

INSPECTION REPORT

WOODFIELD MIDDLE SCHOOL

Redditch, Worcester

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 132818

Headteacher: Mr A Jolly

Reporting inspector: Mrs S Kearney
18006

Dates of inspection: 2 – 4 June 2003

Inspection number: 249277

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 deemed Secondary

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 9 - 13

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Studley Road
Redditch
Worcester

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Professor S Jones

Date of previous inspection: N/A

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18006	Mrs S Kearney	Registered inspector		<p>What sort of school is it?</p> <p>School's results and achievements</p> <p>How well are pupils taught?</p> <p>How well is the school led and managed?</p> <p>What should the school do to improve further?</p>
9883	Mr B Silvester	Lay inspector	Education Inclusion	<p>Pupils' attitudes, values, 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>
30996	Mrs A Higginbotham	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
30941	Mr K Brammer	Team inspector	English as an additional language English	
20729	Mr J Berry	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science	
1759	Mr G Edwards	Team inspector	Information & communication technology (ICT) Design & technology	
31129	Mr J Pickering	Team inspector	Art and design	

32147	Mrs A Wallis	Team inspector	Geography	
23499	Mr H Seymour	Team inspector	History Music Citizenship	
20287	Mr D Harris	Team inspector	Modern Foreign Languages	
21957	Mr R Vaughton	Team inspector	Physical education	
30072	Mr J Skivington	Team inspector	Religious education	
22578	Mr G Jones	Team inspector	Support in English and mathematics	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Woodfield is a middle deemed secondary comprehensive school for girls and boys aged 9 –13 years. It is located on the outskirts of Redditch and is part of Worcestershire LEA. The school is bigger than other middle schools with 565 pupils on roll. The school is popular and the number of pupils entering the school in September 2002 meets the admission level and is similar to previous years. Although there is broadly a balance of boys and girls across the whole school there are more girls than boys in Years 5 and 7 while boys outnumber girls in Year 6. The majority of pupils come to the school from the immediate locality and the school population is very stable with only two per cent of pupils joining in years other than Year 5. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs is above average while those with statements of special need is below average. Twenty percent of the pupils at the school come from minority ethnic backgrounds including a small number of Traveller pupils. A very high proportion of pupils are from families where English is not the mother tongue. The largest group is of Pakistani origin. However, all children within this group have a good level of skill in English. The school was formed from the merger of two middle schools in September 2001 and is nearing the end of its second year of operation. Pupils enter the school at the age of nine with standards that are below expectations and a significant proportion of pupils come from socially disadvantaged households.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Woodfield Middle School is a good and effective school. Standards overall are in line with expectations and pupils make good progress as they move through the school. The quality of teaching is good. The very good leadership of the school has been an important factor in the successful integration of the two school populations during the last two years. Management of the school is good and improving. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of provision in the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science is good and standards are in line with expectations in these three subjects.
- The overall quality of teaching is good and a significant proportion of teaching is very good and excellent. This ensures the good progress of all pupils.
- The leadership provided by the head and governors, and several key staff across the school is very good. This means that the school has a strong base for further development and improvement.
- The very good provision for teaching in French in Years 5 and 6 means that pupils enter Year 7 with greater confidence in using the language than is normally seen.
- The quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as a second language is very good and this ensures the good achievement of these pupils.
- Relationships across the school and the behaviour of pupils are very good supporting a safe and caring environment in which pupils learn well.

What could be improved

- The use of information and communication technology across the whole curriculum as a support to pupils' learning and the development of independent skills.
- Attendance rates.

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 not been inspected previously.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	N/a	N/a	E	C
Mathematics	N/a	N/a	E	D
Science	N/a	N/a	C	B

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

The pupils who sat the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 in 2002 were the same pupils who experienced the merger of the two schools and a highly disruptive building programme. Despite this, their results are broadly in line with those of pupils in similar schools although they are well below average when compared to all schools. The predictions for results in 2003 are more positive and both sets of results indicate good added value when comparisons are made with the same pupils' results at the end of Year 2. The achievement of pupils in the school is good in the majority of subjects although it is unsatisfactory in design and technology. The school sets satisfactory targets and has recognised the need for more regular and sophisticated target setting, for example, for pupils capable of attaining higher levels.

The standards of work seen during the inspection are mostly in line with expectations. They are above expectations in history, and in mathematics in Years 7 and 8. Standards in art are below expectations across all ages. This reflects the below average standards as pupils enter the school and some weaknesses in the way the subject has been managed. A similar situation is found in design and technology although the school has recently made a good appointment to manage this subject and there are already signs of improvement. Standards are below expectations in English and mathematics in Years 5 and 6, but reflect an improvement on the pupils' low level of attainment on entry.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupil's attitudes are very good. They are proud of the school and enjoy their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good.
Personal development and relationships	This is a strength of the school and is very good. There has been a very successful integration of both staff and pupils in the formation of the new school.
Attendance	The attendance rates at the school are well below average and this is restricting the progress of pupils and is a priority for the school's development.

Although the school has introduced a wide range of strategies to combat the continued low rates of attendance they have been largely unsuccessful. A small but appreciable proportion of absence can be identified as being sanctioned by parents. The school recognises that the co-operation of both pupils and parents in raising attendance levels is crucial to further improvement.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 5-6	Years 7-8
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.

The quality of teaching is good in English, mathematics and science and very good in physical education and in mathematics in Years 7 and 8. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well across the majority of subjects. Information and communication technology is not used sufficiently to aid learning across the curriculum. The school is very effective in supporting the language development of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language.

A particular strength of teaching is the high expectations that teachers have for good behaviour and the wide range of strategies they employ to ensure good discipline so that all pupils are fully responsive in lessons and good learning can take place. The use of assessment information to guide teacher's planning, and homework to reinforce learning are areas for development. These features of teaching are not yet rigorously monitored to ensure a consistently good contribution to learning across the school.

The teaching meets the needs of the majority of pupils. The school recognises the growing need to identify and plan more thoroughly for the learning of higher attaining pupils and those with special talents.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	There is a very good range of learning opportunities in Years 5 and 6. Overall the curriculum is good with very good provision for extra-curricular activities. However the use of ICT in art and design and technology does not meet the statutory requirements.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	These pupils are very well supported and the overall quality of provision is very good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school has made very good provision for these pupils and they achieve well.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	All aspects of this provision are good and are important features in the caring and inclusive atmosphere of the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are good and the monitoring of pupils' academic progress is satisfactory.

The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory.

All pupils study French in Years 5 and 6. This is unusual and provides the pupils with a good start in their preparation for compulsory learning of a language in Year 7. These pupils also benefit from having specialist teachers and the use of specialist facilities in many subjects.

The school has good procedures for monitoring behaviour. This is particularly effective in challenging racial prejudice and ensuring a fully inclusive ethos.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership provided by the head and governors, and several key staff, is very good. The overall management of the school is good but the school recognises the need to develop monitoring systems further.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities to a satisfactory standard and provide very good leadership.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is beginning to use pupils' assessment and other performance data to assess areas of need.
The strategic use of resources	The school is very well resourced and financial control and management are satisfactory.

The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and resources is very good.

There is satisfactory application of the principles of best value.

The school has a clear educational direction that has been supported by some effective but short term planning in the first two years of operation. The current long term plan is at an early stage of development.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour is good • Pupils make good progress • Teaching is good • Children are expected to work hard • Good leadership and management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closer links with parents • Better information about pupils' progress • The monitoring of homework

The inspection agrees with all of the parents' views. The school recognises the need to improve the communication with parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The evidence from inspection is that standards overall at Woodfield School are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 6 and in line with expectations for pupils aged 13 at the end of Year 8.
2. Since pupils enter Year 5 with standards that are below and sometimes well below national expectations, this equates to good achievement by pupils as they move through the school. The achievement of both pupils with English as a second language and those with special educational needs is good. The achievement of higher attaining pupils and those with special talents is less secure. The school identified some under-performance by boys in the national tests last year and has taken steps to address the matter. There is no difference in the achievement of boys and girls from the work seen. All pupils achieve well in French as it is taught from when they first enter the school in Year 5.

Pupils' achievement across different subjects

	Years 5 and 6	Years 7 and 8
Achievement is unsatisfactory	Design and technology	Design and technology
Achievement is satisfactory	Physical education, art	ICT, music, science, art
Achievement is good	English, mathematics, science, ICT, French, geography, history, religious education, music	English, mathematics, French, geography, history, religious education, physical education

Standards of work seen during the inspection - across different subjects

	End of Year 6	End of Year 8
Standards below expectations	English, mathematics, design and technology, art	Design and technology, art
Standards in line with expectations	Science, ICT, French, geography, religious education, physical education, music	English, science, ICT, French, geography, religious education, physical education, music
Standards above expectations	history	Mathematics, history

3. The standards seen during the inspection at the end of Year 6 are an improvement on the results in the national tests in 2002 in English and mathematics where standards were well below average in both subjects compared to all schools. Standards seen in science are similar to those in the examination of the previous year at broadly the national level of expectation. The current Year 6 pupils were the first group to enter the newly formed school in September 2001. Pupils in the previous Year 6 had been part of the merger of two schools and experienced the disruption of a rebuilding

programme. The school reports that their experiences had a negative impact on the quality of their learning and the results they achieved. When the results are compared to those of similar schools in the national tests last year the picture is more positive. Standards in science were above the average, in English they were in line and in mathematics they were below.

4. Standards of pupils' literacy are average by the end of Year 8. Since they are below average on entry in Year 5, this indicates that achievement is good. The National Literacy Strategy has been well implemented and its guidance on lesson structure adopted in all subjects.
5. Pupils' standards of numeracy overall are above the expected level. The school is responding positively to the National Numeracy Strategy by involving all departments in action to improve numeracy.
6. The school has set targets for examination results at the end of Year 6 and looks set to meet them. They represent significant added value when the data collected as children enter the school is considered. The school recognises the unusual situation it has as a middle school catering for children entering at the end of Year 4 from several different schools. It has additional challenges as a newly formed school with no historical data bank of pupil records to draw on for trends and predictions. The collection and analysis of assessment records are seen as priorities in the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Pupils are generally keen to attend the school and play a full part in its life, including the very good range of extra-curricular activities. They have a very good attitude to their work. Out of the 107 lessons observed, pupils' attitudes and behaviour were judged as excellent in eight lessons and very good or better in more than two out of five. In four out of every five lessons the response of pupils was good or better. The proportion of such lessons is slightly higher in Years 7 and 8 than in Years 5 and 6. There were three lessons seen in which the behaviour of pupils was unsatisfactory and one lesson in which it was poor. Where attitudes are good, pupils are quick to settle in their lesson, pay attention to the teacher and obey the instructions given. This is particularly important in the afternoon sessions where there is significantly less time than those in the morning. Pupils are keen to answer questions and participate fully in the lesson. They get on well with the work given, concentrate and persevere. For example, Year 5 pupils learning about the Ancient Egyptians in a thirty minute history session achieved very well. Their very good behaviour and attitudes supported by the teacher's energetic approach resulted in a relaxed, busy and productive atmosphere in which learning was very good. In the very few instances when attitudes were not good, a minority of pupils chat when they should be working, appear uninterested and are disruptive of others.
8. The behaviour of the pupils, in class and around the school, is very good. Parents are very happy with the standard of behaviour achieved. Pupils understand the behavioural code that is displayed in classrooms. The school is generally successful in its aim to create pupils who are courteous, tolerant and understanding. The very good behaviour assists the pupils' learning. The Learning Skills Centre seeks to keep disaffected pupils in school whilst working to address behavioural problems. In a few instances where behaviour is not good, a minority of pupils shout out, do not obey instructions and talk when they should be listening to the teacher. In the previous school year prior to the inspection there was one permanent exclusion and five fixed-period exclusions; all boys. This is low compared to national standards.

9. Relationships, between pupils and between pupils and adults, are very good. The school makes sure that all pupils are fully included in the life of the school. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are fully integrated into the life of the school and there are very few incidents of a racist nature. Pupils are encouraged to develop tolerance and understanding within their relationships. Cultural diversity is celebrated. For example, Year 7 pupils studied a poem in English that drew comparisons between the life style of a young Jamaican child brought up in London with that of the parents raised in Jamaica. During the lesson pupils were encouraged to work in pairs to describe their own families and the plenary session celebrated the experiences of a Jamaican girl in the group. Pupils work and play together well. They are willing to share, take turns and listen to others with respect. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into the life of the school and have good relationships with their teachers and support staff. They show increasing self-confidence and determination to succeed. They value the help received from learning support staff and the members of outside agencies they are involved with. Arrangements with mentors, use of the Learning Skills Centre, social skills lessons and the paired reading between Year 5 statemented pupils and Year 8 pupils all contribute to their very positive attitudes.
10. The personal development of the pupils is very good. They respond well to the opportunities given to take responsibility. For example, a school council meets half-termly and the decisions taken by the pupils are posted on the school council's notice board. Pupils have responsibilities around the school. For example, Year 8 pupils help to run the school office and they carry out roles in assemblies. The school choir sings in assemblies and in concerts. They have also been chosen to take part in Worcestershire's music presentation this year. A 'buddy' system operates for English, where pupils hear other pupils read. Pupils show initiative by originating ideas to raise money for charities like Comic Relief and Children in Need.
11. The level of attendance is unsatisfactory. Attendance in 2001/02 was well below the national average. Unauthorised absence in that year was below the national average. Other than illness, the main reasons for non-attendance are;
- time off to celebrate religious events,
 - a small number of pupils go on extended 'holidays',
 - the Traveller pupils generally have a less than full attendance record at this school on account of their nomadic lifestyle,
 - one pupil has not attended all year yet remains on the school register,
 - some absences are condoned by parents,
 - some pupils take holidays in term time.
12. Most pupils are punctual but a few do arrive late. Those who arrive late are recorded in the late book. If there is a concern about punctuality, the parents are contacted. The unsatisfactory attendance has a negative impact on the attainment and progress of the pupils concerned and is preventing the school from fully achieving its intention to be a fully inclusive school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching across the school is good and supports good learning. The most consistent teaching is in Year 6 where four out of every five lessons observed were good or better. In Years 5 and 6 teaching was never less than satisfactory. One third of lessons were very good or excellent and the highest proportion of these is in Year 8. There were four lessons in which the quality of teaching was unsatisfactory.

The quality of pupils' learning broadly reflects the teaching although the highest levels of learning were seen in only a quarter of lessons. In eight out of ten lessons where teaching was of the highest quality the learning was often constrained by the response of pupils. In these few lessons pupils were compliant rather than fully engaged and keen to involve themselves in the activities. Many teachers reported that several weeks of disrupted timetable followed by the half term break had adversely affected the learning skills of some pupils.

14. Teaching is good across the majority of subjects. In design and technology and art it is satisfactory. Teaching is very good in physical education, and in mathematics in Years 7 and 8. A strength of teaching is the very good management of pupils and the high expectations that teachers have of good behaviour. This contributes very effectively to the very good response of pupils and enables good learning to take place and pupils make good progress. For example, in a short afternoon session of thirty-five minutes a group of Year 5 pupils were introduced to a new science topic on forces. A brisk pace to the lesson combined with excellent use of good questions ensured that all pupils, including those with language difficulties were stimulated and fully involved in the learning. High expectations and challenge resulted in excellent behaviour and response from the pupils.
15. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good in all subjects except art and music where it is less secure. There has been a strong focus on the National Strategy for Key Stage 3 since a new manager was appointed last September and development in this area is good. Learning objectives are clear and the structured lesson plan is used effectively in the majority of subjects. There is a consistency of approach to the development of vocabulary with key words being taught, displayed and used in most lessons. This is particularly good in physical education where teachers use technical language that is targeted to the levels of attainment of the pupils and very good questioning techniques that invite pupils to report what they know and can do. However, the marking of spellings, punctuation, grammar and style needs attention in many subjects. The school does not monitor subjects to make sure that they consistently follow the guidance of the national policies on literacy and numeracy.
16. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are very well taught and they make good progress. They are usually supported in the classroom and where there is withdrawal the same ground is covered, so they miss none of the curriculum. Their individual education plans are drawn up between the class teacher and the special needs department with crisp targets and effective strategies. This results in class teachers who are very aware of, and interested in, what is needed; so they modulate their approach to individuals to support them and allow their self-confidence to grow. The quality of help given by the learning support assistants is very high and enhanced by their very good liaison with the class teachers. Where pupils work in the Learning Skills Centre with support assistants the teaching is very good indeed and very well matched to pupils' academic and other needs. The class teachers' high expectations of the special needs pupils reflects the way that they are valued.
17. Many teachers use a good range of resources to help learning and the level of resourcing across the school is very good. For example, pupils in Year 5 and 6 are regularly stimulated by good teaching that utilises white boards, flip charts, flash cards and specialist equipment. In some subjects laptop computers are used effectively and pupils are encouraged to access computers for research and to enhance the presentation of their work. For example, in English there is excellent use of ICT in Year 7 and Years 5 and 6 pupils benefit significantly from the use of

commercial learning packages such as 'Successmaker'. In mathematics there is good use of digital calculators. However, this is an area for development in the overall teaching across the school and there is no effective system currently in place to monitor this aspect of teaching and learning.

18. There are very good systems for assessing pupils' work in mathematics in Years 7 and 8. The assessment information is used to very good effect by mathematics teachers to track the progress of individual pupils on a regular basis. Pupils are placed in groups and teachers often modify their approach to meet pupil needs. In just over three quarters of all subjects taught across the school assessment systems are satisfactory but need further development. The use of assessment information to guide teaching and target the learning needs of individual and groups of pupils is a weakness of teaching generally. This is having a particularly negative impact on the rate of progress of all pupils but particularly of the higher attaining pupils and those with specific talents. Although these pupils have recently been identified across the school there is no clear strategy for enhancing their learning. The school policy is very new and teaching methods and organisation in many subjects does not yet take sufficient account of the needs of this group of pupils. The impact of assessment information on teaching and learning is not yet effectively monitored.
19. Homework is set regularly across the majority of subjects and is generally satisfactory. The purpose of the homework is not often made clear either in the teachers' planning or when it is explained to pupils. The new teaching policy has a clearer expectation of the role of homework but is not yet implemented rigorously in all lessons. This aspect of teaching is not yet rigorously monitored to ensure consistent implementation of the school policy across all subjects.

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

20. The school provides a curriculum that is very good in Years 5 and 6 and good in Years 7 and 8. The curriculum is stimulating and yet concentrates on the basic skills. The provision for the development of literacy and numeracy is good. A great deal of thought and planning went into the curriculum before the school opened with all staff taking part in the discussions.
21. The school's curriculum mostly reflects the requirements of the National Curriculum. The pupils study French in Years 5 and 6 which is an additional strength. Another strength of the curriculum is the gradual development of the specialised curriculum and the access to specialist teachers for many subjects in Years 5 and 6. ICT is used to enhance the curriculum effectively in some subjects, for example, English and mathematics, but in other subjects, for example art, music and design and technology this work is not developed. The statutory requirements with respect to ICT are not met in art and design and technology. All other statutory requirements are met.
22. The school's provision for extra-curricular activity is very good and a number of subjects provide out-of-hours sessions to interest, extend and motivate their pupils. The quality and range of sporting provision are particularly strong, with large numbers of pupils taking part and competing within the school, and at inter-school, district and county levels. There are strong ties with many sporting clubs and organisations. Pupils take part in drama productions at a public performance level, or in tutor or year groups for assemblies. The school has a choir and orchestra. Pupils are encouraged to take part in BBC's 'Big Read' and the older ones in the Carnegie Book Award Shadowing scheme. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 have access to a computer club.

Residential experiences are a particular feature of provision and many pupils, across all year groups, take advantage of the opportunities on offer of the bi annual visit to northern France, the water sports trip to southern France, and the Year 5 visit to a local Outdoor Education Centre. Booster classes take place after school to help pupils prepare for national tests. Currently the school does not audit the range, quality or rates of participation of this provision and a significant minority of parents expressed some disappointment in the choices provided. For example, there is limited opportunity for pupils with scientific or technological interests.

23. The provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory overall. There is a good policy and a scheme of work that covers the four areas of self, health, relationships and citizenship. Personal, social and health education is taught weekly and there are cross-curricular links with religious education and science. The lessons observed were judged to be satisfactory overall. The areas for development that remain are the monitoring of the teaching and a comprehensive assessment of the pupils' achievement. In Year 8, pupils self-evaluate the modules they undertake and set some targets for improvement. This needs to be spread across the school. The school's drugs education programme has been recognised by the local education authority as being good and its good practice is being passed on to other schools.
24. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils with particular learning difficulties are mainly well supported in lessons by experienced learning assistants.
25. Careers education is taking place in the personal, social and health education lessons and is satisfactory.
26. The school has good links with the local community. It receives sponsorship to help buy sports clothes. A great deal of money has been raised for charity and at Christmas time there is a food collection for local needy people. Some of the proceeds from the summer fayre have been donated to help raise money for a new Mosque. Key people in the community such as the police and local religious figures are regularly invited into the school to work with the pupils. The governing body is well supported by a good range of expertise from the local community. The school has yet to involve the community in any formal system of mentoring, in the development of pupils' awareness about careers or in work related projects in the curriculum.
27. Links with the partner first schools are improving as the school develops. This is having a positive impact on the quality of data for the pupils entering the school. There are some good links well established by the special needs department. These enable all data relevant to the academic and personal development of these pupils to be transferred between the schools. However, this aspect of school performance is an area for development in the majority of subjects. It is a strength in physical education where the continuity and consistency of pupils' experiences is improved by regular meetings between staff, shared teaching across schools and a programme of lesson observations. The good links with the upper school are well established and there are regular meetings between staff in most subject areas. However, the schools do not yet have formal programmes in place to develop and improve the overall quality of pupils' experiences or to focus on the development of good practice and common objectives. For example, a shared strategy about improving attendance, or teacher exchanges and mentoring. At the regular meetings specific matters are discussed and good information regarding the pupils' attainment is passed on. These links are having a positive effect on learning and further development will enhance this impact.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

28. The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good.
29. The provision for spiritual education is good. The school meets the statutory requirements to have a daily act of worship that is mainly of a Christian nature. Assemblies are planned to provide thoughtful themes (like celebrating diversity), time for reflection, praise and prayer. Two local vicars visit regularly and one of them serves on the governing body. Religious education makes a very good contribution to the pupils' spiritual development. Other subjects are used well to promote pupils' understanding and learning, offering many opportunities for pupils to reflect and consider their own, and empathise with others', feelings. For example, studying the fate of refugees and the persecution of the Jews.
30. The provision for moral development is good. Pupils are encouraged to show, through their behaviour, that they know right from wrong and care for one another. Pupils are taught to recognise and respect the codes of the different cultures represented in the school and the wider community. There is a weekly programme of personal, social and health education, which includes sex and drugs awareness education. The school provides models of moral virtue through literature, humanities, sciences, arts, assemblies and acts of worship. The school needs to monitor in a simple and pragmatic way the success of what is provided.
31. The provision for social development is good. The school provides many opportunities for the pupils to take responsibility and to show initiative. The school's rules are well established and there is a clear code of conduct. Pupils are encouraged to be courteous and work and play together. Work on a variety of charity fund-raising projects increases their awareness of others less fortunate than themselves. Pupils have good opportunities to develop social skills, like taking turns, sharing and listening when someone else is speaking. The school fosters a sense of community with common inclusive values. Racial, religious and other forms of equality are promoted. Positive and effective links with the world of work and the wider community are provided although this aspect could be improved through more rigorous monitoring.
32. The provision for cultural development is good. The pupils gain an insight into their own culture and other cultures through a range of subjects across the curriculum. Pupils have many trips out, including visits to museums and places of worship. Pupils worked with an artist in residence to produce African masks in copper, which are now prominently displayed on the outside wall of the school. The school has good links with the local Pakistani Forum. The school now needs to audit the quality and nature of opportunities for pupils to extend their cultural development across the curriculum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The steps taken to ensure the pupils' welfare, health and safety are good. The teachers know their pupils well, recognise their needs and give them good support and guidance. The school has a health and safety policy. A twice-yearly health and safety audit is completed and regular risk assessments are carried out. As well, the caretaker reports any problems on a day-to-day basis. No health and safety concerns were observed during the inspection week. Fire drills are held at least half-termly and the fire bells are tested weekly. The school has a medical room and the school nurse visits regularly to carry out medical checks and to talk to the pupils. The police talk to the pupils about road safety and drugs awareness. A range of other specialists come

into the school. The school is a very inclusive one and all pupils are fully involved in all aspects of its life.

34. The school has an appropriate child protection policy. The deputy headteacher is responsible for its implementation and has received the necessary training. All staff have access to the policy and child protection procedures are discussed at staff meetings.
35. The school's procedures for monitoring and supporting the pupils' personal development are satisfactory. The personal development of the pupils is monitored by their teachers. Formal records are kept for pupils with special educational needs but otherwise records tend to be informal. Reference is made to the pupils' personal development in their annual reports. The pupils' personal development is supported by the opportunities they have to take responsibilities in class, around the school and out of school.
36. The school's procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are unsatisfactory. Registers are marked regularly and properly. Attendance is monitored by the class teachers, the heads of year, the deputy headteacher and the educational welfare officer. The welfare officer telephones parents of pupils who are absent without any known reason, on the first morning of absence. Any concerns about non-attendance are pursued and the welfare officer makes home visits. In the school's communications with parents, the importance of good attendance and punctuality is emphasised. The school gives awards for full attendance; there are class awards in Year 6 (where attendance is the highest in the school), but there are no awards for improved attendance. The school does not analyse the level of attendance against the individual progress of the pupils. Despite the level of attendance being well below the national average, the improvement of attendance is not a priority in the school development plan. The school has made efforts to improve attendance but so far they have had little impact on the level of attendance.
37. The schools' procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour are good. There is a behaviour policy, which contains a suitable range of rewards and sanctions to encourage good behaviour. Self-respect and discipline are encouraged. One rule for all the school is that everyone will act with courtesy and consideration. The general rules of discipline are displayed and understood by the pupils. Incidents of bullying are infrequent but, when they do occur, they are dealt with speedily and in accordance with the bullying policy. The school has a 'Bully Box' where pupils can register any concerns they have about bullying.
38. Pupils with special educational needs are very well cared for. There are good and sustained systems for their identification and liaison with first schools. This is followed by very good individualised provision for their needs. All is centred on their individual education plans that are drawn up with the help of pupils, class teachers, parents and the special needs department. These plans are reviewed regularly and contain short term attainable targets, together with strategies for obtaining them. The support for their academic and social needs is very good. Progress is carefully monitored and the levels of support adjusted. Measures of the success of the provision are their good academic achievement and the fact that many progress and move off the special needs register.
39. Support for those pupils who are gifted and talented is being improved. Much of it is up to individual departments and teachers, but these pupils are now identified and

their progress is beginning to be monitored. There have been booster classes for them and a more comprehensive strategy to meet their needs is under development. This is an area for improvement in this inspection.

40. The school's procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' academic performance are satisfactory. The transfer of attainment data from the first schools as pupils enter in Year 5 is weak and the school has been quick to recognise the need for more accurate information. Regular attainment tests are carried out as soon as pupils enter the school and each year following, and these complement information about pupils' attainment in the Key Stage 1 national tests taken at age seven, two years before entering Woodfield. Pupils are then tracked through the school with targets set in Year 6 as pupils prepare for the national tests at age eleven. Assessment information is collected effectively in almost half the subjects and there are very good systems in place in mathematics. The monitoring of pupils' progress is good in just over half of all subjects. It is not yet consistent across all subjects and all years. Few teachers reference test marks, homework or class marks to National Curriculum levels on a regular basis and reports to parents do not record any comparison with national benchmarks. There is no evidence of additional refinements to the level system where pupils are encouraged to recognise smaller increments in their attainment levels. The national tests at the end of Year 6 were not analysed to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge or understanding to inform the planning of their learning in Year 7. However, there is some emerging good practice in the plans for transition units of work in the Key Stage 3 strategy.
41. The use of assessment information to inform curriculum planning and the strategic development of different aspects of the school performance is satisfactory. Some subjects use attainment data to group pupils and plan for their individual learning but these are in the minority. Some examples of very good practice are in ICT. There are some good models of the effective use of attainment data in the provision for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as a second language. Elsewhere in the school the quality of provision is restricted by insufficient rigour and use of data about the progress of individual pupils and groups of pupils. Pupils and their parents are not sufficiently aware of how the pupils are performing with reference to national expectations.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. Parents are supportive of the school and the links between the school and parents have a positive impact on the pupils' learning. The quality of information provided is satisfactory. There is an informative weekly newsletter and the school website has recently been developed. Parents are sent a termly curriculum leaflet so that they can help their child at home with their future studies. Formal letters are also issued in Punjabi and Urdu. Meetings are held for parents of children who are due to enter the school. Parents' evenings are held in the Autumn and Spring terms so that parents can discuss their child's progress with their teachers. A meeting is organised to inform the parents of Year 6 pupils about the standard assessment tests. The pupils' annual reports tell parents what their child has studied but there is insufficient information about what their child knows, understands and can do. Also, the reports do not contain National Curriculum levels and very few targets for improvement.
43. The parents' views of the school are good. Just over a third of all parents responded to the inspection survey of parents' views of the school. There were no significant areas of concern. They praised nearly all features of the school. There was some

slight anxiety about the amount of homework, about the quality of information from the school, links with parents and the range of extra-curricular activities.

44. The school's links with its parents are effective and their involvement has a sound impact on the work of the school. The contribution of parents to children's learning, at home and at school, is satisfactory. The Home School Association organises a range of events, like a Spring Fair, raffles and the pupils' discos. The money raised is used to enhance the pupils' education. Recently the association contributed to the cost of the new school mini-bus. Only a few parents help in school. Parents collect vouchers to provide resources to enhance the school's provision.
45. At the parents' meeting, prior to the inspection, all parents present knew what the homework policy was and felt it was applied consistently and effectively throughout the school. Pupils record their homework in their diaries. These diaries are signed by the teacher and parents and act as a useful line of communication between school and home. The school's use of homework is satisfactory. Parental surveys are carried out and the parents of Muslim pupils were consulted about modifications to the school uniform that they would like. Parents are invited to special assemblies, productions, concerts and sports days. Workshop evenings for parents are held but these are not as well supported.
46. Parents of pupils with special needs are well informed and involved with strategies, individual education plans and reviews. They report that they are very happy with the support the school provides. The prospectus and the governor's annual report do not provide all the information necessary about special needs and do not comply with statutory requirements.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. The school was formed in September 2001 and is nearing the second year of operation as Woodfield Middle School. A major reorganisation of schools across the area resulted in the closure of one middle school and the almost total rebuild of another during 2000-2001. Woodfield is the new school created by the merger of the two schools and housed in almost totally new buildings on the site of one of the two original schools.
48. The new head was appointed from one of the two merged schools where he had served as head for 13 years. Staff in the two schools had their jobs protected by a 'ring fence' policy but appointments to the new school involved a selection process within this policy. The governing body of the new school was fully convened in November 2002 taking over from an interim arrangement when the two governing bodies worked together.
49. Since its formation the school has won a wide range of distinctions including Investors in People award, Sports and Arts Gold Mark award, Quality Mark for the Basic Skills Agency and several other areas of the school's performance have also been recognised as models of good practice by the Local Education Authority. In just under two years the head and governors have successfully created a school environment that is orderly, purposeful, friendly and fully inclusive. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds and those with special educational needs are fully integrated into the school community and the quality of their education is very good. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 who experienced the difficulties of the reorganisation are proud of their new school and during the pupil interviews went to great lengths to explain how they have formed strong friendships, and described the many benefits

they have gained since joining Woodfield. Relationships across the school are very good and parents' views of the school are positive.

50. Leadership of the school is very good, and the management of the school is good.
51. There is a strong commitment to continuous improvement from teachers and support staff. The overall quality of teaching is good and pupils are making good progress. The head has provided the leadership necessary to take the school through a time of great change. He and the governors have formed a team of teachers that perform well with very good support from learning assistants. They have made judicious appointments recognising opportunities to secure and motivate high performing individuals. Rigorous and targeted monitoring by the head since the formation of the new school has identified weak teaching and effective action has been taken. The governors have put in place a satisfactory range of policies and there has been full consultation across the school community about a longer term strategic vision. The leadership provided by the head is very good.
52. The governing body has played a crucial and highly effective role throughout this period of change. There is a wide range of experience and skill amongst the group and the governor representatives interviewed during the inspection were impressive in their astuteness and determination to make things better for the pupils. They have taken some hard decisions in recent months about pupil exclusions and staff competency and documentation confirms that they are generally aware of their roles and responsibilities. They have a clear vision of what they want for the school and priorities such as good pupil behaviour, an inclusive ethos and good relationships have been their focus since the school opened. There are some areas where they have not fulfilled their statutory responsibilities. They also have not yet had sufficient opportunity to produce a clear long term strategic plan for further development of the school. Overall the leadership provided by the governing body is very good.
53. There are some inspirational leaders across the school and nearly all staff with special responsibilities are effective. Some of the most consistent teaching is in Year 6 and this is largely due to the very good leadership and management provided by the Year 6 co-ordinator. There is very good leadership and management of English, mathematics, physical education and French and very good leadership of the National Strategy in Key Stage 3 is emerging. The special needs department has excellent leadership and very effective management. Its leader projects a strong positive ethos and high expectations, which pervade all its activities. Similarly, the management of the provision for pupils who have English as an additional language is very good. The co-ordinator ensures that all learning support and teaching staff know the needs of individual pupils and keep parents well informed of their progress.
54. In the majority of other subjects and across year groups leadership and management are at least satisfactory and are good in science and music. They are good in the specialist lessons for ICT but the school has failed to monitor and manage the entitlement of pupils for the use of ICT across the curriculum. Management of this aspect of the curriculum is currently unsatisfactory. The quality of provision in design and technology is unsatisfactory and the achievement of pupils in some aspects of this subject is unsatisfactory. The newly appointed leader of design and technology has begun the process of improving the overall provision in the subject. The senior team have failed to monitor and support the subject sufficiently while waiting to recruit a suitable manager. Standards in art across all years are below expectations although the achievement of pupils is satisfactory. In art and religious education there are no designated leaders with overall responsibility. These subjects have been operating on

a day-to-day basis mostly through the goodwill of two teachers, one a newly qualified teacher working under significant pressure to maintain and manage the teaching of art across the school. The senior team have failed to monitor and provide sufficient support to these subjects.

55. The overall management of the school is good. The school is an orderly environment. Teaching is good and pupils make good progress. The management of the harmonious integration of two school communities and the supervision of a huge building project have been the major priorities in the last two years. These have been completed with a good degree of success and reflect the good management of the school. However, although the head provides very good leadership, there are some areas of concern mostly around the responsibilities of the senior team. The school has recognised the challenges associated with well below average rates of attendance and some improvement strategies have been put in place. However, these strategies have failed to improve attendance figures. The main priorities identified in the school development plan for 2003 and 2004 do not mention attendance. The governors and head can articulate a clear vision about the use of ICT as a key tool for learning and have invested heavily in computers bringing the ratio of machines to pupils to above the national average. However, there is no system in place to monitor the effectiveness of this investment or the value for money, and the overall provision for ICT across the curriculum is unsatisfactory. This has been recognised in the development plan as one of thirteen priorities and there is some reference to it in some subject and year group development plans. There is currently no clear overview or whole school target for improvement in this provision and no monitoring system in place to ensure that the senior team know what the overall performance is across the school.
56. The inspection recognises the school's success in promoting a very positive ethos and the good achievement of pupils. Within this context, a priority for continued development is refinement of strategic planning. The development planning in the school is at an early stage and needs further improvement so that governors can be fully informed about performance in different areas of the school's provision. The inspection has identified inconsistencies in the quality of provision resulting from weaknesses in the monitoring and evaluation of performance across the school. There is currently no fully effective system to collect and collate information about these areas although the inspection recognises that there is good practice in many parts of the school. Currently governors fulfil their managerial responsibilities to a satisfactory standard and further refinement of monitoring systems and strategic planning will enable them to be fully effective by ensuring that they have access to regular, frequent and reliable information about all areas of school performance.

Strategic use of resources

57. Financial control and management are satisfactory. The budget is balanced, there is no deficit, and spending is well monitored by regular statements from the Local Education Authority and effective supervision by the governor's financial committee. The school has not had a full financial audit since the merger of the two schools so there is currently no audit report.
58. Priorities for school improvement are outlined and costed in the annual school development plan and these are supported through effective financial planning. There are currently too many target areas for development and there is a lack of coherence about the longer term planning across the school. However, some of the areas identified are appropriate. For example, plans to upgrade the accommodation for the

teaching of art will clearly be of benefit to pupils. The funds allocated to the school for specific purposes, such as those to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are used well. The provision for these pupils is very good.

59. Best value principles are applied well in obtaining tenders for services or goods. However, there has been insufficient rigorous use of national data to determine value for money. This is exemplified by the high level of spending on computers that are not yet being used effectively and efficiently across the school. The use of ICT across the curriculum is a key issue in this inspection. There is insufficient monitoring of the impact of spending on standards and the achievement of pupils.
60. The school makes satisfactory use of new technology for administering pupil assessment, attendance, the timetable and library data. These records are kept electronically so they are readily accessible and easy to add to. However, attendance data is not scrutinised with sufficient rigour to clearly identify trends and predict areas of need so that effective action can be taken. The academic achievement of pupils is not yet tracked effectively across the school and in all subjects.

Staffing

61. The school is very well staffed with qualified teachers who are supported by a very effective team of non-teaching staff. It is the school's declared policy to make maximum use of specialist teachers so that pupils in all year groups, including Years 5 and 6, benefit from their particular expertise. This policy is having a positive impact on the quality of provision and the achievement of pupils particularly in Years 5 and 6. In physical education and French, for example, a very high proportion of teachers are experienced specialists who teach throughout the school. Where subjects are taught occasionally in Years 7 and 8 by non-specialist staff the support for these teachers is very good and standards are not compromised. Non-teaching staff make a very important contribution to the life of the school. Learning support assistants, for example, are very well deployed to complement the work of class teachers in giving individual help to pupils with learning needs or to those at an early stage of learning English. The quality of technical support in science and design technology is satisfactory, but it is insufficient and these staff need additional training.
62. The school has gained the status of Investor in People. Procedures for the induction and professional development of all staff follow exacting guidelines and are well documented and effective. Newly qualified teachers receive very good support at all levels and are given time to widen their experience by observing experienced teaching both within and outside the school. They speak very highly of the support and advice they are receiving. The professional development of staff is another very strong feature of what the school provides. Performance management of staff is well established and carried out sensitively so that individuals take from the process ways of improving the quality of their work and developing their careers.

Resources

63. Resources are **very good**.
64. There is a very good range of textbooks in mathematics, geography and religious education, as well as interactive whiteboards, graphical calculators and ready access to laptop computers. Resources are very good in physical education and science although data loggers have yet to be fully used by pupils in science and the use of ICT is an area for development in physical education. English, history and modern foreign languages have sufficient texts, including dual texts for pupils with English as an additional language. Laptop computers are used effectively in some lessons. Although there are sufficient texts in music, the use of ICT in music is underdeveloped. Resources in art and design are unsatisfactory because there is little investment, particularly in Years 5 and 6, and inadequate use is made of ICT. Equipment for ICT across the school is very good with a lower than average ratio of pupils to computers. The library is well-stocked with books, having benefited from the amalgamation of the two schools. Knowledgeable and well-organised staff support pupils' independent learning and research projects. Although resources are especially good for a school this size there is no effective overall monitoring of the impact these have on pupils' learning and rate of achievement, and it is unclear from the Development Plan what criteria are used to set the budget for 2003-2004 or specific targets for short term or longer term planning until 2008.

Accommodation

65. The accommodation is **very good**.
66. The school has had a major rebuild in the last three years and has benefited from the innovative ideas of the architect. A number of classrooms and public spaces within the school are thoughtfully designed with curved walls and are attractively lit to provide light, airy teaching areas and easy movement between lessons. An airflow system and air conditioning constantly changes the air within the buildings. Each year group has its own self-contained area within the school. The subject departments, apart from the art department, which is housed in poor accommodation and due for major refurbishment, enjoy very good teaching areas. The English, mathematics, science, design and technology, geography, history, ICT and religious education departments all enjoy purpose built new accommodation with ample storage and display spaces, although there are times when the space for experimentation in science lessons is cramped. The music department has separate rehearsal rooms but the soundproofing is ineffective. Pupils in physical education enjoy a full-sized gymnasium, a large field and two hard-play areas, the larger being floodlit. Pupils with special educational needs work in an attractive, interestingly shaped room with a soft study and relaxation area. The high perimeter fencing, electronic door locks and closed circuit television provide for the safety of the pupils and adults who work in the school. A dedicated site manager and his team ensure the buildings and playing fields are well maintained, clean and free from graffiti.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

67. In order to maintain and develop further the standards of attainment and achievement, the governors, headteacher and senior staff should:
- **Improve attendance rates for all pupils so that the school can be fully inclusive and the progress of learning for all pupils can be assured.**

This should involve;

- a. Closer liaison with parents particularly those of pupils with high rates of absence.
- b. More rigorous analysis of attendance data to ensure clear identification of patterns of absence
- c. More effective use of strategies that celebrate improved attendance
- d. All areas of the school collectively sharing the responsibility for improving attendance with this seen as a high priority on all development plans at every level
- e. Clearer strategies to support pupils returning to school after being absent through 'catch-up' programmes
- f. The introduction of a mentor system involving people from the community and /or a 'Buddy' system involving pupils from the partner High School, or simply those within Woodfield School itself

Paragraphs 11, 36, 55

- **Improve the use of ICT across all areas of the school**

This should involve;

- a. Maintaining the use of ICT as a priority in the school development plan and identifying a long term strategy to ensure that all pupils have their entitlement to ICT across the curriculum
- b. A monitoring system to ensure that the ICT policy is implemented rigorously either as part of the teaching and learning policy or as a separate policy in its own right
- c. Ensuring that there is full compliance with all statutory requirements for the use of ICT particularly in design and technology and art
- d. Encouraging high attaining pupils and those with particular talents to develop their independent learning skills through regular and effective use of ICT, and celebrating their achievements. For example, through the introduction of a system of ICT 'monitors', through display work, through competitions and events with the partner High School and First Schools

Paragraphs 17, 54 – 55, 59-60, 127,

In addition the governors and head should pay attention to the following areas for development;

Continue to improve the good management of the school by;

- Reviewing and refining the monitoring procedures
- Ensuring that governors are fully aware of their responsibilities and provide them with the means to carry out their duties such as ensuring that all statutory requirements are met.
- Improving the quality of provision and the achievement of pupils in design and technology.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	107
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	6	28	46	23	4	0	0
Percentage	6	26	43	21	4	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y5 – Y9
Number of pupils on the school's roll	565
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	120

Special educational needs	Y5 – Y9
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	146

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	87

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	20

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	7.3
National comparative data	6.1

School data	0.3
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	62	77	139

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	38	40	55
	Girls	56	50	72
	Total	94	90	127
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	68 (n/a)	65(n/a)	91(n/a)
	National	75 (75)	73(71)	86(87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	N/a	N/a	N/a
	Girls	N/a	N/a	N/a
	Total	N/a	N/a	N/a
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	N/a(N/a)	N/a(N/a)	N/a(N/a)
	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	446	5	1
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	6	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	16	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	86	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	3	0	1
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Financial information

Qualified teachers and classes: Y5 – Y9

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	30
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.2

Education support staff: Y5 – Y9

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	211

Deployment of teachers: Y5 – Y9

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	25
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Average teaching group size: Y5 – Y9

Key Stage 2	26
Key Stage 3	26
Key Stage 4	N/a

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	1,474,591
Total expenditure	1,556,266
Expenditure per pupil	2,568
Balance brought forward from previous year	152,164
Balance carried forward to next year	73,829

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	35
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Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	565
Number of questionnaires returned	193

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	40	50	6	2	2
My child is making good progress in school.	52	47	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	52	2	2	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	54	10	2	2
The teaching is good.	58	41	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	46	41	10	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	33	1	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	30	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	42	47	10	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	54	43	1	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	41	2	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	55	32	6	2	4

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

ENGLISH

Overall, the quality of provision for English is **good**

Strengths

- Pupils' achievement is good in all years
- Pupils' learning is enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular activities
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils and teaching is good
- Pupils' positive attitudes and good behaviour contribute significantly to their learning
- Standards are rising because of very good leadership and management.

Areas for improvement

- Greater use of national curriculum assessment information to show pupils what they need to do to improve
- Further develop extension activities for high attaining pupils
- The planning of ICT activities for all years to complement the excellent plans already in place in Year 7.

68. Pupils enter the school from a wide range of partner First schools, and the standards they achieved in the national tests at age 7 are well below average. Pupils make steady progress in their first year in school and slightly better progress in Year 6. The school's only set of results for pupils aged 11 in national tests in 2002 indicate that both girls and boys attain standards which are well below average, though they are equivalent to those attained in similar schools. However, the proportion of pupils gaining level 5 is still well below average. Whilst the current Year 6 pupils are in line to achieve slightly better results than last year's group, they will still probably be below the national average in English and mathematics, because not enough of them will achieve the higher levels. At the end of Year 8, pupils take the optional national tests in English. There are no national benchmark comparisons for these tests, but the school's results indicate that the pupils' attainment is now average and that progress, therefore, continues to be good. Pupils with identified special educational needs achieve well. All reach at least basic standards by the end of Year 8. Pupils with English as an additional language also achieve well and a high proportion of these is amongst the highest attaining pupils. The good progress made by both these groups is largely due to the very good quality of the planning and collaboration between teaching assistants and teachers. They have a joint awareness of the individual needs of all of these pupils, carefully and sensitively monitor their progress, and devise good quality individual learning plans for them. Because these adults know the pupils well, pupils trust and respond positively to them.
69. Many pupils have limited speaking skills when they first come to the school. However, most make at least satisfactory progress in their first two years. The majority make this level of progress because of the daily discussions in their literacy hour. As a result, by the end of Year 6, many pupils can explain their views about advertising in an English lesson, or can explain their strategies for mental calculations in a mathematics lesson. By the end of Year 8, standards in speaking and listening are average. There are many planned opportunities for whole class, group and paired discussions on a variety of social and cultural issues, such as cruelty to animals and refugee children, which arise from pupils' reading. Talk is well used as a tool for sharing and developing ideas, solving problems and making decisions. Pupils of

higher attainment speak fluently and confidently and all pupils listen carefully and show respect for each other's opinions. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make particularly good progress in speaking and listening when they have the support of specialist teaching assistants, as in a lesson observed in the lowest English set in Year 5. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to the rest of their peers, although their use of technical terminology is weaker.

70. Most pupils in Years 5 and 6 are happy to name and discuss their favourite book and some of the pupils with higher attainment have read widely. As a result they read quickly and fluently when asked to in lessons. Middle and lower attaining pupils express opinions about books they have read, although many of them have read little outside of the school environment. As a result, although they are able to read, they have few strategies for reading unfamiliar words and do not always understand what they are reading. Standards of reading are average by the end of Year 8. The department is making a considerable and successful effort to develop pupils' inferential and deductive skills, especially in Years 7 and 8. Pupils of higher attainment can identify the main ideas and arguments in texts as well as read between the lines and make predictions. As a result, many are becoming confident in giving and justifying their own opinions. Pupils of lower attainment are beginning to understand that a close study of writing often reveals implicit and additional meanings and they are starting to look for wider interpretations. By carefully scrutinising the cover of Raymond Briggs's book *When the Wind Blows*, lower attaining Year 8 pupils were able to comment upon the visual images and colours used and to make good predictions about its subject matter. Because such tasks enable pupils to see reading as "detective work", they are developing their critical skills as well as enjoying reading for understanding and information. The department and the librarian are working hard to create a reading for pleasure culture in the school and pupils are responding well. At the moment, the greatest impact is in Year 5, with some Year 8 classes lagging behind in terms of library loans, but all pupils keep reading logs in which they record their reading and comments on books. Both boys and girls of all levels of attainment readily volunteer to read aloud in class and are listened to respectfully by other pupils: however, although most read with good understanding and at a good pace by the end of Year 8, many read too quietly.
71. Standards of writing are average overall. Pupils' handwriting develops inconsistently through Years 5 and 6. By the end of Year 6 the majority of pupils have achieved a legible cursive script, but a significant minority show some weaknesses in letter formation. The school's approach to the teaching of handwriting skills and regular practice is not consistent. Standards in spelling improve well over the first two years in the school. Pupils all use a spelling book that systematically supports this area of learning. Nevertheless, standards of spelling remain barely satisfactory in everyday work because pupils do not routinely use dictionaries as they draft their work. They rarely complete corrections of spellings in their writing, so often make the same mistake over again. Pupils use capital letters and full stops from their earliest days in school but by the end of Year 5 they rarely use punctuation within sentences, although some try hard to write direct speech with the correct punctuation. Pupils in Year 6 still find problems with punctuation and rarely use paragraphs. These omissions limit the standard of their work. Pupils do not seem to be made aware routinely of their shortcomings in terms of the standards of their work compared with the levels of the National Curriculum. The range of writing opportunities is better in Year 6 and includes diaries, persuasive writing, formal letters and book reviews. The writing of imaginary texts by pupils and tasks involving the use of dialogue are not as regularly seen as other writing opportunities, although there are some good recent opportunities for pupils to experiment with poetry.

72. By the end of Year 8, the pupils of higher attainment write fluently, neatly and accurately and with a very good awareness of audience and purpose. Their written responses to Thomas Hardy's short stories, for example, show their willingness to engage fully with some challenging language and unfamiliar social contexts, and to identify the main features of his style and comment effectively on themes, characters and events. They also refer to the text to support their interpretations, though few are yet able to analyse Hardy's use of language, imagery and symbolism. These pupils also use a range of complex vocabulary and sentence structures, especially in their personal and creative writing, and readily use similes and metaphors to enliven their descriptions, story telling and poetry. Their work on "Space Diaries" is particularly lively and, at times, original and amusing. They also use punctuation correctly, organise their ideas into paragraphs and use both standard and non-standard forms of English well. Letters are well planned and autobiographies well illustrated. Pupils with lower attainment write in simple sentences and try to use adjectives and adverbs to bring their creative writing to life. Their stories and descriptions are much better than their writing to explain or to give information, but their limited vocabulary and weak spelling, punctuation and paragraphing, together with a lack of evidence to support ideas and opinions, prevent their attaining higher levels. The department is, however, targeting the technical accuracy of these pupils' work in order to help them to improve. Much written work is done in "drafting books." Whilst this is good practice in helping pupils to plan and draft their work, some pupils do not value these processes or write carefully in the books because not all teachers regularly check the work in them.
73. Pupils' learning is considerably enriched by a wide programme of extra-curricular activities. There are opportunities for pupils to use ICT in all years, but only in Year 7 is there a comprehensive scheme of work, which is both imaginative and exceptionally well-planned, to ensure that they all use ICT regularly to develop their writing, reading, research and presentation skills. The use of ICT, in particular word processing, in literacy work in Years 5 and 6 is limited. There are very few examples on display in classrooms. This provides little support to the development of pupils' keyboard skills or to pupils' views of the usefulness of word processing in their lives.
74. Teaching and learning are good overall and very good in two out of every five lessons. Teaching is never less than satisfactory. Teaching is slightly more effective in Year 6 than in Year 5 and this trend continues into the following two years. In the best lessons, teachers have very good relationships with pupils; they have high expectations of them and set tasks which are interesting and relevant, as well as challenging, especially for pupils with average and lower attainment. They plan well to cater for any special needs in their classes, including the interests of boys, make learning worthwhile and enjoyable and boost pupils' confidence with frequent praise. For example, in a Year 7 class starting a unit on "the family", the teacher made very good use of a personal and humorous anecdote about her own grandmother to energise and motivate the class into revealing to their partners the eccentricities of some of their own relations. This led to a very useful session in which pupils chose adjectives to describe relatives and then justified their choices. Careful planning in Years 5 and 6 in line with the guidance from the National Literacy Strategy ensures that both specialist and non-specialist teachers of English perform well. In the few less successful lessons, teachers do not always ensure that pupils record their learning or encourage them to use their existing knowledge and experience in order to understand new topics. This was seen in a Year 8 class that was starting *When the Wind Blows*. They were given a number of words associated with war, instead of being asked to compile and discuss their own lists and thus take some ownership of

the subject. In some lessons in Years 7 and 8, there is occasionally a lack of challenge for the pupils of higher attainment, particularly when no choices are offered, and all pupils, irrespective of their level of attainment, are given the same task. Marking is rigorous and work is accurately assessed: however, teachers' comments make few references to national curriculum assessment criteria to help pupils move forward and rarely give clear examples to show exactly how writing can be improved. Pupils are well involved in the assessment process, through frequent opportunities for self-evaluation, and their learning is considerably enhanced by their positive attitudes to each other and their enthusiasm for English that is clearly generated by their teachers. Few displays in classrooms in Years 5 and 6 celebrate pupils' work and this results in a lowering of the incentive for pupils to produce the very best they can.

75. The leadership and management of English are very good. The head of department offers clear direction and motivation to a much larger than average team of teachers, most of whom are non-specialists, and sets high standards of dedication, professionalism and hard work. She is constantly looking for ways to improve the curriculum and standards further. Teaching is well monitored, communication is very good, responsibilities are delegated in Years 5 and 6, priorities for development are clear, and lesson planning and evaluation shared by all. The department is also beginning to make good use of a range of test data to set targets both for teaching groups and individual pupils.

KEY SKILLS ACROSS THE CURRICULUM – LITERACY

76. Standards of pupils' literacy are average by the end of Year 8. Since they are well below average on entry in Year 5, this indicates that achievement is very good. The National literacy Strategy has been well implemented.
77. Pupils quickly make progress in speaking and listening, especially those for whom English is an additional language, because teachers plan frequent opportunities for paired and group work and because good relationships within classes means that pupils are always willing to help each other. Talk is used in many lessons as a valuable tool for developing and extending pupils' learning. In religious education, for example, pupils have mini-debates, in history they collaborate to produce radio scripts and in science they present information to the rest of the class. In some subjects, but particularly in English, pupils are encouraged to evaluate their work through discussions.
78. The school is working hard to establish a reading culture. The attractive library is well stocked and the librarian is always available to give help and advice: however, not all departments are yet making full use of its book facilities. There are planned opportunities in most subjects for pupils to develop their research skills, but there is little evidence of pupils being critical of information that they discover on the Internet. A very good, paired reading scheme has recently started in which a group of Year 8 pupils regularly listens to those in Year 5 who have reading difficulties. The school is rightly looking to develop the scheme across all years.
79. Because of the whole school training, most teachers provide good support, such as questions, prompt lists and paragraph headings, to help pupils to structure their extended writing. There is a good range of writing, including pupils' biographies of Mother Theresa in religious education in Year 7 and letters of protest against the destruction of the environment in Year 8 science: however, not all teachers encourage creative approaches, such as imaginative stories or poems. Subject-specific words are clearly displayed in all teaching rooms and there is a strong

emphasis on the correct use of technical language. This is particularly evident in mathematics, science and design and technology. There is a very good cross-curricular spelling competition and most teachers regularly correct and mark spelling, punctuation and grammar and advise on vocabulary and style.

80. Strategies for the teaching of literacy are good overall. Literacy across the curriculum is well managed by the head of English and the newly appointed Key Stage 3 Strategy manager, and all staff understand the importance of a robust and concerted literacy strategy for raising overall standards. Because many teachers in Years 5 and 6 also teach English, opportunities to develop pupils' literacy skills are usually planned in most lessons. Literacy is also very well supported by the French department. The school is beginning to use available test data to set literacy targets for individual pupils and to track their progress in attaining them. However, there is some inconsistent practice within a few departments because not all subject heads are yet monitoring literacy teaching effectively.

MATHEMATICS

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

Strengths

- Teaching and learning are very good
- The leadership and the hard work and commitment of the teachers are very good
- The attitudes and behaviour of the pupils are very good
- The department makes very good use of assessment data.

Areas for improvement

- To make pupils more aware of National Curriculum levels
- To improve the provision for higher attaining pupils and raise their standards.
- To make better use of mathematical displays in classrooms particularly in Years 5 and 6.

81. In the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2002, standards were well below average in mathematics. This is similar to English and well below standards in science. When the results are compared to those of pupils in similar schools they are below average. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level 5 is almost half the national average. This reflects to a certain extent the attainment of pupils when they enter the school but also indicates some concern shared by the school and the inspection team about under-performance by higher attaining pupils in the first two years in the school. Sound progress is noted in most aspects of mathematics during Year 5 and slightly better progress is seen in Year 6. Standards seen in lessons during the inspection are close to the national expectation. However, pupils' workbooks indicate that over time too few pupils are achieving standards above the expectation for their age. It is unlikely that results in this year's national tests at the end of Year 6 will reach the national average. Standards of work seen in lessons and in the pupils' books at the end of Year 8 are above the expected level for many pupils. Achievement by the majority of pupils at the end of Year 8 is good and sometimes very good. The school makes good use of nationally recognised tests to track the progress of pupils as they move through Years 7 and 8. There is little gender difference in achievement. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
82. In Years 5 and 6 pupils make limited use of their mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding in open-ended investigations. Pupils discuss strategies they have used in their computations, whilst at other times they use mathematical vocabulary in an

increasingly accurate way. This is as a result of an emphasis on vocabulary in classroom displays. Pupils have good opportunities to tease out calculations from word problems, but there is no recorded evidence to show that they can hypothesise, analyse and make decisions on how to investigate problems.

83. The National Numeracy Strategy is used effectively across the two year groups. Well-planned lessons mean that pupils become increasingly secure when dealing with mathematical calculations. Pupils in Year 5 multiply by 10 and 100 and understand different strategies for carrying out multiplication and division. They calculate fractions of large numbers and many can change simple fractions into decimals. By the end of Year 6 the majority of pupils understand the links between fractions, decimals and percentages and calculate percentages of amounts of money, length and mass. This represents good progress for the majority of pupils as they move through the first two years. There are limited opportunities for higher attaining pupils to use negative numbers, inverse operations and use of formulae and this is restricting their achievement at higher levels.
84. Many of these younger pupils show a good understanding of shape, space and measures. In Year 5 they recognise a range of two dimensional shapes, although there is little evidence of the same level of recognition for three dimensional ones. They understand how to calculate simple perimeters of shapes and measure length accurately using centimetres and millimetres. In Year 6 pupils list the properties of many regular two dimensional shapes and can talk about faces, vertices and edges. The majority measure angles well and some calculate unknown angles within shapes, given the measurements of other angles. Progress in this work is good.
85. The amount of data handling seen in work books in Years 5 and 6 is satisfactory and the standard of the work, by the end of Year 6, is satisfactory for the majority of pupils. In Year 5, pupils collect and organise data using a tally chart. They then convert the data into simple bar charts. In Year 6 data is used to create line graphs for temperature readings, for example, or block graphs used to show the amount of television watched by pupils in a group. Progress in the development of these skills is good. Pupils' understanding of the language of probability is satisfactory, whilst pupils in the higher sets use this vocabulary when writing about the outcomes of their work using such words as "likely, certain and possible." In Years 7 and 8 some very good graph work was seen at all levels including accurate graphs of linear equations.
86. Pupils with special educational needs often make similar good progress in lessons. This is partly due to the well-organised setting arrangements for mathematics and the fact that some of the groups for pupils with lower attainment in mathematics are much smaller, giving teachers and their support workers more opportunities to directly support pupils. Pupils for whom English is not their first language, also make good progress. They often receive good individual and group support from specialist support adults.
87. Teaching is good overall. It is good in Years 5 and 6 and very good in Years 7 and 8, although the quality in individual lessons ranges from excellent to unsatisfactory. Good or better teaching was seen in three quarters of lessons and in half of lessons teaching was very good or excellent. There was one unsatisfactory lesson. Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives that are shared with pupils. In the best lessons seen, the teachers had high expectations of the pupils, the pace was good and a variety of tasks had been prepared to challenge the pupils. In an excellent lesson seen with a higher attaining Year 8 group the pupils successfully worked out the area of irregular quadrilaterals because of the high quality teaching and very good

visual aids. A group of Year 8 pupils used graphical calculators competently to tabulate data, quickly work out volume and plot the results to find the maximum possible volume in a given investigation. Some good starter exercises were seen, for example, in a Year 7 group where the pupils' visual skills were being improved by an exercise using the mini whiteboards. In a lower attaining Year 7 group the pupils worked enthusiastically on an investigation to use four numbers and the four rules to write all the numbers from 1 to 10. The endings of lessons were, on occasions, challenging but were sometimes not so well focused, with pupils' learning not always consolidated. Teachers make effective use of questioning, encouraging pupils to explain their answers and solutions to the rest of the class. In the one unsatisfactory lesson the pace was slow and the work was not challenging enough.

88. The school has made effective use of the National Numeracy Strategy to support the large group of teachers who teach mathematics in the various sets. They use it well to help them with planning and clarifying learning objectives. Homework is used effectively to support and extend learning. It is set by teachers following a known timetable and many pupils are supported by their parents who see that this work is completed on time. ICT is used well to support learning in Year 6, as pupils have regular access to a program that enables them to practice computational skills at their own level. There is limited use of ICT in their regular daily numeracy lessons in Years 5 and 6. Some good use of graphical calculators was seen in lessons in Years 7 and 8 and there was evidence of some use of computers in the pupils' work.
89. Currently, although each class has a display about mathematics, there is little evidence of pupils' own work in the displays and equally few opportunities for pupils to interact with the displays. There appears to be no formal or informal means of monitoring the displays in class.
90. Assessment procedures are very good. Teachers assess pupils' work carefully and make good use of the outcomes to arrange setting, help plan activities to provide challenges for all pupils and to provide targets to which pupils strive. Targets are shared with pupils, but in some cases they do not have quite enough knowledge of the levels of the National Curriculum in order to see how they might make progress to the next level of learning. Many teachers mark work well and provide pupils with suggestions for making progress, however, in too many cases there is little evidence of this being followed by pupils or followed up by teachers.
91. More detailed links with partner first schools are being fostered now the school is becoming well established and this is providing the school with more informative data on the pupils. Leadership and management of the mathematics department are very good. The department is made up of enthusiastic, hard working and committed teachers. Teachers have a secure grasp of the subject and its requirements. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning take place and good practice is generally shared. The department is well placed to develop further its very good work.

Numeracy across the curriculum

92. Pupils' standards of numeracy overall are above the expected level. The school is responding positively to the National Numeracy Strategy by involving all departments in action to improve numeracy. The development of pupils' numerical skills forms a specific and increasing aspect of the mathematics curriculum. Most mathematics lessons in all years adopt the lesson structure recommended by the strategy. This is helping to increase the level of skill and confidence with number. Some pupils' basic computational skills still have weaknesses.

93. Where pupils need to use number in other subjects of the curriculum, teachers are reinforcing the skills necessary to enable them to do so adequately. For example, in science pupils in all years draw accurate graphs and analyse and interpret data. Pupils measure accurately in Year 8 in design and technology and understand and use simple formula. In ICT and geography pupils produce accurate graphs and interpret data effectively. It is clear that most pupils are transferring their mathematical learning to assist their learning in different subjects.

SCIENCE

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

Strengths

- The good leadership and management of the department provides a firm basis for organised learning and development
- Good teaching leads to good learning
- Computer projector technology is used well to illustrate lessons.

Areas for improvement

- Further development of the Key Stage 3 teaching strategy to ensure that teaching engages all the pupils in active thought more of the time
- Extension work for higher attaining pupils and different work and timings for those with special educational needs
- Development of ICT applications for pupil use.

94. Pupils' standards in the 2002 national curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 were average in comparison with all schools. When compared to similar schools they were above average and very high for the proportion of pupils who attained above level 4. Girls did better than boys. Evidence from lessons and the examination of the pupils' work show that these standards have been maintained. The school's performance in science is stronger than that seen in English and mathematics. The achievement of pupils by the end of Year 6 is good when the standards that they are obtaining now are compared to those that they were obtaining four years ago. Year 6 pupils have made a good start on classification; pupils know what defines an insect and that different kinds of insects have different additional features.
95. Standards by the end of Year 8 are in line with expectations and pupils are making satisfactory achievement, building on the standards that they exhibited in the national tests they took at the end of Year 6. Year 8 pupils know many of the elements by their symbols; they know the properties of metals and link these properties to the uses of various metals. Higher attaining pupils understand what lies behind different densities for different materials.
96. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of very good provision. They are well known to their teachers, who have helped to write their Individual Educational Plans. Consequently teachers produce a graded approach and sometimes design work that is especially tailored to their needs. Where class support is provided it is of high quality and most helpful. This is also the case when pupils work in the learning skills centre. However, sometimes these pupils are not given enough time to complete tasks. This was the case in an exercise to draw and label the parts of an ant. The highest attaining pupils make satisfactory progress but there is often not enough extension work to fully stretch and stimulate them, so that they

make better progress. Pupils who are learning in English as an additional language also make good progress on account of the good provision in science.

97. Literacy skills are developed well. Use is made of keywords, spellings and word definitions are emphasised; pupils use discussion and free writing on projects well. Pupils use mathematics competently in science; they are encouraged to draw accurate graphs, measure precisely and to perform simple calculations. At present the pupils' use of computer equipment is unsatisfactory. Much of the equipment is new, but not yet operational due to connection problems, such as those with the data loggers. The department has plans to overcome these problems in the near future.
98. Pupils generally respond well to science, especially the practical sessions. A lesson using microscopes raised great enthusiasm. They usually behave well so long as there is plenty for all to do. They work best when they are asked to have ideas and to develop them by teacher questions, research or by practical experiment.
99. The quality of teaching is good, leading to good learning. Some very good lessons were seen together with two unsatisfactory ones. Lessons are usually well planned with their aims made clear to the pupils. Teachers begin lessons by checking what the pupils already know and conclude by testing the new learning. The best teaching sets out to involve all the pupils actively in thinking all of the time. These lessons show a wide variety of strategies, lively teaching style and very effective classroom management: as a result they are enjoyable and lead to some very good learning. Teachers make effective use of computer projectors and PowerPoint to give a visual framework for learning. Work is generally well marked with useful corrections and suggestions for improvement, but in the younger years, the suggestions are sometimes too dominated by comments on the presentation rather than the science. Where teaching is less successful there is weak discipline and purposeful learning is restricted. In the less successful lessons, pupils are less likely to be involved in thinking or designing experiments, but are told what to think and what to do. Higher attaining pupils finish tasks quickly and become bored.
100. The department is headed by a committed and enthusiastic teacher who is raising standards by rewriting the schemes of work, adopting new methods of teaching and overhauling the use of assessment. The curriculum is good and enhanced by some visits such as that to Millennium Point. The resources, apart from ICT, are very good; they are well deployed, but the science technician does not have enough time to maintain the equipment and to service two laboratories. The two new laboratories are very good, but they are seldom used by the younger years.

ART AND DESIGN

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

Strengths

- The capacity to improve and the progress already made in the subject mostly due to the good planning and enthusiasm of the newly qualified teacher
- The attitudes of the pupils and their relationships with their teachers are good and this supports their learning.
- Extra curricular opportunities for higher attaining pupils are good.

Areas for improvement

- Standards of attainment are below expectations in all years
- The basic skills of pupils and their use of a sketchbook are weak
- Statutory requirements relating to ICT are not met
- The accommodation and learning resources are poor and are interfering with efforts to improve the curriculum.

101. Standards are below national expectations. By the end of Year 6 the pupils' ability to draw is below average. Most drawing is in pencil, relatively small and taken from photographs rather than observation. Pupils have improving pencil skills and some understanding of the use of drawing to record proportion, movement and scale but they do not vary line to show distance or texture. Shading often flattens form rather than accentuating it. They have improving knowledge of composition through the study of Cubism and Pop Art and an understanding of the spirituality in artwork by working with dreamtime paintings in Aboriginal art. The pupils' use of sketchbooks is in its infancy and the contents tend to be presentational rather than investigative or experimental or a personal response to the world around us. Their work is not annotated enough and the few that are made are descriptive rather than evaluative. Pupils enter school with below average understanding of art and design and their achievements by the end of Year 6 are therefore satisfactory.
102. Standards in Year 8 remain below average. Drawing skills remain under-developed with the great majority unaware of the possibilities of drawing for different purposes. There is limited opportunity for observational drawing. The range of materials available for pupils' use is limited and the scale of pupils' drawings is restrictive. This is having a negative impact on pupil progress and the expectations of pupils and teachers alike. The pupils' compositional skills are much improved and are meeting expectations. Their work related to Cubism, in which they produce collages and pastel compositions is innovative and original. The achievements of pupils by the end of Year 8 are satisfactory. Lower attaining pupils and those who are learning in English as an additional language make the same progress as their peers, thanks to their teachers' being alert to any difficulties they might experience. Boys and girls make equal progress. Higher attaining pupils make good progress due to their working with artists-in-residence on projects including a beautiful copper sculpture mounted on the outer wall of the school. There are also planned opportunities for those who are talented in art to attend out-of-hours classes at the nearby high school.
103. Teaching and learning in art are satisfactory, sometimes good and occasionally very good. In the best lessons teachers make it clear to pupils what they are required to do and the methods they are to employ. The art teacher has good, up-to-date subject knowledge and she relates well to her pupils generating good attitudes to art and design. Lessons are well planned and many activities are inventive and appealing.

Year 8 pupils made rapid progress in a very good lesson centred around animating their drawn images of figures in action. The lesson was divided into manageable portions of time and the very basic resources were well used. The pupils' pace and productivity were very good. The departmental technician provided good support to the pupils and the teacher by circulating and encouraging those making slower progress. Year 6 pupils made good progress in a well-designed lesson surrounding Mrs Klimt's washing line, an engaging device to point out the light and shade falling on drapery. Their recollection of previous learning was impressive as was their keenness to contribute to the question and answer session at the start of the lesson. The pupils' use of words such as camouflage, sagging, drooping, folding and draping added to their literacy skills. Pupils are less confident when asked to comment on the quality of their own work or that of their friends. The ends of lessons often represent missed opportunities for pupils to speak about their work. In the only unsatisfactory lesson, Year 8 pupils were unsure of what precisely they were required to do and the behaviour of a small minority of boys deteriorated until the class spent more time gossiping than working.

104. The curriculum in art is very basic and there is a need for considerable investment in printmaking, textiles and three-dimensional studies. The lack of hardware and specialist software means that the school cannot teach the National Curriculum properly. Extra-curricular opportunities enrich the pupils' experiences and improve their learning. Assessment in art is satisfactory but there are occasions when marking fails to give pupils clear guidance on how well they are doing and how they might improve.
105. The subject lacks a head of department. Its leadership and management are the responsibility of the senior management and are unsatisfactory. There is a complete lack of planning to raise standards or develop the curriculum. Staffing is satisfactory although certain of the non-specialist teachers require training to improve their knowledge and understanding of art and artists. Resources for learning are poor and are slowing efforts to improve the provision. The accommodation is poor although plans are firmly in place for major refurbishment. The newly qualified art teacher inherited a dispirited department but she is providing direction, well considered schemes of work and good leadership for the pupils and the non-specialist teachers alike. The department is improving.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

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

Strengths

- A major strength is the very recently appointed subject leader who has a clear vision of how the subject can be improved
- Relationships between pupils and teachers and pupils' behaviour are rarely less than good and occasionally very good
- Very good provision of specialist accommodation and resources.

Areas for improvement

- The monitoring of the very recent introduction of control and computer-aided design and manufacture to ensure that statutory requirements are met.
- Development planning lacks rigour and is not sufficiently well based on the effective use of performance data.
- To review Risk Assessment procedures throughout the subject.

106. Standards by the end of Year 6 are variable across design and technology. In food technology and textiles they are in line with national expectations, in resistant materials they are below expectations. Overall, this represents an unsatisfactory level of achievement. Pupils' research skills are good. They use information well to guide their individual projects. For example, in Year 6 pupils research similar footwear from other countries to inform their slipper designs and in food they consider nutritional values when making a healthy snack. They produced individual ideas and worked with enthusiasm on the 'soft-toy' project. They analysed the problem, used paper to produce mock-ups and produced patterns to assist with the cutting of the material to the correct shape. Most pupils have a sound knowledge of technical terms which are regularly reinforced by the teachers. Pupils worked on task when bread making, gaining a real sense of achievement from the outcome. This is to be followed up by undertaking the design and making of a healthy pizza. By the end of Year 6, pupils' design skills are at best average. The majority of pupils struggle with basic drawing techniques, for example, simple rendering, which was rarely used effectively to enhance their designs.
107. Standards by the end of Year 8 are below expectations which represents an unsatisfactory level of achievement. Whilst most pupils make at least satisfactory progress in the lessons seen, significant gaps exist, for example, in the resistant materials areas. Equipment to teach the aspects of the National Curriculum for computer-aided design and manufacture has very recently been purchased; the school is presently not meeting statutory requirements. In systems and control in Year 7, work is being developed by the subject leader to enable devices such as lights to be controlled in sequence. Pupils make limited progress in the development of design and drawing skills between Year 6 and Year 8. Their evaluations of their work are often brief and poorly written and there is limited evidence of good planning to develop sketching and modelling techniques. These weaker features were clearly seen when pupils were designing and making a package suitable for a pizza in Year 6, and a pie in Year 8. Pupils' research skills are better, for example, in Year 8 when designing and making a bag in textiles, with a decorative panel based on the style of Matisse and Petra Boase.
108. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning in English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress. Pupils with statements of special educational needs make at least satisfactory and occasionally good progress when they receive high levels of support from learning assistants. Learning assistants interact well with pupils and work closely with them, sharing ideas and guiding pupils when necessary. There is no significant difference in the progress made by girls and boys although girls often took a little more time and care in the presentation of design folder work.
109. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and occasionally good. Specialist teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject they teach. Teachers manage pupils well, work hard to meet their individual needs and pupils respond appropriately with high standards of behaviour. Pupils' attitudes are good and they clearly enjoy the practical aspects of the subject. Teacher demonstrations are often good, but in some instances pupils did not always have the opportunity to apply the lessons learnt. In the few instances when pupils were observed 'off task,' it was as a direct result of uninspiring teaching or repeated similar tasks and this is one reason why key skills do not develop at a faster rate.
110. The school is to be commended for its efforts to attract and appoint a specialist subject leader following the restructuring of two curriculum areas last year. This long period of instability has significantly affected the development of the subject in the

school. There has been insufficient support and monitoring of the subject during this time. The new subject leader has quickly and clearly developed a sense of direction for design and technology and has identified strengths and areas for development following a careful audit of the provision. In only a very short period in post she has improved the balance and range of work, but the impact of these very recent changes has not yet had sufficient time to raise standards. All signs indicate the subject is now well placed for further development although the current development plans do not rigorously determine success criteria for the future and are not firmly based on the effective use of performance data.

111. Very good use is made of the specialist and high standards of accommodation and resources, and although no health and safety issues were observed during the inspection, the Risk Assessment procedures in the subject are weak.

GEOGRAPHY

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

Strengths

- Good teaching uses a wide range of attractive resources which stimulate pupils' interest
- Good relationships between teachers and pupils give pupils confidence in their abilities and allow them to make good progress
- Increasing use of ICT enhances learning.

Areas for improvement

- Assessments to ensure pupils' work is given appropriate National Curriculum levels
- The range of fieldwork opportunities for pupils.

112. The standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 6 are in line with national expectations. However, their achievement is good, given that their attainment on entry to Year 5 is well below average. Year 5 pupils can draw and label maps with title, key and scale and use them well to locate places. In Year 6 pupils make good use of specialist terminology to describe physical landforms and higher attaining pupils understand clearly the formation of waterfalls. Pupils use computers confidently to research and extract relevant information. They locate river features such as deltas and meanders accurately at both national and regional scales.
113. The attainment of pupils in Years 7 and 8 is in line with expectations for their age and their achievement is good. Year 7 pupils, including those with special educational needs, can enter information about slope angles and land use into a spreadsheet on a computer and use this to draw graphs. Some pupils find it more difficult to analyse their information and reach sound geographical conclusions. In Year 8, pupils' understanding of other cultures is enhanced by their studies of Italy and Brazil. Both boys and girls have a good appreciation of the problems affecting people living in the poorest areas of Brazilian cities. Higher attaining pupils can discuss and write well about basic human needs and structure information into a logical sequence.
114. Overall the standard of teaching is good. Teachers prepare lessons well and use their good subject knowledge together with a wide range of attractive resources to stimulate pupils' interest. In a very good Year 6 lesson the teacher used drainpipes, a watering can and a bucket to illustrate vividly the formation of waterfalls. Class sets of laptop computers are used effectively to enhance both pupils' computer skills and their understanding of physical and human geography. Most lessons proceed at a

brisk pace and pupils move smoothly from one activity to another so no learning time is wasted. Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported by classroom assistants whose structured help enables these pupils to make good progress. At present opportunities for pupils to extend their fieldwork skills are limited. Pupils have trust and confidence in their teachers and relationships are good. Pupils are well behaved and have good attitudes towards their learning. They arrive at lessons promptly and work well in pairs and groups where they share ideas and information sensibly.

115. The leadership and management of the department are satisfactory. Appropriate priorities have been identified to develop the department further and progress is being made towards achieving these objectives. Schemes of work are being reviewed and new teaching and learning strategies put in place. A structured series of assessments which will help to measure pupils' progress accurately have yet to be developed. Teaching and learning are monitored within the department and teachers share good practice.
116. The department has the capacity for further improvement because teachers are strongly committed to the education of their pupils and give freely of their time to help them make progress.

HISTORY

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

Strengths

- Good teaching develops pupils' knowledge, insights and skills in the subject
- Most pupils enjoy the subject and work conscientiously in lessons
- Valuable opportunities are provided for pupils to improve their skills in literacy.

Areas for improvement

- Uniform schemes of work
- Systematically documented assessment evidence.

117. By the end of Year 6 standards of attainment are in line with expectations and this level of attainment continues through Years 7 and 8. Pupils, including those with special education need and those learning in English as an additional language, make good progress in the subject during their time in school.
118. The curriculum introduces pupils to a wide range of historical topics that meet National Curriculum requirements. They acquire a good base of factual knowledge and establish conceptual links with other subjects – for example, a Year 5 class studying ancient Egypt became aware of locations in Africa and the existence of flood plains. The capacity to think critically and be aware of alternative interpretation of facts is consistently encouraged and was seen in a Year 8 lesson on the French Revolution, when the personal characteristics of Louis XVI were evaluated in relation to qualities appropriate for leadership. A Year 7 lesson dealing with slavery caused pupils to make connections with historical situations and those in contemporary society. In this lesson, sources from the internet provided some telling, supporting evidence. Beyond the taught curriculum, pupils extend their understanding of history through educational excursions - for example, following a Victorian town trail and by a visit to Warwick castle.

119. The standard of teaching is good overall with some examples of very good teaching seen. Particularly effective is the attention given to the development of literacy through a systematic focus on vocabulary, good use of language demonstrated by teachers and the high expectations evident in pupils' work - this last most notable in Year 6 books. However, marking generally needs to include more suggestions as to how pupils can improve their work. Lessons are well structured and most maintain a good sense of pace and an enthusiastic approach. These factors succeed in keeping pupils engaged and result in them making progress.
120. Leadership and management in history are satisfactory. Appropriate priorities have been identified and pursued – notably the development of ICT, though there are aspects of documentation that require greater coherence and organisation. In particular, schemes of work for all year groups and topics need to have consistency of approach and layout and the assessment of pupils requires more systematic co-ordination.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Overall, the specialist teaching of ICT is **good** but the provision for the use of ICT across the curriculum is **unsatisfactory**.

Strengths

- The subject leader for the specialist provision has a clear vision as to the implementation of the Key Stage 3 Strategy
- Pupils develop very good attitudes and a responsible approach when using computers
- Accommodation and resources are very good and impact positively on standards of pupils' work.

Areas for improvement

- The use of ICT in other subjects across the curriculum is not strategically monitored and co-ordination is therefore not secure.

121. The standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 6 are in line with national expectations and this represents good achievement. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a sound knowledge of text editing, use of images to enhance their work and combine different styles of information. For example, in Year 5, pupils combine text with digital photographs to produce their own school 'passport'. Pupils' knowledge of databases is good, for example, pupils create a class database, classifying boys and girls, colour of hair etc. They also use simulations and explore models, such as setting up a database to investigate and evaluate distances travelled between places. Good use is made of worksheets to extend understanding about what might happen if there were any errors or omissions in a database. By the end of Year 6, pupils' knowledge and understanding of control systems are average. They produce flow charts displaying a sequence of instructions that turn outputs on and off to the system. Lower attaining pupils do not always get the sequence correct.
122. By the end of Year 8, the standards that pupils attain are often at best average, and a significant minority attain standards that are below average. This represents only satisfactory achievement overall. Pupils generally make satisfactory progress in their individual lessons but the majority of pupils have not made sufficient progress in previous years. This is because they have not had sufficient opportunity to study ICT in the past and because they do not have opportunity to practice their skills on a regular basis, in other subjects. By the end of Year 8, pupils' word processing skills

are average. They have a good understanding of Logo instructions for drawing regular polygons. Lower attaining pupils struggle with producing flow charts, for example, producing the control for traffic lights and need for instructions to be in a set sequence. This work is not always completed and therefore deadlines are not met. Pupils' work is at times disorganised. For example, the quality of page layouts was weak after pupils transferred images to a text document while creating a booklet about 'Saving the world'. They also struggle when searching for information, such as when interpreting data contained in different survey reports and after school clubs.

123. Although literacy skills are developed well in lessons spelling is weak for a significant number of pupils. Their work is improved through skilfully prepared worksheets, end of unit tests and insistence on the correct use of technical terminology. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning in English as an additional language, make good progress when supported by learning assistants. Learning assistants make a valuable contribution to lessons and display a secure computer literacy, in particular when supporting individual pupils with word processing.
124. The quality of teaching and learning is good. It is occasionally very good. The subject leader has a good and secure knowledge of the subject. Full classes of pupils are well managed. There is a good deal of trust and mutual respect between the teacher and pupils. They receive high levels of individual teacher support that lead to very good attitudes and a responsible approach when using the computers. Pupils were observed working well together and helping each other in a mature manner. Marking and assessment are rigorous, including end of unit tests to record and monitor individual/class progress. There were some good features in the one satisfactory lesson, but here the teacher tended to talk too long and a minority of pupils became inattentive.
125. The subject leader is fully committed to the development of the subject, which has a high profile in the school's development plan. All classes are timetabled for weekly specialist ICT lessons. Here leadership and management are good and the subject leader has a clear vision as to the implementation and management of the Key Stage 3 Strategy. Pupils are given the opportunity to use computers during their lunch break. They use the computers for individual study and investigation and appointed pupils diligently monitor and oversee the resource. The subject leader undertakes a weekly computer club. Here pupils are actively involved in producing the school Year Book, preparing a Powerpoint presentation for a forthcoming parents evening and searching the internet for information to support a history topic on castles.
126. The subject benefits from two specialist suites, both of which have had a positive effect on standards. One room is dedicated to the teaching of specialist ICT lessons and the second to Successmaker and cross curriculum use. The school has also recently invested in a number of laptop computers for flexible use around the school.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

127. The quality of this aspect of the school curriculum is unsatisfactory. The school is aware that more could be done to use ICT in other subjects and although there are several examples of cross-curricular use, the coordination and strategic overview is not secure. There is no designated person responsible for this area. There has been no audit of current provision or of staff skills to identify training needs. There are some examples of good practice in some subjects. For example, the use of ICT has been audited in English and opportunities for using computers have been identified in the schemes of work of some subjects. There is a higher than usual ratio of computers to

pupils reflecting the high priority that governors and the head place on this aspect of provision. Much of the equipment has only recently been installed and there have been teething problems associated with these new installations. The purchase of a class set of laptops has significantly increased the opportunities for use of ICT in classrooms other than ICT suites. However, systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of the overall provision are currently unsatisfactory. This is negatively affecting the achievement of all pupils and particularly the development of independent learning.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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

Strengths

- Standards in French are rising and pupils achieve well
- Pupils learn well as a result of good teaching
- Pupils behave very well and have positive attitudes to learning French
- The French department is very well led and efficiently managed
- Pupils benefit greatly from the continuity of learning French from Year 5 and the stability of being taught by experienced specialist teachers.

Areas for improvement

- The setting of homework and marking of pupils' written work are not always rigorous enough
- Pupils need more opportunities of using ICT and reading for pleasure in French.

128. Pupils in Year 8 reach standards overall that are in line with national expectations in French. Given that most pupils enter the school with below average attainment, this represents good achievement. Many pupils in higher sets are doing work that is well above average. They understand their teachers' fluent French and respond immediately to instructions. A good number of higher attaining pupils can also speak quite confidently in simple French, giving opinions and justifying them with conviction. Boys as well as girls, and many pupils from families where English is not the main language, have very good recall of vocabulary. In one Year 8 group, for example, pupils were able to come up with sixty French verbs in a short space of time. Pupils of lower attainment, and those with special learning needs, are also achieving well because they are in smaller sets where they receive closer individual attention. They can say what clothes they are wearing in well-pronounced French and understand much of what their teacher says in French.
129. Writing in French presents a greater challenge for lower attaining pupils, and for many boys, who often do not have an eye for accurate detail. Many pupils in higher sets, however, write very well in French and some produce accurate pieces of descriptive writing using two or three verb tenses. Of the four language skills, reading is the one least developed because pupils do not have enough opportunity of reading in French for pleasure and at their own pace.
130. In Year 6 standards are also in line with expectations, although the school has no obligation to teach a foreign language at this stage. The start in French that these younger pupils have is therefore a bonus that benefits them when they reach Year 7. Pupils are all achieving well and clearly enjoy French. They can make simple statements about which sports they like or dislike and most of them understand a good range of classroom instructions in French. Higher attaining pupils at this stage

also write well describing their home life and show they have grasped some of the difficulties of French grammar.

131. Teaching is good overall and much of it is very good. This explains why pupils are happy learning French and are making good progress. This feature of good teaching applies equally to boys and girls, and to pupils with particular needs or from homes where English is not always spoken. Pupils learn well in the orderly working environment created by the teachers through firm, encouraging management. Lessons start very briskly in French and quickly get pupils into a learning frame of mind through activities that build on previous successes. Teachers use French abundantly in lessons and as a result pupils learn to understand the language spoken at speed and with good pronunciation. Pupils learn most when they are actively practising French. This happened, for example, in a very demanding lesson with pupils in Year 8 where the teacher gave them plenty of chance to get used to the different ways of saying "my" in French. By the end they had grasped this concept and were able to use it confidently to say what clothes they were wearing. The teaching of basic skills is also effective through the frequent use of dictionaries. Pupils are becoming skilled in looking up words and making sense of what they find.
132. In a few respects teaching could be even better than it is. Pupils of all ages would benefit from more use of ICT and more planned opportunities of reading in French. This can inspire real interest in language learning and help make the best use of the sixty minute lesson which is sometimes too long for pupils who find French difficult. Homework is not always demanding enough or suitably graded so that pupils who work fast can have more to do. Also, teachers do not mark pupils' work with enough rigour or insistence on pupils correcting their own mistakes.
133. Pupils learn all the better because they behave very well in lessons and bring good attitudes to the classroom. Higher attaining pupils work with real maturity and enjoy being challenged. Those with learning needs try hard and are keen to learn. All pupils co-operate well so that teachers can trust them to work productively in pairs or groups, or on their own. In this respect, and in the very courteous way in which teachers interact with pupils, they contribute well to pupils' moral and social development.
134. The very strong leadership and efficient management of the French department have created an ethos which, in stressing the importance of raising standards in a stable friendly context, reflects well the aims of the school as a whole. Pupils' performance is carefully tracked and targets are given which help them improve. The bright, spacious accommodation for French, and very good up-to-date resources, make a positive impact on standards. The well-established links that exist between the French department and those of other middle schools and high schools in Redditch ensure continuity from one phase to the next. In view of its stability and effectiveness, the French department is well placed to continue making improvements.

MUSIC

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

Strengths

- Leadership is good and provides the energy, commitment and vision to take the department forward
- Good teaching enables pupils to have a positive experience in music
- Good accommodation and resources.

Areas for improvement

- The provision for ICT in music is under developed at present
- The range of pupils' knowledge and development of skills in Years 7 and 8.

135. Pupils enter the school with very varied levels of attainment which are generally below expectations. They do however, make consistent progress and by the end of Year 6, standards overall are approaching national expectations, with some instances of higher standards of attainment. Progress in Year 7 and 8 is less secure in some classes, where knowledge and skills are not sufficiently well developed to ensure that all pupils will meet expectations by the end of Year 9.
136. All pupils have access to the music curriculum with boys and girls responding equally overall. Effective schemes of work and assessment procedures are in place which meet National Curriculum requirements. Pupils in all years are introduced to a range of specialist vocabulary in the context of performing and composing, listening and appraising activities. They acquire basic skills in singing and performing on keyboards and tuned percussion. Those who play orchestral instruments use their skills to enhance group activities. This was seen in a Year 5 class where a trumpeter and violinist joined in improvising fragments of melody. The simple rhythmic patterns suggested and the restricted range of notes used made the task manageable and enabled all pupils to experience success and achievement. Pupils of higher attainment could have been given wider parameters and more freedom to be inventive.
137. Progress is less evident in the work seen from pupils in Year 8. Knowledge of notation has not developed sufficiently and performing skills lack the confidence and security to enable the majority of pupils to work successfully. One example of this was seen in the tasks in the unit on Indian music. By contrast, work recorded on an audio cassette indicates that some pupils are in fact achieving at a higher standard.
138. The standard of teaching is good. Work is well prepared and lessons have a positive, productive atmosphere. For the most part, pupils behave and respond well and work is appropriately matched to their needs including those with special needs and those who are learning in English as an additional language. Occasionally there could be a greater degree of challenge. In singing for example, there is insufficient focus on achieving better voice production and more expressive control. Basic knowledge and skills need constant reinforcement to make progress more secure. Appropriate mechanisms are in place for the assessment of pupils.
139. The leadership of the department is enthusiastic and committed and is providing a clear sense of direction. Pupils have access to tuition on a range of instruments. The extent of this provision is in line with national expectations and the standard of violin teaching is a particular strength. The school needs to build up its own stock of musical instruments that can be made available to pupils. There are several

opportunities for pupils to develop their vocal and instrumental skills out of class. These extra-curricular musical activities are an important aspect of the corporate life of the school and have contributed significantly to the school's achievement of the Arts Mark gold award. ICT is not sufficiently well developed both in terms of equipment and curriculum content, but in other respects, resources and accommodation are good. Overall, there is a clear sense that the department is moving forward.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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

Strengths

- The specialist experience and commitment of the team of teachers creates a very positive learning environment, not only for pupils but also for each other
- The range of extra-curricular activities is outstanding, both for pupils who wish to be involved and for those with exceptional ability and / or potential.
- There are very effective links made with local and regional sporting organisations and pupils benefit by specialist coaches being available for activities such as dance, cricket and tennis
- Good developing links are being made with first and high schools to improve curriculum continuity and consistency, through levelling meetings, lesson observations and reciprocal teaching.

Areas for improvement

- The use of assessment systems to inform and share with pupils the levels of attainment achieved and to set targets with individual pupils
- Systems for keeping pupils' records so that pupils are involved in collecting, inputting and collating their own records
- Further develop ICT as a resource for supporting teaching and learning
- To use assessment information more rigorously to identify different performance across the subject in order to improve strategic planning.

140. Standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 6 are mostly in line with national expectation, and some are above. Boys and girls in Years 5 and 6 develop precision and control in a range of basic skills. Many are able to link skills and techniques accurately. When asked, they are able to analyse their own and others' performance and suggest improvements. Some are able to apply their knowledge to develop strategies and tactics in mini games. All pupils expect to warm up and cool down.
141. At the end of Year 8 standards are in line with national expectation, and some are above. Pupils are given many opportunities to draw on their own knowledge to develop advanced movement and plan ways to improve their own and others' performance. Many work hard to develop their knowledge and understanding of the principles of striking and fielding games, and in using a range of running and throwing techniques. A significant number of pupils achieve very good standards in extra curricular activities at local and regional levels.
142. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 5 and 6, as they acquire and develop new skills. Progress in Years 7 and 8 is good. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning by analysing, evaluating and refining their own and others' practice. They are encouraged to develop their spatial, technical and tactical awareness and modify these in relation to changing circumstances and conditions.

143. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are learning in English as an additional language make good progress because teachers have a good understanding of their particular needs.
144. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Pupils enjoy their lessons and readily volunteer to demonstrate practice and answer questions. They are confident to talk about performance and suggest methods for improvement. Most listen carefully to the teachers and have a strong commitment to their own learning and a desire to improve. Most pupils behave very well in lessons. Relationships with each other and with teachers are very good. The teaching approaches adopted take account of pupils' interests and provide opportunities for pupils to accept responsibility for their own learning. The pupils respond very positively to this approach and are able to work cooperatively and with purpose. Many pupils take part in, and benefit from, the range of extra curricular activities.
145. The quality of teaching is very good. In all of the lessons observed teaching was good or very good, on occasions it was excellent. A major strength of the teaching is the quality of relationships between pupils and teachers, and teachers and teachers, which creates a positive ethos for activity learning and enjoyment. The natural enthusiasm of the teachers is passed on to the pupils who are encouraged to attempt new skills and accept responsibility. Pupils are given opportunities to demonstrate prior learning and to plan and evaluate performance. All teachers have very good subject knowledge covering a range of activities thus enabling them to plan lessons very effectively with linked progressive practices. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and work hard to meet the needs of pupils of all levels of attainment. Lessons are well structured and effectively managed and characterised by a brisk pace. Learning activities are interesting and progressively challenge pupils. All teachers use a range of teaching approaches. They give clear demonstrations and explanations of skills, and question pupils effectively to help them recall what they have learned. Pupils are set objectives for their lessons, and teachers use pupil demonstration to motivate and interest the pupils.
146. The leadership and management of the department are very good. Staff have quickly established themselves into a well-balanced and complementary team who support each other well, have a commitment to continuous improvement and are deployed to meet the requirements of the curriculum. Day to day routines are well established, supported by a subject area handbook. This encourages consistent systems, and high standards. Indoor accommodation is good. Outdoor facilities are very good, and include well-maintained playing fields and a multi-purpose hard surface area. It would be appropriate for the department to further develop ICT resources for the use of pupils, as well as a support for teaching and learning. The Head of Department has begun effective liaison work with the local first and high schools, in terms of reciprocal teaching, lesson observations and levelling meetings.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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

Strengths

- The enthusiasm of teachers and their good relationship with pupils provide good learning opportunities
- Good assessment and monitoring of pupils' progress have a positive impact on learning.
- High expectation and challenge encourage pupils to make good intellectual effort.

Areas for improvement

- Monitoring of teachers' performance to ensure more effective learning
- Appointment of a Head of Department to secure the subject's status in the school and its future development.

147. No assessment figures are available to establish standards of attainment reached at the end of Years 6 and 8 in 2002. Standards on entry to the school indicate below average attainment. Teacher assessment of current working levels in Year 8 puts the majority of pupils at Level 4 and above, indicating good progress. Pupils in Year 6 are working at or around Level 2/3. A broadly similar picture emerges from work seen during inspection. Boys and girls achieve equally well, as do pupils with special educational needs and those learning in English as an additional language, because overall strategies meet their learning needs effectively.
148. By Year 6 standards are approaching national expectations with most pupils working at or near their capabilities and achieving well in terms of their earlier attainment. Good work on empathy and imaginative writing is a feature of many pupils' work. For example, a gospel incident reported in newspaper style or very thoughtful, emotional and spiritual responses in the composition of personal prayers. Symbolism is understood as in accounts of the Good Samaritan parable, while in 'stillness' exercises pupils can identify a focus for reflection during times of silence. There are examples of untidy and unfinished work, particularly of lower attaining pupils when the material is not tailored appropriately to their levels of attainment and time defeats them. Likewise, examples of confusion indicating a lack of understanding of the sequence and significance of events in the gospel accounts, for instance, in the Easter story.
149. Pupils in Year 8 continue to achieve well in terms of prior attainment. They understand the link between belief and behaviour, for example, the washing rituals before Moslem prayer. Some very good work was seen in pupils' own rules for living. They can explain the significance of worship for believers and can address questions of meaning arising from their own and others' experience. In one lesson they were able to use the terms 'agnostic' and 'atheist' with understanding. They show good research skills prompted by challenging tasks to bring information in prior to the lesson. This contributes very effectively to their independent learning. Extended writing is a feature at this level and especially among the high attaining pupils there are many examples of evaluative writing, for instance, giving reasons for their own and others beliefs. Lower attaining pupils tend to state an opinion but have yet to be taught how to argue why they hold it.
150. Pupils' learning is good. They apply intellectual effort in lessons and work purposefully. They behave well in class because teacher expectations are high. They understand what levels they are to aim for and this encourages effort and

achievement. They express a liking for the subject and feel they have made good progress especially learning *about* other religions as well as learning *from* religion.

151. Teaching is overall good. Where it is very good there is a rapport between teacher and pupils, a well-planned lesson briskly paced and pupils are challenged to make an extra intellectual effort, for example, in addressing the big questions of life such as meaning and the existence of God. A Year 6 lesson leading pupils to an understanding of the term 'sacred' made very effective use of personal effects which have special meaning, value and preciousness. Opportunities are, on occasion, missed to illustrate fundamental concepts such as 'believing' or 'spirit' with wider and richer analogies pertinent to the pupils' own experience, in order to deepen their understanding. Assessment and marking of written work is very good where comments from the teacher are full, helpful in pointing out areas for improvement and challenging pupils to think further and deeper. Such a dialogue results in evident improvement and is very effective in raising standards of achievement.
152. The subject makes a very good contribution towards the spiritual and moral development of the pupils, providing them with opportunities for self-reflection in short meditation sessions, personal response in prayer format as well as an understanding of other religions and cultural traditions, and the discussion of moral issues. Extra-curricular enrichment opportunities have yet to be developed.
153. There is at present no head of department. The specialist teacher in charge has shown good qualities of leadership in reinvigorating the subject, raising levels of achievement over the last year and has the vision and commitment to further improvement. School policies such as literacy skills and use of ICT are built into the schemes of work, which are currently being reviewed, with very positive outcomes. Without a head of department, however, the subject lacks its due status amongst other subjects, there is uncertainty about its future management and the level of coordination and support of the other five non-specialist teachers in sharing good practice is restricted. None of these teachers has actually been observed teaching religious education. This does not promote good teaching practice or professional development and impairs the effectiveness of the teaching of this subject. Accommodation is good. Wall space is used well to display and affirm pupils' work. Resources are very good with a plentiful and varied supply of texts, reference books and religious artefacts, video materials and tapes.

CITIZENSHIP

The overall provision for citizenship is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- The quality of teaching is good and leads to secure learning
- Courses are well planned with appropriate content
- The leadership is committed to developing the requirements of this new subject.

Areas for improvement

- The assessment of pupils' work and the monitoring of teaching need further development
- The contribution of all subjects to citizenship is not clearly identified and systems to monitor pupils' learning are not yet sufficiently rigorous.

154. Lesson observations indicate that pupils are achieving well in relation to their prior attainment. By the end of Years 6 and 8 pupils have acquired a good level of factual knowledge and understanding in relation to the course units, in line with expectations of pupils at these stages in their school career. For instance, in Year 6 pupils show a good understanding of what makes individuals unique and how they become part of a functioning society. Further consideration to social relationships and interaction is considered in Year 8 and a lesson was seen which effectively explored aspects of discrimination which can occur in day to day life. Pupils show interest in these matters and react responsibly and sensitively to them.
155. Teaching is good overall. Lessons are well prepared and in most instances make use of a variety of teaching styles that affords good progress for pupils with special educational needs and those who are learning in English as an additional language. Occasionally, an unsuitable room (science laboratory) limits this variety. Teachers have high expectations and their use of the three part lesson is leading to a secure development of knowledge and the reinforcement of literacy skills. Most pupils work well and demonstrate a collaborative approach. Outside agencies such as the local police are involved when appropriate.
156. The school has made good progress in developing its provision for citizenship. The subject is part of the school's personal, social and health education programme and the co-ordinator has brought together a variety of opportunities and experiences for pupils and the course is planned to achieve an appropriate degree of progression across the years. The way in which subject departments could contribute to the provision has yet to be fully established and integrated. The mechanism for assessing pupils' work and for monitoring the quality of teaching needs to be more effective.