

INSPECTION REPORT

CORBRIDGE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Corbridge, Northumberland

LEA area: Northumberland

Unique reference number: 122326

Headteacher: Mr N Pont

Reporting inspector: Bill Goodall
15127

Dates of inspection: 3 - 5 March 2003

Inspection number: 249228

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Middle
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	9 - 13
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Cow Lane Corbridge
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs E Middleton
Date of previous inspection:	April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
15157	Bill Goodall	Registered inspector		<p>What sort of school is it?</p> <p>The school's results and pupils' achievements</p> <p>How well are pupils taught?</p> <p>What should the school do to improve further?</p>
11072	Shirley Elomari	Lay inspector	Educational inclusion	<p>Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development</p> <p>How well does the school care for its pupils?</p> <p>How well does the school work in partnership with parents?</p>
19599	Carmen Markham	Team inspector	Geography History	<p>How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?</p> <p>How well is the school led and managed?</p>
18244	Avril Ellis	Team inspector	Music	
2018	Vicky Ward	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages	
17925	David Mason	Team inspector	Art and design	

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
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32137	Maureen Hooper	Team inspector	Physical education	
2025	Pauline Round	Team inspector	Design and technology	
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2690	Martin Kerrison	Team inspector	English as an additional language English	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Corbridge Middle School is situated on the edge of the village of Corbridge in Northumberland. It takes 356 pupils from the ages of 9 to 13. There are four feeder first schools, but the current pupils previously attended thirteen schools over a very wide area, some of which are primary schools. On leaving, most pupils transfer to the local high school. The school's immediate surroundings are relatively advantaged. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is very low. The pupils' attainments on entry to the school are generally above the national average, although the full range of attainments is present. The proportions of pupils with special educational needs or with statements of need are both slightly lower than the national averages. There are only two pupils whose mother tongue is not English, a figure that is well below the national average. Almost all the pupils have a white British heritage.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Corbridge Middle School is a good school. The teaching is good and the pupils' very positive attitudes to learning help them to make good progress and attain high standards. The leadership and management of the school are good and it provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The teaching and learning are good overall. They are very good in many subjects, and for pupils with special educational needs.
- The pupils' behaviour and attitudes are very good.
- The school's support for pupils' personal development is very good.
- The pupils' attendance is excellent.

What could be improved

- The monitoring and assessment of pupils' work, to give an overview of their attainment and progress throughout their time in the school.
- The planning and delivery of citizenship, particularly in the curriculum for personal, social and health education.
- The use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support and develop other subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made a good improvement since the last inspection in April 1997. The teaching, the learning and the pupils' personal development have all improved and are now of very good quality. The areas previously identified for improvement have been tackled effectively, but the monitoring and evaluation of pupils' progress are still not entirely satisfactory. However, the school is now aware of the need to assess pupils' attainments on entry, during their time in school and on leaving, and has schemes in place to do so.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in national tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
End of Key Stage 2 tests	A	B	A	B

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

The school's overall performance in the national tests is higher than that of similar schools and generally well above the national average. Standards are good in English, and very good in mathematics and science. The results of the national tests at the end of Year 6 were above the national average for English, and well above average for mathematics. They were exceptional in science, with 79% of pupils gaining the higher Level 5. This places the school in the top 5% of schools in the country. The school has no consistent records of its pupils' performance on entry to the school. By the end of Year 8 records are complete, but still do not give an overall picture of the pupils' attainment and progress. Information supplied by the high school to which most pupils transfer, about the Key Stage 3 test results, suggests that pupils have progressed at a rate in line with, or slightly above, the national expectations.

The pupils are attaining high standards at age 11 in all subjects, except design and technology, where they are satisfactory. In physical education and music, standards are very high. By the age of 13, pupils are attaining satisfactory standards in art and design, religious education and ICT, good standards in design and technology, physical education, geography, history and French, and very good standards in music. There is little difference between the achievements of girls and boys. The two pupils whose home language is not English progress well, and those with special educational needs achieve appropriately.

Standards of literacy used in other subjects are good, and in numeracy they are satisfactory, but the standards of ICT used in other subjects are weaker.

From the data provided by other schools, and an analysis of pupils' standards in class, it can be seen that they make satisfactory progress through the school, entering and leaving with achievements above the national averages. The school sets challenging targets both for the Key Stage 2 tests and for individuals.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Attitudes are very positive. Pupils are keen to come to school, they are confident learners.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good both in class and around the school. Pupils work well in groups, remaining focussed during lessons.
Personal development and relationships	The pupils' personal development is very good. The staff know their pupils well and help them to mature and develop effectively. Relationships are very good.
Attendance	Attendance is excellent. There is no unauthorised absence.

The school provides very good support and guidance for all the pupils. The strong climate for learning allows all pupils to study effectively and develop well. They respond with very good behaviour and enthusiasm. There have been very few exclusions.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 5 and 6	Years 7 and 8
Quality of teaching	Good	Good

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

Overall, the quality of teaching seen was good. Only one lesson was taught unsatisfactorily, while in almost half, the quality was very good or excellent. Good teaching was seen in all areas. It was very good in science, geography, history, French, and music and for pupils with special educational needs. When, occasionally, the quality was less than good, it was generally because too much direction by the teacher prevented the pupils from developing their personal responses and building on their existing knowledge and skills. Good teaching was characterised by the teachers' extensive knowledge and understanding of their subject, thorough planning and high expectations for pupils' achievements. The pupils responded with enthusiasm and effort. The climate for learning is very clear and strong so that all pupils are swept along by this ethos of willingness to work hard and make rapid progress. The teaching of literacy across the school is good, but that of numeracy is weaker. The main barrier to the teaching being judged 'very good overall', was the school's lack of a clear picture of pupils' progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is generally broad, balanced and relevant, and includes French in all years. The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good. Provision for citizenship and for personal, social and health education is unsatisfactory, however.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. They benefit from very good support for their learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The few pupils who have English as an additional language have full access to all the learning experiences.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal development is very good. Spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory; moral and social development are very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares very well for its pupils. The systems for monitoring their personal progress are good, but those for academic progress are unsatisfactory.

The curriculum meets requirements for the National Curriculum and for religious education. Citizenship is not yet introduced effectively in personal, social and health education lessons. Some aspects of design and technology need further development. All pupils have opportunities for confidential discussions in drop in sessions. Partnership with the parents is good and has some very good features. They support the school very well.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, and senior staff provide good leadership overall. Other members of staff with management responsibilities provide good support.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities well; they know the strengths and weaknesses of the school and use their expertise to support it.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has started the process of self evaluation well. It is aware of its strengths and weaknesses, including the crucial issue of identifying pupils' progress through the school.
The strategic use of	The strategic use of resources is satisfactory. The school has little

resources	extra funding beyond its basic budget, which is low when compared with national averages.
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There are sufficient well qualified and experienced teachers and support staff to deliver the planned curriculum. The accommodation and resources are adequate, with specialist rooms for many subjects. The school leadership is good; the governors are involved in the development planning, and the principles of best value are satisfactorily applied. It is an effective school that provides good value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents state that their child likes school and that they would feel comfortable to approach the school with any concerns. They believe that the teaching is good and teachers have high expectations, so their child makes good progress. Parents are confident that the school helps their child become a mature and responsible individual. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A small but significant number felt that they are not kept well informed about the progress their child is making. A few stated that the school does not work closely with parents. Some are unhappy about the amount of homework their child has to do and a very small number are critical of the range of activities outside lessons.

The responses to the questionnaire and the comments at the parents' meeting indicate that parents are pleased with the school. The inspection bears out their positive views. A few parents expressed some negative views. The inspection does not fully support the concerns expressed by a few parents. The information provided for parents is sometimes insufficiently detailed and homework is not always set regularly. However, the school does involve parents in a number of ways and seeks to work more closely with them through, for example, the use of questionnaires. The range of extra-curricular activities is very good for a small school but, as most of them take place at lunchtime, not all parents may be aware of the full range.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The inspection was carried out in March 2003, about half way through the academic year. The national data available to the inspection team relates to pupils' attainment in the summer of 2002. The judgements made are based on an analysis of test and assessment results, direct observations of pupils in lessons and a detailed scrutiny of pupils' work, especially from Year 8, where no test data was available. Discussions were held with pupils to establish what they knew, understood, and could do.
2. The assessment of pupils when they were aged seven, in their first schools, indicates that pupils' attainment at that time was higher than the national average. Data is available for only two thirds of these pupils, as they come from a wide area, and many from junior schools. Corbridge Middle school does not identify overall attainment on entry, which is an issue. The majority of these pupils have attained at least the nationally expected standards at the end of Year 2 in the first schools, and many have higher achievements. The review of Year 5 work indicates that pupils have made good progress and are likely to have been attaining broadly above average standards when they enter the school.
3. By the end of Year 6, pupils are attaining standards that are above the national average. In the 2002 tests and assessments for 11-year-olds, the percentage of pupils attaining at least the expected Level 4 was above the national average for English and science, and well above for mathematics. The percentage attaining the higher Level 5 was above the average for English and mathematics, and very high for science. Overall, based on points scored in each subject, the pupils attained standards well above the national average. Based on comparisons with schools with a similar proportion of free school meals, these points scores were around the national average for English and mathematics and well above for science. Also, the proportion of pupils attaining at least the expected Level 4 was around the average for English and science, but above it for mathematics. The proportion attaining the higher Level 5 was again around the average for English and mathematics and very high for science. These statistics indicate that the pupils are generally achieving satisfactory standards compared to similar schools, but that pupils are attaining many more of the higher grades in science in these tests than would be expected at the age of eleven.
4. Attainment in national assessments at age 11 has risen at a rate similar to that found nationally. There was a dip in both mathematics and science results in 2001 that has now been remedied. Both boys and girls are attaining standards above the national averages with the boys doing slightly better than the national picture, especially in English and mathematics.
5. The review of pupils' current and past work indicates that standards are above or well above those normally seen, both at the end of Year 6 and in Year 8. Pupils in Year 6 are attaining standards in English that are above average, and in mathematics and science they are well above average. Standards are above those typical for this age group in all other subjects,

apart from design and technology, where they are in line with national expectations, and music and physical education, where they are well above them.

6. Pupils in Year 8 are attaining standards that are above average in English, French, design and technology, geography, history, and physical education; well above average in mathematics, science, and music, and close to the average in art and design, religious education, and ICT.
7. Overall, pupils respond well to the good teaching they receive and are making good progress to attain the above average standards. Where progress is more limited and standards relatively lower, such as in art and design, this is because the planned programme for learning in Years 7 and 8 limits skill development, or where teachers have more limited experience of teaching the subject, for example, in religious education.
8. Standards in literacy and numeracy are above those usually seen by the end of Year 6 and Year 8. Pupils have many opportunities to use and extend their skills across the curriculum. However, the use of ICT to support and develop learning in other subjects is weak.
9. Overall, pupils of all abilities and backgrounds, those whose home language is not English and those with special education needs, are achieving well. The school has not yet identified pupils who might be gifted and talented for extra support. Pupils enter the school with broadly above average levels of attainment in Year 5 and by the end of Year 8 are attaining standards above and well above the national average. Standards have shown significant improvement in ICT, design and technology and physical education.
10. Pupils' results at the end of Year 9 in national tests and assessments, provided by the high schools that the pupils move to at the end of Year 8, show that progress is at least satisfactory and often good in Years 7, 8 and 9. Significant numbers of pupils attain well above nationally expected levels whilst very few attain below.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are very good and represent a major strength of the school's work. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good throughout the school. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good. Pupils understand what is expected of them and almost always respond very positively. The quality of relationships is very good throughout the school. Attendance is consistently well above the national average and there is no unauthorised absence. The school has successfully maintained the very positive attitudes and behaviour noted in the previous inspection report.
12. Pupils are very keen to come to school. They work willingly and enjoy their lessons, especially when the work challenges and interests them. A high proportion participates in the very good programme of extra-curricular activities, some of which are initiated at the pupils' request. Almost all the parents who responded to the questionnaire state that their child likes school. Virtually all pupils come to school prepared to learn. They listen very well to their teacher and to one another and usually express their own ideas clearly. Throughout the school, pupils settle quickly to work and are keen to contribute their ideas. They concentrate

very well, working hard to complete the work they are given. In a Year 8 lesson in girls' rugby and football, all the girls listened to instructions, tried hard and were unfailingly cheerful on a cold and windswept field. Pupils with special educational needs are almost always equally keen to work. They try hard and usually complete their work, especially when they are well supported either in the classroom or in a small group. They contribute to and take part in every aspect of school life because they are well supported both by the staff and by their peers. Throughout the school, pupils' positive attitudes to learning have a significant effect on the progress they make.

13. Behaviour in lessons is very good overall. Pupils respond well to the high expectations of most teachers and support assistants. During the inspection, unsatisfactory behaviour was seen in only one of the seventy-nine lessons observed. Then the lack of challenge and opportunity for pupils to be involved in the lesson resulted in inappropriate behaviour and a lack of attention to the lesson's objectives.
14. Behaviour in seven lessons was judged to be satisfactory. It was good in twenty-three lessons, very good in thirty-six and exemplary in twelve. Where behaviour was satisfactory, for example in a Year 7 personal and social education lesson, a small number of boys was unwilling to listen and at times behaved in an immature way so that the teacher had to spend time managing their behaviour and the pace of the lesson slowed. The proportion of very good and excellent behaviour seen was very high. In these lessons pupils were enthusiastic and enjoyed learning. They listened carefully to their teacher and to one another, settling very quickly to work and concentrating hard. Pupils took pride in their work.
15. Lessons have a brisk pace because teachers rarely have to spend time dealing with unacceptable behaviour. This in turn helps to ensure that pupils can concentrate on what they are learning. Pupils' level of respect for the feelings of others grows as they move through the school, encouraged by the opportunities they are given to discuss their opinions and feelings. They are usually tolerant towards those whose opinions differ from their own and enter into discussion in a mature and thoughtful way. Pupils look after the school's resources well. There is no vandalism or graffiti in the school. The level of exclusion is very low. There were two fixed term exclusions in the last academic year.
16. Behaviour at break and lunchtime is very good. Pupils play very well together in the playground. Movement around the school is quiet and orderly. Lunchtime is well organised. The noise levels are acceptable and lunch is a pleasant social occasion, with pupils sitting with their friends and chatting quietly. Pupils queue in an orderly way for their food and help to clear up after they have eaten. Pupils take responsibility for their own behaviour so that the light level of supervision out of lessons is sufficient.
17. The school provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils' personal development. However, the organisation of personal and social education means that some opportunities for encouraging personal development are missed, particularly in the area of citizenship. In all classes, pupils are expected to share in tidying up at the end of lessons and many do so as a matter of course. The recently established school council gives pupils a voice in the school and enables them to suggest areas for improvement. The council is taken seriously and

members feel that they have already made a difference to school life. Pupils are involved in organising events, such as school talent shows and a charity fund raising activity. Pupils in Year 7 help to introduce Year 4 pupils to the school and act as ‘buddies’ when they move into Year 5. Both the older and younger pupils are enthusiastic about the system and talk about how successful it is in helping younger pupils gain confidence. In lessons, pupils respond very well to the opportunities they are given to work together in pairs or small groups. They enjoy the opportunities they are given to take responsibility for their own learning. For example, in mathematics lessons, pupils were seen to negotiate additional activities that they felt they needed and in physical education and music they are actively encouraged to develop independence. On a very few occasions the immature attitude of a small number of boys results in some disruption to the lessons.

18. Relationships throughout the school are very good. There is a high level of mutual respect between staff and pupils. Teachers and other staff support pupils’ personal development very well. Pupils respond positively to the praise they receive and are well motivated by the merit system. Pupils co-operate increasingly well together as they move through the school. Bullying occurs rarely and is not tolerated by the staff. Pupils know that they should tell an adult about any behaviour that makes them uncomfortable and trust teachers to deal with it quickly. The very good quality of the relationships makes a significant contribution to the standards of behaviour achieved.
19. Attendance is excellent. The level of attendance is consistently well above the national average and there is no unauthorised absence. Attendance is monitored well and the registers are kept correctly. The overwhelming majority of pupils routinely attend on time in the morning. Lessons begin promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. In most subjects, pupils are taught by specialist teachers with others of the same age in mixed ability groups, or bands based on attainment in the subject. In all, 79 whole or part lessons were observed by inspectors.
21. Overall the quality of teaching is good, with 99% of the lessons seen being satisfactory or better. Pupils respond well to their teaching and make at least satisfactory progress throughout all years. 81% of teaching observed was judged to be good or better with 47% judged to be very good or outstanding. Only one lesson was judged to be unsatisfactory. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
22. The teaching in Years 5 and 6 is good overall. In total 39 lessons were observed, of which four were outstanding, 14 very good, 13 good, eight satisfactory and none unsatisfactory.
 - Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the specialist subjects they teach except in religious education where understanding of the syllabus is more limited.
 - They plan lessons effectively and use a range of different approaches to deliver brisk and lively lessons, which motivate pupils to work hard and make progress.

- They organise their classrooms well and manage pupils very well so that behaviour is always at least good.
23. For example, in a Year 6 art and design lesson, exploring colour mixing, the teacher explained the difference between primary, secondary and tertiary colours very well, and provided clear technical guidance on the application of paint, which was well received, and followed by the pupils to good effect.
24. The teaching in Years 7 and 8 is good overall. In total, 40 lessons were seen of which four were outstanding, 15 were very good, 14 good and seven satisfactory. One lesson was judged to be unsatisfactory.
- Teachers have secure subject knowledge and plan lessons that challenge pupils to achieve.
 - Work is generally well chosen to enable pupils of all abilities to make good progress.
 - Pupils consequently concentrate and work hard and briskly to complete the tasks they are set so ensuring that they make good progress.
 - Where teaching is very good or outstanding, teachers enthuse and motivate their pupils to achieve very high standards.
25. For example, in a Year 7 science lesson on “acids and alkalis”, pupils planned and carried out an investigation into indicators made from plant materials, and evaluated the evidence they had gained before arriving at an appropriate conclusion.
26. Teachers’ plan well and mark pupils’ work regularly. However, the quality of marking is inconsistent. Some teachers clearly identify what pupils know and can do and then set clear targets for further development whilst others use effective praise but do not indicate what pupils need to do to improve. For example in English lessons, although marking is detailed, thorough and positive in tone, pupils do not always take note of highlighted errors because the corrections lack focus and clarity. These marks are not gathered together to give a clear picture of how pupils are progressing through the school in all subjects. Therefore the relative performance of individuals or groups of pupils in different classes is not monitored and analysed to inform curriculum planning.
27. The teaching of literacy is good overall. Teachers make very good links between the literacy programme and the other subjects of the curriculum. The work pupils produce in subjects such as science frequently shows the strategies they have learnt in literacy lessons being applied. The strong focus on applying literacy skills throughout the school has had an impact on raising the pupils’ standards . The teaching of numeracy is satisfactory overall. Teachers use pupils’ numeracy skills to enhance their learning in other subjects, such as using weighing and measuring skills in design and technology and proportions in art and design.
28. The teaching of ICT is good in timetabled lessons, and has improved considerably since the last inspection. But the use of ICT to enhance teaching and learning across the curriculum is unsatisfactory, and teachers do not make the best use of the good equipment available. Many subjects, such as French, mathematics, art and design, and music have noted the use of ICT

as an area for development, and design and technology has important omissions of ICT from its curriculum.

29. The teaching of English and mathematics is good. Teachers have adopted more structured lessons from the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and this has improved the quality of teaching. The teaching of science is very good overall with the teachers providing a wide range of learning opportunities. In the other lessons seen, the quality of teaching in the foundation subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education was good overall. There were many strengths and few weaknesses in most lessons. The teaching of citizenship was, however, limited by the lack of clear plans and advice on how it should be covered in the personal, social and health education lessons and how it could be addressed in other subjects.
30. A strength in the teaching seen in the foundation subjects was the teachers' very good knowledge of their pupils which enabled them to present lessons which were challenging for them all. This enabled both high attaining pupils and those with special educational needs to make good progress. Teachers planned lessons that were appropriate to the age and ability of the set or class. Pupils responded positively and learning was enhanced.
31. In only a few lessons were opportunities taken to enhance pupils' spiritual and cultural learning. For example, in art and design they learn about the work of artists from their own and other cultures. These opportunities were not regularly identified in teachers' planning and some of them occurred in response to the experiences teachers or pupils brought to the lesson, such as a personal, social and health education lesson which raised issues of a war with an Islamic state and the consequences.

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

32. The curriculum provided is satisfactory throughout the school. It is broad and balanced but not all elements of the statutory curriculum are in place as there is no systematic planning for the delivery of citizenship in Years 7 and 8. In addition a small number of special educational needs pupils are withdrawn from French and religious education for additional support in English and mathematics. There is a suitable range of activities and experiences designed to meet the needs, interests and aspirations of the pupils in the school.
33. The curriculum in Years 5 and 6 covers all the National Curriculum subjects and religious education. Since January 2003, these pupils have started to have a lesson in personal and social education for half the year. In the other half of the year, they have a French lesson.
34. In Years 7 and 8, all pupils have a personal and social education lesson each week and this includes careers education. Curriculum time is increased in music and French by reducing time for English and mathematics. In one of the two physical education lessons in Years 7 and 8 the whole year group comes together for the teaching of the games element of the curriculum. Although the total teaching time for all pupils in the school is below the advised

minimum the very efficient use of time in lessons means that there is sufficient time to deliver the curriculum effectively.

35. In each year group in the school there are three mixed ability classes. In Years 5 and 6, pupils are taught in these classes in all subjects except English and mathematics where an additional class is created so pupils are taught in four ability groups. The size of the lower ability groups is kept small so that these pupils can receive additional support and make good progress. In Years 7 and 8, only mathematics is taught in the four ability groups. However, in design and technology, art and design and ICT the creation of an additional class enables pupils to be taught in smaller groups. The use of qualified coaches in physical education also allows an extra teaching group to be created in games. These arrangements are effective and promote good standards.
36. Policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects with the exception of personal, health and social education and citizenship. They provide good support and guidance for all staff to ensure that pupils' learning builds from year to year. Most schemes of work are detailed and cross referenced to the National Curriculum, or where appropriate, to the agreed syllabus for religious education. They are used effectively to develop good lesson plans that usually indicate the learning objectives for the lesson. This is an improvement since the last inspection. However, although some subjects have effective planning links with the first school this is not consistent across the school. In the absence of a policy for annual subject contacts with the first schools, not all the pupils' learning programmes build upon the work pupils have done in Year 4. However, liaison with the high school is very good and supports progress through the curriculum.
37. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good throughout the school. The setting arrangements in some subjects and the provision for smaller classes in others ensure that pupils with specific educational needs have those needs met in smaller teaching groups and this is working effectively. Learning support assistants are effectively deployed to assist pupils in their learning across the curriculum. These pupils have full access to extra-curricular activities. Similar provision effectively supports the few pupils in the school with English as an additional language and ensures that they too have full access to the curriculum.
38. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have both been implemented in English and mathematics lessons throughout the school. The provision for literacy across the curriculum is very good and is a strength of the school. In most subject areas literacy targets and target vocabulary are clearly displayed. However, the school has done little to develop numeracy across the curriculum. Nevertheless, teachers have created opportunities to develop numeracy in some areas, with good examples seen in science and geography. Across the curriculum, therefore, provision is satisfactory. Curriculum provision for ICT has improved since the last inspection as all pupils now have a lesson each week. However, provision for its application across the curriculum is unsatisfactory.
39. There is very good provision for extra-curricular activities. There are visits to outdoor activity centres, visits abroad and field visits. Extra-curricular provision in music promotes very high standards in the subject. Music activities include choir, rock and ceilidh bands, recorder

groups and orchestra. There are opportunities for these groups to demonstrate their achievement in collective worship and concerts. Lunchtime art clubs are well attended and pupils have a wide range of sporting activities to choose from including rugby and football for girls. There are also clubs for French, chess, folk dancing and ICT. Over two thirds of pupils in the school participate in extra-curricular activities.

40. The equality of access to the curriculum is satisfactory. Some pupils do not receive their religious education and French lessons as they are withdrawn for extra support in numeracy and literacy with the consent of their parents. School visits relating to the curriculum ensure that no pupil is excluded on the grounds of cost. Parents do pay for additional music tuition and some pupils may therefore be excluded on grounds of cost as there is no information advising parents that this may be supported by the school where there is need. The school tries hard to address racism, but has problems with access to suitable resources.
41. The provision for personal, social and health education is unsatisfactory overall as there is insufficient documentation available to show what is taught in the planned personal, social and health education lessons. For Years 5 and 6 there are no schemes of work. For Years 7 and 8 there is a very broad overview that has not been updated to include current requirements for citizenship. In addition there is no overview of personal, social and health education indicating elements taught across the curriculum although most teachers include elements as appropriate. Therefore, although pupils have personal, social and health education lessons based on good lesson planning, curriculum coverage is not sufficiently well planned. The school's policies on sex and drugs education are relevant and up to date.
42. Overall provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. Provision for the spiritual is satisfactory. Collective worship does not meet the statutory requirement for daily worship but overall it does make a good contribution to spiritual development and some good examples of reflection were seen. Pupils were asked to consider right and wrong and the value of friendship and giving. Hymns and prayers are used as part of collective worship. The school also celebrates the value of the individual and of achievement. However, many opportunities to create spiritual awareness by encouraging pupils to understand the deeper meaning of topics are lost in registration periods and in many lessons.
43. The moral development of pupils is very good. Teachers make good use of opportunities to explore moral themes relating to attitude and behaviour. This is built into questions, discussions and topics. Sometimes it is part of the planned curriculum, at other times good use is made of appropriate opportunities. In a Year 8 registration lesson pupils discussed the tale of Llewellyn and Gelleio to explore feelings about anger and their consequences. Pupils support several charities in order to develop their awareness of the needs of other. These include the Christmas shoe box appeal, Action Aid for Uganda and '*Cry in the Dark*' a charity to support children in Romania. Ethical discussions are also part of the curriculum. Pupils discussed their reaction to the situation in Iraq in one registration and a Year 7 class in English looked at the clash of values between East and West. Teachers and adults in school are good role models for the pupils who clearly know about how to behave and the difference between right and wrong.

44. Provision for the social development of pupils is very good. The school council is well developed and representatives have clear responsibilities to their peers and to make decisions that are fed back to pupils. Sometimes this is done through a planned assembly, for example, the arrangements for Red Nose Day. Pupils also have the opportunity to be school prefects. Pupils are taught to be responsible. Some good examples were seen in form time in Years 7 and 8. Form time is also an opportunity for pupils to explore some aspects of citizenship, including bias in newspaper cartoons. Humanities lessons enable pupils to understand the working of society and population distribution. History also enables pupils to understand hardship and its impact on individuals. An English lesson, inspired by Martin Luther King, enabled pupils to think about their ideal peaceful society. In geography the impact of tourism on the economy of Kenya was explored. Friendship is a frequent theme for discussion in lessons and in registration periods.
45. The school's provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils have good opportunities to look at local, national and European culture in music, in art and design and in visits to concerts and galleries. History provides opportunities for visits to museums and Tudor houses. In English a good range of texts and poetry is studied. There are school visits to France and Norway. Opportunities for the development of the understanding of culture beyond Europe are satisfactory. Some good use of stories was seen in form time and in collective worship, where an Arabian story was chosen to develop the theme of sharing and giving. There are also some school links with Uganda and art and design also looks at examples beyond Europe. However, significant opportunities are lost in music and in some other areas of the curriculum; no work was seen on this aspect. There are few displays around school relating to cultural development.
46. There are good links with the community. The school is involved with a community music scheme and with a Community Sports Leader Scheme where pupils from the high school run a sports club for Year 5 pupils. Local people, including a disabled person and a minister, support collective worship and a resident who was evacuated during the war supports some history lessons. The school is fully involved in supporting many of the village events.
47. Overall the school has good links with local schools. It takes an active part in the Partnership of schools that includes the first schools and the high school. Meetings are attended regularly. The Partnership is a networked learning community, working together to improve teaching and provision for all its pupils. It is currently working on the development of thinking skills. This provides an opportunity for two teachers from the school to visit first schools in the area to look at good practice in writing. Members of the mathematics department also have opportunities to observe teaching in Year 4 in the local first schools. There is a 'buddy' system where Year 7 pupils from the school work with Year 4 pupils in the first schools. The Partnership of schools is also working together on arts specialist status for the high school. The school holds some Partnership events for pupils in the school building, for example the harvest festival.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

48. Overall the school provides a good level of care for all its pupils. Teachers and support staff are willing to spend time helping pupils; they are caring and considerate of pupils' welfare. Procedures for monitoring and supporting the pupils' personal development are generally very good, but those for their academic progress are unsatisfactory. This was an issue in the last inspection where it was reported that the school did not have central records to demonstrate pupil progress. This continues to be an area in need of development.
49. The arrangements for ensuring the welfare of pupils are good and are securely based on the very good knowledge teachers have of individual pupils. The procedures for child protection comply fully with requirements and all staff are aware of them. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place for health and safety. The staff pays good attention to issues of health and safety both in lessons and around the school. In particular, the safety concerns in physical education mentioned in the previous report have been addressed fully. Plans are in hand for the refurbishment of the food technology room where conditions are currently a cause for concern. The school is rightly concerned that, despite recent improvements, the number of vehicles outside the school at the end of the day remains a health and safety issue. It is continuing to look for a solution. The school is involved in the Healthy Schools initiative. Clear procedures are in place for first aid and medication in school and a record is kept of all interventions. The school contacts parents quickly if their child is unwell or has received an injury.
50. There is good support for pupils with special educational needs and pupils who need extra help with learning are identified at an early stage. Teachers and support staff work well together to meet the needs of individuals who are finding learning a challenge. Some pupils also receive targeted help to deal with their behaviour. Members of the support staff are used very well, both in the classroom and in small groups withdrawn to work on literacy. Individual education plans usually have clear targets so that pupils are able to make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in every aspect of the school's life. However, the school does not consistently identify the gifted and talented pupils, who are therefore not always sufficiently challenged and supported in order to achieve their best.
51. The school promotes the importance of prompt, regular attendance very well so that parents and pupils understand what is expected of them. Almost all parents routinely inform the school promptly of the reasons for any absence. Absence is monitored daily, ensuring that any developing patterns of absence are quickly identified. All unexplained absences are followed up but at the time of the inspection this was not done on the first day, which is a weakness. Lateness is also monitored. The school involves the education welfare officer at an early stage in cases of unexplained absences, developing patterns of absence or persistent lateness. The procedures are effective in maintaining the very high levels of attendance noted at the time of the previous inspection.
52. Procedures for promoting good behaviour are very successful. The five school rules provide a clear framework for achieving and maintaining very good behaviour because pupils know what is expected of them. Almost all choose to comply. Pupils are very well motivated by the high expectations of their teachers. They respond positively to the merit system and accept the consequences when their behaviour falls below the expected standard. A positive

feature of the misdemeanour system is that it helps pupils to understand their actions and the effects they have on others through describing each incident in writing. Pupils take this task seriously. Most of the parents who made their views known to the inspection team are confident that the school achieves a high standard of behaviour. They appreciate the fact that the journal is used to record merits and misdemeanours, so that they are able to see how their child is behaving, and that teachers involve parents at an early stage when concerns arise. Teachers and other adults provide good role models for pupils within a caring environment. Procedures for eliminating bullying, sexism and racism are also good. Pupils know that they should report any incidents and staff are also vigilant, so that unreported incidents are picked up and dealt with quickly. Pupils in all years are confident that bullying is dealt with promptly and effectively when it does occur. The very good relationships throughout the school play a significant part in ensuring that pupils learn to take responsibility for their own behaviour.

53. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very good overall. The staff know the pupils very well. They use this knowledge sensitively when guiding pupils' behaviour and dealing with their personal problems. For example, during the inspection a teacher worked with a group of girls at break to help them deal with friendship difficulties. Personal health and social education is taught by a small team of teachers and, in the lessons observed, was of a high standard. However, the lack of a policy or a detailed scheme of work for it means that the school cannot ensure that all pupils receive appropriate information about all aspects of the personal, social and health education curriculum, including citizenship. This is a weakness. Teachers provide very good role models for pupils so that they learn to treat others with respect and listen to others' viewpoints carefully. They also learn to treat the environment and property with due respect. Pupils have a good range of opportunities to take responsibility and to show initiative, for example by organising charity fund raising events. They are also encouraged to be responsible for their own learning and have many opportunities to work independently in the classroom.

Assessment

54. The school is unclear about the standards achieved by pupils in their first school and therefore it is difficult to accurately measure pupils' progress in the school. The school is aware of this and has plans to remedy this next year. At the end of Year 8, subject leaders know the standards achieved in their subject but this is not entered on a central data base before the information is required by the high school. Recording and tracking of attainment against national levels is insufficient. Consequently, the analysis of pupils' potential and their progress against national expectations is underdeveloped. Only the results of the statutory tests at the end of Year 6 are recorded centrally. All statutory requirements are met in relation to assessment at the end of Year 6. The assessment policy is weak, as assessment is the responsibility of the subject areas.
55. Subject teachers assess progress against learning objectives as required in the school assessment policy. The results are recorded and the procedures are monitored by the subject leaders. In English, mathematics, science, French and some other subjects, pupils have clearly identified targets and there are opportunities for self assessment. In science, progress sheets are used to track the progress of individuals with very good effect, but this is not

common practice throughout the school. The systems used to support pupils' learning therefore lack consistency. Pupils do not know the standards they achieve in all the subjects they study.

56. The use of assessment data to inform and guide curricular planning is unsatisfactory overall as there is insufficient use of formal assessment and its use continues to be inconsistent between subjects. These were issues in the last inspection. However, there has been some progress as science, English and mathematics undertake some specific assessments to inform teaching. Most subjects also use the plenary sessions at the end of lessons to inform their planning for the next lesson. Some very good examples of marking that identified what pupils knew, could do and what they needed to do to improve were seen during the inspection but this is not consistent throughout the school. This was also an issue in the last inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

57. The responses to the parents' questionnaire and comments at the parents' meeting indicate that parents are very supportive of the school. Parents state that their child likes school and that they would feel comfortable to approach the school with any concerns. They believe that the teaching is good and that teachers have high expectations which help their child make good progress. Parents are confident that the school helps their child become a mature and responsible individual. The inspection evidence bears out parents' positive views.
58. Parents expressed some negative views. A small but significant number felt that they are not kept well informed about their child's progress. In particular, they would prefer more frequent and longer opportunities to discuss their child's progress with teachers. Others state that the school does not work closely with parents. Some are unhappy about the amount of homework their child has to do and a very small number are critical of the range of activities outside lessons. The inspection does not fully support these concerns. In most years, parents have only one formal opportunity to discuss their child's progress; this is less than in many schools. Overall, the quality of the annual reports is good. However, there is inconsistency in the way teachers report on progress. Sometimes the information is too imprecise to ensure that all parents understand the progress their child has made in each subject. The school involves parents in a number of ways and seeks to work more closely with them through, for example, the use of questionnaires. Homework is not always set regularly. The range of extra-curricular activities is very good but, as most of these take place at lunchtime, not all parents may be aware of the full range.
59. The school benefits from good relationships with parents. There is a good programme of induction when pupils enter the school from the first schools. Parents have the opportunity to visit and discuss their child with members of staff. Pupils have a chance to visit and to sample lessons. The school brochure has a useful section of information for pupils to help them settle in quickly.
60. All pupils have a journal that they take home daily. This provides them and their parents with a range of useful information and is used conscientiously by pupils to record their homework. Parents are expected to sign it whenever they hear their child read as well as once a week, to

acknowledge receipt of information. The journal is used well by some parents and teachers as a means of communication between home and school. Parents are encouraged to help their children at home. For example, the school has arranged meetings to inform parents about the literacy strategy and its programme of drugs education. Attendance at these meetings is very high. Attendance at parents' consultation meetings is exceptionally high, at around 98%, although the governors' meeting with them is poorly attended. The school encourages parents to discuss their child whenever any concerns arise or if they would like additional information. Teachers keep parents informed of any concerns regarding learning, behaviour or attendance.

61. The quality of the written information provided for parents is good overall. The school brochure provides a wide range of information but there are a few omissions. For example, the special educational needs policy is not summarised, arrangements for collective worship are not provided nor are parents told that they may withdraw their child from it. The governors' report is informative but lacks the school's targets for English and mathematics in the national tests for Year 6 pupils and detail of its work with pupils who have special educational needs. Although a full report on special educational needs is available at the governor's meeting, few parents attend this.
62. The quality of annual progress reports is good overall. The school reports on all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Reports are variable in quality, with the best practice in science, mathematics and design and technology. Attainment is well described and, in the best examples, the progress made by the pupil is clearly stated. Teachers usually indicate pupils' strengths and weaknesses clearly but do not tell parents the National Curriculum level at which their child is working. Some comments are less specific and focus more on attitude, effort and attainment than on progress. Targets are not always given and are often imprecise and unhelpful. In art and design, there is evidence of some pupils being set the same target for several years running. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are well informed and the special educational needs co-ordinator ensures that parents are involved at all stages.
63. The school has an active Parent Teacher Association (PTA) that organises a range of fundraising and social events. These are very well supported and the PTA provides a significant amount of money for school development. For example, the refurbishment of the science laboratory was funded entirely by the PTA and they have committed £10,000 towards the planned refurbishment of the food technology room. Parents' support for events such as the concerts and talent shows is very good.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

64. The leadership and management of the headteacher and the school managers are good overall. The headteacher is very committed to the success of the school and he works hard to ensure that it is a safe and happy community. The aim of the school is to ensure that every pupil can achieve their potential. This is valued by the staff and reflected in the good ethos of the school. It enables pupils to learn in a positive and caring environment. However, there is less evidence of the school's vision for its future development. It is significant that this was an

area for development from the last inspection which still needs to be addressed. The school still has no whole school strategy for the monitoring of standards or progress. This is unsatisfactory.

65. The school has a new senior management team that is beginning to work together effectively. The structure is good as it ensures that there is a management responsibility for Years 5 and 6 and for Years 7 and 8. The deputy headteacher has responsibility for the development of assessment. The delegation of responsibilities within the school is good. Subject leaders have full responsibility for their department. They are responsible for the curriculum, assessment, development planning, the monitoring of standards, progress and teaching and the development of resources. This is very effective. However, senior managers need to monitor this aspect of the work of the school to identify issues and to give management a clearer understanding of standards and progress throughout the school. Several departments would benefit from more support from the senior management team.
66. The school improvement plan identifies appropriate areas for development that will improve teaching and learning and raise standards. The school is aware of what needs to be done but is not as clear about how this will be achieved. The school improvement plan needs to clarify details in relation to the specific detail of monitoring and evaluation activities. The plan is appropriately linked to the financial year and to the performance management cycle. Teachers, governors and managers all contribute to its development. A significant target in the plan relates to the school developing strategies for self review in order to improve standards and a significant amount of work has been done on this target.
67. The school has worked hard to develop the role of the governing body. Overall it is effective in fulfilling its responsibilities. Governors are committed to their work and bring a very useful range of additional skills into the school from their varied professional lives. The effective committee structure enables the governors to look at specific aspects of the school. Governors have an excellent knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and their involvement in shaping the direction of the school is very good. They have undertaken training in interpreting school data and they have a good understanding of standards. They have close links with subjects and they are involved in monitoring. They have devised a very simple and useful questionnaire to enable them to do this effectively. However, their knowledge of their statutory duties is less satisfactory.
68. The governors' application of the principles of best value is satisfactory. They compare academic performance with that of other schools and they consult parents on some issues such as their views on the annual report to parents and the effectiveness of parents' evenings. Governors have a very good understanding of the budget. All spending is carefully considered and targeted through the school improvement plan. Recent developments like the decisions to increase non-contact time for teachers and the employment of an ICT technician have been fully costed. Governors seek to ensure good value for money in relation to purchases. As a result of good standards, the good quality of teaching and the satisfactory use of resources and funding the school provides good value for money.
69. The school has good arrangements for performance management. This is an improvement since the last inspection. There are good opportunities for the professional development of

members of staff linked to whole school targets and performance management. Currently the focus is on developing teaching to transform learning. The school is part of a local networked learning community looking at thinking skills. Opportunities to observe teaching in other schools are good. The induction of new members of staff is satisfactory. Although there are no specific arrangements, the good quality of the staff handbook provides comprehensive information for all and effective subject leadership ensures that new teachers are supported within their subjects. However, alternative arrangements are required for departments of only one teacher.

70. The match of teachers and support staff to the curriculum is good. Teachers are secure in the subjects they teach, even where they are not subject specialists. Teachers have some non-contact time in order for them to be more effective in the classroom. Smaller classes for some subjects help pupils, particularly the less able, to make good progress. The decision to employ a technician for ICT means that teachers can concentrate on teaching. Good use is made of learning support assistants to support literacy and numeracy but some pupils were seen to struggle in several lessons where they were not available.
71. The accommodation is satisfactory. It is very well maintained. Good, attractive and relevant displays help to make it a very good learning environment. However, the rapid growth of the school means that space is short. Currently the school is managing this well, without significant difficulties. The school has the benefit of specialist teaching areas for all pupils and two suites of computers for ICT. The outside areas are satisfactory but a problem with poor draining of the fields makes some games activities very difficult in winter. Overall, learning resources are good although pupils would benefit from more computers in classrooms and in the art room. Provision in the library is good. The school makes satisfactory use of new technology. Pupils have developed skills in ICT but they need more opportunities to use these across the curriculum. Technology is also used to store some data and to transfer it to other schools but it is not used to track pupil progress.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

72. In order to maintain and improve on the school's high standards, the governors, head teacher and staff should consider ways of:

- (1) Improving the use of the data already gathered to give a clear picture of the progress of individual pupils and groups of pupils through the school and their attainment by the end of Year 8.
(See paragraphs 2, 26, 54, 55, 56, 64)
- (2) Ensuring the planning and delivery of citizenship.
(See paragraphs 32, 36)
- (3) Developing the use of ICT to raise standards in other subjects.
(See paragraphs 8, 28)

Other issues

- The school does not comply with the requirements of daily collective worship.
- The statutory requirements in reports and documents are not fully met.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	79
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	35

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	8	29	27	14	1	0	0
Percentage	10	37	34	18	1	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

Y5 – Y8

Number of pupils on the school's roll	356
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	7

Special educational needs

Y5 – Y8

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	46

English as an additional language

No of
pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2
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Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of
pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	6.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.3

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	39	51	90

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	34	35	37
	Girls	42	44	49
	Total	76	79	86
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (88)	88 (74)	96 (98)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	34	35	37
	Girls	42	39	49
	Total	76	74	86
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (76)	82 (81)	96 (96)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

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	249	2	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	9	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	1	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	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	96	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y5 – Y8

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21

Education support staff: Y5 – Y8

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	90

Deployment of teachers: Y5 – Y8

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	81.5
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Average teaching group size: Y5 – Y8

Key Stage 2	24.7
Key Stage 3	27.1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2
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	£
Total income	707,460
Total expenditure	654,031
Expenditure per pupil	1,874
Balance brought forward from previous year	15,000
Balance carried forward to next year	53,737

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.68
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

Number of questionnaires sent out	356
Number of questionnaires returned	168

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	49	47	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	43	52	1	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	35	56	4	1	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	61	14	1	1
The teaching is good.	35	58	1	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	24	46	23	5	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	53	43	2	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	42	4	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	20	56	13	6	4
The school is well led and managed.	36	48	2	1	14
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	38	54	3	1	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	39	43	8	4	5

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

The responses to the questionnaire and comments at the parents' meeting indicate that parents are very supportive of the school. The inspection bears out their positive views. The parents stated that their child likes school and that they would feel comfortable to approach the school with any concerns. They believed that the teaching is good and that teachers have high expectations, so their

child makes good progress. Parents are confident that the school helps their child become a mature and responsible individual. A few parents expressed some negative views. Inspection evidence does not fully support these concerns. The information provided for parents is sometimes not detailed enough, but the school does involve parents in a number of ways and seeks to work more closely with them through, for example, the use of questionnaires. Homework is not always set regularly, according to a timetable. The range of extra-curricular activities is very good for a small school but, as most of these take place at lunchtime, not all parents may be aware of the full range.

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

ENGLISH

The overall quality of provision in English is **good**.

Strengths

- Standards are good in both key stages.
- The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has been effective in raising standards.
- Teacher-pupil relationships are very good.
- Lesson planning is very good.
- The marking of pupils' work and assessment of each individual pupil's attainment is very good.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.

Areas for Improvement

- The monitoring and evaluation of progress and attainment of groups of pupils to inform development is weak.
- Monitoring the quality of teaching and learning across the subject is not yet developed.

73. The standards of attainment in English are good overall. Standards of reading, writing, speaking and listening are all good. In the national tests for pupils aged 11 in 2002, 84% of pupils attained Level 4, the national expectation or higher, and 39% of the pupils attained Level 5 or higher. Both of these percentages are above the national averages, and in line with the scores of similar schools. Pupils' progress from the age of seven to 11 as measured in these tests is lower than the national rates of progress. However, information is not available for about one third of the pupils entering the school, which makes the comparison insecure. Pupils' work and the standards of attainment seen in lessons show progress is satisfactory or better for all pupils from their entry to the school to national testing at age 11. Boys and girls are performing at a similarly high level, whereas nationally girls normally perform better. Attainment at the age of 11 has been above the national average over the past three years, and stayed steadily above it. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
74. Standards reached by pupils in Key Stage 3, at the age of 13, are also good. In lessons and in pupils' written work the standards of attainment build effectively on those reached at age 11. The pupils' national test results in the high schools at the age of 14 show that they have progressed in line with the national expectations or better. Pupils across the attainment range make satisfactory or better progress between the ages of 11 and 13, and pupils with special educational needs again do well.
75. Subjects across the curriculum contribute effectively to the high standards of literacy achieved. The teaching of literacy within subjects other than English is very good. In design and technology, for example, literacy targets are on the board, 'word walls' display both technical vocabulary and support for generic literacy skills, there is a specialist dictionary, literacy objectives are included in planning sheets and so on. Specialist subject language successfully becomes everyday language in this environment.

76. Standards of reading are high. All pupils are eager and willing to read aloud and the older and higher attaining pupils read with accuracy, fluency and expression. Year 8 pupils taking the parts of narrator and the various characters in *'Goodnight Mr Tom'* brought the text to life with reading that demonstrated sensitivity and real understanding of character and situation. Through their reading and study of texts, pupils develop good critical reading skills and develop a good understanding of the range of kinds of writing. Through study of technique and style they learn to write effectively for specific audiences and purposes. More technical aspects of writing, such as accurate spelling and punctuation, remain challenges for many pupils, though there is clear evidence of progress and improvement year-on-year. Pupils are willing contributors in lessons, talking without self-consciousness from their first year in school. For example, a Year 5 pupil considering her worksheet and the task ahead said conversationally to her teacher, *"I've got a bit of a problem."* and helpfully pointed out the missing text, which had the potential to make her task more difficult than she would have liked. As pupils get older, they develop a good sense of appropriate speech for a variety of situations and audiences and higher attaining pupils are well-equipped to develop and express complex ideas. The positive climate for learning in English classes is such that pupils are encouraged to work with confidence and ambition.
77. The standard of teaching in English is good. The literacy strategy has been introduced very effectively and offers teachers and pupils a clear and familiar structure. Pupils enjoy the pace and variety found in lessons. The needs of pupils across the attainment range, including those with special educational needs are met effectively. Lessons are well planned and teachers think carefully about appropriate activities and effective beginnings to lessons. A Year 7 lesson on figures of speech had an effective treasure trail of *'Catch Phrase'* type activities focusing on similes and metaphors, which interested pupils and stimulated thought and discussion. Marking is detailed, thorough and positive in tone. At times, the correcting of errors is less effective than it might be because it lacks focus and pupils do not always take note of highlighted errors. Similarly, good practice is developing in the setting of targets for improvement, which are noted at the back of pupils' books. Sometimes though, the targets are not worded so that pupils are clear about how to improve, and progress in meeting the target is not monitored. In some lessons, particularly when skills are being taught, insufficient thought is given to the range of prior attainment in the topic within a teaching group. Very occasionally in this situation, the technical knowledge of teachers is put to the test.
78. The very positive classroom climate and relationships, the careful planning, and the effective use of the lesson structure all contribute positively to the progress pupils make, to their enjoyment of the subject and very good behaviour in lessons.
79. The nature of the subject, with its focus on the study of literature and a wide range of texts, has a positive impact on pupils' personal development. They have opportunities to empathise with and understand the lives of others through the study of fiction and non-fiction, for example, a Martin Luther King speech on the one hand and the experiences of a poor wartime evacuee on the other.
80. The library is a strength of the subject. Pupils in the school have genuinely 'caught' the reading habit. With the aid of a number of parents and close collaboration with the library

service, the library has been revamped. Stock has been replenished and library lessons instituted. These are very effective.

81. A determination to raise further the good attainment of the pupils at the age of 11 has led the department to reorganise teaching in Year 6 to achieve smaller teaching groups and more focussed teaching. The subject leader feels that noticeable improvements in the standards of written work have been made in the past year and lesson observations and work scrutiny support this view. Overall, the rate and range of improvement within the subject are good and better than at the time of the last inspection.
82. The subject is well led and managed. There is a strong focus on improvement and clarity about priorities. Activities such as work scrutiny, standardisation of teacher assessments and setting of assessment tasks contribute to the evaluations within the subject. A need for more systematic and regular monitoring of teaching and learning remains. A stronger focus on the use of assessment and attainment data to analyse the progress of groups of pupils could lead to better informed decisions about the priorities for improvement .
83. The subject is reasonably resourced and many of the teaching rooms provide good, light, and spacious accommodation. One mobile classroom is noisy however and markedly less welcoming to pupils and teachers. One other is far from sound-proof. Both these rooms have a negative impact on teaching and learning. All rooms however, benefit from excellent displays of relevant materials and pupils' work and are evidence of the commitment of teachers and the high standards attained by pupils. The subject leader is the only specialist English teacher. The subject leader and Key Stage 2 literacy co-ordinator have rightly made a priority to support the teaching in English of the non-specialists who are teaching a range of subjects. They are producing and sharing high quality resources to meet the needs of all pupils. In particular, they secure and develop the talented pupils who are currently achieving well but could do more.

MATHEMATICS

The overall provision in mathematics is **good**.

Strengths

- Teaching and learning are consistently good, and sometimes very good.
- The co-ordinator provides dynamic and effective leadership.
- Pupils attain high standards, they enjoy mathematics and work hard.

Areas for improvement

- Links between learning objectives and National Curriculum levels should be strengthened.
- The development of pupil profiles that track achievement and attainment.
- Greater opportunities to integrate ICT into classroom activities.

84. The standards achieved by pupils at age 11 are well above national expectations. In the Year 6 National Curriculum Tests in 2002, pupils' attainments were well above national expectations and in line with the attainments of similar schools. In Year 6, most pupils are

confident in their use of number and use a broad range of mathematical vocabulary accurately and confidently. Pupils apply their knowledge and skills to the solution of mathematical problems and are competent in presenting the information in a clear and organised way. They confidently discuss the tasks set and have the capability to apply their previously acquired skills and knowledge to a new context. Pupils in Year 6 have a comprehensive understanding of the properties of a range of shapes. They are able to calculate the perimeter and apply formula to calculate the area. Pupils can use the equivalence between fractions, decimals and percentages to solve problems. Less able pupils can calculate the perimeter and area of simple shapes. They understand the difference between ratio and proportion and can solve simple problems. Higher attaining pupils have a good understanding of ratio and proportion and its relevance in a range of contexts. In a lesson on ratio, pupils considered and analysed very well a range of enlarged and reduced photographs of a bird. Pupils in Year 5 can recognise equivalent fractions and solve problems involving fractions.

85. The standards achieved by pupils at age 13 are well above national expectations, they have progressed well. Pupils in Year 8 have an advanced mathematical vocabulary, they can articulate precisely their rationale for a solution and can explain accurately mathematical concepts. Year 8 pupils have a comprehensive understanding of probability. They can predict the outcome of tossing two coins. They confidently complete tree diagrams for possible outcomes when you spin two spinners. Pupils can calculate the probability of choosing red, blue and green beads from a bag. They can calculate the probability of scoring a specific number on a spinner. Higher attaining pupils can plot accurately graphs of a linear function and progress to plotting graphs of quadratic functions. They understand the concept of the gradient and the intercept and can apply this understanding to calculate the equation of a linear graph. Pupils used ICT effectively to underpin their understanding of graphs of linear functions. They designed a profitable game of chance, based on sound mathematical principles and integrated strategies that ensured many losers and few winners. Less able pupils can use a protractor, ruler and compasses to construct a triangle from three given lengths and can plot the graph of simple linear functions. They can calculate the mode, mean and median of a range of data and understand the equivalence between percentages, fractions and decimals.
86. The quality of teaching is good overall and has a positive effect on pupils' learning. It was at least satisfactory in all lessons seen, good or better in eight tenths of lessons and very good in half. Teachers generally use a wide range of effective teaching methods with a variety of well-planned activities that are often investigative and applied to real life situations. Lesson plans are clear, precise, and based on efficient joint planning. They provide an effective framework for each lesson. Teachers explain new skills and concepts clearly and use a range of appropriate resources to develop pupils' skills and understanding. Teachers have high expectations, use good questioning skills to probe understanding and expect pupils to explain their rationale.
87. The development of numeracy skills, mathematical language and the use of strategies for problem-solving based on prior learning are emphasised strongly. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils applied their understanding of fractions to comprehend ratio and proportion. Pace in lessons is brisk and teachers provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to reflect on their learning.

In many lessons, extension activities are identified for the more able pupils. In a Year 7 lesson the extension activity was differentiated with the most able working out probabilities using the multiple principle. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because activities are well matched to their specific learning needs and learning assistants help their progress. Occasionally, pupils' learning potential is not realised because teachers have not sufficiently identified, either the resources, or the support strategies necessary to enable pupils to learn independently. In a small number of lessons, teachers were over ambitious in their planning and consequently they ran out of time.

88. Pupils enjoy mathematics and they concentrate very well on the activities. They work with enthusiasm and interest to complete their tasks successfully. Pupils are confident and articulate in lessons, they actively take responsibility for their own learning. In several lessons, pupils initiated further work in particular activities they believed needed greater reinforcement. Lessons provide opportunities for independent work and investigation. All pupils settle well to either independent or collaborative activities and concentrate diligently for appropriate lengths of time. In a Year 8 lesson on loci, pupils, in groups, were able to find and record loci of points, which moved according to certain conditions. Pupils used a range of resources to investigate loci practically. Relationships are very good, with mutual respect and trust between teachers and pupils.
89. The department is led by a dynamic and effective co-ordinator, who has instigated a clear direction for the development of mathematics within the school. The co-ordinator has a significant impact on the practice within the department. The large department works well, planning together regularly. Teachers with good mathematical understanding have supported non-specialists, in order to improve and maintain the subject knowledge of all the teachers. The monitoring of teaching and learning is comprehensive and has been a significant factor in raising standards of teaching and learning. Arrangements for assessing standards achieved by pupils in lessons are good. Targets are set and monitored and marking is often detailed and informative. Clear records are kept of pupils' achievement and external assessments are used to moderate standards. To ensure that pupils' achievements are judged against national standards, learning objectives need stronger links to National Curriculum levels. Pupils' assessment data needs to be used more effectively to monitor pupils' achievement and progress as they move through the school. Opportunities for using ICT to support mathematical learning are developing but these are infrequent and more regular access to ICT needs to be scheduled.
90. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Standards of attainment, which were just above national expectations at ages 11 and 13, have risen. The quality of teaching has improved from 50% the lessons observed being good or better in the last inspection, to 80% of lessons being at least good.
91. Currently there is no systematic and co-ordinated approach to developing numeracy skills across the curriculum. Two training sessions have enabled teachers and support staff to identify numeracy links across the curriculum. The mathematics co-ordinator produces a termly numeracy poster for all staff, which details the focus for the term and identifies links with other curriculum areas. There has been no monitoring of this strategy to evaluate its

effectiveness in embedding numeracy across the curriculum. No planned strategy exists for developing numeracy across the school. Within mathematics, the provision for numeracy is good and there is a detailed plan for developing numeracy skills. Standards of numeracy are generally satisfactory across the school. In science, pupils draw and interpret graphs and measure angles. In design and technology, pupils utilise their weighing and measuring skills. In geography, pupils collect data and produce the information in a range of tables and charts. In physical education, pupils consolidate their understanding of time. In art and design, pupils are aware of proportion in observational drawing. In ICT pupils manipulate a range of numerical data when working with spreadsheets.

SCIENCE

Overall, the quality of provision for science is **very good**.

Strengths

- Standards of attainment in both Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3.
- The high quality of teaching and learning.
- The good development of pupils' investigative skills.
- The very good support for pupils with special educational needs.
- Pupils' very positive attitudes and behaviour.

Areas for improvement

- Increasing the number of opportunities for using ICT to enhance science teaching and learning and embedding these into schemes of work.
- Evaluating pupils' overall performance in the subject.

92. Overall standards in science are very good. At the age of 11, the pupils' attainments are very good. In the 2002 Key Stage 2 national tests 96% of pupils gained Level 4. This is well above the national average. In the same tests, 79% of pupils gained Level 5. This score places the school in the top 5% of schools nationally. Results are well above those for similar schools. Pupils performed better in science than either English or mathematics. Results in Key Stage 2 national tests show a rising trend over the last six years.
93. Observations of science lessons confirm that pupils' attainments are very high. Pupils have a firm grasp of science concepts and are able to apply this knowledge to unfamiliar contexts. For example, in a Year 5 lesson on sound, pupils showed a good understanding of pitch and were able to apply the concept to a variety of musical instruments, many of which they had not encountered before. Pupils are also developing their ability to plan and carry out science investigations and to consider and evaluate evidence. This was exemplified in a Year 6 lesson on 'forces' where pupils successfully planned and carried out an investigation into the grip provided by different shoes on rough and smooth surfaces.
94. By the age of 13, the pupils' attainments are still very good. Pupils further develop their knowledge and understanding and make connections between what they learn in the classroom and everyday phenomena. For example, in a Year 8 lesson, pupils were able to explain why a straw placed in water appears to bend by reference to the laws of light

refraction. Pupils continue to develop their capability in the skills of scientific enquiry and many pupils have developed these skills to a high level. This was exemplified in a Year 7 lesson on 'acids and alkalis' where pupils were able to plan and carry out an investigation into indicators made from plant materials and to evaluate the evidence gained before arriving at appropriate conclusions.

95. Overall, the quality of teaching is very good. At both key stages, teaching is very good because teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding. Lesson planning is thorough and expectations of pupils' behaviour and attainment are high. The teaching methods used are appropriate to pupils' needs and abilities. Teachers manage pupils well and lessons are well structured and organised. The use of day-to-day assessment is good. Teachers give good quality feedback to pupils both orally and through detailed marking of written work. Teachers know pupils' strengths and weaknesses and take action to help pupils improve. The use of assessment for tracking pupils' progress over time in terms of their National Curriculum levels is less secure, especially at Key Stage 3. Support for pupils with special educational needs is very good. For example, in a Year 6 lesson a group of pupils with general learning difficulties were supported by the use of a computer to help them draw a graph and interpret the results. In a Year 8 lesson a pupil with reading and writing difficulties was very effectively supported by being placed in a group of more able pupils.
96. As a result of very good teaching pupils progressively acquire science skills, knowledge and understanding. At both key stages all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress. There is no difference between the progress made by boys and girls. Pupils make good progress in the development of literacy and numeracy skills through their application in science lessons. Teachers give pupils frequent opportunities for making decisions and learning independently. Consequently they develop these skills very well.
97. Attitudes and behaviour are very good. Pupils listen attentively and work sensibly and responsibly on the tasks set. They respond well to teachers' questions and work with interest, enthusiasm and enjoyment. The quality of relationships between teachers and pupils and amongst pupils themselves is very good.
98. Overall, leadership and management of science are good. The subject leader is effective in promoting good teaching and learning and this results in high standards. Effective guidance is given on the delivery of the science curriculum and an action plan is in place to improve provision. Staff are experienced and well qualified. The department is adequately resourced and makes good use of specialist facilities. However, evaluation of pupil performance is not well refined. For example, the outcomes of National Curriculum test papers taken by Year 6 pupils are not systematically analysed to determine patterns in pupil attainment. Some monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning takes place, for example in the form of sampling pupils' books, but little in terms of lesson observation. The use of ICT to enhance science teaching is limited but developing. These issues have been identified by the subject leader as areas of relative weakness and improvement is planned.
99. Improvements have been made in provision for science since the last inspection. Key Stage 2 teachers have much better subject knowledge and consequently standards of attainment have

risen. The degree of challenge offered to Key Stage 2 pupils is now much higher. As a result, pupils show more interest in learning science. At both key stages, teachers emphasise learning objectives at the start of lessons and explain these to pupils. Consequently pupils are now more involved in their own learning.

ART AND DESIGN

Overall, the quality of provision for art and design is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- Standards at Key Stage 2, particularly objective drawing skills.
- The high quality of teaching at Key Stage 2.
- The positive attitudes of pupils towards the subject.
- The high quality of display – both in the art room and around school.
- The day-to-day management of the subject.

Areas for improvement

- Providing opportunities for the pupils to initiate and develop their own work – particularly at Key Stage 3.
- Supporting the strategic leadership of the subject.
- Providing opportunities to use ICT to develop pupils' work.

100. The standard of pupils' work is satisfactory overall. At the age of 11, pupils' attainments in art and design are above national expectations, and by the age of 13 they are in line with national expectations. Since the previous inspection, standards have been maintained in Key Stage 2 but have fallen slightly in Key Stage 3.
101. At the age of 11, pupils' standards are high and they show good control of the materials they use. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils controlled pencils well, using them to make a variety of marks to accurately depict the surface texture of the animal skulls they were drawing. Year 6 drawings of peacock feathers on display, showed an ability to accurately select and apply colour sensitively. Three-dimensional work in clay is well-constructed and painted work is accurately rendered, showing good colour mixing skills. Pupils know about the work of a number of artists and are familiar with art works from Australian aboriginal and other cultures.
102. As pupils progress through Key Stage 3 they consolidate the technical skills learned in Key Stage 2 and develop some of them well. For example, Year 7 pen and ink drawings based on local architecture show a bold use of tonal values and an extended awareness of the range of marks that can be used to represent textures. Graphic work shows good technical control and an awareness of repeated pattern. Pupils demonstrate the capacity to produce creative and imaginative work within the projects set, but do not generally make effective use of sketch or ideas books to explore their own ideas and undertake their own research.
103. Pupils have positive attitudes towards the subject overall. They are keen to learn and confident in talking about their work, both to each other and to their teacher. They take a

- pride in their work and take great care of the resources. They respond positively to suggestions or challenges from their teacher and work well with each other.
104. Teaching and learning are good overall, but are stronger in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 3. The most effective teaching showed some notable features. Teachers' technical subject knowledge is very good and is clearly communicated and demonstrated to the pupils. For example, in a Year 5 lesson exploring colour mixing, the teacher explained the relationship between primary, secondary and tertiary colours very well and provided clear technical guidance on the application of paint, which was well received, and followed by the pupils to good effect. Relationships between teacher and pupils were very good overall and the teacher worked hard to encourage the pupils. For example, in a Year 6 drawing lesson, the teacher supported a pupil with special educational needs really well; mixing encouragement with challenge and helping the pupil make real progress over the course of the lesson. In the same lesson, the teacher provided sensitive support, but again with challenge, to a pupil who had little confidence in her own ability to draw accurately. Whilst the support and guidance provided in Key Stage 2 lessons is effective, the work of some pupils in Years 7 and 8 indicates that there is too much direction in the teaching they receive and that this is limiting the development of their ability to initiate and sustain their own creative and imaginative work.
105. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory overall, with some areas of strength and other areas in need of development. The subject leader effectively manages the day-to-day work of the department. Planning documentation is in place and used well in lessons. School policies and procedures are applied well and followed through carefully. The accommodation and resources made available for the subject are well used and maintained by the teacher, who sets high standards and successfully encourages a similar attitude on the part of the pupils. The school needs to take appropriate advice however, on protecting the kiln when being fired. Displays are well presented, both inside the classroom and in the school corridors and provide a useful learning resource, as well as celebrating pupils' achievements.
106. The long-term direction for the subject is unsatisfactory. A clear vision for the development of the subject is lacking. No major review of the art and design curriculum has taken place recently, though some individual projects within the curriculum have been reviewed and amended where necessary. Because of the lack of specialist advice and support to give a systematic review, there is no coherent plan for building on existing strengths within the subject, nor for addressing areas requiring development.
107. The art and design curriculum provided by the school satisfies statutory requirements and has many strengths and some areas for development. The curriculum at Key Stage 2 is good overall, and provides well-structured opportunities for the pupils to develop a wide range of technical skills and to learn about the work of a number of artists from Britain and Europe as well as from other cultures. As pupils move through Key Stage 3, however, opportunities for them to improve their standards, by taking an increasing responsibility for making choices about the direction and content of their own studies, are limited. The curriculum does not provide sufficient opportunities for the pupils to use ICT in the development of their artwork. It is enriched, however, by the regular lunchtime art clubs that take place and are well supported by the pupils.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

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

Strengths

- Teachers and pupils work hard in lessons and the standard of pupils' work is in line with, or above expectations.
- Pupils' knowledge and understanding are good and they apply them well when making products.
- Pupils are taught the skills of working with tools, equipment and materials, very well and as a result they produce products of quality.
- Pupils are able to evaluate their work and their written evaluations are of a high standard.
- Pupils' work is valued and display is of good quality.

Areas for improvement

- The written comments on marked work do not identify strengths and weaknesses in sufficient detail to enable pupils to know, and strive for, the next step of improvement.
- Formal monitoring of teaching, pupils' work and teachers' planning is insufficient to ensure consistently high standards across year groups and areas of the subject.
- The use of ICT, to support learning in the subject, including the use of computer control and computer aided design and manufacture, is under-developed.

108. Overall, standards in design and technology are good. At the age of 11, pupils' attainments are in line with national expectations and, by the time the pupils leave the school at the age of 13, attainment is on course to meet or exceed national expectations at the end of Key Stage 3.

109. In all year groups, pupils are able to work to a design brief and follow the stages of the design process. They generate and communicate their design ideas in a variety of ways, including drawing, modelling and discussion. They develop a range of drawing and modelling techniques as they progress through the school; these include three-dimensional drawing and making prototypes. Pupils acquire good knowledge and understanding in the subject, for example in Year 5 they know about linkages and levers and are able to apply this to a project on '*Moving Monsters*'. In a Year 7 lesson, the pupils demonstrated very good knowledge and understanding of structures and they applied this with confidence when designing and making a bridge structure. Pupils learn about a range of materials and their properties, for example in textiles the pupils knew about natural and man-made fibres and were making and using felt in a weaving project. In projects in Year 6, to make a '*Storage Container*' and '*Moving Bugs*', the pupils demonstrated their knowledge and understanding of plastic materials, including how they can be shaped in a variety of ways. Pupils apply their knowledge very well when making but sometimes, it is not so clearly applied when they are designing. This leads to achievement in some aspects of design not meeting expected levels, and not showing appropriate progression from year to year.

110. Pupils are able to produce quality products because they apply their knowledge and understanding when they are making things, but also because they are taught how to use tools

and equipment with appropriate levels of accuracy and precision as they move through the year groups. The pupils work with confidence and enjoyment using a range of hand and machine tools and equipment, for example different types of saws and drills, files and sewing machines. They work safely and with good levels of skill in marking out, cutting, shaping and finishing materials, for example in a Year 6 textiles lesson pupils made paper models of hat designs, made modifications and then made accurate full size patterns of the hats they had designed. In Year 8, they made electronic circuits and cut some complex shapes in plastic material to make a novelty item which lit up. There were no food lessons during the inspection but pupils' work shows that they are designing and making food products and developing relevant knowledge and skills.

111. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, with some excellent teaching in Years 7 and 8 lessons using resistant materials. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and mostly good or very good. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and they plan thoroughly a range of interesting projects that cover most of the requirements of the National Curriculum. The exception is the use of ICT. There is insufficient access to, and use of, ICT to support learning in design and technology, including basic use of ICT to support research and designing as required by the National Curriculum. These deficiencies are identified in school development plans but it is not clear how these plans will be financed. Teachers' management and organisation of pupils and resources are very good. Their instructions, explanations and guidance are good and these contribute to pupil motivation and achievement. Some lessons are organised with clear starter activities and conclusions that support learning well, but this structure is not used consistently. Literacy receives very good attention. This includes, support for understanding the technical vocabulary of the subject, and strategies are in place to support pupils' writing. At the end of projects, some assessment of pupils' progress in relation to National Curriculum levels is good. However, while marking complies with the school's policy, the written comments on pupils' work do not fully support them in understanding their strengths and weaknesses and, how to make the next step. The comments do not always link to the objectives established at the beginning of most lessons and in planning documents.
112. Learning is good in all year groups. Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are very good, they are attentive and follow instructions very well. This supports them in getting on task very efficiently and in sustaining their work and concentration. They are mature in seeking help when needed and in many cases are able to work both productively and independently. They are interested in their work and enjoy completing tasks. They talk about their work knowledgeably and with some pride. Relationships are very good, with pupils showing respect for teachers and each other. They work collaboratively in paired and grouped activities. Pupils respond to teachers' questions but many also ask questions and offer ideas and suggestions. Pupils support one another and work harmoniously with others, whether boys or girls or pupils with special educational needs. The latter pupils have high self-esteem and make the same good progress as other pupils. Able pupils make satisfactory progress and there is evidence, in pupils' folders and teachers' planning, of extension tasks. However, these are not regularly completed and the level of challenge for more able pupils could be increased with advantage.

113. Leadership and management of the subject are good. Direction and curriculum leadership, particularly in the resistant materials areas, are good. Some monitoring and evaluation are undertaken and appropriate priorities are identified. However, systematic monitoring of teaching and monitoring and moderation of pupil work is not yet in place; this results in the inconsistencies identified in aspects of the subject.
114. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory, and some of the good features of the subject have been maintained. Good progress is evident in the quality of teaching, in the level of pupils' knowledge and in the work-shop accommodation. Some progress has been made in raising the level of challenge in design activities and some are now very good. However, not all design activities are sufficiently challenging. Improvement in the access and use of ICT has been insufficient, and the quality of the food and textiles accommodation is now poor. The room is too small, is not suitable for the textiles work with some poor siting of equipment and unhygienic surfaces.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

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

Strengths

- Very good teaching.
- Good standards in both key stages.
- Very good curricular opportunities.
- Very good leadership and management.
- Use of a broad range of resources including field work.

Areas for improvement

- To identify the progress of pupils in both subjects in relation to National Curriculum levels.
- Provision for gifted and talented pupils.

115. Geography and history are planned together but delivered as separate subjects, each year has one term of each subject, so there was not enough evidence to make separate judgements on the provision in each. The standards in geography and history on entry to the school have not been assessed but current standards in Year 5 are very high as able pupils are already achieving Level 4, the national expectation, and no work was seen below Level 3. By the mid point of Year 6 pupils are achieving above national expectations in both subjects as almost half the pupils are achieving elements of Level 5. Most pupils will have achieved Level 4 or higher by the end of Year 6.
116. By the end of Year 8 pupils' attainments are also above national expectations in both subjects because of the very good provision. Half the pupils at the end of Year 8 achieve Level 5 a year before they are expected to do so. In history 8% of pupils are achieving Level 6 by the end of Year 8.
117. By age 11, pupils' written and oral work is very good. In geography they demonstrate skills in map work, including the use of map references and the ability to investigate a local river

system. Following a field visit to Kielder Water they are able to accurately record their findings. They use a good variety of geographic language, can interpret photographs and compare the Rivers Tyne and Nile in detail. The quality of the work seen reflects the emphasis that is put on developing skills, especially those of enquiry, while ensuring that facts are known and understood. This is also true in history where pupils use several sources to find answers to questions. For example, in work seen on the Tudors pupils identified questions they wanted to ask and then researched the answers. They are also expected to find the causes for some events like the defeat of the Armada and they do this very effectively. Some good examples of extended writing were seen where pupils were able to reflect on the life of hardship that led to the Jarrow March.

118. By age 13, pupils have made very good progress in both subjects. In geography their skills in map work have developed to include the interpretation of contours and a range of other information seen in their description of the journey to Killhope. They also have a good understanding of settlement patterns and climate. Pupils are also able to discuss the impact of tourism on an area and to reflect and comment on the advertising that attracts the tourists. They can apply their learning on changing land use in history to changing land use in modern day Kenya. In Year 8 history pupils use ICT to present the results of their research into homes in Nineteenth Century Britain. Good chronological skills are demonstrated in many pieces of work including work on the slave trade. Pupils have continued to develop an understanding and respect for people in other times and societies as demonstrated in the challenging piece of extended writing relating to an imaginary miner's diary.
119. Overall pupils with special educational needs make at least satisfactory progress and some make good progress as teachers do work hard to help them to learn, but there was no additional support in any humanities lessons seen during the inspection and several pupils did find some lessons difficult.
120. Teaching is very good in both subjects throughout the school. Teachers have very good knowledge of the subjects, plan very effectively to ensure all requirements are met and use a wide range of resources to challenge and motivate the pupils. They all have a very good understanding of how pupils learn and they plan their lesson activities to take account of the individual needs of most pupils. However, there are a few examples of very able pupils undertaking tasks that do not challenge them. Pupils are always told what they will learn in a lesson and they have the opportunity at the end of the lesson to think about whether the lesson objectives have been met. Lessons proceed at a very good pace with pupils sometimes working on their own and sometimes in pairs so that they can share ideas. Relationships are very good and good use is made of praise and the celebration of achievement so pupils behave well and are responsible and independent learners. Teachers have created interesting humanities learning environments in their classrooms and these are well used during lessons. Overall marking and assessment are good. Assessment is well planned and assessed work is marked against the learning objectives that inform the planning. This is an improvement in history since the last inspection. Pupils understand the marking and comments from the teachers help the pupils to know what they should do to improve. However, pupils are not clear about how well they are doing in geography or history in terms of National Curriculum levels.

121. The management of the humanities is very good as the two coordinators are very committed to working as a team that supports all members of the department. They regularly review and evaluate the quality of the department's work and make changes if these are shown to be necessary. The planning for geography and history is excellent as the two subjects are very cleverly linked to avoid spending too much time on teaching knowledge. The work on Egypt is a very good example of this with geography and history themes, skills and objectives planned together. This gives more time for the development of skills and field work. The curriculum is broad and balanced with good provision for literacy, citizenship and ICT. There are, however, still occasions when more attention could be given to the wider moral and cultural implications of some work in humanities. This was an issue in geography in the last inspection. The social implications were also identified as being in need of development but this has been addressed.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Strengths

- Pupils enjoy ICT lessons and make good progress.
- Assessment of ICT skills is good.
- Pupils reach good standards of ICT capability, particularly in a range of software packages and utilities.

Areas for improvement

- A co-ordinated approach for the use of ICT across the curriculum is lacking.
- Pupils' ICT skills are not used adequately to enhance their learning of other subjects.

122. Pupils' attainments in ICT at age 11 are above national expectations. The majority of pupils are competent in the use of a range of software packages and can proficiently handle a range of information and data. Pupils use a standard spreadsheet package to calculate the cost of a range of food items in design and technology. After analysing a range of commercially produced brochures, pupils produce a '*Space Brochure*' where they use their desktop publishing skills to communicate information in a variety of forms. Higher attaining pupils use a wide range of publishing features and are sensitive to the needs of the intended audience. In history, pupils use a simulation package to find out information on aspects of life in Tudor times and show an awareness of how their decisions can affect the outcomes in the simulation. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and are well supported by the learning assistant. Pupils in Year 5 produce a '*Wanted*' poster and use digital cameras to incorporate text and images.

123. The attainments of pupils aged 13 are on course to meet national expectations by the end of Key Stage 3. In Year 8 within the timetabled ICT lessons attainments are good. All pupils can combine different kinds of information, for example, using text and graphical images to produce reports. All pupils are confident in searching the Internet for specific information and higher attaining pupils understand how key words speed up the process. Year 8 pupils

demonstrate a range of skills when adding pages and creating hyper-links to their web pages. Pupils evaluate a compact website, then work in small groups to create a multi-media presentation of linked pages using text, images and sound on *Killhope*. Higher attaining pupils are able to use desktop publishing software to organise, refine and present a set of linked pages, which offer users a variety of options. They demonstrate that they have considered the appropriateness of the language, content and appearance for the intended audience. Pupils have no access to computer aided design and computer assisted manufacturing (CAD/CAM) in design and technology and while there are limited opportunities for control technology and data logging it is not systematically included in schemes of work. In such areas, therefore, standards of attainment are not as high as in others. Pupils in Year 7 demonstrate good levels of ICT capability in the timetabled ICT lessons. They produce a *PowerPoint* presentation, comprising of text and graphical images, on the main aspects of the school. This presentation is shown to prospective pupils during their initial induction visit to the school.

124. The quality of teaching and learning seen in the timetabled ICT lessons is good overall. Lessons begin with a clear introduction where the teacher uses appropriate examples and a good range of questioning techniques to involve the pupils in identifying the new areas of learning. In all year groups, the pupils' confidence and appropriate ICT capability enable them to develop their ideas independently. The pace is brisk, pupils enjoy ICT and are keen to learn. Pupils have very good attitudes and adopt responsible approaches to using the computers. Relationships are very good with mutual respect and trust between teacher and pupils. The more able pupils can work with greater independence with self-help resources and in paired activities help to support the learning of other pupils. The teacher and learning support assistant provide well-judged support to those pupils who struggle with the task and pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
125. Assessment of pupils' ICT capability is good in the timetabled ICT lessons. Pupils evaluate their own learning against detailed criteria, which is assessed by the teacher. Pupils have a good understanding of what they can do and how they can improve their work, they use appropriate technical vocabulary to support their learning. The monitoring of the pupils' capabilities in ICT in other subjects is weak.
126. Since the last inspection, ICT provision has improved considerably. The quality and number of computers have greatly improved and the school has two rooms of networked computers. The scheme of work has greatly improved since the last inspection. The timetabled ICT programme now covers spreadsheets, word processing, data handling, desktop publishing, modelling and multimedia presentations. Teaching in the timetabled ICT programme is good and is an improvement on the last inspection. The assessment and monitoring of pupils' ICT capabilities have improved considerably. The use of ICT across the other subjects of the curriculum is erratic and uncoordinated and while there has been some improvement since the last inspection it remains unsatisfactory.
127. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The schemes of work and planning, within the timetabled ICT lessons, are good and pupils make good progress. However, pupils are unable to make systematic use of their skills in other areas of the curriculum and therefore do not consolidate the ICT capabilities they have previously acquired. There are

limited links with other curriculum areas and consequently aspects, such as CAD/CAM and control technology are inadequately covered.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French

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

Strengths

- Above average standards of attainment.
- Very good teaching.
- Pupils have a secure understanding and good recall of language.
- Pupils' awareness of cultural differences.
- Pupils' awareness of their learning.

Areas for Improvement

- Revision of long and medium term planning is incomplete.
- Accurate assessment against National Curriculum levels and analysis of the progress of different groups of pupils against national expectations are underdeveloped.
- Pupils' extended writing skills are weak.
- The use of ICT to raise standards in the subject is unsatisfactory.

128. Overall standards are good. By the age of 11, the pupils' achievements are good, pupils having made a good start in French in Years 5 and 6. All pupils interviewed could understand common classroom instructions, respond to familiar questions and talk about some differences between the English and French languages and cultures. Abler pupils were able to initiate and sustain a short conversation from memory. Some pupils were hesitant or needed prompting to recall phrases they had been taught. This year French is not being taught in Key Stage 2 during the spring term, but there is insufficient evidence to attribute their hesitations to this fact.
129. By age 13, achievements are good and pupils have made good progress. They have a very good grasp of grammar. For example, pupils in Year 8 can describe the formation of the perfect tense and Year 7 pupils can explain how to work out the French equivalents for the word "some". Pupils' listening and speaking skills are good. Pupils can pick out information from taped conversations, abler pupils spotting that some information heard might be misleading. All pupils cope well with French for classroom communication and are able to produce model conversations from memory. Average and abler pupils can adapt and extend modelled dialogues. Although no extensive reading was observed, opportunities for reading are planned and pupils' creative writing shows awareness of authentic text. Attainment in writing is more variable. All pupils copy accurately and write well in structured tasks. Creative writing projects show that pupils draw on earlier learning. However, abler pupils do not write extensively from memory on a regular basis. Writing skills are not coached so thoroughly as speaking skills.

130. Generally, pupils achieve well and make good progress in French. However, although pupils with special educational needs cope well with tasks in lessons, their attainment is inadequately recorded and monitored so that the impact on their progress of being withdrawn from 50% of French lessons is not known. This is an unsatisfactory situation.
131. Teaching is very good. Lessons are extremely well structured and energetically delivered. The teacher frequently checks and draws out all pupils' knowledge of French language and culture through focussed and targeted questions. Reinforcement exercises are well prepared and presented to pupils as a challenge. Pupils respond by tackling them with high levels of concentration and care for accuracy. Their rate of work is very good. Pair speaking, when pupils collaborate independently of the teacher on practising French, is a strength that contributes to the development of pupils' social and language skills. The teacher encourages pupils to volunteer phrases to form a model conversation that is available as a prompt. After brisk and thorough rehearsal the teacher encourages pupils to move on to improving their fluency, adapting or extending the model and speaking without prompts. This progression to speaking from memory is a good achievement by all pupils and is a common feature of lessons. Pupils' behaviour is very good and supported by high expectations of them to focus on learning, conform to the school rules and achieve their behaviour targets if they have them.
132. Pupils show confidence and maturity in evaluating their own learning and negotiating targets. The teacher develops reflection effectively through providing opportunities within each lesson and after half-yearly tests for pupils to articulate how they feel about their learning. The teacher is good at giving clear feedback and praise to individual pupils on their performance.
133. Leadership and management are good. French is generally well organised. There is a clear commitment to developing pupils' awareness of France and its culture and encouraging them to communicate in French. A biennial trip is well established. The classroom learning environment and teaching approaches support pupils in developing cultural awareness and speaking French. Previous planning was appropriately differentiated and focussed. Although individual lessons are well thought through, the revised scheme of work is not in place so that progress over four years is not mapped. Assessment against learning objectives is very good in Key Stage 3. It is regular and records acquisition in the four National Curriculum attainment targets. However, recording and tracking of attainment against national levels is insufficient so that analysis of pupils' potential and of their progress against national expectations is unsatisfactory.
134. The departmental development plan rightly identifies the need to develop the use of ICT, which is currently inadequate. However, there are no targets to improve standards and no link to the school's target to improve provision for gifted and talented pupils.
135. The above-average standards identified in the last inspection have been sustained. Teaching is very good. There have been some improvements in providing opportunities for independent work and textbooks have been updated. However, the use made of ICT and aspects of assessment remain weaknesses.

MUSIC

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

Strengths

- Very good and sometimes excellent teaching.
- Very good relationships that promote high quality learning opportunities for all pupils.
- Pupils' very good and sometimes excellent attitudes towards learning in music.

Areas for improvement

- Planned opportunities for pupils to experience and learn about the music of other countries and cultures.
- Singing as a whole-school activity.

136. Standards in music are very good. They are well above the national expectation for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2, and are on course to exceed national expectations at the end of Key Stage 3 when they leave the school at age 13.

137. By the end of Key Stage 2, all pupils, including those with special educational needs are able to demonstrate levels of attainment in music that are well above the expectation in the areas of composing, performing and listening. Pupils have acquired unusually highly developed composing skills because of the range of stimulating and interactive classroom activities on offer. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, pupils were successfully exploring sequences as a basis for inventing their own music. As well as making very good progress in terms of their musical skills, knowledge and understanding, they were discovering and making use of appropriate links with other areas of the curriculum, such as numeracy. In a Year 5 class, pupils' performing and listening skills were being rapidly refined and improved through a lesson based around the invention of a piece of music for a special occasion, in this case a '*Fanfare for a Pharaoh*'. Singing is satisfactory, but has been rightly identified by the school as an area for further development in both key stages.

138. At age 13, pupils' achievements are higher than required to enable them to meet the national expectations at the end of Key Stage 3. They have a sound knowledge of the elements that make a good piece of music or a good performance, and they use their acquired musical skills and experiences readily. A significant minority of pupils are achieving outstandingly, and not all of these are receiving extra-curricular tuition. They can perform on a variety of instruments with high levels of expressiveness and good technique. They work well in ensemble and are rapidly developing skills and techniques for improving and refining their work. In a Year 8 class, for example, all pupils were able to make effective contributions to an agreed arrangement of Poulenc's '*Carillon*'. The piece was subsequently performed in four parts, with every pupil participating. This involved reading staff notation fluently (including for some pupils, reading in the bass clef), and a few pupils transposed their own parts for the specific instruments they play. The remainder of the class was fully involved in the performance on a range of classroom instruments, and all pupils were able to make excellent progress because the work was pitched at precisely the right level for every individual.

139. Extra-curricular provision promotes very high standards of attainment in both key stages, with some examples of outstanding musical achievement. The school provides a very wide range of opportunities in music, and pupils respond and achieve very well as a result.
140. Teaching is very good overall, and in some cases, excellent. The features of the best teaching include excellent subject knowledge together with the ability to communicate this effectively to pupils, high quality lesson planning and an extensive knowledge of individuals and their learning needs. The teachers have established a supportive learning ethos within the department. This builds upon high expectations of pupils in terms of behaviour and attainment, and benefits from teachers' consistent demonstration of the values and attitudes they require of their pupils. The pace of lessons is fast, but sensitive to the needs of all learners, and there is a good variety of activity. Pupils learn well because they feel safe and cared for, and they know that their efforts are properly valued. Pupils' verbal contributions are welcomed and treated respectfully. This has the effect of promoting a learning environment in which musical experimentation is seen as a safe activity. Teachers provide pupils with feedback on the quality of their work throughout every lesson, and this is very effective in promoting self esteem and an atmosphere of purposeful enquiry. Staff are skilled at questioning, and they focus on the musical features of pupils' attainment and progression, drawing out less confident pupils and encouraging higher attainers to exceed their own targets. They employ a wide range of teaching styles to good effect, and these are applied equally in both key stages. Computers are well used within the department but the range of software programs on offer is limited. New skills and concepts are taught rigorously and clearly - for example correct percussion and vocal techniques - and this has a very beneficial effect on learning for all pupils. A sizeable proportion of the school's population benefits from high quality teaching by the county's instrumental staff, and this too has a very positive effect on standards and the pupils' attitudes. The department's approach to teaching and learning makes a very valuable contribution to the social, moral and spiritual development of pupils. Cultural development is well promoted in terms of pupils' own cultural background; but there is scope for further allowing pupils to develop even more healthy values and attitudes, by examining the music of other cultures in greater depth than at present.
141. The music department is very well led and managed, and the subject makes a significant contribution to the life of the school. Regular meetings between departmental staff ensure that planning is appropriate and subject teaching is effective. The ethos and teaching atmosphere in the department is highly successful in promoting the school's aims and values, and the learning environment promotes high standards of behaviour and attainment. The work of the visiting instrumental teachers is highly valued and is used to enhance school performances and ensembles on a regular basis. In order to maintain and improve upon its existing high standards, the department should now broaden the content of the planned curriculum to include more opportunities for pupils to experience and work within the music of other cultures and consider acquiring suitable software that is not notation or sequencer-based, so that all pupils' needs and abilities are catered for.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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

Strengths

- Varied teaching strategies used to involve pupils in their own learning.
- Thorough planning and progression.
- Teacher's expectations and the standards they set.
- Positive relationships between staff and pupils.

Areas for improvement

- Monitoring and sharing of good practice.
- Use of assessment to inform planning and target setting.
- Liaison with the First Schools.
- Transfer of information on attainment to the High School.

142. Standards are good overall. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils achieve standards that are well above national expectations. By the age of 13, the majority of pupils' achievements are higher than those required for them to reach the national expectations by the end of Key Stage 3. In lessons seen most pupils made very good progress. For example, in Year 6 gymnastics, pupils created complex sequences of at least six movements with precision, control and fluency of movement. From the limited number of lessons seen in Years 7 and 8, most pupils make reasonable progress in those years. In a Year 7 dance lesson, pupils created a phrase of movement that showed a number of moods and emotions. In all lessons seen, at both key stages, pupils could explain the principles involved in preparing for exercise and the effect exercise has on their bodies.
143. The quality of teaching is good and sometimes very good. Teachers display good subject knowledge and good intervention techniques, which enable them to assist pupils to improve performance. Lesson objectives and success criteria are shared with the pupils and effective questioning is used to reinforce pupils' knowledge and understanding. Lessons are well planned to challenge pupils of all ability levels. For example in a Year 6 badminton lesson, pupils with co-ordination problems used modified equipment to achieve success. In all lessons seen teachers used a variety of teaching strategies that involved pupils in their own learning. For example, in a Year 5 athletics lesson, pupils were working in small groups to run a specified distance and identify key criteria to improve individual performances. Pupils took on the roles of starter, timekeeper and performer and worked independently to set up and evaluate each other's performance.
144. Pupil's attitudes in all years are very good. Staff create a positive learning environment where pupils work co-operatively together and there is very good interaction between staff and pupils. Pupils are well motivated, give informed feedback and are confident in undertaking their own activities to warm up and cool down. In a Year 8 games lesson on a cold and windswept field, two groups of girls were enthusiastic and smiling as they were coached in

rugby and football, all were in appropriate kit, many with boots, and none complained about the conditions.

145. There is a varied out of hours programme and pupils from both Key Stages 2 and 3 have enjoy residential outdoor education in the Lake District. This contributes not only to the physical education programme but also to aspects of citizenship.
146. The physical education coordinator has been in post for just over a year and has a clear vision of how the subject will develop in the school. Medium and short term planning are thorough and new assessment procedures will be used to inform future planning.
147. From September 2002 the school became part of the School Sport Coordinator Partnership and already this is having a positive effect on the breadth of curriculum offered to pupils, out of hours opportunities, and staff development. For example, staff from the school received dance training and support through the School Sport Coordinator programme and have introduced dance into the Year 7 curriculum from January 2003. Year 7 and 8 pupils also have the opportunity to attend a weekly dance club at the high school tutored by a dance specialist. The close links being developed through this School Sport Partnership will assist the school to move forward in identified areas for improvement within physical education.
148. The curriculum meets National Curriculum requirements with five activity areas offered at Key Stage 2, with swimming being covered in feeder first schools, and four activity areas at Key Stage 3. In lessons, health aspects and the importance of these in relation to the physical activity being undertaken, are emphasised. This is a good department with teachers having high expectations of pupils.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- Good relationships between teachers and pupils.
- Pupils' positive attitudes towards, and enjoyment of, the subject.
- The very good development of thinking skills.

Areas for improvement

- The leadership and management of department is not yet organised effectively.
- There has been insufficient improvement since the last inspection, particularly in the areas of assessment and planning.
- The lack of a base for the subject to organise it appropriately.

149. Based on lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work, standards overall are in line with the expectations of the agreed syllabus for religious education. This means that standards have been maintained since the last inspection. By the age of 11, standards are slightly above expectations. Pupils show a sound knowledge and understanding of Christianity. By the age of 13, where standards are progressing in line with expectations, they are increasing their understanding of other religions. They have produced thoughtful work on the Hajj in which

they consider what it would be like to take part from the point of view of a Muslim rather than just learning facts about the event.

150. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with examples of good and very good teaching in both key stages. All pupils, including the more able and those with special educational needs, are making at least satisfactory progress in their learning. This is achieved through the use of graded worksheets, different textbooks and by expecting different outcomes from individual pupils. An increasing emphasis on the development of thinking skills is moving pupils on in their learning, but their work still reflects over-dependence on worksheets and comprehension exercises. Most of the areas for improvement relating to teaching and learning in the last inspection report have been addressed. Lessons are more challenging and planning shows learning objectives which are made clear to pupils. In the best lessons teacher use questions very effectively and provide opportunities for independent learning. Pupils are managed well, the pace is brisk and teaching methods are matched to lesson objectives well. Where teaching has shortcomings, lessons are badly paced, too teacher-directed and pupils have insufficient opportunities to think for themselves. Pupils have positive attitudes towards the subject and behave well. They form good relationships with each other and their teachers. They work co-operatively together, make constructive comments about each other's work and are keen to contribute during lessons.

151. The leadership and management of the department are unsatisfactory. Although the head of department works very hard, a lack of focus on certain areas for development identified in the last inspection report has restricted improvement. Although day-to-day assessment is satisfactory, and end of key stage attainment statements are referred to in planning, no tracking of pupils' progress or setting of individual targets for improvement is undertaken. Progress in completing schemes of work has also been insufficient. They still do not show fully how continuity and progression will be achieved, though the subject does now comply with the statutory requirements of the Local Agreed Syllabus. Some monitoring of pupils' work takes place but without an effective system for assessment, this has little impact. The head of department does not have opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching.

152. The quantity and quality of resources have improved since the last inspection. For example, there is now a wider selection of artefacts from a variety of faiths and these are used effectively in the classroom. There is no specialist room for religious education which means that pupils have very little space to display their work and the learning environment cannot stimulate learning as well as it might. The use of ICT is being developed effectively. For example, some Year 8 pupils talked enthusiastically about how they had used a webcam and the Internet to learn about Lourdes. This good practice needs to be shared more widely throughout the department. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, particularly in the area of multicultural understanding. However, as at the last inspection, these aspects are not planned systematically.