

INSPECTION REPORT

NORTONTHORPE HALL SCHOOL

Scissett, Huddersfield

LEA area: Kirklees

Unique reference number: 107804

Headteacher: Mr M Ironmonger

Acting headteacher at the time of inspection:
Mrs C A McDermott

Reporting inspector: Mrs R Eaton
15173

Dates of inspection: 28th April – 1st May 2003

Inspection number: 249327

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Special
School category: Community special
Age range of pupils: 7 – 16 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Busker Lane
Scissett
Huddersfield

Postcode: HD8 9JU

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Ms T Jackson

Date of previous inspection: March 2001

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15173	Mrs R Eaton	Registered inspector	Educational inclusion, including race equality Design and technology	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
13462	Mrs R Mothersdale	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
14691	Mrs J Hall	Team inspector	Science Art and design Modern foreign languages	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
20024	Mr P Wright	Team inspector	Mathematics History Religious education	
27409	Mrs S Hunt	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Geography	
12261	Ms R Adams	Team inspector	Music Physical education	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Nortonthorpe Hall is a school for boys and girls aged 7 to 16 with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Currently, 71 are on the school's roll but only five of these are girls. Owing to their emotional and behavioural difficulties, all pupils have a statement of special educational needs. A number also have additional needs, including a group of six in Year 9 who have complex social and emotional needs. When they join the school, pupils' attainment is below average. They are often underachieving because, in the past, their education has been severely disrupted. All have been permanently excluded from their previous school. The large majority are white, with five being of mixed heritage – white and black Caribbean or Asian. Pupils' homes are within the Kirklees metropolitan borough. In 2002, the number of pupils had fallen to 54. Since then, new pupils of various ages have joined the school at differing points in the year. The school is housed on two sites. The main site caters for pupils aged 7 to 14 and is located in the village of Scissett. The older pupils' site is ten miles away, in the centre of Huddersfield. During term time, the school offers overnight accommodation for up to six pupils at a time, on the main site. At present, about 13 take advantage of this opportunity. On the same site, evening activities are provided for around 20 pupils from Monday to Thursday each week. At the time of the inspection, the headteacher was absent and the deputy headteacher was the acting headteacher.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Nortonthorpe Hall is an improving school which provides a sound quality of education. Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory, although those aged seven to eleven are making good progress. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, as are the school's leadership and management and the value for money it provides.

What the school does well

- The acting headteacher is providing very determined and clear-sighted leadership.
- The pupils in Years 3 to 6 are taught well and their time in school gets off to a good start.
- The staff are working together very well to keep the school moving forward.
- The governing body makes a very strong contribution to the school's leadership and development.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to take part in activities after school.

What could be improved

- Many pupils in Years 7 to 11 do not attend school regularly enough.
- Disruptive behaviour, in and out of classrooms, is not managed consistently.
- Pupils are allowed to smoke during the school day.
- There is no written plan that sets out the school's current priorities and how they are to be achieved.
- The accommodation for pupils in Years 10 and 11 is unsatisfactory.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was previously inspected in March 2001. This inspection, by HMI, removed the school from the special measures that had proved necessary in 1999. However, serious weaknesses remained. Since 2001, satisfactory progress has been made during a period of significant change in the staff and pupil population. The key issues were tackled systematically and largely effectively. Pupils now make better progress, notably in English. Much work remains to be done. However, the improvements made already, the very strong leadership of the acting headteacher and governing body, high levels of staff morale and commitment, and the confidence and support of the local education authority are all

convincing evidence that the school no longer has serious weaknesses and has the capacity to continue to improve.

STANDARDS

The table summarises inspectors' judgements about how well pupils achieve in relation to their individual targets.

Progress in:	by Year 6	by Year 11	Key	
speaking and listening	A	B	very good	A
reading	B	B	good	B
writing	B	C	satisfactory	C
mathematics	B	C	unsatisfactory	D
personal, social and health education	B	B	poor	E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	B	C		

* IEPs are individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs.

The school sets very challenging targets for Year 11 pupils to achieve in GCSE examinations. In 2002, the target was not quite met, but ten of the twelve pupils concerned gained one or more GCSE passes and three achieved five passes at grades C to G. In Years 3 to 6, pupils achieve well or very well in nearly every subject. In Years 7 to 11, achievement is satisfactory overall but good in several subjects. Pupils throughout the school do well in reading, personal, social, health and citizenship education and information and communication technology. In Years 7 to 9, achievement is also good in history, music and physical education. During Years 7 to 11, erratic or poor attendance has an impact on the achievement of a significant number of pupils – they do not make the progress that they should. The tiny number of girls achieve as well as the boys and there is no difference in the achievement of pupils from mixed heritage backgrounds. Higher and lower attainers and those with complex needs generally make progress at equivalent rates, although higher attainers do not consistently achieve the standards of which they are capable.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory overall, but good in Years 3 to 6. When pupils are enjoying what they are doing, their attitudes are frequently very good. On other occasions, a minority will often choose not to get involved and try to disturb others.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory, but generally good in Years 3 to 6. The majority of pupils are still learning how to control their behaviour and they are often volatile and challenging. However, most lessons and activities take place without major disruptions. In some circumstances, such as during assemblies and after-school activities, behaviour is very good.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils gradually learn to become more independent and able to accept responsibility. Relationships between pupils and adults are good.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory, but satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Many pupils join the school with very poor attendance records. They are still not in the habit of

	coming to school every day. Although still unsatisfactory, attendance does improve in Year 11.
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Pupils enjoy staying overnight or joining in the evening activities. Pupils in Years 3 to 9 play an active part in school life, through the school council. Those in Years 10 and 11 become increasingly able to take charge of their examination coursework, get themselves to school and go into town at lunchtime. The oldest pupils hold down work experience placements. They respond well in the adult environment of the college.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Years 3 – 6	Years 7 – 11
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory

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

Science and personal, social and health education are taught well throughout the school. English and mathematics teaching is good in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory in Years 7 to 11. The skills of communication, including literacy, are generally taught well and numeracy teaching is satisfactory. Teaching is consistently good or very good in Years 3 to 6. The quality is more variable in Years 7 to 11, where it ranges from very good to unsatisfactory. The unsatisfactory teaching is almost always linked to a minority of teachers' difficulties in handling pupils' challenging behaviour. These teachers frequently accept standards of behaviour that are too low. Classroom assistants and care staff often make good contributions to teaching and learning but are not always consistent in the way they support teachers and pupils. Teachers plan lessons carefully. They usually make sure that the needs of all pupils are met, but occasionally the higher attainers' work is not hard enough. There are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to practise writing, numeracy or use computers in lessons across the curriculum.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall and good in Years 3 to 6. The Years 10 and 11 pupils have good opportunities and their efforts and achievements are recognised through a range of certificates and awards.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There are no pupils with English as an additional language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. There are good arrangements for pupils' moral and social development. Those for spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. There are many strengths in the way in which pupils are looked after. However, there are also important areas that have weaknesses.

The school's partnership with parents is good.

A good range of activities is provided to enrich pupils' experiences and promote their personal development. Links with the college of further education make good contributions to the opportunities in Years 10 and 11. Not enough time is available for teaching and learning in Years 10 and 11.

Allowing pupils to smoke on school premises does not promote their health and wellbeing.

Staff know pupils' strengths and weaknesses very well and provide them with good personal support and guidance. There are effective links between the residential and education staff.

On the main site, the systems for registering pupils' attendance and trying to get them into school are not good enough. The anti-bullying policy is currently being updated.

There are good arrangements to assess how well pupils are making progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The acting headteacher is leading the school very well in the absence of the headteacher. Senior staff have recently willingly taken on additional whole-school responsibilities and are providing unstinting support to the acting headteacher and each other.
How well the governing body fulfils its responsibilities	Very good. Led extremely effectively, governors are very committed to the school. They are supportive but prepared to question and they play a very active part in helping the school to move forward.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. There are effective systems for finding out about how well the school is doing. The acting headteacher has a very accurate view and is making increasingly good use of the information collected. However, not all unsatisfactory teaching has been eliminated.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Finances are managed prudently and specific grants used effectively. The lack of a written plan to guide developments affects the school's ability to allocate resources with an eye to the future.

The principles of best value are applied effectively.

The responsibilities of subject leaders are unclear. Many do not have a whole-school view.

There are not enough staff for a school of two sites so far away from each other. The arrangements for introducing new staff to the school are too informal.

Learning resources are satisfactory. The accommodation is satisfactory overall, but unsatisfactory for Years 10 and 11. For example, the classrooms are small and there is no outdoor space for pupils to use. The residential accommodation is outdated and dilapidated but the local education authority's plan to improve this is at an advanced stage and is awaiting implementation.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children are taught well. • Parents are kept well informed. • They would be comfortable approaching the school. • The school works closely with them. • It is well led and managed. • It has high expectations for their children to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number feel that behaviour is an issue. • Several have significant concerns about homework.

achieve.	
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The inspectors generally support the parents' positive views. Many pupils behave badly from time to time, but lessons usually continue, so other pupils are able to learn. Teachers do not set enough homework for pupils in Years 7 to 11.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. However, those in Years 3 to 6 achieve well. This all represents a satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection, because achievement is now better in a number of subjects, such as English in Years 7 to 11 and science in Years 3 to 6. Three key factors explain why the youngest pupils make better progress. Firstly, teaching in their classes is consistently good and often very good. Secondly, when these pupils are admitted, they tend to have had a less disrupted education, are not as lacking in confidence and are better motivated to learn. The third reason is that they attend school more regularly and so are better placed to benefit from lessons. Last year, two of the Year 6 pupils successfully returned to mainstream education and, in the coming September, two more are on line to start Year 7 in mainstream secondary schools.
2. At the time of the previous inspection, key issues were to improve standards in the core subjects and to provide a better range of accreditation for pupils in Years 10 and 11. In both, good progress has been made. In 2002, 83 per cent of the Year 11 pupils gained one or more GCSE passes. Three of the 12 pupils gained 5 GCSEs at grades C to G. Although the school's very challenging target for 100 per cent to gain one or more GCSE was not met, the success rate was well above the average for schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Additionally, five pupils were successful in Certificate of Educational Achievement courses. The school's average GCSE points score was 8.9 in 2002. This was significantly better than 4.8, the average in similar schools. The school's target for 2003 is an average score of ten, rising to 15 in 2004, indicating high expectations for pupils to achieve. The current Year 11 pupils are working towards a broader range of GCSE subjects, together with NVQ Level 1 courses, Unit awards and Entry Level certificates. Most have already gained Bronze certificates in a youth award scheme and are well on their way to Silver.
3. The school's analysis of pupils' progress has indicated that approximately 30 per cent of them are making good progress in English, mathematics and science. However, a similar proportion are considered to be causing concern in one or more subjects. Examination of the attendance records of these same pupils shows very clearly the link between poor attendance and the achievement of about 17 per cent of pupils, mostly in Years 7 to 11. In a number of subjects, such as science in Years 10 and 11, pupils' progress is merely satisfactory, despite good teaching, due to factors which include their erratic attendance.
4. During the inspection, a significant minority of lessons in Years 8 and 9 were disrupted by challenging behaviour, with a small core of pupils regularly leaving or being removed, from the classroom. Although no analysis has yet been completed, it is hard to imagine that these interruptions to their learning do not lead to slower progress being made. Additionally, the high level of fixed-term exclusions contributes to the low rate of attendance, so exacerbating the situation. Over a period of two years and seven months, the school admitted 51 new pupils, at a time when many staff changes took place and new systems and structures were being established. During the current year alone, 30 per cent of the pupils in Years 7 to 9 were new to the school, with four being admitted to Year 9. This pattern of admission has been challenging to staff and pupils and has clearly contributed to the unsettled behaviour

presented by significant numbers in Years 8 and 9. The school is now full and September's new admissions will be mainly into Years 3 to 6, paving the way to a more stable population and the anticipation that achievement will continue to improve.

5. During Years 3 to 6, pupils achieve very well in speaking and listening, music and physical education. Their achievement is good in all other subjects, except for geography and the designing element of design and technology. In these two subjects, there are weaknesses in the curriculum. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 achieve well in reading, citizenship, information and communication technology, music and physical education. Achievement is satisfactory in their other subjects. In speaking and listening, reading, citizenship and information and communication technology, Year 10 and 11 pupils achieve well. In other subjects, their achievement is satisfactory. There is insufficient evidence to judge their achievement in physical education. Where pupils make good progress, this is as a direct result of high quality teaching, a well-structured curriculum, good attendance and positive attitudes.
6. Pupils' good progress in English is supported by the way in which they are encouraged to practise their speaking and listening and reading skills in lessons across the curriculum. However, there is scope for a more determined effort to promote writing, which is not enjoyed by pupils in Years 7 to 11. Similarly, few planned opportunities are provided for pupils to reinforce their numeracy skills in other subjects. Achievement in information and communication technology lessons is good throughout the school. However, computers are underused in other subjects. As a result, pupils have few opportunities to practise and consolidate their skills.
7. The tiny number of girls make progress at similar rates to the boys, and the very few pupils from more than one cultural heritage do as well as the other pupils. The school has identified a group of Year 9 pupils with complex needs and has modified the curriculum in order to make it more relevant for them. As a result, they make progress at equivalent rates to other pupils, as do the lower attainers generally, owing to the support they receive. Higher attainers are occasionally not challenged sufficiently in lessons and so do not always achieve as well as they should.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Overall, pupils have satisfactory attitudes to school, and those in Years 3 to 6 have a good attitude to learning and school. The assemblies at the start of the school day are marked by most pupils' attentiveness and their willingness to celebrate fellow pupils who have won awards or been chosen as 'Pupil of the Week'. Where pupils enjoy lessons – for example, when Year 7 pupils played cricket and learnt new skills of bowling and batting – their attitudes are often very good. However, when the lesson does not hold their attention, a minority react by deciding not to take part. Instead, they walk out, pick fights and are abusive to the teacher and support staff. Pupils in the residence, either staying overnight or choosing to attend the evening activities, enjoy participating in the wide range of opportunities open to them. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 enjoy their college activities and the opportunities to participate in the social aspects of lunch in the college refectory. A Year 11 group on a catering course prepared a selection of dishes for sale, and cleaned and cleared away the preparation area with care once they had completed their task. In Years 3 to 6, pupils try hard in lessons and are keen to complete their work. On a walk round the school to investigate aspects of the environment that would contribute to their personal and social development, pupils were very focused on their task, and eager to describe their observations, contribute ideas and start writing up their work. On occasions, pupils' attitudes can change very swiftly when the work has engaged their attention. A

Year 7 music lesson took some time to get started because of the disruptive behaviour of one pupil at the start of the lesson. Pupils then became engrossed in identifying elements of music and composing their own music. When one pupil, whose behaviour and attitude had been inconsistent until then, was interrupted by a pupil joining the lesson, he said 'Stop messing about. He (*the teacher*) has got other kids to teach as well'.

9. Many pupils' behaviour can vary from explosive to charming, abusive to considerate, violent to gentle. They test the limits of the acceptability of their behaviour and can be mercurial in their change of mood. Overall, behaviour is satisfactory, and among the Years 3 to 6 pupils it is generally good. There are points of the day, such as break and lunchtimes, when pupils find it particularly difficult to manage their behaviour – for example, if another pupil is goading them into behaving badly. Further disturbance very often occurs when pupils are returned to lessons they have left because of a disagreement, unless the incident has been entirely resolved.
10. During the previous year, there were 65 fixed-period exclusions and one pupil was permanently excluded. This was a very high rate of fixed-period exclusions but the one permanent exclusion was in line with similar schools. Many of the incidents of very challenging behaviour involve Year 9 pupils, who have only been in the school for a relatively short period of time. They are still disaffected and distrustful of school and several have severe social and emotional issues. Where a pupil is being abusive and physically challenging to learning support staff, teachers or fellow pupils, this can have a disastrous effect on learning for all pupils in a lesson. Mostly, such behaviour, when it occurs, does not persist throughout the whole lesson. There were occasions during the inspection when extremely disruptive behaviour came as a shock to teachers, as they do not normally expect to encounter it. Pupils had only just come back after a holiday and, additionally, a number of them clearly reacted badly to the inspection.
11. When considered as a whole, pupils' personal development and the relationships that they form, mainly with staff, are good. Many of the pupils, especially those in Years 3 to 6, have learnt to ignore the more extreme behaviours of some of their peers, and just get on with what they are doing, choosing to take no notice of the enticements to run off or 'kick off' in a lesson. For example, an older pupil who had left his own lesson tried very hard to disrupt a Year 7 cricket lesson, but was totally ignored for his pains. 'We're used to it', one of the pupils commented later. Year 10 and 11 pupils have progressed to being able to take charge of their coursework, get themselves to school – mostly on time and by public transport – and can be trusted to take themselves into town and college at lunchtime, returning for afternoon lessons. Nearly all Year 11 pupils successfully take responsibility for getting themselves to their Friday work experience placements on time. Pupils are accustomed to electing a school council representative, but councillors find it difficult to go out and seek the views of their fellow pupils. They are considering the concept of a suggestion box to support direct canvassing of viewpoints. As not all school councillors attend meetings regularly, pupils are used to taking the place of a councillor and successfully sharing in the school council experience. The council has been involved in bringing pupils' attention to the impact of bullying and ways of addressing it. Year 9 pupils have asked for, and taken over, a redundant mobile classroom to use at break and lunchtimes. They have decorated this room to their own taste, and taken over a rota of jobs for its upkeep. At the end of lessons, pupils discuss the grades awarded for behaviour and participation and work with their form teachers and tutors when completing the weekly review of their performance. Although this could be a potential flashpoint for pupils who may disagree with the teachers' judgment of how well they have met their targets, for the

most part they have a very realistic view of how well they have done, and accept their grades maturely.

12. The rate of attendance is unsatisfactory. In the last reported year, unauthorised absences were well above average for a school of this type. There are significant numbers of pupils with poor attendance records. The school has shown that many recent admissions have been pupils with very poor attendance rates prior to joining the school. Currently, the attendance of pupils in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall. In Years 7, 8 and 9, attendance is unsatisfactory. In Years 10 and 11, attendance levels are still unsatisfactory, but attendance improves in Year 11. Registration procedures for pupils in Years 3 to 9 do not meet with statutory requirements.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. However, a significant proportion of lessons are taught well. When pupils are in Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching is consistently good and it is often very good. Teaching is regularly good in Years 7 to 11 but occasionally it is unsatisfactory, particularly for pupils in Years 7 to 9. This unsatisfactory teaching is almost invariably linked to teachers' failure to manage pupils' behaviour sufficiently well, leading to inadequate learning. Learning mentors make a strong contribution to teaching and pupils' progress in Years 10 and 11.
14. During the inspection, several of the teachers were clearly taken aback by the exceptionally challenging behaviour presented by a minority of pupils, especially in Years 8 and 9. Despite being able to account for the unusually high number of incidents, which often appeared orchestrated in order to sabotage lessons, it is clear that a very small number of teachers struggle to keep order. The senior staff are well aware of this and continue to work with the teachers to improve matters. The large majority of teachers are normally able to manage pupils' behaviour effectively – as is seen by the progress pupils are making. However, several are too reluctant to clamp down firmly when pupils test the water. Teachers throughout the school consistently demonstrate their respect for pupils, but a few confuse this with not imposing their authority. In an information and communication technology lesson, Year 7 pupils occasionally drifted off task, but they were always picked up very quickly by the teacher, who asked questions to bring their attention back to their work. By making sure all pupils were interested and busy, the teacher prevented them from getting bored and wanting to create a diversion. In other lessons, less confident teachers go too far in seeking to avoid confrontation. They accept standards of behaviour that are too low. For example, in these instances, foul and abusive language goes unchecked and pupils wear coats and hats during lessons. The senior staff make sure that the less strong teachers have enhanced levels of classroom support. However, these members of staff are not always given a clear role to perform. Occasionally, and with the best of intentions, they unwittingly undermine teachers – for example, by conducting conversations with pupils at inappropriate times or by doing too much for the pupils. The system of support by care officers is greatly valued by teachers. During the inspection, it was tested severely, with the result that support was not always available in moments of need. However, on other occasions, staff interrupt lessons unnecessarily, by being too obtrusive when checking that all is well. There is a clear need to review approaches to managing behaviour, in order to achieve consistency.
15. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' behaviour is managed very well. The pupils concerned may be younger and smaller, but they have got just as much potential to be challenging as the older ones. They experience fewer changes of staff but are not taught exclusively by

their class teachers. A significant factor in their better learning and progress is that they enjoy lessons and do not want them to be disrupted.

16. Generally, teachers throughout the school plan lessons carefully. They base them on the school's curricular plans, which in turn follow national guidance. As a result, the work pupils do is appropriate to their age and interests. By taking account of their own observations and the growing body of information collected about each pupil's performance, teachers make sure that lessons are matched to the needs of the pupils. Pupils respond well when provided with activities that require them to try hard. In many lessons, teachers successfully provide tasks that demand just the right amount of effort. Often, these involve revising and consolidating existing skills and knowledge and then moving on further. For example, in a good mathematics lesson, the teacher questioned Year 10 pupils to check their knowledge of symmetry and then each drew shapes involving lines of symmetry. Higher attainers finished this task quickly and went on to complete more complex shapes, eventually applying their knowledge to designing their own symmetrical shapes. Occasionally, teachers give higher attaining pupils work that does not stretch them enough. The pupils who find the work hard are given extra support – for example, support staff help them to understand what they need to do – so they are able to learn as well as the others. Teachers work very hard to make sure that the resources they need are readily available, so time is not wasted during lessons and pupils do not have an excuse to be diverted. In several of the most effective lessons, an additional dimension is an element of fun and enjoyment. In these instances, teachers show that they are enthusiastic and pupils often respond by mirroring this interest. For example, in a music lesson, Year 9 pupils with complex needs were very motivated by their activities. These involved plenty of practical work and games and varied resources, including information and communication technology. Because the teacher had structured the lesson well, with tasks that led smoothly from one to another, pupils remained interested throughout and made good progress. On occasion, teachers' careful planning is to little avail when attendance is low. For example, when the class consists of only one or two pupils, activities such as discussions are no longer viable and the pace of learning is liable to slow down.
17. The class teachers in Years 3 to 6 have each established a very pleasant but hardworking atmosphere, in which pupils are eager to learn and do well. Pupils feel secure, because their behaviour is managed consistently and they know what is expected of them. They want to be in class, because learning is enjoyable and often exciting. For example, in a drama lesson involving the pupils from both classes, the teacher had planned a range of activities which required pupils to explore co-operation and kindness. They were motivated right from the start – the warm-up session immediately grabbed their attention and they relished moving like samurai warriors or sumo wrestlers. All pupils played a full part in the lesson, working together and showing no inclination to take advantage of the relative freedom they were allowed. The purpose of the lesson was constantly reinforced, and it ended with the pupils seated in a circle, all given the opportunity to contribute 'What we have learnt'. In this lesson, as in the majority of those throughout the school, relationships between teachers and pupils were positive. Teachers are invariably pleasant to pupils, even when the pupils are being abusive and defiant. In a small minority of lessons, teachers are so keen for pupils to learn and make progress that they persevere with the planned activities when it is clear that pupils are in no mood to learn. Rather than ploughing ahead, more confident teachers respond flexibly and adapt activities or even halt the lesson, until pupils are more co-operative.

18. The majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire feel confident that their children are taught well. However, a significant minority have concerns about the homework provided. The inspection confirmed that, although a small amount of homework is set regularly for the Years 10 and 11 pupils, teachers do not place enough importance on pupils in Years 7 to 11 continuing to learn outside the classroom.

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

19. The quality and range of learning opportunities are satisfactory overall. Learning opportunities for the youngest pupils are good. Good improvement in the provision for Years 10 and 11 pupils now gives them opportunities to gain GCSE and National Vocational Qualifications. National Curriculum subjects and religious education are well established and statutory requirements are in place throughout the school. Older pupils are formally disapplied from studying French. There are plans, however, to develop accreditation for French through unit awards in Year 9. There are weaknesses in physical education. In Years 7 to 9, too much time spent on contact sports limits the participation of the very few girls. The quality of physical education provision in Years 10 and 11 is barely satisfactory, owing to the lack of facilities.
20. The amount of taught time for pupils in Years 10 and 11 falls well short of the national recommendations. This is because the school day ends early and there are many short breaks during the day. Additional time is lost if the start of lessons is delayed, and because travel to and from a sports centre for physical education twice a week takes too long. The time allocation for mathematics is too low, especially given that many pupils have missed significant amounts of schooling over the years. The shortage of mathematics time is particularly acute for pupils preparing for GCSE.
21. A good range of activities is available after school and these are open to day and residential pupils. They include cooking, swimming, indoor and outdoor games, gardening, fundraising, orienteering and tracking. Younger pupils in Years 3 to 6 thoroughly enjoy a weekly luncheon club with their teachers. This is a very pleasant social occasion, making a most effective contribution to pupils' personal and social development. Other activities that enrich pupils' learning opportunities include a day of work to remember the Holocaust, support for Comic Relief, and an expressive arts day with pupils performing 'Stars in their Eyes'.
22. The timetabled programme for personal, social and health education is good and covers relevant topics such as health and wellbeing, sex and relationships and the use and misuse of drugs. Citizenship is taught to pupils throughout the school and includes important and relevant areas such as rights and responsibilities and conflict resolution. Additionally, the Friday afternoon programme of activities in Years 3 to 9 not only promotes pupils' physical development, especially in Years 7 to 9, but also their personal and social development. All subjects contribute in some way to the good progress pupils make in their personal development and relationships.
23. In Years 10 and 11, much work has been done in the last two years to raise standards in National Curriculum subjects by improving opportunities for pupils to gain externally accredited certificates. There is now a good balance of academic and vocational accreditation. Pupils can take GCSE examinations in English language, mathematics, double science, general studies, art and design, design and technology and information and communication technology. By attending courses at an adjacent college of further education, pupils also have access to NVQ Level 1 in catering,

hairdressing, building and construction, fabrication (metalwork) and motor vehicle maintenance. Pupils can also gain unit award accreditation in, for example, religious education, personal, social, health and citizenship education, and careers education and guidance. Lower attaining pupils have opportunities for Entry Level accreditation in subjects such as English language and mathematics. All pupils leave with a progress file of their achievements.

24. The programme of non-National Curriculum subjects is well developed and co-ordinated in Years 10 and 11. Through a youth award scheme, for example, pupils study personal, social, health and citizenship education, they learn about beliefs and values and the expressive arts, and they receive good careers education and guidance. There are good links with the Connexions service, formerly known as the careers service, to support pupils from Year 9 through to Year 11. Pupils have good work experience opportunities in Years 10 and 11. These are very well organised by teaching and support staff.
25. The use of visits into the community and visitors into school make a good contribution to pupils' learning. For example, visits are made to local villages and churches, the theatre, cinemas, museums, garden centres, the Royal Armouries, a sculpture park and art galleries. Visitors include musicians, theatre groups, students from training colleges, speakers about different charities and police and prison officers. Sports instructors support the Friday afternoon programme in Years 7 to 9 for climbing, canoeing, sailing, rock climbing and football, for example. Pupils occasionally visit other schools, for example to work as the sound crew for a musical production.
26. The governing body was instrumental in developing the links with a local college of further education. These links are good not only for the provision of vocational education but also for the use of a science laboratory and the services of laboratory technicians. There are no laboratories on the Years 10 and 11 site but now, through the college link, pupils develop their GCSE science enquiry skills well in a specialist science setting.
27. All pupils' statements of special educational needs are regularly reviewed and revised in accordance with their changing needs. The provision for the pupils with additional special needs, such as dyslexia or more complex emotional problems, is very much a developing one. The school waited until its assessment procedures improved before concentrating on the special educational needs provision. However, it has identified a small group of pupils whose needs are more complex than the rest of the school population and they are taught a modified curriculum in a separate class. Their curriculum does follow the National Curriculum guidelines but it is more flexible and the class has enhanced staffing. The school is developing individual education plans for these pupils, to augment the targets set for all pupils to achieve. It is well aware of the continued need for more support from outside agencies and training for staff to meet the needs of these pupils.
28. Pupils' moral and social development is provided for well. Pupils are taught right from wrong and staff provide good role models to help pupils to establish appropriate social relationships with one another. However, the school custom of allowing pupils to smoke does send an ambivalent message and detracts from the otherwise good provision. Pupils' development is supported well by their work in personal, social and health education and citizenship, and in physical education and music lessons, where there are good opportunities for them to work together. The younger pupils are constantly encouraged to consider the effect of their behaviour on others and to become responsible for their actions. Throughout the school, very good use is made

of the time at the end of each lesson to help pupils to reflect upon their contribution to the lesson and to evaluate their effectiveness as learners. The vocational and youth award scheme courses for the pupils in Years 10 and 11 help them to develop effective planning and decision-making skills and to prepare for life after school. The after-school activities support the development of pupils' social skills and help them to use their leisure time constructively. As part of the residential provision, the childcare staff help the pupils to improve their self-esteem, learn how to get on with each other and become independent. Experiences, such as work placements and courses and lunchtimes at college, give Years 10 and 11 pupils particularly good opportunities to practise their social skills in a variety of different situations. The school council enables pupils in Years 3 to 9 to develop skills associated with citizenship, but there is no similar provision for those in Years 10 and 11.

29. The arrangements for pupils' cultural and spiritual development are satisfactory. Good contributions are made by music and art and design lessons, where pupils are introduced to and discuss customs and traditions from different countries. Through their work in these subjects and in religious education and assemblies, pupils have adequate opportunities to study other cultures and faiths and to appreciate their own cultural heritage. Religious education is taught throughout the school. Morning assembly usually has a moral theme and pupils are encouraged to reflect on human issues, such as overcoming adversity and striving to succeed. Teachers encourage pupils to respect life and living things and to handle carefully tiny creatures such as insects.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

30. Procedures for child protection are satisfactory and in line with those of the area child protection services. All staff have received basic training in child protection procedures and are sensitive to child protection issues. The school has good links with the area child protection agency, looked-after children team and the education welfare service, and is regularly involved in case conferences and in working with relevant agencies and professionals when there are concerns about pupils and their families or placements. Pupils said in discussions that they felt safe in school.
31. Health and safety procedures follow the local education authority guidelines and the school has developed a specific policy for its own use. These procedures are satisfactory overall. Clear health and safety procedures are in place for science and design and technology lessons. The administration of medicines is properly monitored and good records are kept. Risk assessments have been completed for most outside activities, such as work experience placements. The school permits pupils to smoke in designated areas outside on both sites during break times. Years 10 and 11 pupils also smoke between lessons. Although pupils have to have the permission of their parents or carers, encouraging smoking does not support the concept of promoting health education for pupils or follow national guidelines on health education. The residential unit has recently had a positive inspection by the National Care Standards Commission and is acting on the recommendations made by this report.
32. Good quality personal support and guidance are offered to all pupils, including the very small number of girls and the pupils from mixed heritage backgrounds. From the time pupils enter school at the start of the day, they are with staff all the time, and this leads to staff knowing pupils very well and being able to build up a good working relationship, underpinning any disciplinary action and adding credence to rewards. The school's token economy system recognises and rewards social and behavioural

achievements, as well as academic achievements. It is thoroughly understood by all pupils and acts as a useful measure of a pupil's personal development in lessons or leisure activities. Staff know accurately just where each pupil's strengths and weaknesses lie.

33. Pupils staying for the evening or overnight in the residential provision have access to a wide range of activities. Their individual choices are respected, with opportunities to socialise as part of a group, plan future activities, sit quietly watching television, or go shopping and help cook the evening meal for staff and pupils. Pupils in the residential provision are allowed telephone contact with parents and carers, but there is no independent listener or completely private access to a confidential helpline. Due to the transient nature and short stay of pupils in the residential provision, rooms are not personalised to any extent, but activities such as the evening meal and breakfast are managed in an orderly, pleasant manner, that takes account of individual pupils' needs. Residential staff work as part of the behaviour support team during the day in school, and so know pupils very well. A number of teachers also stay with pupils during the evening activities and this enhances the personal support and guidance that they offer pupils. Communication between the residence and the school is good, through the daily contact book and information book. Management and administration of the residential unit is satisfactory, and pupils' dignity and privacy are respected.
34. A number of aspects of the procedures to monitor and promote attendance are unsatisfactory. Although a list is taken of pupils arriving at the school at the start of the school day (which proves very useful if pupils attempt to abscond before morning registration), procedures to check up on any pupils who are absent are not initiated promptly at the main school site. Phoning a pupil's home or carer to check on their absence is often neglected when the behaviour support team of care staff, which has the responsibility for this task, are called on to deal with incidents. The school has difficulty establishing links with specific education welfare officers to follow up their concerns over pupils' absences, as there are no education welfare officers with responsibility for the school. Procedures for marking registers do not meet with statutory requirements at the main site. An attendance officer has not been appointed, although the previous report suggested that this was imminent. The school informs parents or carers when a pupil is sent home or has decided to leave the premises and records are kept of all such phone calls. The school keeps track of pupils' attendance and gives rewards for improved and consistent attendance. A formal register is not taken on the handover of pupils from day to evening residential care and after-school activities, although a fire register is taken for pupils who stay in the residence overnight. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance on the Years 10 and 11 site are good and have improved the attendance markedly. The centre ensures that every absentee, even persistent non-attenders, is contacted daily before 11 am. Twice a week, a member of the childcare staff is available to carry out home visits on any Years 10 and 11 pupils who have not attended, and this is judged to have had a beneficial effect on attendance.
35. Procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour are good, but those to eliminate bullying and oppressive behaviour are merely satisfactory and are in need of updating and clarifying. The school maintains detailed records of incidents and links these to exclusion records and to setting targets for pupils' behaviour. A daily behaviour log is kept. Data on incidents and pupils' behaviour is analysed by senior staff and used to renegotiate pupils' personal targets, decide on the necessity for detention or require an increased number of contacts to be made with a pupil's home or care establishment. All staff are required to use approved methods of restraint but only a few have any training in this procedure. Where positive handling strategies are used,

the restraint incident is recorded. There are points of the day, such as break and lunchtimes, that the school has identified as being particularly difficult times for pupils to manage their behaviour. In response, this time is very tightly structured and supervised – for example, with lunchtime clubs and activities – so that there are fewer opportunities for inappropriate behaviour to occur. The school acknowledges that bullying does take place, and is working with the school council and residential staff to revise its procedures, risk assessments and strategies to eliminate these incidents. There is a database for recording bullying incidents, used to ensure that pupils who are victims of bullying are identified, and that support is available for both the victim and perpetrator.

36. The procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment and progress and monitoring and supporting their academic progress are good overall. This has been a priority for development since the previous inspection and good progress has been made. All subject policies have sections on assessment but there is some inconsistency in practice between subjects and teachers. For example, in physical education and music, records relate to pupils' response and effectiveness as learners, with insufficient evidence of what they know, understand and can do. In science, the assessment procedures are not as secure for Year 7 to Year 9 pupils as they are for the Years 10 and 11 pupils. However, the school readily admits that procedures are developing and they have more fine-tuning still to do.
37. The records which pupils bring into the school are often incomplete because of their history of disrupted schooling. As a result, the school carries out detailed initial assessments in literacy, numeracy and personal and social development on all pupils soon after admission. These assessments are linked to National Curriculum levels, targets are set with the pupils and these are reviewed regularly. Senior staff, including the acting headteacher, have begun, very usefully, to analyse the outcomes of assessments and to link these to pupils' behaviour and attendance in order to develop ways of helping pupils to achieve more.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. Parents' views are generally positive. They are very satisfied with the ease with which they can contact the school, make arrangements to come in or communicate messages. They feel comfortable when talking to staff and find the school 'very helpful' with an 'open access policy' towards parents. They are concerned over aspects of the pupils' behaviour and bullying incidents but overall have justified confidence in the fact that the school acts promptly to sort out these problems. Parents also have concerns over the amount of homework that is set, and the consistency of these arrangements. They feel correctly that it is only set 'now and then' or that 'extra work is sent home when pupils need to catch up'.
39. The school makes good efforts to keep in touch with parents. Members of the care staff, learning mentors and pastoral co-ordinators are responsible for speaking to parents when there are difficulties over behaviour, attendance or issues that are affecting pupils' work. Reports and grades of academic and personal accomplishments are sent home every week to keep parents and carers up to date with how pupils are getting on. Information in written annual reports to parents is personal to the pupil involved and useful to parents and carers. Pupils staying overnight in the school for a residential activity are encouraged to ring home to speak to their parents during the evening. Because of the long distances many pupils have to travel to come to school, few parents are involved in the school on a day-to-day

basis. Parents are encouraged to come into school to help manage their children's behaviour if this is felt to be necessary, and this offer has been taken up by a significant number of them. Few parents are able to attend the performances that pupils take part in, but there is generally a good attendance at annual reviews, and the school is always willing to arrange transport for parents and carers, if this poses a difficulty. The school has not been able to persuade any of its pupils' parents to join the governing body.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

40. Within the school there is a very clear desire to provide each pupil with the best possible quality of education. Teachers and support staff show that they respect and value every boy and girl. Even when their efforts are rejected, staff work very hard to help them. The acting headteacher is leading the school very well during the absence of the headteacher. Her determination, insight and efforts have played a major role in ensuring that the school continues to function and move forward. In several respects, the pace has accelerated since she assumed her new role. For example, subject leaders have all started to produce action plans to steer their future work. The acting headteacher prepared the staff very well for the inspection, making sure that their morale remained high. In recent times she has had significant scope to develop as a leader and she is currently providing good opportunities for other staff to do likewise. As a result, the amount of expertise available to the school is increasing.
41. The senior management team is large and includes the bursar and acting principal childcare officer. This means that the views and knowledge of different staff groups are incorporated into discussions and decisions and help to provide the team with a clearer view of their impact. A number of the senior staff have only recently assumed whole-school responsibilities and are still developing their leadership and management skills. Following the headteacher's unexpected absence, the members of the team agreed very readily to take on additional tasks and have provided unstinting support for the acting headteacher and each other. Several have especially relished these opportunities, growing in confidence and developing a wider perspective. Taking on whole-school responsibilities has brought staff from the two sites closer together, raising their awareness of issues that affect them all. The reallocation of tasks has revealed where roles overlap or where there are gaps, and the team has identified the need to review responsibilities for the longer term.
42. The split site causes particular difficulties for the teachers who lead and manage subjects. The situation is compounded by a lack of clarity over their roles and differing expectations. In some subjects, one teacher has leadership and management responsibility throughout the school, but in others there is a break at the end of Year 6 or Year 9 and two or more staff are involved. There is no co-ordinator for geography. Subject leaders fulfil what they understand to be their roles but the acting headteacher fully accepts that these need to be clarified to make certain that, for example, pupils experience consistent approaches within each subject.
43. Led by an extremely effective chair, the governing body is very committed to the school. Governors go beyond being supportive – they are dynamic and challenging. They have a very clear understanding of what the school has achieved and which areas require further development. Significantly, much of this awareness has been acquired through first-hand involvement and observation. For example, governors have active links with subjects and aspects of the school, they attend meetings with senior staff and local education authority officers and belong to working parties – such as the one considering the admissions policy. Governors' involvement and influence

continue to grow as they become more confident. For instance, the chair instituted a standard agenda item – ‘Governors’ Questions’ – at the termly meetings. Each governor was required to be prepared to ask about an issue – perhaps arising from the headteacher’s report. For about a year, this structure has not been necessary – governors now ask questions as a matter of course. In partnership with the local education authority, the governors have made very effective arrangements for the school’s leadership during the headteacher’s absence.

44. The local education authority has been very supportive whilst the school has had serious weaknesses and expresses great confidence in its ability to continue to move forward. Officers report regularly to the governors, providing them with a further source of information about how well the school is performing. Since the previous inspection, the support and supervision provided have been linked closely to the school’s action plan, helping to ensure that tasks were achieved. Chiefly due to staffing issues, the plan took longer than expected to complete and is just reaching the end of its life. The school appreciates that, currently, a weakness is the lack of a written long-term view of how it is to develop. Staff are aware that raising attainment is a key concern, but the finer points of the school’s educational direction are only now being crystallised. Under the acting headteacher’s leadership, the development of a three-year improvement plan is now underway, involving all staff and governors.
45. The acting headteacher has a very accurate view of what the school does well and what remains to be done in the short and long term. She has achieved this through a combination of the school’s formal procedures for finding out about its performance and by making sure she is a constant presence around the school, on both sites: looking, listening and evaluating. As reliable data about pupils’ performance is built up, the acting headteacher shows a growing capacity to analyse and use the information collected – for example, identifying pupils needing additional support or demonstrating where attendance is a key factor in pupils’ low achievement. A range of strategies is in place to check on the quality of teaching. These involve all staff with senior management responsibilities and local education authority officers. As a result, the school is fully aware of each teacher’s particular strengths and weaknesses and uses this information to plan training or establish targets for individuals or the whole school, within formal performance management procedures. However, the school has not been entirely successful in ensuring that all teaching is of an acceptable standard.
46. Management information systems are used well and support school administration effectively for purchasing and paying for goods, keeping financial records and communicating financial and pupil data to the local authority and government departments. The school buys into the local education authority’s finance support scheme to help ensure best value is gained. Grants provided by the government for specific projects, particularly those for literacy and numeracy, have been used effectively. The day-to-day management of finances and the monitoring of the school’s expenditure by the bursar are good. She is very clear about the spending and produces regular updates for the governing body. Figures are also available to subject co-ordinators, enabling them to keep track of their spending. The administrative support is efficient and office staff are professional and welcoming. The recent auditors’ report judged the school’s procedures to be satisfactory. The few recommendations have been implemented.
47. The process for setting the budget is good. Through the finance committee, the governing body is closely involved in budgeting the school expenditure and has played a significant part in ensuring the prudent management of the school’s finances. Governors are clearly aware in their budget deliberations of the impact of the school’s

changing pupil population and this and other strategic issues help to shape their longer-term financial planning. However, the lack of a written plan to guide future improvements is a clear handicap when it comes to allocating resources. The school follows good practice in the purchase of resources and in its appointment of contractors for work on the school premises as well as in its careful consideration of the outcomes of its spending decisions. Best value principles are applied well. No large purchases are made without consultation or an evaluation of whether they will be effective. However, although the school has recently started to compare its performance with similar establishments it does not yet use this information effectively to challenge itself to do better. The school has worked very well in partnership with the local education authority to address the issue of a very large budget deficit. This has been reduced from over £100,000 to less than £15,000 and the expectation is that it will be fully cleared by the end of 2004.

48. There are insufficient staff members to meet the demands of the curriculum in a school of two sites so far away from each other. The distance between the sites makes it very difficult for staff to be used flexibly and for teachers to always teach to their strengths. It also limits the time available for co-ordinators to oversee their subjects and implement developments. The expertise and experience of the staff is satisfactory overall and good in a number of subjects. There is strong support by learning mentors in Years 10 and 11, especially in the management of the youth award scheme. There are no formal procedures for the induction of new staff. Instead, they rely on ad-hoc support and advice from teachers and learning support staff.
49. Learning resources are at least satisfactory in all subject areas, except geography. They are good in several, such as science, French, art and design and music. Staff on the site for Years 10 and 11 pupils make good use of the nearby college facilities.
50. Accommodation is satisfactory on the main school site and good in several subjects, such as science and music. Design and technology accommodation is very good on this site. Classrooms in this building offer a bright and pleasant environment for learning, with walls displaying pupils' work attractively. There are good surroundings for the pupils to use at playtime. In physical education, the gym, changing rooms and playing fields are unsatisfactory. The accommodation for information and communication technology is very well planned in Years 3 to 9, but on the Years 10 and 11 site, the dedicated room is too small to be fully effective. The accommodation for Years 10 and 11 is unsatisfactory overall, although the staff have made good use of all available areas. The premises are in poor condition and are expensive to rent and maintain. The classrooms are small and the design and technology workshop and the library are inadequate. There are no designated outside social areas and the pupils can only get fresh air by standing on a busy roadside. There are no facilities for physical education. These inadequacies make it difficult to offer out-of-lesson activities or private study areas for the pupils. The school has been consulting with the local education authority for some years in an attempt to find alternative accommodation for the Years 10 and 11 pupils.
51. The residential accommodation is acknowledged to be outdated and dilapidated. The local education authority has committed a significant sum of money to build a new residential block and recreational facilities, and detailed plans have now been drawn up.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

52. In order to continue to raise standards, the acting headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) Continue to work to improve pupils' attendance, especially in Years 7 to 9. Review and develop the procedures for registering pupils' attendance and checking on those who are absent, particularly on the main site; (Paragraphs 12, 34)
- (2) Ensure that teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Clarify the way in which outbursts of challenging behaviour are managed by teachers and support staff. Provide clear guidance regarding the role of staff supporting in lessons. Ensure that all staff have appropriate training in approved methods of physically restraining pupils; (Paragraphs 13, 14, 17, 35)
- (3) Provide clear guidance for pupils by stopping the practice of allowing them to smoke on school premises; (Paragraphs 28, 31)
- (4) Develop (a) a written plan that sets out the school's priorities for the coming year, together with a clear description of the actions needed to achieve these and (b) an outline plan of proposed developments in the longer term; (Paragraphs 44, 47)
- (5) Continue to work with the local education authority to locate more suitable accommodation for the pupils in Years 10 and 11. (Paragraph 50)

In addition, the following issues should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- i) Complete the revision of the anti-bullying policy and procedures; (Paragraph 35)
- ii) Review and redefine the roles and responsibilities of teachers who lead subjects. Ensure that they have a clear grasp of the quality of teaching, learning and the curriculum in their subject throughout the school; (Paragraph 42)
- iii) Ensure that teachers provide consistent opportunities to encourage pupils to practise their writing, number and computer skills in lessons across the curriculum; (Paragraphs 6, 57, 64, 100)
- iv) Develop formal procedures to introduce new staff systematically to the school's policies, procedures and practices; (Paragraph 48)
- v) Increase the amount of time available for teaching and learning in Years 10 and 11. (Paragraphs 20, 64, 69)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	73
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	48

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	11	29	21	8	0	0
Percentage	5.5	15	39.7	28.8	10.9	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	71
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	41

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

Attendance

Authorised absence	%	Unauthorised absence	%
School data	12.6	School data	13.8

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3 Year 9)

The numbers of pupils taking national curriculum tests has been very small i.e. less than ten. The test results of such small numbers of pupils are not a reliable guide to the standards pupils achieve. The test results are therefore not published.

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 4 for the latest reporting year	11	12	0	12

GCSE results				1 or more grades A*-G
Numbers of pupils achieving the standard specified	Boys			10
	Total			10
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School			85

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	8.9

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
46	52	1
1	0	0
1	3	0
4	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0

Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

0
18

0	0
10	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y11

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	4.7
Average class size	7

Education support staff: Y3 – Y11

Total number of education support staff	22
Total aggregate hours worked per week	659

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002-2003
	£
Total income	1325562
Total expenditure	1324929
Expenditure per pupil	18660
Balance brought forward from previous year	18957
Balance carried forward to next year	-18324

This deficit budget has been agreed with the local education authority. It is lower than anticipated and is decreasing.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	8
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0.4
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	71
Number of questionnaires returned	20

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	30	5	10	0
My child is making good progress in school.	37	47	5	5	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	11	32	42	5	11
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	16	47	5	32	0
The teaching is good.	55	30	0	5	10
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	58	32	5	0	5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	80	20	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70	25	0	5	0
The school works closely with parents.	75	25	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	50	45	5	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	45	0	10	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	65	25	5	5	0

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

ENGLISH

53. During Years 3 to 6, pupils make good progress and achieve well. Progress and achievement are satisfactory in Years 7 to 11. The quality of teaching is good, often very good, in Years 3 to 6, and is satisfactory in Years 7 to 11. Boys and girls achieve equally well.
54. A strength of the school is how very well the younger pupils develop their speaking and listening skills. When they enter the school in Year 3, their literacy skills are below average. By the end of Year 6, they are interested and hardworking pupils who are keen readers and writers and very good communicators. All these young pupils, including those with additional special educational needs, pay attention in class and respond very well to others. During a session in which pupils listened to the teacher read 'Fantastic Mr Fox', one Year 3 pupil showed how well he had listened and understood by remarking perceptively, 'That must be an extremely large table for 29 to sit around'. The teacher asked what the word 'succulent' meant – 'tasty', 'juicy', 'delicious' came the replies. On occasions, pupils acted out certain aspects of the story, pretending to raise their glasses to Mr Fox. A weekly drama session of exceptional quality provides pupils with the opportunity to enhance their communication and personal skills. They learn with humour and excitement, soaking up knowledge like a sponge.
55. Unfortunately, as pupils get older, their challenging behaviour often prevents their speaking and listening skills from developing. In addition, they are very reluctant to speak and express their ideas. However, when their behaviour is well managed they do discuss aspects of their learning. During a Year 8 geography session pupils were eager to describe how they had used the Internet to locate the Himalayan mountains and in mathematics the same group talked about data groups and block charts. By the end of Year 11, pupils appear more confident. For example, they are prepared to discuss their opinions of topical affairs. One Year 10 pupil talked about how the Iraqi war had dominated the news during the Easter holidays. As part of a GCSE session on 'Romeo and Juliet', higher attaining Year 10 pupils discussed its themes of hatred, love, loyalty and tragedy, and there was effective speaking and listening during a personal, social, health and citizenship lesson, when two Year 10 pupils were discussing the AIDS problem in Africa.
56. Progress in reading is good throughout the school. This is despite the library on the main site not being very well resourced and the upper site one being very small and under-resourced. The majority of pupils are, however, very happy to read and all books in both classrooms and libraries are well cared for. By the end of Year 6, pupils have made good progress, using two commercial reading schemes effectively in conjunction with other resources, such as library books, to aid their independent reading. A higher attaining Year 6 pupil read 'Jack and the Beanstalk' with expression and fluency. Pupils' level of enjoyment and confidence in reading is maintained as they move up the school. By the end of Year 9, pupils are willing readers, when their behaviour in class is well managed.
57. Pupils' achievement in writing is good in Years 3 to 6. However, this good progress is not maintained further on in the school. By the end of Year 6, pupils are confident, careful writers using joined up writing, punctuating correctly and using paragraphs to structure their writing. Years 3 and 4 pupils wrote about their chosen characters from 'Jack and the Beanstalk', and Year 6 pupils wrote confidently letters of complaint to

the Wakefield Daily News about proposed lengthening of the school day. By the end of Year 9, achievement is satisfactory. Pupils do not like writing and teachers are often reluctant to insist that they record what they have learned or their ideas. There are not enough relevant resources to help pupils structure their writing and computers are not used sufficiently to provide support, variety and motivation. Older pupils' unwillingness to write, and sometimes to communicate, has an adverse effect on their use of literacy to help them learn in other subjects. By the end of Year 11, pupils still remain reluctant writers, however the school has worked hard to give them a range of opportunities to gain external accreditation. Pupils enter for GCSE, Certificates of Achievement and a youth award scheme. Last year, seven pupils achieved grades F or G at GCSE, with one pupil gaining grade C.

58. During the best lessons, the teachers plan well, imaginatively choosing activities and resources that motivate pupils to learn. They make effective use of the guidance offered by the National Literacy Strategy and Key Stage Three Strategy. Pupils respond by working hard and showing high levels of enjoyment. However, the older pupils' behaviour is not always managed well, pupils are not consistently stretched and their progress is hampered. Challenging behaviour is not dealt with quickly enough by both teachers and support staff, particularly in Years 7 to 9. Additionally, high absence rates among certain older pupils inhibit their progress.
59. The co-ordinator leads and manages the subject well. However, he does need to be more aware of teaching and learning in other classes throughout the school, especially on the Years 10 and 11 site. English lessons contribute positively to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The subject overall has improved well since the previous inspection.

MATHEMATICS

60. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory overall. Pupils in Years 7 to 11 make satisfactory progress as they move up through the school. Those in Years 3 to 6 make good progress. This represents sound improvement since the previous inspection. There is no significant difference in the achievements of boys and girls.
61. Younger pupils enter the school with low levels of understanding of mathematics. They make a good start in acquiring basic number skills and are helped to concentrate through focused teaching, lively lessons and continuous support. Teaching in this age group is good. Teachers have clearly benefited from the National Numeracy Strategy in the planning and structure of lessons and in the effective use of numeracy resources. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, pupils responded very well to a mental arithmetic starter activity and progressed very smoothly into the main activity, identifying the appropriate use of calculators. Lessons have a clear start and move along quickly; all pupils are involved by the good use of targeted questions, matched to their needs. Group work is well organised and pupils are set appropriate tasks to consolidate number concepts, with worksheets and practical activities. By the end of Year 6, a few higher attaining pupils attain in line with national expectations. For example, they use their understanding of place value to multiply and divide whole numbers by ten or 100 and are able to understand how a pie chart works. Lower attaining pupils count sets of objects reliably and use mental recall of addition and subtraction facts to ten.
62. In Years 7 to 9, pupils learn about all the required aspects of mathematics and they make satisfactory progress. The quality of teaching varies between satisfactory and unsatisfactory. Pupils are often uncooperative, and need the regular prompts, praise

and individual support from the teacher and learning support assistants to maintain their concentration. There is a particular focus on developing their number skills and although this is appropriate the work is sometimes very repetitive and does not always develop pupils' skills sufficiently. Lesson plans are not always followed and too much time is spent on oral work and mental calculations and too little on the ending of the lesson, when learning and behaviour are reviewed. The management of behaviour is a weakness for these pupils and the strategies which are used effectively with younger pupils are not evident. For example, the aims of the lessons are not made clear at the beginning and not written up on the board. Pupils who should not sit together are allowed to do so and inappropriate behaviour and swearing is ignored. However, where the teacher does settle the group, pupils work hard. Higher attaining pupils are occasionally given work that is too easy for them.

63. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress during Years 10 and 11, so that, by the end of Year 11, most pupils achieve passes in the Intermediate Level GCSE. However, the quality of teaching is variable. When it is effective, the teacher's subject knowledge is good, tasks are related to pupils' own experience and seen as relevant, lessons are well planned and staff work well together as a team. For example, in a good Year 11 lesson, pupils made good progress in learning how to draw a scatter graph and the types of information it can convey. The work was set at an appropriate level to challenge the pupils and there was good use of questioning to assess their understanding of the topic. Where teaching is less effective, the behaviour management is unsatisfactory, the pace of the lesson is slow, there is a lack of challenge for the higher attainers and the tasks are unstimulating so that pupils are not interested, their attention wanders and little learning takes place.
64. Leadership of mathematics is satisfactory. The subject leader is clearly aware of his responsibilities and has observed teaching in all year groups. He successfully uses assessment data to keep track of pupils' progress, predict future results and to monitor any differences in the achievement of boys and girls. He is aware that further development is needed to make planning more appropriate to the needs of all the pupils – for instance, by providing more practical work in Years 7 to 9. Planning for higher attaining pupils in Years 10 and 11 has shown good improvement since the previous inspection, as a result of the introduction of courses leading to nationally recognised awards. However, these pupils do not have enough time in which to study mathematics. The subject makes a satisfactory and consistent contribution to literacy, with emphasis given in lesson planning to key vocabulary. Opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical skills in other subjects are inconsistent, but with several good examples. For instance, databases are used in information and communication technology, graphs are used in science and food technology and pupils use their knowledge of number and measurement in design and technology. In mathematics lessons, computers are used for practising basic numeracy, but not for a broader range of activities, such as by representing statistics on spreadsheets.

SCIENCE

65. Pupils' progress and achievements in science are satisfactory overall. The achievements of pupils in Years 3 to 6 are good. This is because they have a positive attitude to learning and they behave well in lessons. Relationships in Years 3 to 6 are good, as is quality of teaching.
66. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are keen to join in activities and find that learning science is fun. In lessons about light, for example, teaching is confident and brisk, and simple experiments are used very effectively to promote new scientific ideas and vocabulary.

The youngest pupils, with guidance, reason that light travels in straight lines. This is because they are prepared to think about why a beam of light from a torch is blocked by a piece of card. They learn and use the scientific terms for parts of the eye. They make neat diagrams of the eye with appropriate labels. They are observant about changes in the pupil of the eye in bright light, and talk animatedly about what they see. They name objects that are sources of light, including the sun, and they learn, contrary to their initial ideas, that the moon is not a source of light.

67. Progress and achievement in Years 7 to 9 are satisfactory overall. Higher attaining pupils reach the nationally expected standard by Year 9 and have a positive attitude towards learning science. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. The teacher is not a science specialist but has a strong commitment to the subject, and there are good facilities for practical work. In a Year 9 lesson on the preferred habitat of woodlice, pupils concentrated well, treated living animals with respect, behaved sensibly in the school grounds, and thought about how best to set up their investigation in order to make informed explanations about the results. Unfortunately only two of the eight pupils on roll in this class were present to benefit from this practical investigation. Staff in a supporting role are well meaning and caring but unfamiliar with, for example, the scientific principles of fair testing and the use of appropriate variables. Their interventions, therefore, are not always helpful and result in some confusion. Pupils are not asked enough questions to make them think and to check how well they have understood.
68. In Years 8 and 9, a significant number of pupils disrupt lessons. They learn about topics that are relevant and topical, but find it difficult to concentrate for extended periods. The management of pupils in these instances is not firm enough. The range of resources and methods used do not always hold their attention. In a lesson about microbes and disease, for example, an interesting quiz helped pupils learn about bacteria, viruses and fungi because all had to participate. However, a brief reference to current concern about S.A.R.S. (severe, acute respiratory syndrome), though highly topical and relevant, was too short to arouse and sustain pupils' interest. Pupils are bored by the completion of worksheets. They are easily distracted at points of transition from one worksheet to the next.
69. Provision for science for pupils in Years 10 and 11 has improved considerably. GCSE double science has been introduced. Most pupils are entered for GCSE double science and most achieve grades in the lower range DD to GG. There is consistent good-quality specialist science teaching. Pupils now do science investigative coursework in a laboratory, with the support of laboratory technicians, through good links with a local college of further education. There is now much good achievement in GCSE coursework because pupils are well taught and assessed in specialist accommodation. For example, pupils investigate the effect of temperature on the rate of a chemical reaction. They plot line graphs of their results both manually and using the computer. Higher attaining pupils wordprocess their coursework and are the most successful when writing explanations and evaluations. Average and lower attaining pupils generally plan investigations, carry out experiments and record results better than they analyse findings. This is because they describe more competently than they explain the reasons for their actions and their results. In spite of the high quality of the specialist science teaching in Years 10 and 11, the progress and achievements of the pupils are satisfactory overall. This is because irregular attendance and difficulty listening and responding in lessons slows the progress of a small minority of pupils. In addition, the time allocation for double science is short and further minutes of teaching time are lost walking to and from the college laboratory. On the plus side,

however, access to the college is a valuable experience for pupils preparing to leave school.

70. The subject is well led and managed across the school, improvement in the subject is good, and this is all leading to higher standards by the time pupils leave school in Year 11. There is still not enough use made of computers to support learning in science, and pupils in Years 7 to 9 do not yet have access to data logging equipment.

ART AND DESIGN

71. Pupils make satisfactory progress in art and design overall. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in Years 3 to 6. Most pupils in Year 11 enter GCSE art and design. Higher attaining pupils achieve GCSE grade C. Others attain in the range of grades D to G.
72. In Years 3 to 6, pupils investigate and record shapes and patterns, for example on floors, walls and windows. They then create patterns using geometric shapes, coloured paper, paint, stencilling techniques and the computer. Pupils enjoy illustrating stories, such as the 'Harry Potter' books, using pencil and crayon. The youngest pupils make and paint face masks when they read the story of 'The Little Red Hen'. Pupils learn to appreciate enhancement of the environment with sculptures, for example. They use the Internet to research the work of Henry Moore. One Year 6 boy said 'How beautiful' on seeing a picture of a bronze reclining figure appear on the screen. Teaching is good and enthusiastic, encouraging a positive response from pupils. Their achievements are displayed well in classrooms and corridors. There is not a wide enough range of resources and artefacts to enrich learning in art and design. Although improving with training, staff still do not have good enough computer skills to support learning in art and design for the youngest pupils.
73. Pupils' progress and achievements in Years 7 to 9 are generally satisfactory. The overall quality of teaching in Years 7 to 9 is also satisfactory. Pupils in Year 7 are responding well to new specialist teaching this term and good relationships have been established. In their work on presenting cartoon characters, logos and signatures, they are learning new techniques well like designing, cutting, colouring, printing and using craft knives safely. Pupils receive good quality support from the teaching and learning support staff and are ready to accept their guidance. Teaching methods promote well pupils' confidence in their own abilities and their self-esteem. The quality of teaching in Years 8 and 9 is satisfactory and pupils are making satisfactory progress. A Year 8 lesson began well, and pupils were interested to learn new techniques. A calm, pleasant working atmosphere prevailed and good use of humour helped pupils to develop designing, colouring and printing skills. However, most pupils, not used to the challenge of learning new skills, decided to leave the lesson half way through. Those remaining in class made good progress. Work in Year 9 is not yet challenging enough as preparation for GCSE work in Year 10.
74. In Years 10 and 11, pupils make satisfactory progress overall in GCSE art and design. Pupils are generally more productive than in Years 7 to 9 because they have had access to specialist art teaching for a longer period, and GCSE assessment procedures are well established. In spite of good quality teaching in Years 10 and 11, poor attendance and/or lateness to lessons hold back the progress of a minority of pupils. Pupils work in two dimensions and to a lesser extent in three dimensions. They sculpt in plaster of Paris and clay but there are no facilities for work in ceramics. Pupils design and make models of houses, churches and boats, for example. An imaginative model of a Hansel and Gretel house using sweets, biscuits, paint, textiles,

card and polystyrene is the result of good sustained work by one of the boys. Pupils make and decorate face masks. They draw portraits in pencil to a high standard. They use paints vibrantly and creatively to depict high seas, a forest at night, contrasting night and day, water and storms. Pupils use shading of the same colour to create three-dimensional effects. Pupils occasionally paint in the style of famous artists, for example David Hockney.

75. Improvement in art and design has been satisfactory. Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory and improving. Links still need to be made to support art teaching in Years 3 to 6. Appropriate priorities for development have been identified but there is no plan to show how they will be achieved. There are too few opportunities for pupils to study the work of famous artists and sculptors. Not enough use is made of computers in art and design lessons.

CITIZENSHIP AND PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

76. The school provides a good curriculum for personal, social and health education and citizenship. This represents a satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection, especially in Years 10 and 11, where there is now appropriate accreditation. Pupils achieve well overall, in line with the quality of teaching. However, teaching ranges from very good to unsatisfactory, so progress in lessons is similarly variable.
77. During Years 3 to 6, pupils learn about health and wellbeing, including emotional health. They find out about different parts of their bodies and the growth of the human baby before birth. They have considered the facts of keeping safe, including safety on the road and the use and misuse of medicines. As part of citizenship, they have learnt about rights and responsibilities of being a citizen and they know about the importance of caring for their environment. During a very good lesson with Years 3 to 5, pupils made very good progress investigating their own surroundings and learning the importance of caring for the environment. Very good teaching and an encouraging atmosphere ensured that pupils stayed on task and worked well together.
78. By the end of Year 9, pupils have learned about the emotional and physical changes associated with adolescence and have studied human reproduction. They have considered responsible parenting and are helped to understand about relationships and care for others. As part of citizenship, they have begun to empathise with others by looking at how to help and support those with disabilities and to know about equal opportunity issues in school and in the wider world. Teachers place an appropriate emphasis on building self-esteem and helping pupils to understand the impact of their behaviour. For example, a Year 7 lesson gave pupils the opportunity to reflect on their behaviour and to consider how they would approach the coming week. However, teachers do not always manage pupils' behaviour firmly enough. During these lessons, pupils' progress is adversely affected.
79. In Years 10 and 11, pupils learn about sex and relationships and the use and misuse of drugs. As part of the unit of work on a healthy lifestyle, pupils look at major health issues in developing countries, such as AIDS. A very well prepared lesson for Year 10 showed pupils the effects of anorexia and bulimia. There is a particular and highly relevant emphasis on conflict resolution, including self-awareness, anger management and what communities do for adult bullying. Pupils in Year 11 follow a course on parenting and learn the correct way of handling an infant and to be aware that at all times a baby's needs will come before their own. In a good lesson with Year 11, the pupils, who were all boys, looked at the methods and reasons for sterilising

bottle feeding equipment and were given the opportunity to mix and make a baby bottle mixture.

80. The subject makes a good contribution to literacy, especially in speaking and listening skills. The use of information and communication technology is unsatisfactory, with few resources and no planned use of what is available. However, some opportunities have been taken to use the Internet, when looking at third world development and when the school took part in Red Nose Day.
81. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has kept up to date with current developments and citizenship is embedded well in the curriculum. However, the contribution to citizenship of other subjects, such as English, science and history, has not been identified. At Years 10 and 11, the subject is very well organised. It is recognised as an important part of the curriculum for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties and is enhanced by appropriate accreditation. The co-ordinator has not had opportunities to observe teaching in all parts of the school, although she has an oversight of all the planning.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

82. Lessons are taught well and girls and boys of all abilities make good progress in the skills needed to make items using food or resistant materials. Their overall achievement is satisfactory, because much less attention is paid to the skills associated with designing and so pupils make less progress in this aspect. Since the previous inspection, the subject has developed well, with accreditation now offered to pupils in Years 10 and 11. The oldest pupils have had units of their work accredited – for example, designing and making a small wooden box. One higher attaining pupil has been entered for GCSE resistant materials technology. Year 10 pupils are working towards Entry Level or full GCSE. No food technology accreditation is offered but pupils may opt for a catering course at the local college of further education, leading towards NVQ Level 1. Additionally, a similar course in fabrication also enhances the opportunities available for pupils to pursue their interest in activities related to design and technology.
83. Throughout the school, pupils are taught by staff with specialist knowledge of either food or resistant materials technology. Because they have this expertise at their fingertips, they are able to plan interesting and relevant projects and make safe and full use of all the available equipment. They give clear demonstrations and explanations and answer pupils' questions competently. Although one teacher is still relatively new to the school and still establishing relationships with some classes, pupils do in the main listen to what their teachers say. For example, during the first lesson of a project to make a moisture tester, introducing them to the use of electronics, Year 8 pupils paid good attention to the teacher's explanation of the functions of resistors and transistors etc. As a result, they appreciated the need to select the components carefully when constructing their circuits.
84. In each aspect of the subject, teachers make sure pupils learn a wide range of skills, using a good variety of materials. They introduce new equipment and processes carefully, so pupils' learning builds systematically on what they have already experienced. For example, during a very good lesson, Year 7 pupils prepared kebabs and rice as part of a topic on making snacks. They revised existing skills – such as the use of knives and skewers – and demonstrated their ability to prepare a variety of foods, before moving on to learn how to use the grill. Pupils responded very well to the teacher's high expectations, hanging on to every word as she described how to

present the kebabs attractively. As in all lessons, pupils were encouraged to be independent – in this instance, to weigh their ingredients, collect equipment and organise themselves. The teacher is confident to let the pupils get on with their work, maintaining a discreet overview and stepping in when necessary. Although pupils are invariably given opportunities to make choices – for example, the type of saw or peeler they use – they have only limited scope for developing designing skills. For instance, in a Year 7 pupils' resistant materials project of making bookends, only the decorative features are designed by the pupils. Whilst it is entirely appropriate to place most emphasis on making skills, teachers are fully aware that pupils need more opportunities to design and plan work for themselves.

85. The two teachers organise their particular aspects of the subject well. They have recently begun work on an action plan for the subject as a whole and intend to develop shared approaches – for example, to designing. There is evidence of good use of computers – for instance to carry out research using the Internet. However, not enough is done yet, especially in the area of computer-aided design and manufacture, which suffers from a lack of suitable resources. The accommodation is very good on the Years 3 to 9 site, but poor for Years 10 and 11. A technician provides very good support for resistant materials in Years 3 to 9, but there is no specialist support for food technology.

GEOGRAPHY

86. Pupils learn geography during Years 3 to 9. During lessons, their progress ranges from satisfactory to very good, in line with the quality of teaching. Overall, their achievement is satisfactory. Currently, there is no designated subject co-ordinator or specialist teacher to complete the curricular plans for the subject.
87. During Years 3 to 6, pupils develop skills, such as reading maps, as they investigate the school's immediate locality, including the villages of Scissett and Skelmanthorpe. They then extend their knowledge to the geography and lifestyles of different countries. Teachers prepare lessons very well, so resources are to hand and activities move on smoothly and quickly, so pupils remain interested. Lessons build successfully on what pupils have learned previously. For example, during one very good lesson, pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 extended their ability to use an atlas by locating India, Nepal, Pakistan and China. Because the support staff and teacher shared the same high expectations, pupils were consistently required to think hard and find for themselves the answers to questions. The teacher moved round the class as they were working, checking their progress, prompting them when appropriate and giving lots of praise and encouragement. As a result, pupils not only made very good progress in their ability to observe, describe and compare a village in England with one in India, they were aware of their learning and could see how they might improve their work.
88. As they move up through the school, pupils continue to develop geographical skills and they find out more about physical features and how they affect people's lives. For example, in another very good lesson, Year 8 pupils also focused on India, but pupils were expected to apply their previous learning in order to make predictions about how the geography of the country influences where people live and hence the density of the population. The teacher had organised a series of activities that involved pupils learning actively, and they responded with interest, trying hard to succeed. They drew maps to indicate the land features, temperature and population in different regions and used the Internet to research and save more information about, for instance, the mountains of Nepal. The teacher managed pupils' behaviour very effectively, by responding quickly to the first signs of unrest. For example, when one pupil became

upset because he had made an error, the teacher said, 'We don't make mistakes, only alterations', successfully calming the boy. Where lessons are less imaginative and teachers rely more heavily on the use of worksheets and textbooks, progress is more steady and pupils are less involved and keen to learn.

89. The assistant headteacher is leading and managing the subject satisfactorily and has arranged training for the staff who teach geography. National guidance and commercially produced learning packs are used to guide teachers' planning in the absence of a whole-school programme of work. There are insufficient resources and not enough use is made of computers to help pupils to learn.

HISTORY

90. Over time, pupils' achievement and progress are good. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good. Pupils have a good attitude towards studying history because teachers make the subject interesting and relevant. Pupils study history from Year 3 to Year 9.
91. In Years 3 to 6, pupils study the way in which life in Britain has changed since Tudor times. They understand that most people in 1500 lived in the country and that they hardly ever travelled long distances. They can recognise the historical figures and the importance of a king, queen or head of the church in relation to the life of ordinary people. For example, pupils study the lives of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I.
92. Pupils continue to make good progress during Years 7 to 9. In Year 8, they study the origins of the Second World War and how Adolf Hitler came to power. They understand the background to the conflict and the reasons for the rise in worldwide unemployment in the 1920s and 1930s. Pupils are able to build on their knowledge of living conditions during the 'Blitz' to describe the feelings of children who were evacuated during the war.
93. Teachers plan a wide variety of lessons which keep pupils' interest high, and they learn well because of this. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject are good and their confidence is well rewarded in class as pupils make a very good effort. The good teaching is characterised by teachers setting clear and achievable objectives and having appropriately high expectations of pupils. This holds pupils' interest and makes them want to do well. Teachers throughout the school display good subject knowledge and they use this to develop and maintain pupils' enthusiasm. This was used to particularly good effect when, during an effective Year 8 lesson, the teacher provided good visual and audio information that gave pupils insight into the experiences of Russian soldiers defending Stalingrad. All pupils showed a good understanding of events surrounding the invasion of Russia and the reasons behind why Hitler decided to attack.
94. The co-ordinator manages the subject well. Since the previous inspection, he has produced a modified, whole-school programme of work based on the National Curriculum, thus successfully increasing pupils' opportunities for learning. This has led to good improvements in the subject. A good variety of resources has been established and these are used very well to motivate pupils in lessons. However, the co-ordinator has insufficient time allocated for monitoring and supporting colleagues throughout the school. Planning does not identify the use of information and communication technology in lessons sufficiently, which limits the information pupils can access through the Internet and CD-Roms. The co-ordinator is well aware of the areas for improvement – for example, the procedures for measuring how well pupils

make progress and for taking this into account when planning lessons and units of work.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

95. Pupils make good progress and achieve well and this is a satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. There is no difference in the achievement of boys and girls. Teaching is good overall and pupils have the use of two dedicated rooms. As a result, the pupils' attitudes to the subject are very good; they behave well and respect the equipment. The accommodation for Years 3 to 9 is well planned and spacious. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 now have the opportunity to achieve appropriate external qualifications.
96. By the end of Year 6, pupils input text into a wordprocessing program, use different fonts and add pictures and borders and save their work to the appropriate place on the computer. They put instructions such as forward, turn left and turn right into a programmable robot and use a learning program on the Internet. They experience graphics by exploring how patterns can be copied and resized. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils created posters illustrating classroom rules. They made good progress in the relaxed working atmosphere created by the teacher and were beginning to work independently. One pupil coped with the lack of a suitable picture for his rule, 'Don't throw pencils', by selecting an image of a pencil-shaped firework instead.
97. During Years 7 to 9, pupils continue to make good progress. They use a spreadsheet and put images, sound and animation into a presentation program. They use the Internet for looking up information on a specified site and operate a digital camera. They have built on their experience of using a programmable robot and enter more detailed instructions. In a good Year 7 lesson, pupils made good progress as they used information from a database to present graphical information. They were able to listen and follow instructions and all succeeded in producing a bar chart and a pie chart. One pupil was delighted with his success and said 'This is my favourite lesson'.
98. By Year 11, pupils are confident in their use of computers. They find websites on the Internet by using a search engine and have simulated shopping from a website selling books. Pupils create simple web pages and one was able to transfer a football club logo onto his page. They have made timetables in a spreadsheet program and use text and graphics in desktop publishing. The pupils are very positive about their use of information and communication technology and are motivated by the accredited courses. One pupil in Year 11 and five in Year 10 are following a GCSE programme. Those who will not achieve GCSE are following a Unit Award Scheme in such areas as wordprocessing, use of spreadsheets and graphics. In a good Year 10 lesson, pupils were engrossed in the task of making their own music video databases. There was a good working atmosphere as pupils succeeded in lifting an image from a video and transferring it into a database and entering text into other fields.
99. The teaching of information and communication technology as a specific subject is good. It is never less than satisfactory and on one occasion was very good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and are confident in the use of a wide range of applications. The routines for using the computers in Years 3 to 9 are very well established and pupils know how to behave and treat the computers well. This has a very positive impact on their progress and confidence. However, in some lessons, there is insufficient extension work for higher attaining pupils.

100. The use of computers across the curriculum is unsatisfactory. There are lost opportunities for pupils to use the skills learned within the information and communication technology curriculum to enhance their work in other subjects, especially in English and mathematics. The specialist rooms are underused. However, there are a few good examples of the use of computers in classrooms. For example, during an art and design lesson, pupils in Years 3 to 5 used a search engine and located and enlarged examples of Henry Moore's sculpture.
101. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator is well informed and knowledgeable. He is aware that the computers for Years 3 to 9 need replacing so that up-to-date software can be used. Also, there are no printers in the room for pupils in Years 10 and 11, so they are unable to print their work. At the moment, the school has insufficient technical support to ensure that the computers are all in working order.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French

102. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 have one hour of French each week. In this limited amount of time they achieve satisfactorily over time. The quality of teaching is good and pupils make good progress during lessons. French is only taught to pupils in Year 7 to Year 9. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 are formally disapplied from studying a National Curriculum modern foreign language.
103. In Year 7, pupils learn simple vocabulary. For example, they learn to count, say the days of the week, months of the year, greetings, phrases about themselves, school, home, shopping, food and drink. Their pronunciation remains approximate, in part because too much of the lessons are spoken in English by the teaching and support staff. Pupils persevere with their speaking, reading and writing in French. They can complete sentences starting with 'Je m'appelle ...' and 'J'habite ...', for example. By Year 8, pupils make good progress and write short phrases and sentences. Their pronunciation remains approximate, but they are beginning to speak French with more confidence. They can listen, understand and respond to questions from a tape recording spoken in French, about descriptions of boys and girls, and the various European cities in which they live, for example. In exercises of this kind, pupils make steady progress reading and responding, listening and responding, and writing French. They learn about the 24 hour clock and activities at different times of day, distinguishing 'Je me leve' from 'Je me lave'. By Year 9, higher attaining pupils have extended their vocabulary about daily events, writing and speaking, for example, 'Je me lave les dents'. There is currently no accreditation to recognise pupils' achievements by the end of Year 9, but this is planned.
104. French lessons are well prepared and hold pupils' attention. Teaching is good overall and pupils are mainly enthusiastic and well behaved. Good relationships help pupils to develop the confidence to speak in French. All pupils are encouraged to make spoken and written contributions in lessons and this helps to raise their self-esteem. Pupils concentrate well because lessons are conducted at a brisk pace with varied activities. There is not enough use of computers, however, to support learning in French. Lessons of one-hour duration before lunch are too long and concentration tends to wane after 45 minutes. Pupils' achievements are assessed frequently during lessons, helping them to move forward and make progress. Good assessment records provide a clear check on whether achievements in each lesson are good enough. However, these weekly assessments are not yet analysed to find out whether

progress over time is good enough, nor are they matched to National Curriculum attainment levels.

105. The subject is well led and managed and appropriate priorities for development have been identified. The way in which these priorities will be implemented are not yet developed into a workable development plan. The good progress reported in French lessons at the time of the previous inspection has been maintained.

MUSIC

106. Pupils enjoy music and the school provides well for them. The quality of teaching is good and is enhanced by visiting musicians, workshop opportunities and good quality electronic equipment, enabling all pupils to take part in a variety of musical experiences and achieve well. Music is not offered to the pupils in Years 10 and 11.
107. Pupils who attend school regularly achieve standards in line with national expectations. The pupils in Years 3 to 6 listen carefully and can recall pattern, pitch and rhythm. They regularly make very good progress in lessons. They sing together tunefully, understand simple notation and improvise simple musical phrases. In one lesson, two visiting musicians taught pupils to scratch and combine rhythms and sounds, breaking down the technique into small steps and enabling all pupils to become increasingly accurate with their timing in order to develop their performance. The more confident pupils combined the rhythm with expressive movement of their own, showing an increasing awareness of an audience. Pupils remained highly motivated throughout the lesson. Timely intervention by classroom assistants helped pupils to sustain their concentration, happily taking turns, watching and encouraging their classmates. The good and very good quality of teaching stimulates pupils' interests, develops their musical skills and promotes high standards. The rich variety of musical opportunities offered to the younger pupils, including taking part in activities, festivals and events organised for Kirklees primary schools, enables them to work as a team and experience success.
108. Progress made during Years 7 to 9 is more uneven because of unsatisfactory attendance and erratic and disruptive behaviour by a significant minority of pupils new to the school. When pupils are settled and attentive, they make good progress in lessons, achieving standards appropriate for their age. The teacher makes the lessons interesting with a variety of activities that gradually build upon pupils' skills and knowledge, enabling them to develop their techniques and understanding. These include the use of games, audio-visual equipment, information and communication technology and electronic instruments, allowing pupils to explore, improvise and combine sounds. Using a CD-Rom, they explore how sounds are made and how they can be combined and used expressively to achieve an intended effect. Clear explanations and demonstrations by the teacher enable pupils to improvise melodic phrases and recognise patterns of sounds that are musically characteristic of specific cultures. One pupil was quick to recognise that a tune was typical Asian music while another identified that a tune played on a North African bagpipe sounded like Egyptian music. Pupils often perform from ear showing an awareness of different musical structures and devices, such as the use of drones as a background to the melody. They use appropriate music vocabulary and the teacher successfully encourages them to consider how well they have done.
109. Programmes of work that meet the requirements of the National Curriculum have been developed since the previous inspection and the music facilities have been improved with the creation of a well-equipped music room. The subject makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' information and communication technology

skills in Years 7 to 9. However, this is an aspect of the curriculum that needs developing for the younger pupils. Current teacher assessments provide scant information about the progress pupils have made and are of limited use to identify future learning. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The role of the subject co-ordinator is being further developed to include a more rigorous approach to monitoring and evaluating standards and the quality of teaching and learning. The co-ordinator is very well informed about the strengths and weaknesses in the provision for the younger pupils but does not yet have a sufficient overview of the provision overall.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

110. Overall, pupils of all abilities achieve well if they attend lessons regularly. However, there is evidence of underachievement among pupils with poor attendance and progress slows down in Years 10 and 11, due to the lack of facilities. The quality of teaching is good for the pupils at the main school and this enables them to develop a good range of physical skills and to exercise safely. Swimming coaches at a local swimming baths make a good contribution to teaching and pupils' progress in Years 3 to 9. No physical education lessons were observed in Year 10 and the one lesson in Year 11 was unsatisfactory, due to the absence of the leisure centre's instructor. It is not possible to judge pupils' achievements in Years 10 and 11 or the quality of teaching. The pupils in Years 3 to 6 make particularly good progress in lessons because they are keen to improve their performance. They follow the directions provided by the teacher, who is very skilful at helping pupils to develop their techniques by timely advice and encouragement. Most of these pupils are prepared to keep on practising until they have mastered a skill, such as serving or returning a ball in tennis.
111. In Years 7 to 9, the behaviour of many pupils is more erratic and this adversely affects their progress. This is exacerbated by a very small gym, limited facilities for games and inadequate changing rooms, resulting in pupils being reluctant to change for lessons. However, the teacher has established a good relationship with the pupils and commands their respect. Most pupils do make steady progress with many attaining standards appropriate for their age. Achievement among the lower attaining pupils is especially good. Many pupils with poor co-ordination or limited achievement in academic subjects do particularly well in physical education due to the patience and skill of the teacher in helping them to master new skills. The curriculum places too much emphasis on contact sports, which disadvantages the girls.
112. Pupils learn to work together and to comply with rules. They play small team games and compete against each other, showing respect for their opponent and offering praise when they have executed a particularly skilful shot. The older pupils learn how to link skills and techniques and apply them with accuracy and precision to attack and defend when playing net games. In one lesson, Year 8 pupils became increasingly accurate in placing the ball beyond their opponent's reach by varying the speed and direction of the return ball when playing tennis. Pupils are encouraged to pursue their sporting interests outside of school hours. They are offered a range of outdoor and adventurous activities, such as water sports, climbing and caving, gaining nationally recognised standards in the optional activities on Friday afternoons and for after-school activities. Some pupils have become competent boxers while others join local rugby clubs and even lead and coach younger groups of pupils. The physical education curriculum makes a very positive contribution to the development of pupils' social skills and does much to raise pupils' self-esteem. However, the provision for those in Years 10 and 11 is barely satisfactory due to the lack of facilities and

specialist teaching. Pupils use the facilities of a leisure centre and are taught by its staff. Their physical education programme is balanced and relevant but does not enable them to progress through the National Curriculum Programmes of Study.

113. The subject is well led and managed in Years 3 to 9. A programme of work has been developed for these pupils which meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The co-ordinator has completed an evaluation of the physical education provision and identified priorities for development. The school is seeking ways to work more closely with the local high school in order to extend the quality and range of facilities available to the pupils so they can achieve even higher standards by Year 9 and to enable pupils in Years 10 and 11 to build progressively upon their skills and sporting interests.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

114. Achievement is satisfactory overall but good in Years 3 to 6. Teaching is also satisfactory overall and good in Years 3 to 6. There are suitable plans to guide teachers when they prepare work and these appropriately include aspects of Christianity and other religions, focusing on stories, special people and symbols. Festivals of the major world religions are celebrated - for example, Ramadan and Divali. Teachers make good use of the locally agreed syllabus.
115. Pupils' work in religious education effectively supports the aims of the school by providing pupils with a growing awareness of how different people live and work together. During Years 3 to 6, pupils are encouraged to develop a sense of sharing and caring for others. They learn to appreciate how their actions affect others and develop an understanding of sharing. Speaking and listening is a strong feature of pupils' learning in their exploration of the subject. For example, pupils in a very good Year 6 lesson joined in enthusiastically discussing 'teachers and preachers?' They were able to come up with an extensive list of ways of passing information and a game of Chinese whispers successfully highlighted the problems associated with passing a message by word of mouth.
116. During Years 7 to 9, pupils develop their knowledge of different religions. In one lesson, Year 7 pupils considered basic beliefs of Sikhism. They learned that the Khanda constitutes three symbols in one and that its name is derived from a special type of double-edged sword which symbolises the Sikhs' belief in one God. The pupils made good use of a carefully selected text to discover what is important to a Sikh, an exercise that supported their work in literacy. Lower attainers copied much of the descriptions into their folders, whilst the higher attainers were able to write more independently. The teacher successfully encouraged them to participate in a discussion. However, although pupils initially took a full part in the discussion, their interest waned and they became restless, because it went on for too long.
117. Although no lessons were observed at Years 10 and 11, it is evident that pupils study religious education as part of an accredited youth award scheme. They consider a number of contemporary issues as well as the place of Christianity in our lives today. For example, a Year 11 class considered the concept of God, human existence and the universe. They considered common arguments for and against the existence of God and discussed questions such as 'Why are we here?' Pupils in Year 11 look at personal responses to a range of moral issues with regard to medical and health topics.

118. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. The subject content is appropriate to the time allocated, but opportunities are missed to broaden the experiences and understanding of the pupils by the use of visits outside the school. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject leader has improved planning and the use of resources considerably, but insufficient use is made of new technology. Because of the quality of the relationships between staff and pupils, the subject makes a sound contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural education in the school.