

INSPECTION REPORT

LEYSLAND HIGH SCHOOL

Countesthorpe, Leicester

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 120272

Headteacher: Mr K McDermott

Reporting inspector: Mr I Hodgkinson
20588

Dates of inspection: 16th – 19th September 2002

Inspection number: 250950

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Middle deemed secondary

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 11 to 14 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Winchester Road
Countesthorpe
Leicester

Postcode: LE8 5PR

Telephone number: 0116 2771841

Fax number: 0116 2783157

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr A Spencer

Date of previous inspection: October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|--------------|-----------------|----------------------|---|---|
| 20588 | Mr I Hodgkinson | Registered inspector | | What sort of school is it? How high are standards? 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? |
| 12775 | Ms J Goodchild | 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? |
| 04359 | Ms W Hola | Team inspector | Mathematics | |
| 12191 | Mr C Moxley | Team inspector | English Special educational needs English as an additional language | |
| 19043 | Mr D Lewis | Team inspector | Science | |
| 01782 | Mr A Lyons | Team inspector | Information and communication technology Design and technology | |
| 30518 | Mr M Johnson | Team inspector | Art and design | |
| 32221 | Mr K Williams | Team inspector | Geography | |
| 12328 | Ms P Mitchell | Team inspector | History | |
| 07483 | Mr R Donne | Team inspector | Modern foreign languages | |
| 12276 | Mr T Payne | Team inspector | Music | |
| 32241 | Ms J Rundle | Team inspector | Physical education | |
| 04372 | Mr R Fordham | Team inspector | Religious education Educational inclusion, including race equality | How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? |

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Bench Marque Limited
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Victoria Street
Burnham-on-Sea
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TA8 1AN

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Leysland High School is a middle-deemed secondary school educating 672 boys and girls in the 11-14 age range. It is much larger than the average for other schools serving the same age range. It is a popular school which has been oversubscribed in recent years, and admissions of pupils on appeal have taken the school roll well beyond its planned admissions level. Numbers on roll have increased by over a fifth since the last inspection in 1997. The school is located in an area of social advantage in terms of the social class and the educational background of adults, but it draws around 30 per cent of its pupils from outside this locality, mainly from the city of Leicester. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. There are eleven pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. Very few pupils have English as an additional language, and none are beginners in using English. When pupils start the school as eleven-year-olds, their attainment is broadly average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is average. A larger-than-average proportion of pupils have statements of special educational needs, and this includes pupils with learning, emotional and behavioural difficulties, and those with physical, hearing, and speech-and-language impairments. The school places a great deal of emphasis on building relationships between all of those involved in the school community, and on developing a culture of mutual respect, tolerance and individual responsibility. There is no school uniform and first names are used between teachers and pupils. The Leysland Charter sets out the aims and objectives of the school very clearly, with an emphasis on raising achievement and stimulating pupils' personal development.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Leysland High School is a very good school with some outstanding features. Relationships throughout the school are exceptionally strong. The headteacher and senior staff give outstanding leadership, and work hard with the governors to ensure that teachers, pupils and parents share the aims of the school as set out in the Leysland Charter. All groups are fully involved in making decisions about how to improve the school. There is a strong mutual respect between pupils and teachers which ensures a high degree of co-operation in lessons and other activities. Pupils like coming to school and their behaviour and attitudes are very good. The school provides a good quality of education and standards by the end of Year 9 are above average. Up to 2001, results in national tests at age 14 had been improving at broadly the same rate as the national trend. There were significant improvements in 2002 results. Results in science are particularly good, because of excellent teaching. Very effective management has ensured that the school has made very good improvement since the last inspection. The school carefully analyses its strengths and weaknesses and those of its pupils, and takes appropriate action where necessary. It gives very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Leadership by the headteacher and senior team is outstanding, both in the direction they give to the school, and in the systems they set in place to support very good school improvement
- The school is particularly good at getting the best value from its limited resources; it uses funds well to support priorities which are set after very wide consultation
- Relationships between all groups in the school are excellent, allowing a high degree of co-operation between pupils, teachers, support staff and parents in promoting good learning. Liaison with parents is excellent
- The quality of provision for science is outstanding, and is very good in English, art and design, history, information and communication technology (ICT), and in the education of pupils with special needs
- An excellent personal, social and health education programme, which has a strong emphasis on citizenship, is one of many factors which help pupils develop strongly as responsible and caring members of society
- Pupils have very positive attitudes and behave very well. Their attendance is well above average, and the procedures for monitoring attendance are excellent
- Relationships with partner primary schools are very strong and ensure that pupils continue to make good progress as they move from Year 6 to Year 7
- There is a high quality of display of pupils' work around the buildings

What could be improved

- In music, overall standards of attainment are well below average and teaching and learning are unsatisfactory
- Pupils do not use computers enough to help them to learn in English, mathematics, science, art and design, geography, music, and physical education

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good improvements since it was last inspected in 1997. Many initiatives to raise standards of attainment and the quality of teaching and learning have been effective, so that standards of attainment have continued to rise, and the quality of teaching has improved substantially, most particularly in ICT, religious education and modern foreign languages. The school's curriculum is now good; it has been reviewed successfully to give priority to raising attainment in mathematics and English, and gives adequate time to all subjects except music. The quality of planning and writing of schemes of work in subjects has also improved significantly. The emphasis given to developing the spiritual and cultural aspects of pupils' work is now good and very good respectively. Effective systems are in place to assess pupils' work, and good use is made of the assessment information to help pupils improve. Performance management of teachers and appraisal of support staff have been implemented successfully and have contributed well to improvements in the quality of education provided by the school. The annual reports to parents are now of a high quality. Standards of attainment and the quality of education provided in music have not improved sufficiently since the last inspection.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 9 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests. *Pupils are awarded points for the levels they attain in national tests in English, mathematics and science.*

| Performance in: | compared with | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | all schools | | | similar schools |
| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2001 |
| End of Key Stage 3 tests | B | B | B | C |

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

Attainment by the end of Year 9, measured by the national tests, was above average for each of the five years to 2001. The school's results in these tests have improved broadly at the same rate as the national trend in recent years. There was a considerable overall improvement in test results in 2002, so that the challenging targets set by the governors were exceeded in all subjects. Science results have remained well above both the national average and the average for similar schools over recent years, and inspection confirmed that pupils have a very strong knowledge and understanding of the natural world and scientific principles, and can apply these using a range of investigative and experimental techniques. English test results were above the average for all schools and in line with those of similar schools in 2001; they improved strongly, especially at the higher levels, in 2002. The attainment of girls in English is higher than that of boys as it is nationally, but the gap narrowed a little in 2002. Pupils' writing in English is particularly interesting and imaginative, and pupils write well in different forms and styles to suit specific purposes. Test results in mathematics, measured by pupils' points scores, were broadly average compared to all schools from 1999 to 2001, and improved in line with schools nationally over that time; they were, however, below the average for similar schools in 2001. There was a considerable improvement in mathematics test results in 2002 at all levels. Pupils have good knowledge and skills in number which serve them well in national mathematics tests, but they have lower-than-expected levels of skill in applying these concepts and in using them for investigative work. Taking all subjects together, pupils achieve well in their time in school. Having entered the school with broadly average standards, they leave with above-average results in the national tests and above-average standards in most of their subjects. Pupils with special educational needs make particularly good progress. The school's policies to improve the achievement of gifted, talented and higher attaining pupils have been successful in most subjects, but there is not enough

attainment at the highest levels in design and technology, music, and physical education. Pupils' basic skills are sound and contribute well to their success in their subjects. They are articulate and set out their views clearly having listened carefully to others. They mostly write well, with good technical and evaluative vocabularies, but the quality of spelling, punctuation and handwriting varies across subjects. Pupils' number skills are good when used in different subjects. Where they have sufficient opportunities, they can use computers effectively to improve their work. Overall, achievement is very good in English and science, and satisfactory in mathematics; it is good in all other subjects except music where performing, composing and listening skills are below expected standards.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school | Very good. Pupils' high regard for their school is evident from their comments, and from their enthusiastic participation in the wide range of activities and enrichment opportunities provided. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Very good. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is mostly very good. Their conduct around the school is exceptionally well-ordered, requiring the lightest of supervision by staff. There were no permanent or fixed term exclusions during the last school year. |
| Personal development and relationships | Excellent. There is an exceptional degree of mutual respect between the pupils themselves and between pupils and their teachers, which permits a great deal of co-operation in learning. Pupils are prepared to take on many responsibilities, for organising activities, for supporting other pupils, for decision-making in the school and for approaching their own learning. |
| Attendance | Very good. Overall attendance is well above the national average. Unauthorised absence was broadly in line with the national average in 2000-2001. There has been an improvement in attendance levels since the last inspection, which contributes strongly to the good achievement of pupils. |

Pupils' attitudes and values are a key strength of the school. The school produces responsible and caring young people who know how to take their part in society.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

| | |
|---------------------|-------------|
| Teaching of pupils: | Years 7 – 9 |
| Quality of teaching | Good |

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

Teaching seen was good overall, with very few unsatisfactory lessons. Teaching in science is excellent, and a high proportion of lessons in English were also excellent. Overall in English, in art and design, and for those with special educational needs, teaching is very good. A significant proportion of very good or excellent lessons were also seen in design and technology, history, modern languages, physical education, personal, social and health education and religious education. The school's policy on teaching and learning is clearly helping to raise standards, since the main strengths of teaching noted by inspectors reflect its approaches. The way in which teachers organise their lessons – giving pupils clear objectives, then setting them interesting activities which help them to learn, and reviewing what they have learned at the end – are particularly strong features. The methods used by science teachers are particularly good at stimulating the interest of pupils of all levels of attainment. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils, although in mathematics the pace of learning is slowed in a minority of lessons by some repetition and not moving quickly enough to challenging new work. In music lessons, where teaching overall is unsatisfactory, the work is often too easy, especially for higher attaining instrumentalists, although there are some very good instrumental tuition sessions. The greatest strength of the teaching in all subjects is in the management of the pupils and the high quality of relationships established between teachers and their pupils. Learning is good overall, mainly because pupils show a great

deal of interest in the work they are undertaking, and concentrate hard on the tasks at hand. They show their teachers a great deal of respect. The teaching of literacy is satisfactory across subjects; there is good emphasis on the development of a technical and evaluative vocabulary through the use of key words in all subjects, but not enough attention is given to spelling, punctuation and handwriting in some subjects. Number is well used in many areas to improve the accuracy of pupils' work and their ability to detect patterns and relationships when looking at evidence. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to use computers to help them to learn in many subjects; but there are good examples in subjects such as science, design and technology, geography, history and French, of pupils using ICT to research, to process data and to improve the accuracy and quality of presentation of their work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|---|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | Good. The curriculum overall is well balanced, but there is too little time for music lessons and drama. The personal, social and health education programme, with its citizenship component, is excellent, and has a very beneficial effect on pupils' attitudes. The school works particularly hard to foster links with its partner primary schools to ensure that pupils make good progress as they move from Year 6 to Year 7. There is a very good careers education programme which helps pupils make appropriate choices of courses in their next school. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Very good. Teaching of basic skills is very good, and there are high standards of monitoring and record keeping. There is caring provision for pupils with disabilities and learning difficulties. Support staff work very well to enable pupils to develop independence. |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language | Good. There are no pupils who are beginning to learn English at the school. The progress of pupils with English as an additional language is monitored carefully to ensure that provision matches their needs. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Very good. Provision for social development is excellent; there are many significant opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and develop social understanding, such as the 'TIM' (Trust in Me system) system of personal counsellors and the school council and its sub-groups. Provision for moral development is very good, especially through the personal, social, health and citizenship programmes. There are now very well planned opportunities across subjects to promote pupils' cultural development. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good, although the statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship is not met. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | Very good. The educational and personal support and guidance that pupils receive is excellent. Pupils are given clear targets for achievement, and the school has set in place very thorough monitoring systems to track pupils' progress and identify those who are underachieving. Time is available for tutors to mentor and support their pupils. Procedures for promoting attendance and good behaviour are very effective. There are excellent arrangements for child protection. |

The school has excellent links with parents. It keeps parents exceptionally well informed about the progress of their children and activities within the school. The Leysland High School Association goes beyond the usual functions of a parent-teacher association and acts as a forum for keeping parents up to date about developments in the education of their children, and as a means of consulting parents about changes in the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Outstanding. The headteacher and senior staff give the school excellent leadership. They are thoroughly committed to the aims of raising achievement and promoting the personal development of pupils as set out in the Leysland Charter, and work very hard to involve all groups in the school in realising those aims. They have set in place very good systems for promoting school improvement. Their very effective management systems contribute strongly to good management of individual departments by heads of subject. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | Very good. The governors play a full role in shaping the direction of the school. They are very well informed of the school's strengths and weaknesses, because of the very good quality of information they receive from the headteacher and other teachers, and because they visit the school frequently and report back on aspects of the school's performance. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | Very good. Data is used well to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the school and of individual pupils and most actions taken to address weaknesses are very effective. Teaching and learning are formally observed in classrooms so that the headteacher and senior team can encourage good practice; they support good teaching and administration with very effective professional training and development programmes. |
| The strategic use of resources | Excellent. Despite its relatively low costs, the school's staffing, accommodation and learning resource levels are good. Careful management of resources, and the care which pupils show for their school, mean funds are not wasted. A comprehensive development planning process, in which subject and other departments can bid for funds to develop in ways linked closely to the school's overall priorities for improvement, helps to ensure that resources are allocated very efficiently. Specific grants have been well used to support improvements in literacy, numeracy and ICT. |

The school is particularly good at getting the best value from its limited resources. It consults very widely when setting its priorities for development, so that the degree of support for the leadership and direction of the school is exceptionally strong. The school serves its population very well indeed.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teaching is good • Children make good progress at school, and are expected to work hard • The school is well led and managed • Behaviour in the school is good, and the school helps children become more mature • Children like school • Parents are comfortable in approaching the school to discuss any issues • The school provides an interesting range of activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small minority of parents feel that their children do not get enough homework, especially in Year 9 |

Inspectors agree fully with the parents' positive views about the school. Concerns about the quantity of homework were expressed by a small minority of parents overall, but by over a fifth of those with children in Year 9 who responded to the parents' questionnaire. Inspectors found that not enough homework was set in music and physical education, and the quantity of homework varies because the school does not operate a

homework timetable. Overall, however, inspectors agreed with the comments made by some parents that the quality of homework is good and serves to develop pupils' skills of investigation and enquiry.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Pupils achieve well throughout their time in the school: having entered the school at age eleven with broadly average levels of attainment, they reach age 14 with standards of attainment which are above average.
2. Standards of attainment of pupils when they join the school at age eleven, measured by the national tests in English, mathematics and science, are broadly average, with a weaker performance at the higher Levels 5 and above. This is confirmed by the school's analysis of pupils' achievement, which predicts a weaker-than-average performance at the higher levels by age 14 given the pupils' capabilities on entry to the school. In English tests at age eleven, a broadly average proportion of pupils attain the expected National Curriculum Level 4 and above, but the proportion attaining the higher Level 5 and above is below average. Science attainment is broadly average at Levels 4 and 5. In mathematics, the proportion attaining Level 4 and above is above average, while the proportion attaining Level 5 is broadly average. Pupils join the school with a wide range of abilities in other subjects, reflecting the mixture of backgrounds of pupils who are drawn from a large number of schools both in and outside Leysland's catchment area.
3. Attainment by the age of 14, measured by the national tests, has been above average for each of the last five years when compared with all schools, and was well above average in 1998. The school's results in these tests have improved broadly at the same rate as the national trend in recent years. Results in 2001 were average in comparison with similar schools – those with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. There was a considerable overall improvement in test results in 2002, so that the challenging targets set by the governors were exceeded in all subjects.
4. Science results have remained well above both the national average and the average for similar schools over recent years, and inspection confirmed that pupils have a very strong knowledge and understanding of the natural world and scientific principles, and can apply these using a range of investigative and experimental techniques. The most able pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 often produce work of quite outstanding quality, for example in a wall poster on the place of mankind in the universe. Pupils demonstrate very good literacy skills in science, and these play a significant part in fostering pupils' awareness of issues, such as those related to the environment, which relate to citizenship. Pupils also record numerical results accurately from the beginning of Year 7, and presentation and interpretation of results are real strengths. Pupils use ICT well to help them with their science work.
5. English test results were above the national average for all schools and in line with those of similar schools in 2001; they improved strongly, especially at the higher levels, in 2002. The attainment of girls in English is higher than that of boys as it is nationally, but the gap narrowed a little in 2002. More able pupils are particularly competent in speaking and listening. Pupils are attentive listeners, showing respect to their teachers and each other, and speak with confidence in a range of situations. Pupils' attainment is above that expected when reading aloud from a range of texts and many read perceptively. They write well for a range of purposes, and produce imaginative and interesting work. Powerful poems were written by pupils as a result of the visit of two poets to the school, and Year 9 pupils have reviewed some sophisticated literature that they have read.

6. Test results in mathematics, measured by pupils' points scores, were broadly average compared to all schools from 1999 to 2001, and improved in line with schools nationally over that time; they were, however, below the average for similar schools in 2001. There was a considerable improvement in mathematics test results in 2002 at all levels. Pupils have good knowledge and skills in number, shape and space, algebra and data handling, so that the proportions of pupils reaching expected Levels 5 or 6 in the national mathematics tests are above average, but they have lower-than-expected levels of skill in applying these concepts and in using them for investigative work.
7. Taking all subjects together, pupils achieve well in their time in school. Overall, achievement is very good in English and science, and satisfactory in mathematics; it is good in all other subjects except music where performing, composing and listening skills are underdeveloped. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress during their time in the school as a result of very good teaching and sensitive support. The school has been successful overall in promoting good progress for higher attaining pupils; special approaches to teaching for this group in mathematics, for example, have produced good results. Higher attainers however make less good progress than their peers in design and technology, drama, music and physical education, where approaches do not fully meet their needs.
8. In art and design, pupils draw well and show good spatial awareness when arranging shapes and designs. The good standards achieved in art result in part from some thorough research and development of work by pupils. In design and technology, pupils make products well in a wide range of materials, but there are weaknesses in the care and accuracy with which pupils communicate their design intentions. Pupils' geographical skills are good, particularly in their use of the subject vocabulary, their use of data and evidence to make informed decisions, and their use of graphs to present data. Similarly in history, pupils use evidence well to make decisions, and they show a good grasp of historical facts and of the sequence of events. Higher attainers write particularly well and in a variety of forms in history, but weaker literacy skills of middle and lower attainers constrain the standards of their written work somewhat. The amount and quality of written work in French, especially in Year 7, are very good, and pupils are confident speakers of the language. In music, standards of attainment are well below average, especially in the development of practical skills. Pupils however have good skill levels in physical education and evaluate their own and others' performance very well. They can also use computers well for a variety of tasks including wordprocessing, desktop publishing and data processing in their ICT lessons. In religious education, pupils have very good knowledge and understanding of world religions and can reflect on religious issues. Similarly, in citizenship, pupils have a good understanding of their rights and responsibilities in a democratic society.
9. Pupils' basic skills are good and contribute well to their success in their subjects. They are articulate and set out their views clearly having listened carefully to others. They mostly write well, with good technical and evaluative vocabularies, but the quality of spelling, punctuation and handwriting varies across subjects and lowers standards for the communication of designs in design and technology, for example. Pupils' number skills are developed well in mathematics and are good when applied in other subjects. In science and in geography pupils construct and interpret graphs effectively, while in design and technology they are confident in calculation and measurement. Lower attaining pupils, however, lack some confidence when working with numbers other than whole numbers – decimals and fractions. Where pupils have sufficient opportunities, they can use computers effectively to improve their work and to complete a broad range of tasks.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. The attitudes of pupils towards school are very good. They have a strong work ethic and determination to succeed. Pupils are highly motivated to take part in events organised by the school such as concerts and school productions. The number of pupils taking part in the wide range of enrichment activities the school provides is high and their interest and involvement is excellent. The small number of pupils from ethnic minorities, and those with special educational needs, are fully integrated into the school community.
11. Relationships between pupils and with staff are excellent. One of the most striking characteristics of the school is the mutual respect shown between staff and pupils. Pupils are valued for their individuality and helped to achieve their potential in many ways; they respond positively to this and develop during their time at school into confident young people. Pupils are happy to approach members of staff if they are experiencing difficulties with their academic work or having personal problems. There are many opportunities for collaborative or group work to further develop pupils' social skills and they willingly share and support each other in their learning. Pupils are encouraged, through debate, to express their feelings on a wide range of moral and social issues. They listen with sensitivity to the views and opinions of their peer group that may differ from their own.
12. The standard of behaviour within the school is very good. The school is a socially harmonious community. Behaviour seen in lessons was rarely less than satisfactory, and on occasions excellent. Where the behaviour of pupils was unsatisfactory, it was directly related to teaching staff not applying the school's behaviour management procedures. On these occasions, the learning of other pupils was disrupted. Pupils state that bullying is unacceptable within the school and is not an issue. The ethos of the school encourages pupils to accept responsibility for their actions and treat everyone with respect. This is a significant strength of the school.
13. The development of pupils' initiative and personal responsibility is excellent. By the time they reach the end of Year 9 they are confident and articulate young people who are able to express their feelings and concerns in a logical manner. From first entering the school pupils are encouraged to accept responsibility for managing their own learning. Homework frequently involves independent research and expectations of teaching staff are good in this respect.
14. During lunch and break times pupils organise themselves with minimal adult supervision. For example, they organise their own lunchtime clubs and take responsibility for running them. The TIMs counsellors have a duty rota to ensure that at least three of them are accessible to pupils each day. The school council provides an effective forum for pupils to air their views, which gives them a real opportunity to have an input into the running of the school. They have been instrumental in changing the school lunch system for example. Pupils are currently involved with Blaby District Council in an 'eco' project, which makes a significant contribution towards their understanding of their responsibilities in the wider community. Pupils are actively involved in the day-to-day life of the school, such as current Year 7 pupils being present at a Year 6 induction day to answer questions and Year 9 pupils having a responsibility towards the incoming Year 7 to help them settle into school.
15. A range of visits, both in this country and overseas, extends pupils' understanding of the wider community. The residential opportunities form a significant part of pupils' social development and contribute significantly to the excellent relationships between pupils and with staff.
16. Attendance is very good and well above the national average. For the year 2000/01 the overall attendance level was 94 per cent compared with the national average of 90.9

per cent. Unauthorised absence was broadly in line with the national average. There has been an improvement in the level of attendance since the previous inspection. These high attendance levels promote the high standards that pupils achieve. All attendance is properly recorded and procedures meet statutory requirements.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. Teaching and learning seen during the inspection was good overall, with very few unsatisfactory lessons. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection, which reported shortcomings in around 15 per cent of lessons. Teaching in science is excellent, and a high proportion of lessons in English were excellent, too. Overall in English, and in art and design, teaching is very good. A significant proportion of very good or excellent lessons were also seen in design and technology, history, modern languages, physical education, personal, social and health education and religious education.
18. The school's policy on teaching and learning is clearly helping to raise standards, since the main strengths of teaching noted by inspectors reflect its approaches. For example, the ways in which teachers organise their lessons – giving pupils clear objectives, then setting them engaging activities which help them to learn, and reviewing what they have learned at the end – are particularly strong features. The methods used by science teachers are particularly good at stimulating the interest of pupils of all levels of attainment. In French and in English, the wide variety of materials, exercises and methods used in lessons ensures that pupils' concentration and interest remains high. Source material is well used by teachers in history to allow pupils to compare and contrast evidence and to detect bias and propaganda. Geography lessons contain a variety of approaches, including the good use of computers to process data and draw conclusions about population settlements. In citizenship, activities such as a mock election and a live drama - featuring pupils from another Leicestershire school - on the theme of crime and punishment, serve to heighten awareness of crucial issues in society. A wide range of materials, including videos, is provided in religious education to allow pupils to learn *from* religion as well as learning *about* religion. In physical education, good lesson structure ensures that pupils are well prepared for physical activities and can thoroughly evaluate their own performance and that of others.
19. The quality of teachers' planning has improved since the last inspection, so that overall, pupils of all levels of attainment learn well. In art and design, lessons are well planned to integrate the learning of theory with practical activities. In design and technology and ICT schemes of work are well planned to meet the needs of most groups of pupils. The school's strategy to raise progress and achievement for gifted, talented and higher attaining pupils has worked effectively in most subjects, and teachers mostly have high expectations of their pupils. However, the highest attainers do not have enough opportunities in design and technology to extend their learning, and in physical education activities are not always matched to abilities so that higher attainers are not always sufficiently challenged. In music lessons, where teaching overall is unsatisfactory, the work is often too easy, especially for higher attaining instrumentalists, although there are some very good instrumental tuition sessions. In mathematics the pace of learning is reduced in a minority of lessons by some repetition and by not moving more quickly to challenging new work.
20. The greatest strength of the teaching in all subjects is in the management of the pupils and the high quality of relationships established between teachers and their pupils. Learning is good overall, mainly because pupils show a great deal of interest in the work they are undertaking, and concentrate hard on the tasks at hand. They show their teachers a great deal of respect. Teachers have good subject knowledge and many have good questioning skills. In mathematics, for example, teachers in some lessons

use incisive and encouraging questioning of pupils to make a speedy diagnosis of the pupils' understanding, and then use the knowledge gained to promote some high quality learning.

21. The teaching of literacy is satisfactory across subjects; there is good emphasis on the development of a technical and evaluative vocabulary through the use of key words in all subjects. Not enough attention is given to spelling, punctuation and handwriting in some subjects, and in particular, more work is needed on sentence punctuation. The use of number is well taught in many areas to improve the accuracy of pupils' work and their ability to detect patterns and relationships when looking at evidence; there are particularly good examples of this in science and geography. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to take full advantage of the potential offered by computers to help them to learn, particularly in English, mathematics, science, art and design, geography, music and physical education. There are, however, good examples in subjects such as science, design and technology, geography, history and French, of pupils using ICT to research, to process data, and to improve the accuracy and quality of presentation of their work.
22. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. Teachers are skilful when using individual education plans to plan their lessons in order to take account of pupils' different needs. Tasks were adapted for special educational needs pupils in history, English, ICT and French. Support staff work well with a range of pupils to encourage them to learn by themselves.
23. The small number of pupils for whom English is not their mother tongue make good progress and are fully integrated into the life of the school.

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

24. The school provides a broad and well-balanced curriculum that meets the interests, aptitudes and particular needs of all pupils. Since the last inspection the curriculum has been under review and many of the difficulties identified then have now been addressed. Sufficient time is now allocated to ICT and the issues of balance and adequate coverage have been largely resolved. All National Curriculum subjects and religious education are now taught discretely and this has had a positive impact on pupil achievement. The additional time given to English, mathematics and science supports the literacy and numeracy strategies well. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is taught in all years and the introduction of the well-managed strategy for Years 7 to 9 have made significant contributions to pupils' confidence, literacy and numeracy skills and enjoyment of school life. These initiatives have enabled the school to make significant progress in strengthening teaching and learning. The improvement in schemes of work, academic monitoring and revisions in the assessment policy have all added to the development of pupils' learning. In most subjects, for example, in English, mathematics, science, art and design, geography, history, ICT, modern languages and religious education, the opportunities for learning are good and work is well planned and organised. Statutory requirements are met in all subjects with the exception of music and the provision for drama in English.
25. For pupils with special educational needs, the teaching of basic skills is very good, and there are high standards of monitoring and record keeping. There is caring provision for pupils with disabilities and learning difficulties. Support staff work very well to enable pupils to develop independence.
26. Provision for literacy is satisfactory overall in the curriculum. The new strategy for teaching literacy has been adopted successfully within the English department, and is

beginning to raise standards through precise, targeted activities and regular spelling tests. Key words are attractively displayed in all subject areas. The planned Literacy Diary and the developments to the Quiet Reading time are promising but not yet fully implemented.

27. Provision for developing pupils' numeracy skills is good across subjects. The numeracy co-ordinator is working with good collaboration from other teachers to implement the National Numeracy Strategy across the curriculum, and draft numeracy and calculator policies have been produced. Visits to the Think Tank Museum and Galleries of Justice have been good ways of linking mathematics to other subjects, and further projects are planned to take place with other subjects in the current term.
28. The provision for, and range of, extra-curricular activities is good. The school has improved its provision at lunchtimes and after school. Clubs for French, German and ICT, along with booster classes for mathematics, English and science in Year 9 all help to raise achievement by using time productively. The many sporting activities such as netball, girls' fitness, hockey, football, cricket and athletics, and a wide range of enrichment activities enable pupils to develop their skills and interests. Opportunities are also there for pupils to develop their own clubs and activities. The chess club is run by pupils and is well supported. There is also open access to the library which is well used and has a busy and productive atmosphere. Field trips in geography, museum trips in history and visits by artists to the school all enable pupils to extend their knowledge through experience.
29. The curriculum provided for pupils, the extensive learning support and clear recognition of the needs of all pupils regardless of race, gender, disability or ability is a real strength in the school. The early identification of pupils who are gifted and/or talented ensures that they make good progress in most subjects. The complex timetable arrangements have created occasional difficulties of equality of access and continuity, especially in design and technology and music.
30. An excellent programme of PSHE is taught well by form tutors. It is extremely well co-ordinated and this ensures that planning, delivery and monitoring of this aspect of the curriculum is effective. It covers a broad range of topics such as rights and responsibilities, citizenship, decision-making and bullying as well as the statutory requirements for sex and drugs education. The involvement of form tutors in the programme strengthens pastoral care and relationships. The citizenship component of the programme is a real strength. There is provision for self-assessment, review and action planning that is well structured and challenging. The PSHE lessons seen during the inspection were generally good. These enabled pupils to develop skills and attitudes and to explore a wide range of moral and social issues.
31. Provision for careers education and guidance is very good. These are provided in partnership with the careers advisory service. In PSHE, pupils are encouraged to explore their strengths and weaknesses and examine possible careers, which enables pupils to be aware of the advice and guidance available to them prior to selecting their subject choices in their next school.
32. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is very good. Productive links have been established with the Leicester Education-Business Consortium, for example, to look at industrial processes. Blaby District Council has provided financial support for Artists and Writers in Residence as well as providing the equipment for the school to run a mock election. The University of the Third Age supports work on the Second World War in history. There are many links with local sports clubs that help pupils to develop their skills.

33. A lot of care is given to the transition of pupils from primary school to high school, to ensure very good continuity of education between Years 6 and 7. The school works hard to prepare pupils for the next phase of education through carefully planned subject bridging units. An excellent portfolio of information on each pupil is transferred to the next school.
34. Overall, the school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC). The focus of the school on good and respectful relationships and the creation of an environment based upon clear values and principles influence every aspect of school life and pupils' personal development. There is clear recognition by the school that the SMSC development of pupils has a vital impact on pupil progress, attitudes and achievement. There are many references to these aspects of pupils' personal development in the school's documentation, especially with regard to behaviour, equal opportunities and bullying. Good policy documents relating to SMSC and collective worship have been produced. The PSHE programme is an integral part of the school's delivery of SMSC opportunities. It provides a valuable starting point for a planned and co-ordinated approach to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development across the school in terms of a shared policy for the planning, delivery and monitoring of this aspect of the curriculum. The religious education syllabus provides very good opportunities in these areas, where there are valuable opportunities for reflection and discussion of spiritual and moral issues.
35. Provision for students' spiritual development is good overall. Assemblies take place twice each week for each class. Assemblies rarely constitute worship although one good assembly on the theme of the Good Samaritan did have treating others with kindness as a specific theme. Tutor time provides some opportunities to reflect on issues by using themes for the week, but these are applied in an inconsistent manner and provide little opportunity for spiritual development. The statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship is not met. However, pupils' attitudes do show a clear respect for the beliefs, feelings and values of others, and these contribute well to their spiritual development. There is some evidence of planning in departments for spiritual development, but this is inconsistent and lacks structure. The PSHE programme contributes well in this area through the consistent application of teaching style that encourages pupils to develop good attitudes in reflecting on their own experiences and forming views about world issues of justice, relationships and personal beliefs. In some subjects, opportunities for the spiritual development of students were observed. For example, the religious education curriculum makes a very good contribution; pupils are encouraged to consider and respond to questions about the meaning and purpose of life, and are aware of, and have respect for, the values and beliefs of others. In English, the study of literary texts invites empathy with certain characters, the understanding of their feelings and impulses. There are also some very good examples of pupils giving expression to their innermost thoughts and feelings through art and sculpture.
36. Provision for moral development is very good. Opportunities are targeted largely through the PSHE programme. Topics such as attitudes to bullying, sex education, drugs awareness, equal opportunities and ethical issues, provide a challenging curriculum for discussion and the development of attitudes and values. The school has clear expectations of pupils knowing right from wrong and they respond very well when they are corrected. The headteacher and staff are excellent role models for pupils. Assemblies make a significant contribution to this area. For example, topics such as forgiveness, caring for others and respecting each other all enable pupils to develop good moral attitudes. Several subjects contribute well in providing opportunities for moral development. In religious education, pupils are able to respond to aspects of morality using their knowledge of religious and ethical issues; they explore feelings, develop attitudes and values and form judgements very well. These opportunities

enable them to develop moral principles and values. In physical education, pupils demonstrate their attention to fair play and playing to rules.

37. Provision for social development is excellent. The school provides significant opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and develop social understanding. The PSHE programme provides many opportunities in this area, in terms of specific curriculum provision, such as rights and responsibilities, healthy environment, citizenship and sex education, which all provide a valuable contribution to developing attitudes and fostering independent thinking. The TIM scheme trains pupil counsellors to be a listening ear for pupils with problems. In addition, lunchtime clubs and sporting activities all help to develop skills of social interaction. The school council provides very good opportunities for pupils to develop their communication skills and make important contributions to the life of the school. School council sub-groups such as the eco-group and the anti-racist group enable pupils to be actively involved in discussion and action. For example, they have been successful in obtaining a grant for the eco-group of £250 from the local district council. Most subjects contribute towards social development. For example, pupils work extremely well together and many opportunities are provided for them to express their views in paired work, group work and general discussion. They respect each other's contributions. Pupils create a safe environment, free from intimidation and their concern for others is evident in class and around the school.
38. Provision for students' cultural development is very good. There are several opportunities for students to be involved in activities that extend their cultural development. The school's curriculum provides very well with planned opportunities for pupils to develop an awareness of the rich variety of different cultures and traditions that exist in this country. The co-ordinator of multi-cultural education ensures that multi-cultural features are build into the curriculum in all departments. The PSHE programme provides many opportunities. For example, topics such as racism, stereotyping and discrimination enable pupils to develop their attitudes and values. There are aspects of religious education that make a significant contribution, especially in terms of the study of different religions and the cultures that support them. In art and design, there are many examples of multi-cultural topics and artefacts used in research. The quality of display around the school highlights the rich diversity of cultures around the world. The study of cultural influences in history, such as the plight of black people in America striving to obtain their civil rights enable pupils to develop an awareness of racist issues. Fieldtrips in geography, visits to France and theatre trips all enable pupils to develop a keen awareness of local culture.
39. Since the previous inspection there has been a significant improvement in the opportunities for spiritual development, although the statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship for all pupils is still not met. The provisions for moral, social and cultural development have all improved and continue to be great strengths.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. This is a caring school where the personal and academic needs of individuals are identified and consistently met by all staff.
41. The educational and personal support and guidance that pupils receive is excellent. A lot of care is given to the transition of pupils from primary school to high school. Pupils stay with their tutor group throughout their time at school. These small communities provide a secure base for pupils and help them to integrate into the larger school community with ease. The excellent relationship that tutors form with their group contributes significantly to both the personal development and academic progress of pupils.

42. Monitoring of pupils' academic and personal development is excellent. Data on monitoring slips, merits, attendance and assessment information are used to specifically identify any pupils who are underachieving. The recently introduced mentoring scheme gives tutors quality time with pupils to discuss a range of issues with them and help them set meaningful and achievable targets to improve their overall academic performance. Monthly year team meetings provide a forum for individual pupils to be discussed and strategies put in place to support those identified as having specific needs.
43. The excellent PSHE programme that pupils receive contributes significantly to their personal development. Careers education, which is extremely well integrated into these lessons, raises pupils' awareness of the need to consider the importance of making appropriate choices when deciding on which subjects to study at GCSE. Pupils are encouraged to develop self-knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses in both academic and personal terms.
44. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are excellent. Pupils whose attendance is becoming a cause for concern are swiftly identified and support systems put in place. The Education Welfare Service works in partnership with staff and effectively supports the school.
45. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. Pupils know and understand the standard that constitutes acceptable behaviour. A range of strategies, such as daily reports and pastoral support plans, are in place to support pupils. The merits system is used well to reinforce positive behaviour and attitudes.
46. Procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are excellent. The ethos of the school promotes mutual respect for all. For example, the school council formed a subgroup on anti-racism and their report was presented to a teacher management meeting. Further awareness is developed through many subjects, particularly drama. The TIM counsellors play an important role in identifying potential problems and form an important part of the school's provision.
47. The arrangements for child protection are excellent and arrangements for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good. All the appropriate procedures are in place. There is regular liaison with those responsible for the care of children being looked after by the local education authority. Health and safety procedures ensure the safety and protection of pupils.
48. Most procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. The results of external examinations are systematically analysed and this makes a significant contribution to the high standards that pupils achieve. The achievement of boys and girls is also monitored and some departments are making use of this information to plan strategies to address any differences. Modern foreign languages, for example, are using ICT to engage more effectively the interest of boys in this subject. There are no significant differences between the performance of pupils from ethnic minority groups and the rest of the school community.
49. Use of assessment information is good. National test results from primary schools, and data from the school's own assessment procedures, are used to build up a profile of pupils' attainment when they enter the school. This profile forms a baseline for monitoring pupils' progress over their time in school and the information is sent to all members of the teaching staff. Predicted grades for end of Year 9 national tests enable teaching staff to set realistic targets for pupils. Pupils are aware of their predicted grades and the level they are working at throughout their time in the school. Pupils'

work is marked and annotated with National Curriculum levels, together with how they can improve and reach a higher level. The marking system is clearly understood by both pupils and parents. However, in physical education assessment procedures are not followed consistently by all teachers and do not allow clear enough targets for improvement to be set for individual pupils. In music, assessments are over-generous and not enough is known about pupils' capabilities when they join the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. Parents consider the quality and effectiveness of what the school provides and achieves to be excellent. Parents strongly value Leysland High School's educational philosophies. Twenty-five parents attended the meeting prior to the inspection and seventy per cent of parents completed the questionnaire on parents' views.
51. The parents who responded to the questionnaire and attended the meeting felt their children liked coming to school, were expected to work hard and were making good progress. They feel that the school is well led and managed and that teaching is good. They would feel comfortable about approaching the school if they had any concerns and the range of activities outside of lessons is good. The only concern expressed, by a small minority of parents, was about the amount of homework that children receive.
52. Inspectors agreed with parents' positive comments, but not wholly with the concern over homework. The team felt that when homework was given it was of a high quality that extended pupils' learning and the development of independent learning skills. Many examples of independent research, for example, were evident in the scrutiny of pupils' work. However, the amount of homework that pupils receive varies between subjects and does not always meet the time identified in the school's homework policy that is printed in the pupils' organiser. This has an adverse effect on the preparation of pupils for the homework and coursework they may be required to undertake when they transfer into the next phase of education, and restricts learning in physical education and music.
53. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is excellent. Tutors and heads of year ensure that ongoing contact is established with parents of pupils who are causing concern. Most parents willingly collaborate with the school to resolve difficulties when they occur. The high turnout of parents for consultation evenings, and the 100 per cent attendance at the annual reviews for pupils with special educational needs, are evidence of this.
54. The quality of information provided for parents, particularly about the progress of their children, is excellent. There has been a significant improvement in the annual reports to parents since the previous inspection and they are now of a high quality. The information they contain gives parents a clear view of what their children study, the level they are working at and their attitude towards their studies. The personal statement by pupils, and the review by form tutor and the headteacher make these reports pertinent to the individual. Parents clearly understand the marking system and its links to National Curriculum attainment levels which enable them to keep a regular check on progress. A regular newsletter keeps parents informed of the daily life of the school.
55. The contribution of parents to children's learning is excellent. The thriving Leysland High Association organises both social and fundraising events. Through their monthly open meeting, parents are consulted about a range of issues by the school. This forum also arranges information evenings for parents; recently an evening on drug abuse. The association was instrumental in setting up the highly successful Year 9 Prom last academic year. The very good results attained by pupils in external examinations are due in part to the high quality support from parents.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. The headteacher and senior management team give the school excellent leadership, because they are thoroughly committed to the aims of raising achievement and promoting the personal development of pupils as set out in the Leysland Charter, and work very hard to involve all groups in the school in realising those aims.
57. The Leysland Charter gives the school very clear sets of aims and values, which permeate the life and work of the school. The school prospectus sets out these aims and values very clearly for parents and pupils, and offers simple explanations of the school's expectations regarding the quality of relationships and standards of behaviour. These expectations are posted around the school to act as reference points and to remind pupils and teachers of the guiding principles of the school. There is, therefore, an exceptionally strong reflection of the school's aims and values in its work at all levels.
58. The school's development planning process is very effective, because it takes account of the school's strengths, weaknesses and opportunities, and because it involves wide consultation in its completion. The school is currently entering into a new five-year development plan. This plan has an overall focus on raising achievement through three strands which appropriately reflect national priorities for the education of pupils in the 11-14 age range: the national Key Stage 3 Strategy, educational inclusion, and teaching and learning. The development priorities of the school are therefore aimed squarely at fundamental ways of improving learning for all children. The importance of the approaches advocated in the plan is made clear to all teachers through planning meetings with heads of subject and comprehensive training and professional development programmes. The active involvement of all teachers and support staff in understanding how they can play a part in helping the school to achieve its priorities, and how these will improve the learning of pupils, means that there is a high level of commitment to school improvement. The school has a very good capacity to succeed still further.
59. There are very good systems in place for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance and for taking effective action where necessary. The school makes very good use of data to analyse its own overall performance and that of individual departments and individual pupils. It uses ICT well to process and make sense of this data. Its analysis of data is shared widely in the school, so that most teachers and departments are good at using data to evaluate their own performance. A comprehensive programme for the observation of the lessons of all teachers by the senior management team is exceptionally well done: teachers get full and helpful evaluations of their work and senior managers become fully appraised of the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and learning in their school. Action is taken to support teachers or subjects where necessary. A joint evaluation of school effectiveness process, undertaken annually with the local education authority's link adviser, further serves to keep the school reflecting on its strengths and areas for improvement. There is much evidence that such management systems have produced very significant improvements in the quality of the work of departments, most notably in ICT, religious education and French; in improved curriculum arrangements for the humanities subjects and revised approaches to teaching and learning in mathematics.
60. Management systems established by the senior management team help to support good leadership and management of subjects. Leadership and management of music is unsatisfactory; this is the one subject where, having clearly identified weaknesses in performance, the school's efforts to support teaching and learning have not been successful. Science, art and design, citizenship, design and technology, history, ICT

and religious education departments are very well led and managed, imparting a high degree of enthusiasm for teaching and learning and for improvement in subject performance.

61. The leadership and management of special educational needs are very good. The new special educational needs Code of Practice is being fully implemented. The special educational needs co-ordinator is knowledgeable, highly qualified and extremely well organised. Full and up-to-date records are kept to enable the progress of statemented pupils and others with disabilities or learning difficulties to be monitored in detail. The additional funding allocated for those with special educational needs is carefully controlled and efficiently spent.
62. Governors have an exceptionally good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and of the issues facing the school as it develops. This understanding is gained through the very good quality of information and briefing governors receive from the headteacher and other teachers, and from governors' frequent visits to the school. When governors visit the school to look at particular aspects of the school's work, they write helpful reports for the attention of their colleagues. Because they are so well informed, governors play a very full part in shaping the future direction of the school. They have, for example, taken over responsibility from the local education authority for school buildings development and maintenance, so that they can allocate the resources more effectively to support the school's own priorities. Inspectors were struck by the degree of confidence with which governors were able to talk about all aspects of the school's performance; governors clearly feel fully involved in decision-making in the school.
63. Governors set demanding targets for improvement in the school's academic performance, but the improvement in test results for 14 year-olds meant that these targets were exceeded for all of the subjects involved. While governors are for the most part effective in fulfilling their statutory duties, they have not taken action to ensure that the school meets requirements for the daily act of collective worship and for giving pupils full National Curriculum programmes of study in music and drama.
64. There is a good range of staff with appropriate qualifications to cover the curriculum, with the majority teaching in their specialist subject and excellence in the science department. There is a comprehensive programme of continuing professional development including timetabled induction for all new staff, in-class support for individual teachers, a staff mentoring system, a full programme of in-house training opportunities and access to external courses. Teachers are also offered opportunities to work with the 'family' of schools for standardisation of subject assessments and subject development. There are detailed records of the attendance of teachers and other staff on continuing professional development activities; their impact, benefits for pupils and value for money are evaluated fully.
65. The performance management process and procedures are fully embedded into school practice and have a positive impact on teaching and learning, pupil progress and attainment. Continuing professional development activities are well focused on the individual teacher's needs and linked to the school improvement plan. There has been significant and very successful support, for example, for improvements in teaching and provision for religious education.
66. Support staff are well qualified and are valued by teachers and governors for their positive impact within the school. There has been an increase of numbers within the administration team following a review of roles and responsibilities and plans are already being implemented for the performance management of all support staff, which

will be piloted with the administrative team. There is good support for both pupils and staff from the librarian.

67. Overall, accommodation for the school is satisfactory. Internally, school is generally a pleasant place to be, with an atmosphere conducive to work in an orderly environment. Rooms are kept in good decorative order, and classrooms and corridors are greatly enhanced by good displays, some of which are outstanding. These displays make a major contribution to the attractive ambience of the school. The headteacher and governors make excellent and imaginative use of the limited space available and work is ongoing to ensure that learning is not inhibited by limitations in the accommodation. However, some areas, including one of the art rooms, do not have sufficient access to natural light. Office accommodation for staff with management responsibilities, though sometimes small, is adequate and results in real gains in efficiency.
68. Despite the best efforts of the headteacher and governors, the 20 per cent increase in the number of pupils over the last four years has caused limitations in the accommodation to become apparent. Many classrooms are slightly too small for 28 pupils, especially in Year 9. Although teachers cope very well, opportunity for some activities, such as role-play, is limited, and even the newly refurbished science laboratories become cramped when a whole class is undertaking practical work. In history, the single room dedicated to the subject is decorated with displays of pupils' work, historical data, posters, and specialist vocabulary which are prolific, colourful and attractive. These assets create an excellent historical atmosphere which is more limited in other rooms used in teaching the subject. In other subjects there are more specific limitations. In music, for example, groups of pupils sometimes have to be split, with a changeover during the lesson, and in physical education there are no changing facilities suitable for disabled pupils.
69. The quantity and quality of learning resources within departments are good overall. The amounts given to departments are sufficient to teach the National Curriculum and have been increasing for the last three years. Departments are able to bid for development funding to support new initiatives.
70. History is generously resourced with new books and a good range of artefacts is borrowed from the museum service. The new subject of citizenship has been splendidly resourced. Good resource provision is the norm in English where there is a good range of stock and banks of good quality teacher-generated worksheets. Science is well resourced. In art and design, the use of the library supports the subject well but there is a shortage of software for ICT. In design and technology, resources are well matched to the newly developed programmes of study. Geography is resourced with relevant texts and modern languages has new text books and makes good use of ICT. In religious education, there are good audio and video resources. In mathematics, resource provision is satisfactory with useful graphic calculators but few artefacts offering tactile experience. In two subjects resources are inadequate. In drama, there is a lack of resources such as props, and in music, there are many shortages of equipment, instruments and music. Most pianos are unplayable because they are damaged.
71. The good provision of computers within the ICT lessons and within a good range of their other subjects enables pupils to have good experiences that support their learning. Most computers are new and of good quality. Many pupils use their home computers to support their schoolwork.
72. The library and resources centre has a satisfactory ratio of books to pupils. About 28 per cent of the books are fiction. The attractive centre is well used to support learning, especially by pupils researching topics in history, religious education, science, English,

design and technology, art and design, music and geography. The centre has nine computers with Internet access. The centre has magazines and videos for revision but no music CDs. A full-time librarian provides very good support for pupils' independent learning.

73. Resources outside the school make a very effective contribution to pupils' learning. English makes good use of visiting poets. Pupils go on field trips in geography and visit museums and galleries in history. Art has an artist in residence and organises workshops to broaden the experience of the pupils. In science, pupils visit the Space Exploration Department of the University of Leicester and the University of the Third Age supports work in history and citizenship. Taster lessons in German at Countesthorpe College widen pupils' choices and offer a new cultural dimension.
74. The school's finances are very carefully managed, with the guiding principle that pupils on roll in the school at any point in time should benefit in full from the resources the school has at its disposal. The school does not sanction a deficit which would need to be repaid by later generations; likewise it has been spending its reserves to the extent that it forecasts a surplus of less than 1% of its annual income by the end of this financial year. It is excellent at directing spending to places where funding is most needed, because communications are so good between those who make the main financial decisions and those who spend the money in the departments of the school. The comprehensive development planning process ensures, through discussion between line managers as well as documentation, that money is available to support spending priorities within departments which match the overall school improvement plan. Departments can bid for this money if they have a demonstrable case.
75. The school has used its specific grants very well to support improvements in literacy, numeracy and ICT.
76. The school is particularly good at getting the best value from its limited resources. It consults very widely when setting its priorities for spending and development, so that the degree of support for the leadership and the direction of the school is exceptionally strong, and it meets the needs of its population very well indeed. The school systematically compares its performance with that of others, and questions its own performance openly and constructively, so that it ensures its pupils get very good value. It reviews the quality and cost of its services systematically, so that, for example, in such aspects as catering and buildings maintenance, the school and its pupils get as good a service as possible given the funding available.
77. The leadership and management of Leysland High School is outstanding. The school has improved very well since the last inspection. The socio-economic circumstances of the pupils are above average, and their standards of attainment on entry are average; there is an above-average proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs. Standards rise during the pupils' time in school and pupils achieve well because they are well taught. The personal development of the pupils in their time at school is excellent. Overall, then, the school is very effective. When the achievements of the pupils and the way in which they are taught are weighed against the relatively low unit costs of their education, Leysland High School is judged to give very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

78. In order to further improve standards, governors should:
 - (1) Improve attainment and the quality of education in music by:

- ensuring that pupils' capabilities in music are fully assessed when they join the school, and that schemes of work and lessons are planned to develop the capabilities of pupils of all attainment levels;
- ensuring that pupils' practical skills develop appropriately;
- giving the subject enough time to cover the full National Curriculum Programmes of Study.

(Paras: 7, 8,19, 29,139,140,141,142)

(2) Further extend opportunities for pupils to use ICT in all subjects of the curriculum by:

- continuing the good work already underway to encourage teachers to incorporate more use of computers into their teaching and learning programmes;
- further developing the skills and confidence of teachers in using computers;
- ensuring that pupils can have appropriate access to computers when they are needed to extend learning in lessons.

(Paras: 21, 80, 82, 92, 103, 105, 107, 120, 130, 138, 141,149)

In addition to the key issues above, the following minor issues should also be included in the governors' action plan:

- Meet statutory requirements for the daily act of collective worship, for the singing aspects of the programmes of study for music, and for the drama aspects of the English curriculum;
(Paras: 24, 35, 39, 63, 81, 140)
- Ensure that the school's homework policy is implemented fully, and that teachers, pupils and parents are clear about the amount of homework that pupils should be given to complete each week;
(Paras: 52, 141, 149)
- Continue to extend good practice to support the achievement of higher attainers, particularly in design and technology, music and physical education.
(Paras: 7, 19, 110, 141, 146)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|-----|
| Number of lessons observed | 106 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 55 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number | 11 | 35 | 38 | 17 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Percentage | 10 | 33 | 36 | 16 | 4 | 0 | 0 |

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

Y7 – Y9

| | |
|---|-----|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll | 672 |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | 61 |

Special educational needs

Y7 – Y9

| | |
|---|----|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | 27 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 79 |

English as an additional language

No of pupils

| | |
|---|---|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 7 |
|---|---|

Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

| | |
|--|----|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 25 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 12 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 5.4 |
| National comparative data | 8.1 |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.6 |
| National comparative data | 1.1 |

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

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

| | | | | |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
| | 2001 | 96 | 114 | 210 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above | Boys | 65 | 68 | 83 |
| | Girls | 97 | 84 | 97 |
| | Total | 162 | 152 | 180 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above | School | 77 (62) | 72 (71) | 86 (76) |
| | National | 64 (63) | 66 (65) | 66 (59) |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above | School | 36 (25) | 46 (42) | 64 (45) |
| | National | 31 (28) | 43 (42) | 34 (30) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above | Boys | 68 | 78 | 80 |
| | Girls | 98 | 93 | 100 |
| | Total | 166 | 171 | 180 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above | School | 79 (68) | 81 (76) | 86 (86) |
| | National | 65 (64) | 68 (66) | 64 (62) |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above | School | 28 (29) | 45 (52) | 47 (44) |
| | National | 31 (31) | 42 (39) | 33 (29) |

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

| Categories used in the Annual School Census | No of pupils on roll | Number of fixed period exclusions | Number of permanent exclusions |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| White – British | 580 | 0 | 0 |
| White – Irish | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| White – any other White background | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – White and Black Caribbean | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – White and Black African | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – White and Asian | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – any other mixed background | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British - Indian | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British - Pakistani | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – Caribbean | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – African | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – any other Black background | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Chinese | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Any other ethnic group | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| No ethnic group recorded | 61 | 0 | 0 |

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

Teachers and classes

Financial information

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y9

| | |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 35.1 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 19.1 |

Education support staff: Y7 – Y9

| | |
|---|-------|
| Total number of education support staff | 13 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 252.5 |

Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y9

| | |
|---|------|
| Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes | 79.1 |
|---|------|

Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y9

| | |
|-------------|------|
| Key Stage 3 | 24.5 |
|-------------|------|

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| | |
|----------------|-----------|
| Financial year | 2001/2002 |
|----------------|-----------|

| | £ |
|--|-----------|
| Total income | 1,620,405 |
| Total expenditure | 1,636,630 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,514 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 45,436 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 29,211 |

Recruitment of teachers

| | |
|--|-----|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years | 4.8 |
| Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years | 7.3 |
| | |
| Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE) | 0 |
| Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE) | 0 |
| 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 | 672 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 468 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 47 | 47 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 44 | 43 | 2 | 0 | 11 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 38 | 47 | 5 | 1 | 9 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 24 | 49 | 10 | 2 | 15 |
| The teaching is good. | 41 | 46 | 1 | 0 | 12 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 30 | 47 | 9 | 2 | 12 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 53 | 42 | 3 | 0 | 2 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 63 | 32 | 2 | 0 | 3 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 32 | 49 | 10 | 1 | 8 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 42 | 46 | 2 | 0 | 10 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 41 | 45 | 3 | 0 | 11 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 34 | 40 | 8 | 0 | 18 |

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

ENGLISH

Overall the quality and provision in English is **very good**.

Strengths:

- Pupils' writing is interesting, imaginative and in a variety of forms to suit a range of purposes.
- They listen intently and speak with confidence.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good.

Areas for improvement:

- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use computers for drafting, editing and presenting their work.
- There are too few opportunities for drama within English lessons.

79. Standards of work seen during the inspection are above the national average by the end of Year 9. Results in the national tests at age 14 were above the national average and were in line with those of similar schools in 2001; they improved strongly at the higher Levels 6 and above in 2002. The attainment of girls is considerably higher than boys, in line with the national trend, but the gap narrowed a little in 2002. More able pupils are competent in speaking and listening. Pupils are attentive listeners, showing respect to their teachers and each other, and speak with confidence in a range of situations. This competence was shown well in a discussion on homelessness. Pupils' attainment is above the expected standard when reading aloud from a range of texts and many read perceptively for inference. They write well for a range of purposes and produce imaginative and interesting work. Powerful poems were written by pupils as a result of the visit of two poets to the school, and Year 9 pupils have reviewed some sophisticated literature that they have read. Handwriting and presentation are good.
80. Pupils enter the school with attainment that is in line with national standards. They make good progress during their three years, with the more able achieving particularly well. Pupils with special educational needs progress rapidly owing to superb teaching and support in class; they are taught in small groups with appropriate strategies and resources. The quality and quantity of all pupils written work improves over the three years, but there are insufficient opportunities for them to use computers in English for drafting, editing and presenting their work. Reading develops well, with books that are studied often linked thematically to other written and oral activities.
81. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. The teaching seen was all of at least good quality; in two thirds of lessons it was very good, with some of it outstanding. Teachers' planning, range of strategies used in the classroom and firm, patient control lead to effective lessons. Pupils' interests are stimulated and maintained through varied teaching methods, although the pace should be more appropriate for the most able pupils in Year 7. The use of pair, individual and whole-class activities maintains concentration and motivates pupils. A dynamic drama lesson was observed, in which pupils' enjoyment was clear. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to do drama, which is part of the English curriculum, owing in part to a lack of access to the theatre. Year 7 pupils showed their competence in computer-based tasks, which greatly motivated them through careful planning and splendid teaching. Homework is set regularly and well marked, and assessment tasks measure attainment each term.

Assessment results are recorded, but this needs to be done more systematically in order to monitor and evaluate pupils' performance and to plan future work.

82. Overall, there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. There has been an improvement in the quality of teaching but the use of computers overall in English has declined. Resources for the department are sufficient, but the accommodation in the semi-open plan classroom is inadequate, as pupils are disturbed by others working or passing nearby. Attractive displays celebrate pupils' work. In all other ways the high standards noted in the last report have been maintained.
83. The strong and talented teachers are well led and managed by the head of department. The subject very clearly reflects the aims and values of the school with its strong emphasis on raising achievement and on developing pupils' personal qualities. Additional lessons to extend learning for the most able Year 9 pupils have contributed to the raising of their standards in the national tests at age 14. Links with upper and feeder schools maintain a continuity of the curriculum in English.
84. Provision for literacy is satisfactory overall in the curriculum. The new strategy for teaching literacy has been adopted successfully within the English department, and is beginning to raise standards through precise, targeted activities and regular spelling tests. Key words are attractively displayed in all subject areas. Speaking and listening are strong in most subjects, including mathematics, science and PSHE. The standard of written work varies across the curriculum, with insufficient attention to spelling, cursive handwriting and punctuation in some subjects. In particular, more work on sentence punctuation is needed. The planned Literacy Diary and the developments to the Quiet Reading time are promising but not yet fully implemented.

MATHEMATICS

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

Strengths:

- Pupils' overall rate of progress in acquiring mathematical knowledge and skills is good.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and there are some examples of high quality teaching and learning as a result of the teachers' incisive and encouraging questioning skills.
- The mathematics team works cohesively and with a determination to secure improvements; there is no complacency and much willingness to seek out best practice.
- The department has made a good start in implementing the National Numeracy Strategy.
- Performance data are compiled, analysed and used well to evaluate individual pupils' progress.
- Pupils have very good knowledge of their own learning in terms of National Curriculum levels.
- Mathematics rooms, although often tight for space given the number of pupils they currently hold, are nevertheless, attractive and welcoming with some good displays.

Areas for improvement:

- The mathematics curriculum does not develop pupils' problem solving and investigative skills sufficiently. The curriculum does not yet contribute greatly to wider educational areas such as citizenship.
- The quality of teaching is not consistently satisfactory or better; in particular the pace of learning needs to be improved in a minority of lessons.
- ICT is still not used extensively to support learning in mathematics.

85. Standards of pupils' work by the end of Year 9, taking account of all aspects of the National Curriculum for mathematics, are broadly in line with expectations.
86. Pupils' knowledge and skills in number, shape and space, algebra and data handling are generally good. As a result, the proportion of pupils achieving expected levels, or higher, in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 9, is above the national average. Most pupils have a good grasp of number, can perform the computations and algebraic manipulations expected for their ages and produce and interpret graphs well.
87. The last inspection report stated that pupils' investigative and application skills were below the expected levels and this is still the case. This is because pupils are given too few opportunities in mathematics lessons to use the many skills they have learned to solve problems in a wide range of interesting and relevant applications. Pupils can recognise and discuss mathematical patterns but they are very rarely required to make generalisations and their attainment in this respect is below expectations.
88. Test results in the school are going up. Over the period 1997 to 2001, the trend in pupils' performance in the tests at the end of Year 9 was similar to the national rising trend. In 2002, test results rose significantly; the proportion of pupils obtaining Level 5 or above went from 72 per cent in 2001 to 80 per cent in 2002. The figures for Level 6 or above rose from 46 per cent in 2001 to 54 per cent in 2002. In 2001, the proportion of pupils obtaining Level 7 or above (16 per cent) was smaller than that nationally (20 per cent) and in 2002 the school figure rose to 25 per cent. These improvements reflect the attention placed by the mathematics team on raising the performance at the upper levels through successfully targeted work with this specific group of pupils.
89. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. They make good progress in acquiring mathematical knowledge and skills. Pupils in the higher mathematics sets made more progress than expected and better progress than those in most other sets. These conclusions, derived from analysis of performance data, are confirmed through lesson observations where, lesson by lesson, pupils in the higher sets generally make good progress whereas in other sets, progress is mostly satisfactory. The progress of the lowest attainers with special educational needs is very good because the group sizes are small and the provision for these pupils meets their needs very well.
90. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall; they are satisfactory in a third of lessons, and good or better in a half but unsatisfactory in the remaining minority. Learning is best where teaching provides pupils with challenges at their level and does not just focus on practising routine skills. Good or very good learning, occurring in about half of lessons, can also be attributed to the teachers' incisive and encouraging questioning skills. In these lessons, through good questioning, teachers determine accurately how much pupils have understood and what the next activities should be for learning to move on with good pace. The pace of learning in some other lessons is slowed by unnecessary repetition and not moving quickly enough to demanding new work. Teachers have good subject knowledge and generally plan lessons well but teaching methods overall are still too narrow. Management of pupils and relationships with them are very good.

91. Most pupils work diligently. They lack an obvious excitement for mathematics; this was mentioned in the last report. Pupils have very good knowledge of their own learning in terms of the National Curriculum levels they have reached through the termly testing arrangements.
92. Teachers make appropriate use of textbooks and simple calculators but other teaching aids such as computers, graphical calculators and other visual aids or real life artefacts are not used frequently to provide interest and diversity to learning. Members of the mathematics team state their appreciation of the guidance on teaching and learning provided from the National Numeracy Strategy. They are making good use of the Framework for Teaching in Years 7 to 9 that the strategy has provided. There is scope for engaging in further staff development activities to develop teaching skills, including the sharing of good practice within the department that includes some high quality teaching of other effective practitioners in the school and from elsewhere.
93. Overall, improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Attainment has improved in line with the national trend from 1997 to 2001 followed by a marked improvement in 2002. The overall quality of teaching has improved to include some high quality teaching but a few instances of unsatisfactory teaching still remain. Teaching now provides for some opportunities for group work or discussion but the application of investigative and problem-solving strategies remains unsatisfactory. Too few opportunities are provided for pupils to use their mathematics in a wide range of contexts to increase not only their achievements but also to increase their interest and independence and demand greater intellectual and creative effort.
94. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The mathematics team has worked cohesively and with determination to raise the quality of educational provision and outcomes since the last inspection. The items for improvement raised in this report have already been recognised. The team has made good use of available performance information to identify areas for improvement and appropriate action has been, and is being, taken with signs of success.

SCIENCE

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

Strengths:

- The quality of teaching is excellent.
- The progress made by pupils from Year 7 to Year 9 is very good, and the standards achieved in national tests are well above average.
- The science curriculum is very good and it is enriched further by a stimulating extra-curricular programme of activities.
- The management of the department is excellent.

Areas for improvement:

- There is not ready access to computers during lessons, especially to support independent learning and the most able pupils.

95. When they come to the school, pupils' attainment in science is broadly in line with expectation. During Years 7 to 9 they progress much better than expected so that by the end of Year 9 more than four-fifths of all pupils have reached Level 5 or above. This proportion is well above the national average and puts the Leysland High School in the top ten per cent of schools nationally. The number of pupils gaining Level 6 and above is also well above average and about three times the expected number of pupils gain

Level 7 or above. The pupils' achievement is therefore very good. The very good science results at the end of Year 9 were noted in the report on the last inspection, and although there have been variations from year to year the trend is, if anything, upwards. In particular, the number of pupils gaining Level 7 or higher has shown a significant improvement in 2002. The department is actively working to improve these results still further, and a series of master classes for the most able pupils has resulted in a small number of pupils gaining Level 8 in the 2002 National Curriculum extension paper and a considerably enhanced number gaining Level 7.

96. In lessons and work seen, pupils also produce work of very high standard. Working with mixed ability groups, teachers are very skilled in their techniques for questioning pupils, and are able to ensure that all pupils submit work of the required standard. Throughout Years 7 to 9, pupils of all abilities are keen to participate in discussions through which they show that they have a good understanding of the work, for example in studying our developing understanding of disease and the methods available for conquering it. The most able pupils often produce work of quite outstanding quality, for example in a wall poster on the place of mankind in the universe. In mixed ability classes in Years 7 and 8, the teachers go to considerable lengths to secure good progress for pupils of all abilities. Support by teaching assistants for pupils with statements or who have special educational needs is excellent, and class teachers support other pupils very well indeed leading to good, and sometimes outstanding, progress, and very good results in the National Curriculum tests. In Year 9, pupils are grouped by ability and in one lesson, for example, a splendid discussion on digestion led by the teacher gave rise to really interesting comments and questions by pupils, and excellent learning.
97. The many discussions seen during the inspection week reflect pupils' very good literacy skills, and play a significant part in fostering students' awareness of issues in relation to citizenship. In scrutinising pupils' work, as well as in the classroom, it became clear that activities also support the development of numeracy skills very well. Pupils are taught to record numerical results accurately from the beginning of Year 7, and presentation of results, perhaps graphically, and interpretation of results is a real strength. Pupils use ICT fluently to help them with their work.
98. Pupils respond very well to the high level of challenge presented by the department, and grow in both knowledge and scientific wisdom throughout their time in the school.
99. The quality of teaching and learning is excellent. Teachers in the department are all excellent practitioners who pride themselves in working as a team to secure the very best progress by their pupils. Just over half of the eleven lessons observed during the inspection week were very good; all the remainder were excellent. At least two of these excellent lessons were of a quite outstanding quality in terms of the involvement of pupils in their own learning and in their response to the excellent activities prepared by the teacher. Pupils are very much aware of the levels of their performance and of what they need to do to improve. A major strength in the teaching is the use of challenging discussion to bring pupils on task and to keep them there, whether about safety in the chemistry laboratory or the reasons for maintaining a small quantity of smallpox virus in research institutions around the world.
100. Teachers plan their lessons very carefully, making full use of their knowledge of their subjects and of how children learn best. In lessons with Year 7, for example, the teacher was at pains to explain really carefully how to set up the task so that the appropriate results could be collected. Not only were pupils excited at the prospect of carrying out real chemistry experiments but they knew how to do so safely, allowing the teacher time to support those pupils who really needed it. In a lesson with Year 9, leading to an investigation into the relationships between force and movement, the

teacher gave pupils plenty of opportunity to practise their experimental technique, as part of the process of developing a suitable method and refining it to give reliable results. This teacher also used a diagram to make excellent connections between practical work and the associated ideas; at the same time gaining valuable insights into the levels of understanding within her group.

101. Leadership and management of the department are outstanding, and the head of department has assembled and supports a team of teachers who are not only excellent teachers as individuals, but who work together to form a department whose strengths are even greater than those of the individuals who make it up. The department is lucky to have the services of two excellent technical staff who give first rate support to teachers.
102. One of the most outstanding features of the department is the curriculum, which fulfils the requirements of the National Curriculum fully, and provides many opportunities for development of the skills associated with citizenship, and for reflection on how the work of scientists affects us all. In addition, the curriculum caters exceptionally well for the needs of both gifted and talented pupils and those who have special educational needs, by providing alternative activities tailored to the needs of each group. A very good range of extra-curricular activities, such as visits to the space exploration centre in Leicester, makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning.
103. The department makes good use of ICT whenever it enhances pupils' learning. However, there are few computers available in the department, and occasionally this has a detrimental effect on learning, for example when a pupil needs to undertake independent work using the Internet during lesson time.

ART AND DESIGN

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

Strengths:

- Pupils' display of work around school is excellent.
- The subject is very well led.
- Teaching and learning are very good; lessons are well planned with very good integration of theory and practical work.
- The use of sketch books for research and development is very good.

Areas for improvement:

- Pupils do not use computers enough to improve their work.
- The accommodation has limitations in preparation and storage areas, which restricts the range of work which can be covered.
- Three-dimensional skills are not fully developed because of limited opportunities to work in clay.

104. Teacher assessments for 2002 show that attainment at the end of Year 9 is above the national average. Boys' performance at Levels 5 and 6 was lower than that of girls. In the work seen during the inspection, the standards of attainment in Years 7 to 9 were above average with no significant difference between boys and girls. These standards are achieved because the teaching is very good and pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive. Pupils use line and tone effectively in their drawings. They explore ideas and research visual information in depth, including images from different historical and multicultural contexts. Pupils' work has most clarity and accuracy when they work from first-hand observation. Both boys and girls in Years 7 to 9 with special educational needs achieve well, benefiting from individual attention. In a Year 9 lesson on totem pole paintings, the pupils arranged shapes well and had a good understanding of spatial layout and composition. They experimented with colour mixing and created the impression of distance with scale and tonal variations. Very good connections were made to the work of contemporary artists and multicultural designs. Three-dimensional skills are not fully developed because of limited opportunities to work with clay.
105. The quality of teaching and learning is very good in Years 7 to 9. Teachers know pupils well and plan their lessons to meet individual requirements. They use their knowledge and subject expertise well and lesson preparation is very good. ICT is used as a research tool; its full potential to help in learning and design work has not yet been fully developed. Teachers make very good use of praise to encourage the participation of all and good use of question and answer ensures that pupils are actively involved. The use of clear introductions to lessons and time spent re-enforcing the work of the previous lessons enable pupils to build upon prior learning and recognise the continuity of topics. There is good emphasis on procedure, methods and care of equipment. In a Year 7 lesson on relief tiles, the teacher showed the class a good example of interpretation in claywork, using studies of natural forms as a starting point; the pupils understood the processes involved and the idea that information can be recorded in any media. A well-structured pattern of homework is in place in Years 7 to 9 and pupils are becoming more aware of their levels of work. Homework set is very good and appropriate in subject matter, and is used well to support project work. Well-constructed assessments make a significant contribution to the development and progress of pupils' work by identifying strengths and weaknesses.
106. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good throughout. This is a direct result of the high expectations and enthusiasm that the teachers bring to their work. Pupils enjoy their art and design lessons and are eager to explain their work to classmates and visitors alike. There is an effective working ethos and pupils behave and do their best and apply themselves purposefully to their work.
107. The quality of leadership and management is very good. Teaching schemes and departmental policies are clear and provide very good guidance for staff. There are not enough computer facilities in the department to allow pupils to make use of their potential for design work. Technical help, storage and preparation spaces are still inadequate. Extra-curricular activities and visits to galleries and museums have a positive effect upon the quality and range of pupils' work. Literacy is being addressed within the art and design curriculum and sketchbooks reveal that pupils are given good support with the development of their reading and writing skills. Gifted and talented pupils are now identified and supported well. The quality of display around the school is excellent.
108. Improvements since the last inspection have been very good as a result of very good teaching and clear leadership within the department. Assessment procedures have been refined in order to ensure pupils have systematic opportunities to discuss their achievements and to set targets for future development effectively. Schemes of work

now provide a systematic build-up of skills and knowledge. Time allocation is still minimal for full depth coverage of National Curriculum requirements.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

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

Strengths:

- Pupils achieve well.
- Teaching is good, with high quality schemes of work, tasks mostly well-matched to pupils' capabilities, and enthusiastic teaching from knowledgeable and skilful teachers.
- There is a high quality of relationships between teachers and their pupils.
- Teachers work very well as a team, which allows them to transfer information and plan appropriate activities as pupils move from module to module.
- The quality of leadership is very good and has developed the subject well since the last inspection.
- Pupils have the opportunity to work with a wide range of materials.

Areas for improvement:

- Too few pupils reach the highest levels of attainment.
- Some lack of care and accuracy in graphic and written communications reduce the overall quality of designs.
- Short modules of work and frequent changes of projects upset the continuity of learning and progress made by pupils.

109. Standards of attainment at the end of Year 9 are above national expectations. Only one pupil, however, was assessed at Level 7 by teachers in 2002, and this is below the national average. Pupils work well in a range of materials. Making skills are good in resistant materials (wood, metal and plastic), textiles and food, and pupils have good understanding of mechanisms, structures and computer-aided design and manufacture (CAD/CAM). Pupils' design skills are less well developed. In particular, standards of communication of design intentions are reduced by insufficient attention to good presentation and careful annotation.

110. Learning is good in lessons. Low attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, through enthusiastic teaching, appropriate support and interesting tasks matched to their ability make very good progress towards the targets set for them. Gifted pupils make satisfactory progress but are not given enough opportunities to fully extend their learning.

111. Pupils like design and technology and look forward to their lessons. They co-operate with each other and their teacher so that overall pupils make good progress and their motivation is high. They are confident in their teachers, and follow safe and hygienic procedures. This gives them confidence to carry out their work quickly and confidently.

112. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teaching seen was always at least satisfactory, and often good or very good. The teaching programmes are extremely well planned, allowing pupils to make work of quality that they are pleased to take home. Homework is used well to support both the design and planning tasks. Pupils demonstrate great interest because of their teachers' expertise. Teachers are enthusiasts, sharing their enthusiasm with their pupils; they work extremely hard to ensure that they plan together and share pupils' attainments to ensure common standards. Teachers pass on detailed information to each other about classes and pupils to ensure the effective transfer of groups between modules. However, the short-term nature of each module

and frequent change, sometimes every six weeks, adversely affects standards; pupils forget what they have learnt and have to relearn when they go back to work in particular materials. This was demonstrated when pupils in Year 9 returned to food technology having forgotten both basic hygiene and safety standards.

113. The management of design and technology is very good, with a strong emphasis on improving achievement. The departmental development plan addresses the need to amend schemes of work to offer better access to the higher levels for higher attaining pupils. The design and technology technician very effectively supports the work of the department by providing a well-organised environment and keeping stocks of materials to the correct level. The accommodation and resources are of a good quality and there is a good supply of resources. There are six specialist rooms covering different materials and processes, and they help to give pupils a broad range of experiences. Pupils are now starting to use the specialist computer rooms and are developing high-level computer-aided design skills.
114. There has been good improvement in both the provision of the good range of work that pupils produce and in the standard of that work since the last inspection. Design and technology offers pupils the opportunity to make work of quality.

GEOGRAPHY

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

Strengths:

- Teaching is good; teachers have high expectations and are committed to raising achievement.
- Teachers make good use of data and National Curriculum attainment levels to set targets and monitor pupils' progress.
- There are very good relationships between teachers and pupils.
- Pupils speak well and make good use of the language of the subject in discussions.

Areas for improvement:

- While sound progress has been made in developing the use of computers in the subject, pupils still do not have enough opportunities to use ICT to help them in their work.
- There is too much discussion in some lessons, and not enough time for pupils to complete written tasks.

115. Attainment by the end of Year 9 is above the national average for both girls and boys. This observation is confirmed by teacher assessments which for 2001 showed 85 per cent of pupils achieved National Curriculum Level 5 or above compared to a national average of 64 per cent. The trend since 1999 has shown continual improvement. Boys' results have improved significantly since 1999, although girls still outscore boys at the highest levels.
116. Attainment on entry is slightly above that found nationally although there is a wide ability range. Some Year 7 pupils were weak in basic locational features of the British Isles while other pupils were very knowledgeable. Good progress is made by pupils from Years 7 to 9 through an extending subject vocabulary, the selection and use of evidence to make informed decisions, and the use of data, graphs and charts. Most pupils show satisfactory mapping and diagrammatical skills. Higher attainers produce detailed written and analytical work. In lessons seen, Year 8 pupils were able to understand the issues and techniques required to undertake a geographical enquiry, and Year 9 pupils were confident in discussing issues surrounding the conflicts over land use. Some higher attaining pupils do not have enough challenges to take them to

higher levels of performance. Despite some special educational needs pupils having weak literacy skills they make good progress throughout Years 7 to 9.

117. The overall quality of teaching is good, and was never less than satisfactory in lessons seen. Teachers are enthusiastic and have good subject knowledge. Lessons are well prepared with clear objectives and a variety of techniques are used. The department is developing its use of computers, with Year 8 pupils using spreadsheets to support their *settlement* topic. Skilful teacher questioning elicits good subject knowledge from pupils. Lessons are generally well paced. In one very good Year 7 lesson on the use of thinking skills in geography the pace was consistently brisk and a range of challenging activities provoked a creative response to problem solving. Good learning is enhanced by the sensible use of resources, interesting work and the very good relationships that exist. The three-part lesson structure of introduction, activity and review works well, although on occasions the timing of pupil tasks needed to be more precise. Pupils display a good use of subject-specific language, but there is too much discussion in some lessons and not enough time for pupils to complete written tasks.
118. Marking provides helpful information on standards reached and shows pupils how to make progress. The majority of pupils know their National Curriculum levels and there is good use of National Curriculum level exemplars to show pupils the standards of work required. Assessment procedures are good and help teachers to plan appropriate work for their pupils.
119. There has been good improvement since the last inspection, in the standards that pupils attain, in the quality of teaching and learning and in the curriculum arrangements for geography.
120. Leadership and management are good. There is a clear vision about how to improve, focused on raising attainment and the quality of learning. Expectations are high and documentation is comprehensive. Good assessment and monitoring procedures exist to track pupil progress and achievement; both school and department data is used well in this regard. Schemes of work are detailed and are planned carefully to help pupils make progress. Some developments have been made in the use of ICT, but more use of computers could bring wider benefits to pupils' learning. Effective planning allows the department to make good contributions to the school's work on citizenship, and to the pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural progress.

HISTORY

The quality of provision for history is **very good**.

Strengths:

- Teaching is good, and lessons have a brisk pace.
- Pupils are given many good opportunities for individual research, for a great variety of presentations and for writing at length. They find topics engaging and tasks stimulating.
- Classrooms are orderly; pupils behave very well.
- Good attention is paid to general and specialised vocabulary in every lesson.
- The record of achievement folders are informative of individuals' standards to pupils and parents alike.

Areas for improvement:

- Basic literacy skills such as the use of capital letters are not applied consistently by pupils.

121. From lesson observations, scrutiny of work and talking to pupils during the inspection, attainment at the end of Year 9 is above national expectations. This is in line with teachers' assessments of attainment in 2002. There is a very wide range of attainment across the year group. The work of the highest attainers is impressive. Although there is still a gender difference and girls perform better at the end of Year 9, boys are raising their standards at Levels 5 and 6 and are doing well compared to national figures. Overall, achievement is good.
122. Attainment on entry overall is above national expectations though the range of attainment is very wide. Oral recall in history is very good and this includes the support groups for lower attainers in Year 9 as well as the mixed ability classes. With the average and lower attainers, their knowledge of history is often better than their ability to write accurately. There is a coherent and well thought out strategy in the department to enhance interest and achievement in the subject. A great variety of written work is being used, such as posters, obituary notices and diary entries. Some presentation is made using ICT. From Year 7, pupils evaluate historical information successfully from primary and secondary written and pictorial sources. Pupils settle to written tasks quickly and in a business like way. Many write fluently and well, using different styles for different audiences, but some lack attention to basic grammar and punctuation, such as the use of capital letters. Pupils show a good grasp of historical facts and of sequence of events. Through wise teaching, they develop good ability to empathise.
123. The quality of teaching and learning is good. All lessons observed promoted at least sound learning and teaching in a majority of lessons was good or very good. The teachers are competent and enthusiastic historians with a firm belief in the value of their subject for the young. Good practice is constantly shared, formally and informally. The department uses high quality work and source sheets but takes care to train pupils to research from books as well. A Year 8 class, taking part in role-play in Henry VIII's reign, took the very good opportunity to talk energetically so developing speaking skills as well as reinforcing their historical knowledge. Work given to pupils is well matched to their abilities, and this helps all pupils to make good progress. Sources for comparison and contrast train pupils to watch for bias and for reasons for propaganda. Pupils' emotions are sometimes touched as, for example, when the moral indignation of a Year 9 class was aroused by the cruel conditions endured by child factory workers in the early industrial revolution.
124. Since the last report there has been significant improvement. Pupils in Year 9 now analyse historical sources critically. There are clear policies, procedures and schemes

for teachers of the subject. Schemes of work are extremely detailed and give clear guidance on all aspects of the work. Teachers plan well to help pupils develop their skills and understanding. Record of achievement folders show pupils how to improve, and their progress is very carefully monitored.

125. The management of the department is very good. It is lively and forward looking. The subject co-ordinator provides competent leadership and she is well backed up by experienced teachers. There is a good focus on the development of ICT as a tool for history. Pupils in a Year 9 class individually and maturely used the facilities of a presentation package to combine text, images and titles most effectively. Expeditions are planned such as cross-curricular ones to the Galleries of Justice in Nottingham and the Imperial War Museum. The subject is very well resourced.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Overall the quality of provision in information and communications technology is **very good**.

Strengths:

- Pupils' attainment is above expected standards; they achieve well.
- The provision of accommodation and equipment is very good; it allows pupils to use ICT in an increasing range of subjects.
- Teaching is good, with high quality schemes of work and tasks well-matched to pupils' capabilities.
- Relationships between teachers and their pupils are of a high quality.
- Leadership for the subject in the school is very good: thoughtful planning and support given to teachers from many subjects has allowed the subject to develop very well since the last inspection.

Areas for improvement:

- Pupils do not yet have appropriate opportunities to use ICT in all subjects of the curriculum.

126. Standards of attainment at the end of Year 9 are good and are above national expectations. Pupils join the school with a wide range of prior experience that they gain from their different primary schools, but by the end of Year 9 each pupil has built well on their foundation, and achievement across Years 7 to 9 is good. Low attaining pupils, through good teaching and appropriate use of material suited to their ability, make very good progress towards the targets set for them. Gifted pupils are able to extend their learning very well; they are encouraged to solve increasingly complex problems and make their own choices of software to help them.
127. Learning is good in ICT lessons. Every pupil learns about wordprocessing, desktop publishing and other programs in a planned manner in an ICT lesson every week. These skills are used in a good range of subjects in the curriculum, and consolidate the knowledge, skills and understanding gained in their ICT lessons, developing their work to a high standard. They start to handle data effectively, using the computer in spreadsheet and database form in their ICT lessons and then use it in other subjects.
128. Pupils' response to ICT in the school is very positive. They are extremely well motivated and co-operative. They demonstrate confidence in their work and enjoy using computers for a range of activities. Some pupils use their home computers for schoolwork and the school encourages their use. Pupils use the ICT equipment extensively in the specialist rooms and they have access to computers during lunchtimes and in the library to further support their learning.

129. The quality of teaching is good overall. During the inspection, teaching was always at least satisfactory, often good and on occasions very good. Schemes of work and lessons are extremely well planned and use appropriate materials matched to the pupils' prior attainment. Lessons are enthusiastically taught, with a crisp pace and appropriate challenge. There is plenty of software for pupils to use to solve problems and extend their learning. Homework is cleverly developed to meet the needs of pupils; it is relevant, but does not need a home computer to complete.
130. There are notable uses of modern technology in other subjects. In French, for example, the use of computers has improved the motivation of boys and helped to significantly raise their standards of achievement. In design and technology, pupils are now starting to use the specialist computer rooms where they are developing high-level computer-aided design skills. Some teachers in other subjects lack sufficient computer skills and understanding, so that computer use is not integrated into all subjects, but the ICT coordinator has plans to ensure this happens. There are three specialist rooms, with good opportunities for teachers to use them in all the subjects of the curriculum. The ICT technician effectively monitors the equipment and supports non-specialist teachers when they use the equipment.
131. The co-ordination and management of ICT are very good and plans for further development of the subject are excellent. Very good management has ensured that there has been a significant improvement in both provision for ICT and the quality and range of work produced by the pupils since the last inspection. The accommodation and resources are now of a high quality and there is a good supply of machines, some based directly in classrooms.
132. ICT offers an exciting learning experience of quality for all pupils.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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

Strengths:

- Strong departmental leadership and management.
- Significant improvement since previous inspection, with consistently improving attainment.
- Some outstanding teaching.
- Good learning in lessons over time.
- The volume of written work and its quality is exceptionally good.

Areas for improvement:

- English is used too frequently as a medium for discussion in lessons.
- The use of ICT has been developed well but pupils need still further opportunities to use computers to stimulate their learning.
- There are not enough study visits to France to bring the subject alive to pupils.

133. Standards attained in French by Year 9 are now above those expected nationally. They have improved steadily in recent years. The 2001 teacher assessments showed the girls outperforming the boys at Level 5 and higher by a wide margin. Their results placed them above the national average. The boys, however, lagged behind at below the national average. In 2002, the girls continued to improve. Boys' attainment at Level 5 improved dramatically by 26 per cent which narrowed the gap to the girls to less than is found nationally.

134. Pupils achieve well and make good progress in French. Pupils listen carefully in class and consequently become more and more familiar with the sounds and patterns of the foreign language. They soon learn the skill of manipulating questions in French to form answers and this clearly gives confidence in speaking. Teachers often take opportunities to hear pupils reading out aloud in French which boosts confidence further, and also helps to improve pronunciation and intonation. The amount and quality of writing, particularly in Year 7, are unusually good. These enable pupils to progress swiftly from individual words to short, basic sentences. As they move through the school, their range of vocabulary widens and their sentences become more complex. Year 9 pupils produced some very good and ambitious pieces of writing on familiar and well-practised topics. Thus the languages department makes a significant contribution to standards of literacy.
135. Teaching is good and occasionally outstanding. Pupils learn well in lessons and over time because lessons are driven at rapid pace without losing any thoroughness. The quick pace and the wide variety of materials, exercises and methods ensure that pupils' concentration and interest levels remain high. No valuable lesson time is lost. Pupils' behaviour and attitude is very good. A clearly evident mutual respect in the classroom creates an excellent atmosphere for learning. Most pupils are keen and enthusiastic, eager to participate and volunteer answers. Pupils have ample opportunity to consolidate their learning during lessons and in their various homework tasks, which contributes to the continuity so necessary for successful language learning. Feedback both orally and in writing shows pupils how to improve. The standard of marking is high.
136. Classroom assistants provide good and regular support for pupils with special educational needs and these pupils make good progress. The department's work has traditionally focused on average attainers. In one class of largely slightly below average attainers, the amount of work assimilated and later quite accurately reproduced was remarkable thanks to the efforts and drive of the teacher which stimulated very positive responses in the pupils. The good practice of stating aims and objectives at the beginning of the lesson and then demonstrating the learning achieved at the end gives pupils welcome feedback on their achievements and progress. The department has begun to introduce a range of appropriate strategies to encourage higher attainers to achieve more and teachers are alert to the need to provide additional materials and tasks where appropriate.
137. Improvement since the last inspection is very good. Problems with leisurely pace, slow progress, repetitive tasks, restricted vocabulary and lack of pupil participation have been eliminated. Similarly, there is currently no concern about the underachievement of higher attainers and the poor use of assessment data.
138. The department is well led by example and conscientiously managed. Shortcomings in assessment practices, schemes of work and in targeted planning to improve attainment no longer exist. However, English is used too frequently as a medium for discussion in lessons. The increasing use of computers in lessons has brought benefits, particularly to the motivation and attainment of boys; teachers need to go on expanding their use of ICT to bring fresh excitement and immediacy to the subject. Similarly, there are not enough study visits to France to help bring the subject alive to pupils. Overall, the department is now well placed to continue improving.

MUSIC

Overall, the quality of provision is **poor**.

Strengths:

- Relationships are good; pupils' attitudes in lessons are mainly good and most pupils enjoy music.
- The range of opportunities and the quality of teaching in instrumental tuition is good.
- Extra-curricular work, including school productions, is highly regarded by the school community.

Areas for improvement:

- By Year 9, standards are well below average; performing, composing and listening skills are underdeveloped; achievement is unsatisfactory.
- The quality of teaching in classroom work is unsatisfactory.
- Learning does not sufficiently develop practical skills and statutory requirements to teach the full National Curriculum in music are not met.
- Inadequate time is given to the teaching of music.
- The management of music is unsatisfactory.
- There is insufficient use of ICT in music.
- Since the last inspection report there has been poor improvement.

139. Pupils enter the school with very variable musical experiences related to the quality of their musical education in their previous schools, interests and level of home support. Many instrumentalists enter with above average experience but most pupils enter with too limited experience and below average attainment in music. By Year 9, when pupils are 14, standards are well below those expected nationally. Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. A contributory factor is the time allocation given to music, which is well below that recommended for the subject at this level. Most pupils are working at about Level 4 or 5 but some talented pupils attain higher levels. Most girls attain higher levels than most boys do and girls are more involved in instrumental tuition and extra-curricular work.
140. In classroom work, pupils do not sing as a class and the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum are not met. Instrumental skills are underdeveloped; many pupils find it difficult to keep time in ensemble and use letters written on keyboards. Pupils are given insufficient opportunity to use their own instruments. Pupils' composing skills are weak. The music-reading skills of most pupils are poor; pupils use letters under notes. Pupils listen respectfully to each other when performing and when appraising but their general musical knowledge, for example of musical vocabulary, instruments, composers, forms, structures, artists and well-known pieces of music is poor.
141. Teaching in classroom work varies from good to unsatisfactory but overall is unsatisfactory because it lacks rigour and the proportion of unsatisfactory lessons is too high. In instrumental tuition, most teaching is very good. In class work, teaching is confident and pupils understand the objectives; the presentation of information is lively but there is too much teacher talk with long introductions and insufficient attention to presenting information visually or to developing musical vocabulary. There is too much theoretical study of music and not enough making of it through which pupils learn; consequently, musical skills are weak. Expectations are too low and pupils, especially the high attaining pupils, who are often instrumentalists, find the work too easy. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into lessons and make similar progress to the other pupils. Lessons have clear structures and start briskly but the pace of lessons is often too slow and they often run out of time. Tasks do not engage pupils sufficiently at different levels so that too little is learned, especially by high attaining pupils. The management of pupils is good and relationships are good in most classes; pupils enjoy practical work. Most pupils work productively but without any real verve; they support each other but the majority lacks the skills and confidence to tackle many of the tasks at the expected level. As a result, behaviour varies from good to

unsatisfactory. Music technologies are not used enough and the music room lacks a computer. The assessment of pupils does not always give enough support to pupils to improve their work, for example by making it clear how they can improve. Insufficient use is made of homework to extend pupils' learning.

142. Leadership of the subject is enthusiastic, but the management of music is unsatisfactory. Schemes of work are inappropriate and there are no policies; there is insufficient monitoring and evaluation of the subject's performance or of instrumental tuition. Assessment is too generous; there are no tape or video records. Curricular links with feeding primary schools are insufficiently developed to enable the department to build on prior learning. There are many shortages in learning resources including keyboards, tuned percussion instruments such as xylophones and glockenspiels to enhance creative work, additional computers, TV, video, OHP and music for class use and the library. Extensive damage to pianos makes most unplayable. These constraints limit the opportunities to make music in the classroom.
143. Sixteen boys and 37 girls receive instrumental tuition from ten visiting teachers; this is about nine per cent of the school's population, a below average number in relation to similar schools. Standards are broadly average but above average in woodwind. Teaching is good and some very good teaching was observed in flute, oboe and brass tuition. The progress and achievement of pupils are good in lessons in relation to their ages and the time they have received tuition but not all pupils use practice books effectively and the short 20 minute lessons, many given to individuals, are less productive than the longer group lessons. The curriculum insufficiently supports instrumental tuition and tuition makes insufficient impact on the quality of pupils' musical experiences in the classroom because pupils do not use their instruments in classroom work enough.
144. The limited range of extra-curricular activities in music includes the small orchestra and choir, which operate in the early part of each year. There is a newly formed clarinet choir. The school produces annual musicals involving good numbers such as *Rocky Monster*, *Oliver* and *Bugsy Malone*; these are highly spoken of by parents. Not enough use is made of recorded music in assemblies and music makes insufficient contribution to pupils' personal development, mainly because it is unplanned. Since the last inspection, the school has attempted to support teaching and learning in music. The management of pupils has improved but standards of attainment have deteriorated, the time allocated to music has been reduced and most of the issues highlighted in the last report have not yet been remedied.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Overall the quality of provision is **good**.

Strengths:

- The quality of teaching is good; support staff are well deployed and teachers work well as a team.
- Lessons have good structure, with clear objectives, effective warm up sessions, good question and answer sessions and good review of progress at the end.
- Good emphasis on key words in lessons helps pupils develop the technical language of the subject.
- Pupils are mostly fully incorporated into lessons, including those with special educational needs and non-participants.
- Pupils evaluate their activities well and give good feedback on their own and others' performance.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are strong.
- The extra curricular programme is very good.

Areas for improvement:

- Assessment procedures are not followed consistently by all teachers, and do not set clear enough targets for individual pupils.
- There are some weaknesses in the department's planning, including planning of schemes of work to ensure pupils make progress, the planning of a programme for the gifted and talented and the availability of a handbook to set consistent expectations for all teachers.
- ICT is not used enough in lessons.

145. Standards of attainment by the end of Year 9 are above average. Pupils develop independent warm-ups as observed in Year 8 gymnastics and Year 9 netball and football. They are able to evaluate their own and others performance to give constructive feedback to improve performance. Pupils demonstrate high levels of skills during passing, receiving, and keeping possession for attacking in hockey and football and apply these skills well in small game situations. In dance and gymnastics pupils can select appropriate movements and produce simple synchronised sequences. Pupils are able to orientate maps and set simple routes for each other. All pupils are able to work co-operatively in pairs and small groups and listen to each other with courtesy. Achievement between Years 7 and 9 is good.

146. Good progress is made by pupils in lessons, including those with special educational needs, as observed in Year 7 hockey and the Year 8 orienteering session where individual pupils were supported to work at their own pace for understanding. There is an inconsistent approach by teachers to the matching of activities to pupils' ability in order to challenge higher attaining pupils and to support those with lower capabilities, such as varying the height of boxes for vaulting in gymnastics.

147. The very good extra-curricular programme offers a wide range of activities to extend learning as well as additional opportunities in recreational, coaching and competitive situations. This programme is well supported by both pupils and additional staff who offer their time, and the department responds to pupil requests for additional activities whenever possible. Further use of adults other than teachers will be explored in the future.

148. Teaching is good overall; teaching was good or better in two thirds of lessons seen, and as a result learning is good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge; their enthusiasm for the subject and the very good relationships between staff and pupils

ensure motivation levels to participate are high, as seen particularly in the girls' netball and football sessions and the mixed dance lesson. All teachers ensure that pupils know what they will be learning and the key words that they will hear during the lesson; these are displayed on the white boards available in both the gym and the theatre as observed in all gymnastic and dance lessons and verbally in outdoor sessions. There is very good questioning by all teachers for recall of previous work and how this relates to current work. Thorough planning ensures lively warm-up sessions, as seen in the Year 7 gymnastics and girls' football, and lessons that are delivered at a brisk pace with clear development of skills and pupils remaining on task throughout the lesson. There is appropriate intervention by teachers with individuals, groups and whole class to remind pupils of the task and to evaluate how performance could be improved. Non-participating pupils are regularly involved in observing and feedback, including the completion of worksheets on key areas covered in the lesson and how individual pupils could improve their performance. The Year 8 group dances displayed significant improvement when they responded more closely to the music and Year 7 pupils in gymnastics were able to display better synchronisation after discussion on the strategies they could employ, such as counting and watching each other more closely. There is good consolidation at the end of lessons to check pupils' understanding of their learning.

149. There is little evidence of the use of ICT in lessons and this an area for improvement which will extend learning opportunities, such as instant feedback of performance with the use of video footage and understanding the implication of exercise on the heart via the use of heart monitors. Opportunities are not taken to set homework, which would build on pupils' learning in lessons.
150. Support staff are effectively deployed to ensure pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into lessons and as a result pupils make good progress. The team teaching observed in the Year 9 girls' netball and football lessons is particularly effective.
151. Pupils learning and response are good in all lessons, they co-operate with each other and work well in team situations, are willing to participate in class discussion and there is obvious care for each other. They listen attentively and there are very few instances of inappropriate behaviour which are dealt with quickly when they occur. There is an inconsistent approach in the department to expectations such as sitting and listening in the gym, involvement of non-participating pupils and dismissal at end of lessons.
152. Since the last inspection, there has been good improvement, especially in gymnastics. Assessment systems have improved to allow pupils' progress to be monitored well in some aspects of the subject; this has not been extended to all areas.
153. The newly appointed head of department has already highlighted some areas for further improvement, including the need to continue to improve assessment, and to update departmental documentation. Teachers do not share good practice in teaching and learning enough, and there is not a programme for gifted and talented pupils. Shortcomings in the accommodation for the subject mean that there are no appropriate and accessible changing facilities for disabled girls, while in some lessons there is a safety concern because girls must change without supervision due to staffing constraints.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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

Strengths:

- Standards are above agreed syllabus requirements.
- Teaching is always at least good, and occasionally very good.
- Pupil management is very good.
- Curriculum provision is good.
- Contributions towards the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good.
- Departmental management is very good.

Areas for improvement:

- The department does not set targets for pupils that are related to their levels of attainment, and consequently, pupils are unclear about the standards they are reaching and what they need to do to improve.

154. Standards in all years and by the end of Year 9 are above expectations in relation to the Leicestershire Agreed Syllabus. Achievement across the whole age range is good.
155. In lessons and work seen during the inspection, attainment in Years 7 to 9 is above expected levels. There are many good examples of pupils developing their knowledge and understanding of religious language, principles and concepts. Pupils generally make sense of what they study and can relate it to their experiences of life. In Year 7, pupils made significant gains in understanding the difference between beliefs and opinions through the very good use of people's views about the importance of animals in creation. In Year 8, pupils developed a good understanding of the importance of Passover in Jewish belief as a result of the very good knowledge of the teacher. In Year 9, pupils explored the images in creation. The teacher challenged them to extend their thinking about the importance of fact and truth in the creation story. Pupils were able to form their own views, whilst respecting the different attitudes of others. The use of key words, technical language and good discussion work were useful aids to improve speaking and listening skills. Overall, learning is good. Pupils with special educational needs, and those who are gifted or talented, make good progress.
156. Overall, pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They are generally well motivated and apply themselves to the work. They collaborate well with each other and work at a productive pace. The relationship between teachers and pupils is very good, and teachers support individuals both academically and personally. Pupils' very good behaviour makes a significant contribution to their achievement and progress.
157. Teaching is of good quality with some very good features. Planning is good, and this helps pupils to review information learnt in previous lessons. Lesson aims are shared with pupils in all cases. Teachers make good use of questioning to consolidate current learning and to review previous work. They use a suitable range of styles such as discussion, use of video and audio material and worksheets that match the needs of individual pupils. This range of approaches enables pupils to *learn from* as well as *learn about* religion, and helps them to maintain their interest and develop understanding of religious principles and concepts. Resources are well used, especially worksheets. These enable pupils with different needs to learn well. Teachers manage pupil behaviour very well, contributing to a good climate for learning. Extension work and homework are used to good effect in allowing pupils to reflect on the information they have gained in class. Teachers have clear expectations of pupils and challenge them to succeed, and these are effective in contributing to pupil achievement.

158. Assessment of pupils' work is generally good and very helpful comments are made in exercise books. The procedures provide a good basis for assessing what pupils know and understand. Accurate assessment information helps the teacher to plan appropriate new work. The department does not set targets that are related to expected levels of attainment. Consequently, pupils are unclear about the standards they are reaching and what they need to do to improve. This is recognised as an area for development.
159. The curriculum in Years 7 to 9 is broad, balanced and meets the needs of the pupils and the requirements of the Leicestershire Agreed Syllabus. Religious education also makes a valuable contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, so providing opportunities for pupils to explore world issues of justice, relationships and personal beliefs.
160. The department is managed very well with a clear sense of purpose and direction. Pupils are provided with a rich diet of religious education. The head of the department approaches the task with enthusiasm and commitment. There is good support from other departmental staff. Planning is very good. The departmental development plan does address appropriate priorities and forms a good basis for future action. Documentation, such as schemes of work and policies for the subject, is very comprehensive. The quality of display is very good and celebrates pupil achievement.
161. Since the time of the previous inspection, attainment in all years has improved significantly, due largely to improvements in both planning and the quality of teaching. There has been a significant improvement in the contribution religious education now makes to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. Overall, the improvements since the last inspection have had a good impact on standards, pupils' achievement and progress.

CITIZENSHIP

The provision for citizenship education is **very good**.

Strengths:

- Very effective and enthusiastic co-ordination by the head of subject.
- Plenty of good, practical support given to form tutors who deliver much of the programme.
- Good time allocation for the subject.
- A stimulating variety of activities and methods of teaching the subject.
- Many subjects in the curriculum contribute well to the citizenship programme.

Areas for improvement:

- Continue to develop a high quality programme for citizenship across all subjects.

162. The management of citizenship is very good. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and believes passionately in the importance of the issues involved for the young. She is thoroughly aware that hard-worked and hard-pressed form tutors do not have the time to research appropriate material or resources to cover the topics required. She has set herself, therefore, to interweave the required subjects through the PHSE curriculum during the three Years 7 to 9, and to provide full support for the class teaching and the activities. Teachers have accepted their new role and there is some evidence of their increasing enjoyment in it.

163. The allocation on one day of the week of the morning form time and the first period of the day gives an appropriate amount of time to make a wide variety of activities possible. These include, for example, role-play, watching video clips and group discussion with reporting back to the class. Peer education on the theme crime and punishment was observed during the inspection when a Year 11 drama group from another Leicestershire school acted out a play about a young criminal in an almost professional way. The impact on Year 9 pupils was great and led to thoughtful consideration of what could be done and to meaningful discussion with pupils' different points of view clearly explained. The experience was very valuable in that the pupils perceived its relevance to themselves.
164. The subject co-ordinator keeps the programme relevant to the pupils. In one activity, pupils come to recognise that in school life there are rules, regulations and responsibilities and this leads on to a consideration of the need for law. School councillors take their duties in Council seriously and report back to their forms. The local government topic has been cleverly worked on so that pupils are faced with a decision-making exercise; one of two schools in an authority has to close. Which should it be?
165. Speakers are brought into school to talk from experience about personal involvement, for example, on the topic of ageism. An elderly person described the loneliness and anxieties of an old person living alone in straightened circumstances, and another elderly person described the interest, friendship and excitement provided by such activities as the University of the Third Age. The pupils had much to discuss from these mixed messages.
166. Regular assessments of pupils' progress are undertaken and reports are sent to parents. The assessment tasks have been streamlined to help form teachers. With regard to attainment targets at the end of Year 9, a simple grid quickly shows whether a pupil has reached Level 5 (the national expectation) or is working above it or towards it.
167. There are many examples of citizenship education within other subjects and their contribution to the programme is monitored by the citizenship co-ordinator. In ICT, good notions of practical citizenship are made clear in the consideration of the way lives are changing through the use of computers in shops and in the workplace. Teachers in science invariably build in considerations of ecological and environmental issues. In geography, citizenship ideas are embedded in work planned on national parks. In citizenship itself, one highly successful project in Year 8 last term was the running of a mock election which caused very great interest and excitement and led to definite factual and practical learning.
168. Pupils in Year 9 have citizenship notebooks; some thoughtful ideas and strong feelings are expressed in them. The subject is generously resourced. Suitable textbooks, teachers' resources and other materials are distributed to form tutors.
169. Charity work comes under the umbrella of citizenship as well as impinging on pupils' moral and social development. The pupils' response to the shoebox appeal at Christmas is enthusiastic if not overwhelming. Many other topics in the syllabus overlap between pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, their PHSE and citizenship. An example is the debt repayment issue, examined at Leysland through a case study on the Philippines; another example is the work of Amnesty International.
170. The school has launched into a very full and worthwhile programme of citizenship education. The start is impressive. There is every reason to believe that the subject's contribution will have added importance as the confidence of those teaching and those taught grows. The school is well out in front in the depth of its programme and in the

quality of its delivery compared with the position many schools have reached in the subject. Citizenship at Leysland contributes very positively to the wider educational aims of the school.