7 pupils has graded parts which enable all to participate, whatever their level of skill. In a Year 11 lesson, tasks that were closely related to the requirements of the listening examination paper were set by the teacher, and as a result, pupils were developing their skills systematically and developing their ability to respond analytically to the different kinds of music they were hearing. Music lessons maintain a strong practical focus and the teacher models performing skills well. The use of ICT interactive software in Year 7 helps motivate pupils and reinforce their learning. The quality of peripatetic woodwind and brass teaching is strong. In the last academic year three pupils achieved a standard equivalent to grade 8 of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music and two were preparing for external diplomas. Peripatetic string teaching is less successful; the pace of lessons and progress made by pupils is slow. Aural awareness is not cultivated and as a result intonation is weak.
150. Over the first three years the course includes a range of modules which are generally appropriate to the National Curriculum, though music from the British Isles, folk music and music from the western classical tradition is under represented and the Year 9 curriculum does not ensure that pupils develop their knowledge and skills sufficiently strongly. Pupils' work and progress are satisfactorily assessed.
151. The leadership and management of the department are very good. The subject coordinator makes a very significant contribution to maintenance and ongoing development of the strong and influential music tradition within the school. The extent to which pupils' music making is embedded in the corporate life of the school and the wider community is outstanding. This contribution is widely recognised and appreciated, not least for its impact on the personal development of pupils. The number of pupils receiving instrumental tuition is more than double the national average and pupils of all ages and abilities benefit from this free provision. As a result of pupils' increased musical competence and interest, there is a wide range of thriving extra-curricular activities. There is a high participation rate, and pupils perform well in these activities. The school's senior brass group is particularly successful, and achieves high standards. Players demonstrate tight rhythm, a cohesive sense of ensemble and obviously enjoy their music making together. A junior choir has been formed specifically for boys in order to encourage them to sing and develop their vocal skills. Singing is being developed through links with the Voices Foundation. A tutor visits the school regularly to conduct rehearsals and choral workshops.
152. There has been a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection apart from the accommodation which continues to be inadequate. The lack of space and soundproofing is a considerable impediment to the work of this successful department.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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

### Strengths

- The 2002 GCSE results are above the national average.
- Extra-curricular sport provides very good opportunities for all pupils, particularly the gifted and talented, to excel in school and beyond.
- Good links with local sports clubs and organisations enhance and extend pupils' attainment and progress.

### Areas for improvement

- Risk assessments in physical activities have not yet been completed.
- There is not enough monitoring and development of teaching to ensure the very best practice.

153. Pupils enter the school with below average levels of attainment in physical education. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 in 2002 indicate that current standards are average overall, and the work seen during the inspection confirms this.
154. By Year 9, standards are average in games. Most pupils demonstrate competence in a range of skills and understand the principles of play in invasion games. Many pupils develop more advanced skills and have a good understanding of rules and tactics. The performance of high attaining pupils is well illustrated by the Under 12 and Under 13 boys' football teams, which won the North Lincolnshire Schools' Football Championships, and the Under 14 girls' hockey team, which is currently at the top of the North Lincolnshire Schools' Hockey League. Standards in gymnastics are below average. Year 8 boys show that they understand the terms body tension and extension, and most pupils demonstrate good control in a balance. Low attaining pupils and a severely disabled pupil take pride in performing a simple partner balance well. Pupils' progress in planning, evaluating and improving their own and others' performance varies, depending on which class they are in. These skills are under developed, as reported in the previous inspection. Pupils' literacy skills develop well when they focus on key words and discuss their understanding of performance, but this is not always the case.
155. The 2002 GCSE results were above the national average, and all pupils gained a grade A\*-G. These results are a significant improvement on those gained in 2001. Additionally, a group of ten pupils, half from Year 10, all gained A\* - C grades in the GCSE short course examination, which they took as an extra-curricular activity.
156. By Year 11, standards in the core National Curriculum course are average. Most pupils know how to warm up before exercise, and they can do this independently. High attaining pupils can name the muscles they are stretching. Sound learning continues in team games, where pupils show that they have mastered the basic skills and tactics of invasion games, well illustrated by girls in hockey and boys in football. Standards in GCSE practical coursework are above average, and Year 11 pupils, preparing for their badminton moderation, apply their knowledge, skills and understanding of rules and tactics, effectively, in the game. Pupils' written coursework reflects an average knowledge and understanding of theoretical aspects and, in discussion, pupils show a good awareness of the advantages and disadvantages of sponsorship in sport. There is little evidence of pupils' use of ICT in their coursework.



157. An extensive programme of extra-curricular sport provides very good opportunities for all pupils to excel in school and beyond. The school is justifiably proud of its success in cricket at all ages. For two consecutive years, the Under 14 cricket teams have won the regional Yorkshire Post Schools' Challenge Cup competition, playing in the final at Headingley. Last summer, the Under 15 team won the county final of the Lord's Taverners Cricketer Colts Trophy. Strong links with many local sports clubs and organisations extend and enhance standards in extra curricular sport.
158. Pupils' achievement in relation to their prior attainment is good in Years 7 to 9. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into physical education, and achieve well alongside their classmates. In all years, those pupils, particularly the gifted and talented, who take advantage of the extra-curricular opportunities achieve very well. In Years 10 and 11, pupils following the GCSE course achieve well in response to focused teaching. However, achievement in the core curriculum course for all pupils is only satisfactory, because too many pupils adopt a casual attitude to the subject and teaching is less rigorous.
159. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. There is good teaching in Years 7 to 9 and in the examination classes. The teachers have good specialist knowledge, prepare well and have clear learning objectives that they share with pupils. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good, and these usually create a co-operative learning atmosphere. The behaviour and attitudes of most pupils are satisfactory, and they put energy and effort into their work. Good participation levels, smart standards of dress and pupils' good support for extra-curricular activities indicate the positive attitudes of the majority. However, there is a significant minority of boys and girls in Years 9 to 11 who do not take their work seriously. Immature behaviour, such as constant chattering, noisy laughter and shouting out, reflects some pupils' lack of concentration, which disrupts the pace of learning for the whole class. Teachers maintain a good pace of activity and give appropriate feedback on how pupils can improve their work. Well-designed tasks ensure that pupils build on previous learning, and make progress through opportunities to practice new skills. Teaching is good when teachers have high expectations and use a range of strategies to give pupils a share of responsibility for their learning, as seen to good effect in a GCSE theory lesson. Pupils were actively involved in matching sports to sponsors, and skilful questioning probed their knowledge and understanding of the topic. Marking is encouraging, but pupils receive limited advice on how to improve their work or how they are progressing against targets set.
160. The leadership and management of physical education are satisfactory, overall. The co-ordinator provides good leadership, and the commitment and enthusiasm of the two specialist teachers are a strength. There is sound development planning, outlining appropriate priorities. Good use is made of assessment data to set individual targets in the GCSE course. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Attainment has improved in all courses, and there is now no unsatisfactory teaching. The monitoring and development of teaching is now in place, but this has had little impact on raising the quality of teaching beyond satisfactory. Curriculum planning has also improved, but there is still a problem in terms of balance and equality of access, as the boys spend more time on games and less time on athletics than girls do in Years 7 to 9. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in National Curriculum courses are not clearly documented. Departmental documentation also needs to be developed further to include guidance on the development of pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in the subject. Risk assessments in physical activities have not yet been completed. There are good playing fields and a new sports hall, though teaching time in the gym is limited by examinations and school productions.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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

### Strengths

- Teaching is good.
- ICT skills are very well developed and promote pupils' achievement.
- Relationships are often very good and help pupils to gain confidence in developing their opinions and a personal faith viewpoint.
- A very good contribution is made to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural.
- Resources are good.

### Areas for improvement

- Assessment procedures are not precise enough to help pupils know how well they are doing and how to improve.
- The summary session at the end of lessons is too short to help pupils to share opinions and formulate their own.
- There is not enough use of extended personal writing to help pupils develop skills of reflection.

161. At the end of Year 9 no formal teacher assessments are made, but standards in lessons and in the work seen meet the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education and are average for pupils of this age. Pupils gain a sound understanding of some of the major world faith heritages present in Britain through a study of key figures in Judaism, Islam and Sikhism. They acquire a deeper knowledge of Christianity and a greater understanding of what it means to take part in ceremonies which make people formal adherents. Baptism in Christianity and formal naming ceremonies as in the Yoruba people of Nigeria are studied. Through formal exploration of creeds across religions, pupils enlarge their views of religion in the wider world and the cultures in which they evolved.
162. All pupils study religious education in Years 10 and 11, and some pupils take either the short or full course examination at the end of Year 11, but the numbers involved in this are small. Their results are below the national average but numbers are too small to make full comparisons meaningful. Far fewer pupils take the short course examination at the end of year 11 than is common nationally. As a consequence, the vast majority of pupils leave with no certification in the subject although the general curriculum provides enough time for examination preparation. Nevertheless, by the end of Year 11 most pupils reach average standards. Pupils gain an understanding of many topics with spiritual and moral implications such as prejudice and discrimination. Pupils were visibly moved by a hard-hitting video on the plight of asylum seekers and expressed their concern and understanding of what it must mean to be persecuted for race, religion or beliefs. Several expressed their lack of knowledge of people of other faiths and showed narrow perspectives because of their lack of experience of the wider world beyond their local community.
163. The standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 9 represent satisfactory achievement across Years 7 to 9. In Year 7, some good extended responses to teacher's probing questions were seen. The achievement of pupils in Years 10 and 11 is also satisfactory, although it is better for those taking the GCSE courses. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily, in line with their peers. A particular strength is the acquisition of good skills in ICT. Pupils use computers frequently to research and retrieve information and to draft and redraft their writing. Good habits of

supported independent study are developed. Literacy skills develop well. Pupils are given opportunities to write as reporters in the third person, to retell narratives or to search dictionaries for definitions in order to gain a more precise vocabulary. Pupils contribute well to class discussions, but achieve less well in group discussions.

164. Teaching and learning are good, with all lessons seen satisfactory or better. In Years 7 to 9 two thirds of lessons were good or better and in Years 10 and 11 all teaching was good or better. Lessons are well planned. Clearly stated lesson objectives are shared with pupils and usually revisited to see what has been learned at the end of the lesson. These clearly focused lessons begin with quick starter activities such as quizzes which stimulate pupils' learning, but occasionally the answers are not checked before the lesson moves on. Good use of varied resources develops learning. For example, a good video on the trial of Jesus engaged and developed pupils' emotional understanding and the ordering of the events of Holy Week. Teachers use their expert subject knowledge and personal experience to deepen pupils' understanding, such as in a lesson on war where pupils were led to consider the personal and economic cost on those involved. Judicious interventions with clear explanations help pupils to learn effectively as in lessons on wealth and poverty. Clear questions, very good relationships and very effective class management help pupils to extend their skills and understanding. The very good, mature, open relationships help pupils to ask questions confidently knowing that their opinions are respected. Honest answers led to good debate, such as on the question on whether the war with Iraq is justified.
165. Most lessons in Years 8 to 11 are based on topics which are researched individually over a series of lessons. Pupils are given the choice of approach and most rely heavily on ICT, where their skills are high and resources, including CD Roms, are good. Learning is good, although occasionally pupils would benefit from more direction. In Years 10 and 11 in the core religious education which most pupils study, no homework is set which reduces achievement and the significance of the subject in the eyes of pupils. The higher attaining pupils cope well as they remember their work from week to week, but those slower to learn can lose ground. Occasionally in lessons where many pupils have special educational needs or challenging behaviour, teaching and learning are not broken down sufficiently into small, well-paced steps. Some pupils are not under enough pressure to achieve and are too laid back in their approach to learning. In most lessons the plenary session is too short to enable pupils to share their achievements and consolidate what they have learned.
166. Day to day marking is satisfactory and some is very good, especially where extended comments which value pupils' efforts and help them improve are used. Feedback does not usually give sufficiently precise information to pupils on the standards they are attaining, although this aspect is currently under review. Pupils' self-evaluation of their work is a positive feature of assessment.
167. A good, well balanced, curriculum is helping to produce well-rounded young minds with a good sense of religion: an appreciation of their own heritage and tolerance and understanding of those of others. Visits are good. After a visit to a synagogue in Hull one Year 11 pupil showed great initiative in renewing contact with the chairperson so that pupils were invited to share in an open Shabbath for the Feast of Hannukah. They were able to express their appreciation of another religious community and how much they had learned. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The impact of the holocaust and a study of the diary of Anne Frank help pupils to appreciate the survival of the human spirit in conditions of terrible adversity.

168. Key figures in the history of religion such as Martin Luther King or Ghandi enable all to realise that the conditions in which we live are sometimes bought by ultimate sacrifice. Knowing that many religious figures and role models are male the school ensures that figures such as Mother Theresa and the work of Sheila Cassidy in Chile are well represented and considered.
169. Leadership and management of the subject are good. There is only one subject specialist who does most of the teaching from Years 8 to 11 as well carrying other significant responsibilities within the school. At least 360 pupils are taught in one week posing constraints on the full assessment of their progress. Teaching and learning are not monitored fully. There is some non-specialist teaching but little time is available for the teachers involved to meet with the subject co-ordinator.
170. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. There is now no unsatisfactory teaching. Examination results achieved by the small number who take them have risen. The time allocated to the subject has improved, as has use of ICT. Reporting arrangements in Year 7 are unsatisfactory as they do not include specific comment on pupils' learning in the subject.