

INSPECTION REPORT

BATLEY HIGH SCHOOL FOR BOYS

Batley, West Yorkshire.

LEA area: Kirklees

Unique reference number: 107767

Headteacher: Graham Wright

Reporting inspector: Michael Miller
17556

Dates of inspection: 13th to 16th January 2003

Inspection number: 253765

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Secondary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	11 to 16
Gender of pupils:	Male
School address:	Blenheim Drive Batley Field Hill Batley West Yorkshire
Postcode:	WF17 0BJ
Telephone number:	01924 326343
Fax number:	01924 326348
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Geoffrey Alvy
Date of previous inspection:	March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17556	Michael Miller	Registered inspector	Vocational courses in Years 10 and 11.	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are the pupils and students taught? How well is the school led and managed? School improvement and effectiveness.
19743	Ann Taylor	Lay inspector	Educational inclusion, and equal opportunities.	Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development. Attendance. How well does the school care for its pupils and students? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
30046	Ross Parker	Team inspector	English	
30576	Peter Bannon	Team inspector	Mathematics	
27050	Val Blackburn	Team inspector	Science.	
20619	Jenny Hazlewood	Team inspector	Information and communication technology.	
15606	Christine Hill	Team inspector	Design and technology; Special educational needs, and Gifted or talented pupils.	
18854	Malcolm McGregor	Team inspector	Art and design.	
4317	Ken Madrell	Team inspector	Geography.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities?
22458	Gilbert McGinn	Team inspector	History.	
4372	Ralph Fordham	Team inspector	Religious education, and Citizenship.	The pupils' and students' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development.
32173	Barbara Brown	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages English as an additional language	The provision for and standards achieved by pupils with English as an additional language.
19532	Elizabeth Charlesworth	Team inspector	Music	
23137	Ron Fewtrell	Team inspector	Physical education	

The inspection contractor was:

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Gloucestershire. GL53 7JX.

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Alexandra House, 33 Kingsway
London. WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Batley High School is a secondary community school for boys aged 11 to 16 (Years 7 to 11). It is smaller than most other secondary schools and only two-thirds the size it was at the previous inspection, when it had a sixth form. There are 662 pupils on roll, fewer than at any time in the past five years. It is currently under-subscribed as a number of parents choose to send their sons to schools outside the local area. However, the school is popular with the parents of those boys currently attending it. Most pupils live relatively locally and are able to travel to school on foot or by public transport. The school is committed to playing an increasingly important role in the life and work of the community, and of its pupils. The attainment of boys on entry to the school in Year 7 is well below average. Two-fifths of the pupils are from white ethnic backgrounds. The balance comes mainly from Asian or Asian British backgrounds with just under two-fifths from Indian and one-fifth from Pakistani ethnic backgrounds. The percentage of pupils whose mother tongue is not, or believed not to be, English is very high. However, the number of pupils at an early stage of English language acquisition is very low. Unemployment in the area is higher than average and school data shows they have a significant number of single wage earning parents undertaking unskilled and semi-skilled work. At nearly 33 per cent, the proportion of pupils registered for free school meals is high. There are nearly 20 per cent of pupils on the register of special educational needs, which is slightly below average. At over 6 per cent the proportion of pupils having full statements of special educational need is well above average. The school is recognised as one facing challenging circumstances and is supported through the Excellence in Clusters initiative.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Batley High School for Boys is a school which is well poised for improvement. It has a good capacity for, and commitment to, improvement. Nevertheless, it has a number of significant weaknesses, principally related to the quality of teaching and learning. Some of these weaknesses result from serious staffing difficulties. Other weaknesses result from inadequate action on the key issues from the previous inspection. The very good leadership provided by the new headteacher, with the full support of a very determined governing body, is now taking the necessary action to secure the required improvement. Standards are below average but pupils' achievement is good. The school is well managed and provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The good achievement of the pupils, taking into account their levels of attainment on entry to the school.
- The very good leadership provided by the headteacher and governing body.
- The good progress made by pupils with special educational needs.
- The school provides good careers education and guidance.
- The good achievement of pupils in art and design, mathematics, physical education and design and technology, leading to their success in GCSE examinations compared with other subjects.
- The role of the school and its governors in developing good links with parents and the local community.

What could be improved

- Standards throughout the school in national tests, assessments and examinations are too low.
- Overall provision in science, modern languages and in music is unsatisfactory.
- The implementation of the information and communication technology strand of the Key Stage 3 Strategy.
- Teaching methods which are matched, and applied, to support fully the learning needs of all pupils.
- The joint management and coordination of the support provided for pupils within the special educational needs department, those for whom English is an additional language, and the learning support unit.
- Meet statutory requirements for the reporting of pupils' progress to parents, the implementation of the new Code of Practice for special educational needs, and a daily act of collective worship for all pupils.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS PREVIOUS INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in March 1997. Since then it has been too slow in addressing the issues from the previous inspection and there has consequently been insufficient improvement. Whilst expectations of pupils' attainment are now rising, there is room for improvement at departmental level. The headteacher and governing body are setting sufficiently challenging targets at whole school level. However, there continue to be inconsistencies between and within subjects in

the use of assessment, to guide the teaching and curriculum development. There have been some improvements in lesson planning. However, the use of teachers' planners to record their work is not good enough and the pupils' targets in their individual education plans are not sharp enough. Effective systems are being put in place by the headteacher, and senior management team, for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning. These systems are starting to have effect and there is some sharing of good practice. However, there is still some reticence on the part of a few teachers and departments to share good practice and improve the quality of teaching.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

In 2002, the results of the National Curriculum tests in Year 9 were well below average when compared with all schools nationally. When compared with similar schools they are below average. When taking into account the pupils' prior attainment in the national tests and teacher assessments at the end of Year 6, these results are above average. This represents good, and often very good progress for pupils between Years 7 to 9. In the current Year 9, standards are below average in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, history, geography, modern languages and art. They are average in information and communication technology and in physical education. They are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Standards of attainment are well below average in music. Achievement is unsatisfactory in modern languages and music. However, it is satisfactory in geography and good in all other subjects.

In 2002, attainment in GCSE examinations was well below average when compared with all schools nationally, for boys nationally and compared with similar schools. However, when the boys' results at GCSE are compared with the levels they attained at the end of Year 9, the level of improvement is average. GCSE points scores show the school's rate of improvement over the past five years has been in line with that seen nationally. Pupil numbers gaining five or more A* to G passes were below average for all schools, but above average compared with similar schools, and well above average compared with the boys' prior attainment. For those gaining one or more A* to G passes the success of the school was well above average. Standards in the current Year 11 are below average in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, history, geography, modern languages, music and physical education. They are average in art, design and technology and in citizenship. They are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Standards are above average in Urdu. Achievement is below average in music and in modern European languages. It is satisfactory in history and geography and good in all other subjects.

Standards of literacy and numeracy are below average, but those for numeracy are rising more quickly. Standards for pupils with learning difficulties are below average but in line with their ability and the boys' progress is good. The progress of pupils for whom English is an additional language is unsatisfactory because the level of additional support provided is too inconsistent to be fully effective. Gifted or talented pupils make good progress. The school sets itself realistic but increasingly challenging targets for improvement.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. Most pupils show sound attitudes in lessons. However, when they are not challenged and motivated by the teaching they do not work at a fast enough pace, often chatter and do not concentrate well enough. A small minority have poor attitudes to lessons and do not attend school regularly.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Most pupils are well behaved and the school is an orderly place. However, a minority, especially in Years 7 to 9, persistently misbehave and sometimes disrupt learning in lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. The great majority of pupils respect and acknowledge each other's cultures and traditions. Pupils play an active role in school life through their school council.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. An improving picture, although below national averages. Internal truancy is falling.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. In Years 7 to 9 teaching and learning were good or better in just over half the lessons seen. In Years 10 and 11 teaching and learning were good or better in nearly three-fifths of lessons. Examples of excellent teaching and very good or excellent learning were seen in religious education and in information and communication technology lessons. In Years 7 to 9, teaching and learning are good overall in mathematics, information and communication technology, design and technology, art and citizenship. They are satisfactory in English, science, history and geography. Teaching is very good in religious education and learning is good. Teaching is good in physical education and learning is satisfactory. However, teaching and learning are unsatisfactory in modern European languages and in music. In Years 10 and 11, teaching and learning are good in mathematics, information and communication technology, design and technology, history, geography and art. They are satisfactory in English and science. Teaching is again very good in religious education and learning is good. Similarly, teaching is good in physical education and learning satisfactory. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory in modern European languages and music. The teaching of literacy skills is satisfactory and that of numeracy is good. The teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs are good overall. Learning for pupils with English as an additional language is unsatisfactory in Years 7 to 9 because of insufficient learning support but it is satisfactory for older pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The school meets statutory requirements Good features include careers education, the range of extra-curricular activities and the contribution of the community to pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The school's provision enables pupils with special educational needs to improve and make good progress. The school enables pupils identified as gifted or talented to achieve their potential at differing rates.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Unsatisfactory overall. There is much good work being done with pupils for whom English is an additional language. However, there are serious inconsistencies in support and practice between departments, and the school's staffing difficulties limit the quality of pupils' development.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Provision for moral, social and cultural development is good. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. The school does not meet statutory requirements for a daily act of collective worship for all pupils. Whilst there are daily prayers for Muslim boys, no facilities are provided for other religious groups.

How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. There are sound systems in place to ensure pupils' safety. The school is successful in making sure most pupils attend school regularly. The school deals satisfactorily with poor behaviour but the approach of teachers to behaviour management is inconsistent.
The school's procedures for assessment	Unsatisfactory overall as individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are not sufficiently focused. However, procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. Most departments make satisfactory use of assessment to guide their planning.
Partnership with parents	Good. The headteacher and governors are developing stronger links with parents through their outward looking, community approach. Links with parents are enhanced by the good work of the community liaison worker. However, the school's reports to parents on their children's progress are too vague and give insufficient guidance as to how pupils can improve.

The school is fully committed to its role as a multi-racial, community school. It has a high regard for equality and promotes racial harmony well.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The leadership qualities of the headteacher, who has been in post for just one year, are very good and he is providing the school with a very clear educational direction. He is well supported by an effective senior management team in fostering a good, shared commitment amongst the staff and a determination to secure improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory overall as the governing body has not yet ensured that the new Code of Practice for special educational needs is fully implemented. However, the governors' role in shaping the direction of the school is very good, as is their understanding of its strengths and areas for improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory overall. The school's senior management evaluates and diagnoses its strengths and weaknesses well and takes effective action to secure improvement. However, these processes have yet to be consistently applied throughout all departments. The school's development planning is good.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school's budget clearly reflects priorities in the school's development plan. Heads of department are held strictly to account by the bursar and headteacher who are, in turn, closely monitored monthly by the governing body. The principles of best value are very well applied.
The school's staffing, accommodation and learning resources	Unsatisfactory overall. Staffing is unsatisfactory because the school has difficulties in recruiting well-qualified specialist teachers. This continues to cause significant difficulties in some major subjects. The school's accommodation is satisfactory. Learning resources contribute satisfactorily to the pupils' learning.

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 school has high expectations of its pupils and the boys make good progress.• Parents feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or problems.• Teaching is good and their children like school.• Parents are well informed about their children's progress and the school works closely with parents.• The school helps their children to become mature and responsible and behaviour is good.• The school is led & managed well.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children do not receive the right amount of homework

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views. Inspectors also agree that, whilst there is good practice in some departments, homework is inconsistently planned and set across a range of subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. When pupils start at the school in Year 7, their overall standards are well below average in English, mathematics and science. Many of these younger boys have low levels of literacy and this has affected their achievements in the past. However, inspectors find that the achievement of the large majority of pupils at Batley High School for Boys is good.

Standards and achievements in Years 7 to 9

2. Results for the national tests of pupils at the end of Year 9 in 2002 were well below average overall when compared with all schools nationally. When compared with similar schools¹ they were below average. However, when taking into account the pupils' prior attainment in the national tests and teacher assessments at the end of Year 6, these results are above average. This represents good, and often very good progress for pupils between Years 7 to 9.
3. Over the past five years, the school's trend for improvement has been in line with the national trend overall for pupils by Year 9. The trend for improvement in English has tended to mirror that seen nationally. In mathematics, it has been consistently better than the national trend. However, the science results have been too inconsistent and this has affected the overall trend for improvement for the school. This is largely explained by the significant difficulties the school has had in recruiting and retaining staff within the science department in order to maintain a satisfactory quality of teaching and learning.
4. The school is part of the Excellence in Clusters initiative, through which the school sets its targets. There were no agreed cluster targets for 2002 for the percentage of pupils gaining Level 5² and above. Although the school fell below its own targets overall, it is increasingly setting itself challenging benchmarks for the attainment of its pupils. At the higher Level 6 and above, the school fell well short of its target, although it was very close to this target for mathematics. Overall, the percentage of pupils gaining these higher levels, by the end of Year 9, is below average. However, senior management analyse the school's results well and have a good understanding of the importance of target setting in helping to raise standards.
5. In English, in 2002, the percentage of Year 9 boys gaining the expected Level 5 and Level 6 and above in national tests was well below average. When average points scores³ are taken into account, the results were still well below the national average. Teacher assessments of pupils at this level were closer to the average. However, when compared with similar schools results were below average but well above average based on the boys' prior attainment at the end of Year 6. This represents some very good progress for the majority of pupils, particularly those with lower prior attainment. Nevertheless, the school is not complacent and its own analysis has

¹ Results are also compared not only nationally but with those obtained by students in similar schools; this includes those with a similar uptake of free school meals.

² By the end of Year 9: pupils are expected to reach at least National Curriculum Level 5 in English, mathematics and science national tests. Level 6 and above are referred to as higher levels. In 2002, the national percentage of pupils reaching Level 5 and above (with Level 6 and above shown in brackets) was 66 per cent (31) in English, 67 (45) in mathematics and 66 (33) in science.

³ Average points scores are also calculated for Year 9 tests. Level 5 is worth 33 points. A pupil achieving Level 5 in all three subjects would therefore have an average points score of 33.0.

identified its concern to target pupils better and thus enable an increased percentage of the boys to attain the higher Level 6 and above.

6. Mathematics results overall were the best for the National Curriculum core⁴ subjects. In mathematics in 2002, results were below the national average for the boys' attainment at Level 5 and Level 6 or above, and on the basis of the pupils' average points score. However, when compared with similar schools, results were above average and well above average overall. They were well above average for pupils gaining Level 5 in the mathematics tests. On the basis of their prior attainment in Year 6, the Level 5 results places the school in the highest 5 per cent nationally for improvement and well above average for the boys gaining Level 6 or above. These results show that the majority of pupils make very good, and sometimes excellent progress in mathematics from Year 7 to 9.
7. Results in national tests in science, in 2002, were well below average when compared with all schools nationally and on the basis of the pupils' average points score. However, there has been some improvement over the past two years, in spite of staffing difficulties. In 2002, science results for pupils in Year 9 were average when compared with similar schools and above average overall on the basis of the boys' prior attainment. Most pupils make good progress in science during their first three years at the school.
8. Teacher assessments in 2002 for the foundation subjects⁵ show levels of attainment for pupils achieving Level 5 or above which are well below average in modern languages and in physical education. They were rated as above average in music, but the inspection finds some concern as to the basis for this as clear assessment measures are not in place for this subject. Teacher assessments were below average in all other subjects, but closer to the average in design and technology and geography. No teacher assessments were undertaken for information and communication technology in 2002, for reasons which are explained in the subject paragraph in Part D. At the higher Level 6 and above, teacher assessments are well below average in all subjects except design and technology and history, where they are below average. The use of this performance data to identify trends and help to target for improvements, particularly at the higher levels, is under-developed in most foundation subject areas. Most departments do not yet keep moderated portfolios of pupils' work to provide examples of the standards required at each National Curriculum level and to help them monitor the accuracy of their assessments.
9. Standards in work and lessons seen during the inspection show that levels of attainment for pupils in Year 9 are below average in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, history, geography, modern languages, and art. They are average in information and communication technology and in physical education. They are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Standards of attainment are well below average in music. The boys' achievement was unsatisfactory in modern languages and music. However, it was satisfactory in geography and good in all other subjects.

Standards and achievements in Years 10 and 11

⁴ The National Curriculum core subjects are: English, mathematics and science.

⁵ The National Curriculum foundation subjects are: art; design and technology; geography; history; information and communication technology; modern foreign languages; music; physical education. In addition, religious education is taught to the requirements of a locally agreed syllabus.

10. In 2002, the school's total points' score⁶ for GCSE/GNVQ examination courses was well below average when compared with all schools nationally and for boys nationally. The same is true when the results are compared with similar schools. However, on the basis of GCSE points' scores, the school's rate and trend for improvement over the past five years has been in line with that seen nationally. In this respect, the trend for improvement has been fairly consistent since the previous inspection. When the boys' results at GCSE are compared with the levels they attained at the end of Year 9, the level of improvement is average. The rate of improvement in Years 10 and 11 is therefore slower than seen from Years 7 to 9, where it is above average. The main reasons for this centre around the school's staffing difficulties, the problems it has experienced in recruiting, suitably experienced teachers and the fact that some teachers are having to teach outside their specialist areas. These problems have been particularly acute in science and modern languages. Senior management and the school's governing body are making strenuous efforts to remedy this situation. The fact that improvement from Year 9 to 11 is in line with that expected nationally shows that they are being successful in minimising any potential underachievement.
11. The proportion of boys gaining five or more GCSE passes at grades A* to C was well below the national average and that for similar schools. The school fell short of its target at this level and senior management's analysis of the results, whilst expressing disappointment, shows a strong determination to ensure improvement. Areas for improvement have been identified and challenging targets have been set for 2003 by the headteacher and governors. Set against this, the school just exceeded its main average points score target. This was because of the success of pupils gaining five or more, and one or more, A* to G passes. The numbers gaining five or more A* to G passes were below average for all schools but above average compared with similar schools, and well above average compared with the boys' prior attainment. For those gaining one or more A* to G passes the success of the school was well above average on all measures. In spite of the problems it has faced the school is doing well overall by its lower attaining pupils and enabling them to achieve well. However, the school is aware that its GCSE performance at A* to C and higher A* to A passes is not yet good enough. It has set itself a very challenging target for A* to C passes in summer 2003 and is working hard towards its stated goal of achieving this.
12. GCSE results for pupils gaining an A* to C grade in summer 2002 were significantly below average in a range of subjects including science, communication studies, design and technology, English, French, geography, history and mathematics. However, all pupils who were entered for the examination gained an A* to G pass in art and design, communications studies and mathematics. The school enters higher than the national average numbers of pupils across a range of subjects in GCSE examinations. In 2002, this included single science, communication studies, design and technology, English language and literature, French, geography and history. This policy is in line with the school's approach in providing all of its pupils with the opportunity to achieve well. Compared with the other subjects they took at the same time in 2002, boys consequently achieved particularly well in art, design and technology, mathematics and in physical education.
13. Standards in work and lessons seen during the inspection show that levels of attainment for students in Year 11 are below average in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, history, geography, modern languages, music and physical education. They are average in art, design and technology and in citizenship. They are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for

6 GCSE results: In 2002 nationally, 51.2 per cent of students attained five or more grades A* to C, 86.8 per cent attained five or more grades A* to G and 94.6 per cent attained one or more grades A* to G. The average total points score was 34.6 (calculated by eight points for A*, seven for A, etc).

religious education. Standards are above average in Urdu. Achievement is below average in music and in modern European languages. It is satisfactory in history and geography and good in all other subjects. The good achievement seen in work and lessons reinforces, and contributes to, the inspection judgement that the school is well poised for improvement. The school's strategies to raise standards, and further raise the boys' achievement, are well considered.

Standards and achievements of pupils with special educational needs

14. Standards for pupils with learning difficulties are below average by Year 11 but in line with their ability. The pupils with statements of special educational needs, make good progress from the time they enter the school in Year 7. The progress made by pupils on school action⁷ and school action plus, is satisfactory but not consistent across all subject areas because of variations in the use of individual education plans. Standards for gifted or talented pupils are good. They make good progress with examples of some pupils making very good progress on GCSE courses with increased grades.
15. Standards for pupils by Year 9 are in line with their ability based on their prior attainment when they were in Year 6, but well below average nationally. The pupils with statements make good progress against their individual targets set at the beginning of Year 7 for behaviour and learning. Here again, because of the variations in the quality and use of individual education plans, the progress is inconsistent but satisfactory. Standards for gifted or talented pupils in Year 9 are below average nationally but they make good progress.

Standards in literacy and numeracy

Literacy

16. Pupils come to the school with standards of literacy which are well below the national average. Many pupils are still developing basic reading skills. The majority have limited familiarity with vocabulary and language structures beyond the everyday. For example, pupils reading a mythological story in a Year 8 English class were hampered by some of the everyday vocabulary, before they started to consider the historic and specialised features of the language. They also struggle to express some of the ideas that they develop during lessons. Most are more successful when they are talking than when they are asked to write. This limits progress across a range of subjects. In a Year 8 information and communication technology lesson, flaws in spelling and punctuation undermined effective, animated presentations. Standards do develop rapidly when teachers give sufficient opportunities for pupils to talk. Middle attainers in Year 8 use small group discussion as an effective way of sharing and developing their thinking. Higher attainers in Year 9 develop complex and extended arguments and put them across in a formal setting. Writing skills also develop quickly within those areas where teachers coach and model the appropriate styles of expression. When there is sufficient focus on a narrow but relevant range of vocabulary, higher attainers are able to exceed expectations. They craft complex sentences, which reflect mature and wide ranging understanding. Lower attainers in Years 10 and 11 learn to build lengthy, if basic, pieces of writing, which express their understanding. However this process depends on excessive direction by teachers. This limits opportunities to develop discussion as a means of further developing understanding and self-confidence.

Numeracy

⁷ Under the new Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs, 'school action' and 'school action plus' are the first two stages of a graduated response to initial parent or teacher concern about a pupil. As the result of assessment and action at these stages, a pupil may be assessed as requiring a full statement of special educational need.

17. Standards of numeracy across the school are below, but close to the national average. Whilst pupils enter with overall attainment levels well below average, by the end of Year 7 these have been raised considerably. Pupils measure accurately in science, and design and technology. They make good use of scale in art and in geography where they interpret and plot scatter graphs to good effect. They attain just below the national average in mathematics by the end of Year 9 because their competency in numeracy compensates for their generally below average ability.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

18. Pupils' attitudes to the school, their behaviour, and the quality of relationships are all satisfactory. This is not as positive a picture compared with the previous inspection, when attitudes and behaviour were good and relationships very good. However, this comparison is not like for like, as there were sixth formers present last time, who invariably have better attitudes because they have chosen to stay on at school.
19. Pupils' attitudes to learning usually reflect the quality of the teaching. In good lessons, pupils are bright and enthusiastic. When asked their opinions about the sort of lessons they enjoyed, the boys explained they liked a challenge and being given choices so they could think for themselves. Where lessons are satisfactory, pupils respond in the same neutral vein.
20. Older pupils are attending school more regularly than before, because they are more interested in the variety of courses the school has organised for them. When teachers invite boys to become active participants in lessons, by offering their opinions, working in groups or undertaking practical activities, they become interested and lively. In lessons where teachers talk too much, where the lesson proceeds slowly and tasks are pedestrian, boys either start to misbehave because they are bored or become passive onlookers. They pretend to co-operate, but in practice produce little work.
21. Older boys involved in subjects where they need to take ultimate responsibility for their work, such as compiling GNVQ portfolios, proceed slowly in lessons. They do not have the maturity or self-motivation to work steadily on their own, and constantly chat to each other and waste time, when not directly supervised.
22. Pupil's behaviour is satisfactory. Again, it mirrors their attitudes, in that good teaching results in good behaviour and lessons that lack interest often result in pupils misbehaving. In most lessons where behaviour is good, pupils make good progress and are learning effectively. The large majority are polite and helpful. A small but significant minority of boys in Years 8 and 9 have extremely challenging behaviour, which causes disruption. However, pupils feel that behaviour has improved since the new headteacher arrived.
23. There is some bullying and oppressive behaviour, but this is handled well and pupils are confident that teachers listen to them and take action. The school does take instances of bullying seriously. In conversation with inspectors, older boys suggested some good ideas for ways the school could improve the support it provides for those who are being bullied. There are some racist incidents; these often start out as arguments and then racist comments are made when tempers become heated.
24. The numbers of pupils being temporarily excluded are high and have risen sharply since the previous inspection. The majority of these incidents are from white boys in Years 8 and 9. The numbers of older boys excluded has fallen, because of wider

alternative curricular opportunities, such as the ASDAN⁸ scheme. However, there is a group of younger boys who have received several exclusions and who do not conform with socially accepted norms of behaviour. The school is currently at the early stages of planning specialist provision for this group including using internal exclusions and behaviour modification programmes.

25. Relationships within the school are sound and this helps pupils make good progress in developing their social skills. Pupils contribute enthusiastically to the life of the school, noticeably through sports and the dedication shown when they work for their bronze and silver Duke of Edinburgh awards. Boys will often help each other in class when they notice someone struggling to understand. Older boys show themselves willing to extend help and support to younger boys, given the chance.
26. They are tolerant of each other's cultures and beliefs and they will work together in mixed race groups, when asked, without fuss. They usually work and socialise in racial friendship groups, through choice. In class, groups often conduct conversations in the pupil's home language, when it is then difficult for some teachers to judge if it is work related. However, in Year 7, where the school is being pro-active in seating pupils in mixed race groups, there is visibly more interaction. These arrangements also reduce the amount of group conversations and resultant loss of concentration. Discussions with the school, governors and parents indicate that boys merge into racial groupings more as they get older. During conversations with inspectors about school, boys explained that this is a reflection of their upbringing. Where there are mixed race friendships, they are accepted without negative comments being made by others. Such inter-racial and ethnic tolerance reflects the school's good provision for the cultural development of the pupils.
27. There was a good atmosphere in the school council meeting held during the inspection. This is when the boys showed how well they could work together and accept each other's point of view. They are very interested in how the school is developing over the next few years and are determined to play an active role in shaping its future. For instance, they proposed plans for a basketball court during the meeting. The school genuinely listens to them and values their opinions. This value of the individual is an example of the school's good provision for the personal and social development of its pupils.
28. When given the opportunity, some boys will show initiative but this is not a strong feature of the school and is the exception in class, rather than the rule. Prefects accept their responsibilities with pride and dedication. They show themselves to be capable of using more initiative than they are presently encouraged to take. The boys do undertake some work to benefit others, such as working in the community to clear local places of litter.
29. Attendance rates are improving and are now hovering slightly under 90 per cent. Compared with other schools this is below average and therefore unsatisfactory. However, it does represent a considerable achievement over the past year and the school are confident that attendance will continue to rise. The level of authorised absence is growing (and unauthorised consequently reducing) as parents become more used to providing reasons why their child is absent. This is another improvement.

⁸ ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) is an approved awarding body offering a number of programmes and qualifications to develop life skills, from Key Stage 3 through to adult life, from preparatory to Entry Level through to Key Skills at level 4. ASDAN programmes and qualifications blend activity-based curriculum enrichment with a framework for the development, assessment and accreditation of key skills and life skills, with a strong emphasis on negotiation, co-operation and rewarding achievement.

30. Attendance is lowest for boys in Years 8 and 9. The amount of extended visits overseas has fallen compared with those taken at the time of the previous inspection. However, half of parents wanting to visit family abroad do so without asking the school first. The number of extended visits abroad and warranted absences related to religious observances reduces the attendance figure by approximately half a per cent.

The attitudes and values of pupils with special educational needs

31. Overall, the attitudes to school of pupils with special educational needs are good. Working with support assistants, in withdrawal sessions and in the learning support unit, they enjoy learning and doing well and this raises their confidence and self-esteem. Frequently, pupils' attitudes change when they are put back into mainstream classes and their behaviour deteriorates. There is a significant minority of younger boys whose unsatisfactory behaviour is affecting their learning and progress. Pupils respond well to good teaching and the good support they receive in lessons. The gifted or talented pupils have good attitudes to learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

32. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. In Years 7 to 9 teaching and learning were good or better in just over half the lessons seen. However, the highest proportion of very good teaching, nearly one-fifth of lessons, was seen in these years. In Years 10 and 11 teaching and learning were good or better in nearly three-fifths of lessons. Examples of some excellent teaching and very good or excellent learning, with these older pupils, were seen in religious education and in information and communication technology lessons.
33. In Years 7 to 9, teaching and learning are good overall in mathematics, information and communication technology, design and technology, art and in citizenship. They are satisfactory in English, science, history and geography. Teaching is very good in religious education and learning is good. Teaching is good in physical education and learning is satisfactory. However, teaching and learning are unsatisfactory in modern European languages and in music. In Years 10 and 11, teaching and learning are good in mathematics, information and communication technology, design and technology, history, geography and art. They are satisfactory in English and science. Teaching is again very good in religious education and learning is good. Similarly, teaching is good in physical education and learning satisfactory. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory in modern European languages and music.
34. There are a number of significant issues for the school, relating to the quality of teaching and learning. In the immediate years following the previous inspection in 1997, the school paid insufficient attention to improving the quality of teaching and learning. Nearly all the key issues from the previous inspection related directly to teaching and learning. These included, raising teachers' expectations of pupils, the more effective use by teachers of assessment, the development of a more consistent approach to lesson planning, the more systematic monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning and the sharing of good practice. In May 2001, one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools visited the school as part of a national initiative to support Schools in Challenging Circumstances. It was clear from the report following this visit that progress had been unsatisfactory on some of these teaching and learning matters. The consistency and planning aspects, in particular, were judged as requiring further improvement.

35. Since the new headteacher took up his post in January 2002, these issues have been squarely faced. The teaching and learning issues are now being properly tackled and a whole range of well-considered initiatives has been put in place to drive improvement. The headteacher and the school's leadership group have the full and active support of the governing body. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting were appreciative and supportive of the changes being secured. There is measurable success and the school is improving through sharper self-evaluation, but it realises it still has some way to go. The monitoring of teaching and learning by senior management is focusing the minds and talents of the teaching staff, the majority of whom show a good commitment to improvement. However, there is still some reticence on the part of a few teachers and departments to share good practice and improve the quality of teaching. For example, there continues to be inconsistencies between and within subjects in the use of assessment to guide the teaching and curriculum development. There have been some improvements in lesson planning and the sharing of learning objectives with the pupils. However, the effective use by some teachers of their planners to record their work is not yet good or professional enough. The pupils' targets in their individual education plans are not sharp enough. Homework is not consistently used effectively enough.
36. Support procedures have been put in place where the new systems of monitoring are identifying unsatisfactory or poor teaching and learning. There is a positive approach to professional development and support for staff. However, where necessary, competency proceedings have been properly and correctly instigated. Where the unsatisfactory or poor teaching was identified during the inspection, this came as no surprise to senior management. The required changes are being made. The leadership of the school is providing very clear direction. As identified in other sections of this report, staffing and recruitment difficulties have also taken their toll on the school. These problems have had some impact on the quality of learning for pupils across all year groups. As a consequence, there was some unsatisfactory teaching or learning seen across a range of subjects including English, media studies, science, design and technology, physical education, modern languages, geography, history, music and religious education. Whilst there were some issues of behaviour management, the unsatisfactory learning was more often than not characterised by teachers talking too much at pupils and not involving the boys sufficiently well in their own learning.
37. Nonetheless, a range of important key strengths characterise the good or better teaching throughout Years 7 to 11. These are to be seen across a broad range of subjects and contribute significantly to the support of the pupils' learning. They reflect well the improvements being made and the response of the best teachers to the key issues on teaching raised in the previous report of 1997, and that of Her Majesty's Inspector in 2001. They include, for example:
- Detailed and careful preparation and planning of lessons, leading to clear explanations and the sharing of lesson objectives with the pupils.
 - Good sharing and exploration of subject specialist vocabulary and terms. This also supports the pupils' literacy development well and benefits those for whom English is not their mother tongue.
 - High expectations of the pupils leading to good quality working partnerships between teachers and boys.
 - Good subject knowledge and the ability to share and communicate this, leading to mutual respect and pupils' perceptions of the value of learning.
 - Good monitoring and assessment through which teachers set challenging targets for pupils so that the boys know what to do to improve.
 - Effective questioning to draw out pupils' knowledge and help them appreciate and evaluate the extent of their learning.

38. It is clear that the majority of the school community, governors, senior management, teachers and support staff, are working hard to create and establish an improved climate for learning within the school. This approach is well focused on encouraging pupils to achieve well in spite of overall below average levels of attainment. There is a good focus on raising the boys' self-value and self-esteem. The school's refurbishment programme is further supporting this climate for learning, and it is gradually creating an improved environment for teaching and learning.

The teaching of pupils with special educational needs

39. The quality and range of teaching styles used, varies across subjects. Individual education plans, for all pupils with learning difficulties, are in an early stage of development. Expectations of pupils' attainment are not consistently high enough across all subjects. Targets that are in place are not sufficiently practical for teachers to use when support staff are not present. Pupils are not fully involved in setting their learning targets or in self-assessment. Where the quality of teachers' planning is good, especially in the core subjects, the learning support unit and for pupils with dyslexia, pupils have clear learning targets. The quality of the learning support assistants and learning mentors is good. They keep detailed records, of individual pupils' progress, and report this information to the special educational needs coordinator and other support staff. Learning support assistants frequently make up for the lack of clear learning targets in lessons, by setting specific targets of their own with a good blend of challenge and help. This supports the pupils in making good progress. The quality of teaching for gifted or talented pupils is good with some very good teaching in some subjects.

The teaching of literacy and numeracy

Literacy

40. The school has made satisfactory progress in developing strategies for teaching literacy. It has appointed a coordinator to lead the changes in Years 7 to 9. The entire teaching staff has taken part in well-planned training. This has enabled every subject area to re-think how to teach pupils to cope with the specialised reading and writing tasks the lessons require. As a result, there is a greater awareness of the difficulties these tasks present. Teachers across all subjects have begun to highlight the important vocabulary and terminology, which pupils need to use. The coordinator has worked effectively to support teachers across every subject area. The school has maintained a focus on literacy, in the face of distraction by other initiatives. This process has affected teaching approaches across the whole age range, but it has really only just begun. This impetus to support learning by developing language skills needs to be maintained.

Numeracy

41. Numeracy is taught well across the school. In mathematics, teachers make good use of starter activities to sharpen pupils' mental skills. Teachers in art, design and technology and information and communication technology are consistently effective in developing a range of numeracy skills such as scaling, measuring and the use of

formulae to test solutions to problems. Data handling skills are developed soundly and regularly within science, and are a strength of teachers' planning in geography.

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

42. Overall, the quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school are satisfactory. The school's curriculum meets statutory requirements. There is good equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. There is an effective curriculum policy, which provides a foundation for planning and implementation. One of its strengths is that it recognises that all pupils are individuals and are at different levels of development. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Other good features of the curriculum include the range of extra-curricular activities offered, the work-related curriculum and links with the community, which provide good support for pupils' learning.
43. The school's strategies for the teaching and promotion of literacy across the curriculum are satisfactory. The effectiveness of the teaching in promoting and developing the pupils' numeracy skills is good. However, the development of pupils' information and communication technology skills through all subjects of the curriculum is under-developed and inconsistent.
44. The curriculum in Years 7 to 9 offers the pupils a satisfactory range of subjects that cover the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. However, in music there is inadequate planning to enable pupils to build on knowledge and understanding gained earlier in their school life. A good feature of the curriculum is the Learning Support Unit, which provides effective learning opportunities for the pupils it serves, who might otherwise become school refusers.
45. The curriculum in Years 10 and 11 is satisfactory. No pupils are disapplied from the National Curriculum. The school provides a broad curriculum, which satisfactorily supports the learning needs of the pupils. However, in modern languages there is insufficient time to teach the contents of the course and there is unequal provision for pupils in Year 11. All pupils follow an appropriate common core of GCSE subjects in English, mathematics, science, technology and religious education. They also take courses in personal and social education, and physical education. Some additional, certificated, courses in information and communication technology are currently being offered to Year 10 and 11 pupils, to make up for the lack of previous provision in Years 7 to 9. There is a good range of optional subjects available at GCSE but provision of vocational courses is limited to business studies. An innovative practice at the school is for these options to be studied in one year, either Year 10 or Year 11. This adds an increased opportunity for pupils to study new courses such as statistics and graphics. However, in music, pupils' opportunities for learning are unsatisfactory because the subject is not taught in Year 10. For some pupils at the school alternative provision has been developed. The school's 'Curriculum Plus' and 'Reach Out' programmes are successfully improving attendance, attitudes and achievements for groups of pupils previously at risk from disaffection.
46. There is good provision for extra-curricular activities and pupils' participation rates are high. Good use is made of additional funding through the New Opportunities Fund to support such provision. There is a wide range of sports and other activities, many of which are supported by the learning mentors. There is a good programme of revision classes for pupils in Years 9, 10 and 11 operating after school and during holidays in October, February, Easter and May. Curriculum experiences are enhanced through off-site visits, particularly in history, geography, art and English. Such visits enrich pupils' learning. Some pupils participate in residential visits to the school activity

- centre. Examples of activities that have effectively contributed to pupil's learning include the Duke of Edinburgh awards and revision activities for groups of gifted or talented pupils. Foreign travel visits to Spain and Euro Disney are effectively enabling pupils to broaden their horizons and enhance their personal development.
47. Provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory. It has developed considerably since the previous inspection and is much improved. Although staffing difficulties have meant that the specialist team of teachers has been somewhat depleted, a nucleus remains with plans to regroup for the next academic year. There is effective coverage of sex and relationships education, drug abuse and health education.
48. The school makes good provision for the work-related curriculum. There is an effective planned programme for pupils, involving school staff, specialist staff from the local authority's careers service and members of the wider community. The annual careers convention, which took place during inspection week, is a very effective component of the programme. The depth of preparation the pupils had been given for this experience impressed inspectors. Discussion with pupils and convention delegates alike confirmed the value of the experience. There was high praise from all participants as to the efficiency of the school's arrangements for this important event.
49. Throughout Years 7 to 9, pupils are well supported before making option choices for Year 10. In Year 9, all pupils receive good guidance from their form tutors. There is good support from specialist staff from within the school and from the careers service. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 receive good advice on post-16 options. There is a good programme of work experience for all pupils in Year 10 and its effectiveness is well developed through the personal and social education programme. Enhanced work placements, which are very effective in helping the pupils develop a range of skills relevant to their future working life, are available for those pupils following the school's 'Curriculum Plus' programme.
50. The community makes an effective contribution to pupils' learning. There are good links through the Excellence in Clusters partnerships. The Community Plus and the new Reach Out programmes operate through effective collaboration with local community centres and colleges. The good work undertaken by the learning mentors, the community liaison worker and the neighbourhood enrichment officers is central to this success. The art and the design and technology departments have established effective links with the community to support pupils' learning. The annual careers convention is a further good example of this community support.
51. The school has satisfactory links with other schools and colleges. A good feature of the links with local primary schools is the work of the community liaison worker. This involves visits to pupils in primary schools, and to their homes, during the period of transition from primary school to Batley High School. Through the Excellence in Clusters initiative, effective links are being established with other secondary schools. Such links are effectively supporting the development of the curriculum in Years 10 and 11. These initiatives and links are helping to support those pupils who wish to continue their education beyond 16, with the annual careers convention being a key feature in this process.

Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs

52. The curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and the school offers a sound range of learning opportunities for its pupils. The curriculum is relevant to all pupils who present the school with a wide range of special, individual

educational needs. The withdrawal programme, curriculum plus and dyslexia support are organised so that pupils have a curriculum matched to their individual requirements. However, the under-development of the use of individual education plans, and their use by teachers, means there is a lack of coordination and monitoring of the curriculum for pupils with learning difficulties.

53. The vocational award courses, which are being developed, are successful in involving pupils in work related learning, links with the community and local employers. This is preparing them well for the world of work. Excellence in Cities is having a good impact on the provision for gifted or talented pupils, including extension and enrichment activities. It is also having a positive impact on the curriculum offered for disaffected pupils through curriculum plus and the support of the mentors.

Personal development: *provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural, including multicultural, development*

54. Overall, the school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Provision for moral, social and cultural development is good and provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. The focus of the school on good and respectful relationships, and the creation of a learning environment based upon clear values and principles, influences every aspect of school life and pupils' personal development. Since the time of the previous inspection, there has been some improvement in the provision for pupils' spiritual development although the statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship for all pupils is still not met. The opportunities for moral, social and cultural development continue to be strengths.
55. There is a clear recognition by the school that the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils has a vital impact on their 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. The personal, social and health education programme, together with the recently integrated citizenship course, provides a valuable starting point for the school's planned, monitored and coordinated approach to this aspect of the curriculum. It is an integral part of the school's provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The programme is soundly coordinated and taught by a team of dedicated teachers. The religious education syllabus provides very good opportunities in these areas, and there are valuable examples of opportunities for reflection and discussion of spiritual and moral issues in this subject.
56. Opportunities for pupils' spiritual development are satisfactory overall. Assemblies take place once each week, for each year group. However, assemblies or tutor time rarely include a daily act of collective worship. However, pupils' attitudes do show a clear respect for the beliefs, feelings and values of others, and this contributes well to their spiritual development. There is some evidence of planning in departments for spiritual development, but this is inconsistent and lacks structure. The personal, social and health education programme contributes little in this area. However, a positive feature of the way in which the programme is taught is the encouragement of pupils to develop good attitudes in reflecting on their own experiences. This approach successfully enables pupils to form their own views about world issues of justice, relationships and personal beliefs. Religious education makes a very good contribution to the pupils' spiritual development. Here, pupils are encouraged to consider and respond to questions about the meaning and purpose of life. They 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. In history, pupils are encouraged to express their feelings and views on a range of issues

and this enables them to give expression to their innermost thoughts and feelings. However, some opportunities are lost to enhance this aspect of pupils' personal development.

57. Provision for moral development is good. Opportunities are targeted largely through the personal, social and health education and citizenship programmes. Topics such as attitudes to bullying, sex education, drugs awareness, equal opportunities, and ethical issues provide a sound basis for discussion and the development of attitudes and values. The school has clear expectations of pupils knowing right from wrong and they generally respond well when corrected. The headteacher and staff are good role models for pupils. Assemblies make a significant contribution to the pupils' moral education. Each year group is encouraged to support certain charities chosen by the pupils. Opportunities for prayer for Muslim pupils are provided on a regular basis. This facility has yet to be extended to all pupils. 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. This enables them to develop moral principles and values. In physical education, pupils demonstrate their attention to fair play and playing to rules. In geography, pupils look at the notions of right and wrong as they explore their attitudes towards the use of the world's resources.
58. The school's approach to the social development of its pupils is good. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to take responsibility and develop social understanding. The personal, social and health education programme supports moral education well, in terms of the teaching of rights and responsibilities, the importance of a healthy environment, citizenship and sex education. All of these elements provide a valuable contribution in developing attitudes and fostering independent thinking. In addition, lunchtime clubs and sporting activities all help to develop skills of social interaction. The school council provides a good forum for pupils to develop their communication skills and make important contributions to the life of the school. The recently introduced prefect system also enables pupils to develop social skills and undertake responsibilities. Prospective prefects go through an election process. Most subjects contribute to, and provide good opportunities for, the pupils' social development. Pupils work very well together and are prepared to express their personal views in paired work, group work and general discussion. They respect each other's contributions.
59. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good with a variety of openings aimed at encouraging them to be involved in activities to extend their cultural development. Consequently, pupils are enabled to develop an awareness of the rich variety of different cultures and traditions that exist in this country. However, the level of emphasis placed by teachers on cultural and multicultural aspects is inconsistent between different subjects. Some departments, such as religious education, make a significant contribution especially in terms of the study of different religions and the cultures that support them. Personal, social and health education provides some opportunities when dealing with topics such racism, gender and sexuality, and immigration. The study of different cultures in geography enables pupils to explore a variety of different cultural influences in other regions of the world. Various school trips and visits provide good opportunities for pupils to appreciate and enhance their understanding of local and national culture.

The personal development of pupils with special educational needs

60. Pupils frequently show respect for others' needs, interests and feelings as well as their own but they are not sufficiently encouraged to develop the ability to think through the consequences of their own and others' actions. Consequently, pupils with challenging behaviour do not always adjust successfully to a range of different occasions or behave appropriately. This is because the school does not have a programme to modify their challenging behaviour. However, pupils in the learning support unit benefit from advice offered by the mentors and participate in activities in the community.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

61. There are satisfactory procedures for child protection, and for ensuring the boys' safety and welfare. The positive aspects of care and welfare, seen during the previous inspection, have been successfully maintained. The way the school manages instances of poor behaviour is satisfactory.
62. Most teachers are aware of, and are sensitive to the personal and home circumstances of each pupil. However, frequent staff changes in science and modern languages, due to staffing shortages, are unsettling for the boys. Child protection procedures are firmly established. A member of staff is the child protection coordinator and is part way through training. The headteacher has also been trained.
63. The health and safety policy has been recently revised and is satisfactorily tailored to meet the needs of the school. There is a newly designated member of staff with responsibility for the oversight of health and safety matters, who has been well briefed on his role. The school promotes a sound awareness of health and safety, especially in higher risk areas such as physical education, science and design and technology. However, there are some health and safety concerns relating to ventilation and seating at workstations in information and communication technology.
64. The way the school monitors and supports pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Most form tutors stay with their forms throughout their time at school to ensure continuity of care. The organisation of special visits to places of the boys' choice, as rewards for good behaviour and attendance, provide good opportunities for tutors to get to know their pupils better on a social footing, and this has a positive effect on the pupils' learning.
65. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. They have improved considerably over the last year and the boys' attendance has risen as a consequence. The truancy rate is also declining because the procedures for checking on boys' whereabouts have been tightened. Attendance monitoring procedures are firmly established, including a 'Call Direct'⁹ system and careful analysis of attendance data by administrative and pastoral staff. Despite these good procedures, the attendance of a core of pupils of white ethnic origin in Years 8 and 9 is low; these are boys who often misbehave in class and show little interest in being at school.
66. Unauthorised absences are followed up carefully and an active governors' attendance committee provides another avenue, when needed, to help parents understand why their son's regular attendance is so important. There is a clear commitment to improve attendance by breaking through the 90 per cent attendance 'barrier'. The school is well on its way towards this. There is an established working partnership with the educational social worker, who is also a governor, a frequent visitor and who knows

⁹ Call Direct – this is where parents are telephoned on the first day of absence to find out why the pupil is away.

- and supports the school well. The school does all it can to mitigate against the effect of days off for religious observances, by planning teacher training days to coincide with these, where possible. The school does not monitor attendance data by ethnicity and recognises this as an area for improvement.
67. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are satisfactory, but there are areas for improvement. The school has recognised the importance of improving boys' behaviour. The new behaviour policy is adequate for teachers who are skilled in encouraging good behaviour. However, it does not give a clear enough guidance for the minority of teachers who struggle. Consequently, management of behaviour lacks consistency. Frequent use of temporary teachers is one contributory factor as to why behaviour sometimes deteriorates. Lack of behaviour management skills is another. The school is fully aware of these shortcomings and has plans to complete a behaviour audit to help them make specific improvements. Staff also want to improve the range of rewards given for good work and behaviour. This is appropriate, as immediate rewards for positive attitudes in lessons are very limited.
68. The recent introduction whereby disruptive boys are removed to a separate room, known as an inclusion room, is effective in allowing the lesson to proceed and others to learn. A few of the reasons boys are withdrawn reveal teacher's lack of behaviour management strategies rather than serious behaviour problems. However, this 'inclusion room' provision is not yet leading to the long-term improvement in behaviour of boys who are repeatedly referred to this facility. Most such boys are of white ethnic origin and in Years 8 and 9. Having recognised this, the school is at an early stage of discussing ways to provide more appropriate curricular provision combined with improved behaviour support.
69. The procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are satisfactory. Some parents are concerned about bullying and feel there are some boys who are afraid to report incidents. A satisfactory anti-bullying policy is in place, which was reviewed last year, but pupils were not involved. The school's programme of personal, social and health education lessons contains good sections on bullying and racism, which are discussed with the boys regularly. Pupils spoken to during the inspection were all happy that staff deal firmly with bullying, once alerted to a problem. They were happy this is, in their own words, a "*telling*" school.
70. Older boys have several good ideas for ways the schools' support systems could be improved further. There are no systems through which pupils can help each other cope with bullying, or for older boys to support younger ones. The active school council has not been involved in discussing bullying for some time. There are no ways for boys to discreetly alert someone if they need help, for instance through placing notes in a 'bully box', as often seen in other schools. Involving boys in discussing ways to overcome bullying and help each other, and explaining this to parents, is a minor issue for the school to consider.
71. Some racist incidents do occur, and these are carefully logged and followed up by senior staff. There is racial tolerance in the school and a respect for each other's cultures and traditions. Racism, discrimination and equal opportunities are discussed in personal and social education lessons and through assemblies. There is a positive atmosphere in the school, which has a high regard for racial equality and promotes it well.

The care and guidance provided for pupils with special educational needs

72. The special educational needs coordinator has a good knowledge of the needs and circumstances of individual pupils especially those with statements. The school has secure procedures for assessing and identifying pupils with special educational needs and the gifted or talented. With the review process the school is effective in meeting the needs of statemented pupils through challenging targets. Pupils' progress is monitored especially in relation to annual reviews and individual education plans although these tend to lack sufficient specific detail. The school liaises well with parents and other agencies.
73. Individual education plans are not in place for all pupils with learning difficulties and those which are in place vary in quality. There is no consistency in the format or use of these to support pupils' progress. Pupils are not always clear what their targets are and how well they are doing. Support staff, know their pupils well but because of the unsatisfactory practice with individual education plans, teachers do not always know their pupils as well or support them effectively. All statements and reviews are up to date but the school has not implemented the new Code of Practice¹⁰. However, the monitoring of the achievements of statemented pupils by the special educational needs coordinator and the support staff is satisfactory.
74. There are secure procedures for identifying pupils who are gifted or talented which involve teachers and heads of departments. Teachers have pupils' learning targets and the pupils know what they are expected to achieve both short and long term. Although there are no individual education plans, the coordinator has reliable systems in place to monitor individual progress and uses the information to trigger support from the learning mentors. This is a good provision because it enables boys to achieve their potential at differing rates.

Assessment

75. A lack of provision and use of individual education plans, for those pupils with identified special educational needs, makes the overall procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress unsatisfactory. However there are a number of good features present and in many respects procedures have improved since the previous inspection. The use of assessment information to guide curricular planning and the procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are satisfactory.
76. The collection and analysis of assessment data is now well established. The school makes good use of standardised tests and public examination results to analyse pupils' performance and set satisfactory targets for achievement. The school should now increase the input from each department in order that pupils have target grades for each subject rather than a single grade target for all subjects. Some departments have introduced their own effective procedures in this respect but there is a lack of uniformity and communication of this information to parents and pupils. Analysis does identify the achievements of the different ethnic groups.
77. Pupils are formally assessed for achievement and effort each term, with assessments being related to National Curriculum levels in Years 7 to 9 and GCSE grades in Years 10 and 11. This information is reported to parents who also receive an end of year report. However, there is inconsistency at departmental level in the monitoring of the accuracy of teachers' application of these National Curriculum levels in order to ensure

¹⁰ Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities, duties and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help and support to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.

the validity of this information. This affected the teacher assessments in music in 2002 and resulted in teacher assessments not being undertaken in information and communication technology.

78. There are examples of good practice in the use of assessment within departments for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress and in all cases practice is satisfactory. In design and technology, mathematics, religious education, art and geography the pupils are involved in setting their own targets and good use is made of assessment information to guide teachers' planning. In some other areas pupils are insufficiently involved in determining their term assessments, consequently they do not fully understand their assessment and targets. There is also a lack of consistency in the extent to which pupils record their targets in their school planners. There remain some departments where the use of assessment in influencing their planning is unsatisfactory.
79. On a whole school level, good use is made of assessment information in Year 9 to help influence the number of GCSE subjects taken by some pupils. In Year 11 subject targets are introduced and an individual mentoring system for each pupil aims to maximise achievement. The assessment coordinator provides very thorough and informative data analysis on all standardised tests and public examination results. This information together with target levels for every pupil in the school is given to every member of the teaching staff. However, the school recognises that teachers now require additional training to help them make full use of this information in order to raise standards.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

80. The majority of parents are supportive of the school. Parents recognise the improvements the new headteacher has initiated and are positive about the future under his leadership.
81. The headteacher is developing stronger relationships with parents through his outward looking community approach. There have been recent consultation meetings held at community venues in the town, where the headteacher asked how the school could make itself more responsive to parents. Governors, some of whom are parents, provide strong leadership and are vital links between community and school. The school has successfully maintained the positive picture seen at the time of the previous inspection.
82. The role of the community liaison worker continues to be strong, very much as described at the time of the previous inspection. She is the main point of contact for many families and successfully helps to bridge the gap between home and school, by making home visits and liaising with the school on parents' behalf.
83. A small minority of parents returned their questionnaires and attended the meeting with OFSTED inspectors. Nearly all questionnaire replies were positive, especially those agreeing that the school has high expectations, is approachable for parents and that boys make good progress. Inspectors agree with parents' positive views. There were some concerns about the level of homework, behaviour, and the degree to which the school is working closely with parents. Behaviour and homework concerns were also expressed at the OFSTED meeting.
84. Arrangements for homework are unsatisfactory and this is an area for improvement. There are inconsistencies regarding the amounts and frequency of homework set. Teachers sometimes have differing expectations of pupils, depending upon the boys'

ability levels. For example, homework is not always set or completed by some lower ability boys. Behaviour in the school is satisfactory. Poor behaviour is handled adequately. However, the school has correctly identified that improvements are needed to help some teachers improve their behaviour management skills.

85. The school is working hard to build good relationships with all parents. It shows a keen determination to involve parents in the life of the school, and tries to encourage parental involvement, especially through the family learning scheme called 'Share'. This is a national scheme where parents work on an activity at school, which they then take home to share with their sons. Results so far have shown the boys becoming increasingly more confident in their schoolwork. Parents are starting to develop a more responsible attitude towards making sure their children attend school regularly. This is because the school is constantly liaising over non-attendance.
86. Despite the school's work, attendance at parent's evenings remains low, with about half of all parents attending in Years 9, 10 and 11, and slightly more for the parents of younger boys. The numbers of parents attending from the Asian ethnic communities are growing. However, the school was delighted that many parents attended the study skills evenings held recently for Years 10 and 11, and teachers and governors see this as very encouraging.
87. Information for parents about progress is unsatisfactory. Annual reports are too vague and give little guidance as to how boys can improve. Information and communication technology was not reported to parents of Year 9 pupils in 2002. Handwriting on reports is sometimes not easy to read and comments cursory. For instance, '*working well - keep it up*' is not helpful. The school has recently introduced termly reports detailing effort and target grades. These accompany letters from heads of year, either praising the pupil or highlighting concerns. They have been appreciated well by parents and a good number of supportive replies were received.

Partnership with parents of pupils with special educational needs

88. Parents of pupils with statements of special educational needs are properly involved in identifying their child's needs. They are provided with suitable support through regular reviews of their son's progress. Parents of pupils who are gifted or talented are kept well informed of their child's progress and the additional provision.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

Leadership and management

89. The leadership and management of the school are good overall. The management skills of the new headteacher in identifying areas for development and improvement, and his leadership qualities in ensuring these necessary changes are undertaken, are very good. The headteacher is well supported by an effective leadership team and an active and very involved governing body. Consequently, the quality of the school's development planning is good. The leadership approach of the school is ensuring that the shared commitment of the staff and their ability to succeed are good. This is because the focus for the school's development is firmly rooted in a determination to

create an ethos¹¹ for learning, where the pupils can achieve well, and standards are raised. Through this, the aims and values of the school are being soundly met through its life and work. The school is increasingly aiming for excellence and is no longer content to sit on its laurels, as it appeared to do in the years immediately following the previous inspection.

90. The leadership and middle management skills of heads of department are sound overall. There have been difficulties in the management of science and modern languages where acting heads of department, although undertaking a satisfactory holding task, have been hampered by considerable staffing and recruitment problems. These problems have hindered the development of the departments concerned. There are also some areas for development in the management of music, where the head of department is relatively inexperienced. Nevertheless, leadership and management of the mathematics department are good and particularly effective in ensuring a consistent rise in standards. The leadership qualities of the design and technology, religious education, art and citizenship departments are also especially good.
91. There is clear evidence to show that the majority of heads of department are satisfactorily developing the skills required to meet the increasing demands of educational change and development. However, the analysis and use of performance data to help set targets for their department, groups of pupils and individual boys are under-developed at middle management level. Most subject leaders are still reliant on support from senior management, through the school's line management system, in order to help them undertake this important work. The individual management of the various elements for the support of pupils with special educational needs is good. However, the separate support strands, including gifted or talented pupils, those for whom English is an additional language, the learning support unit and special educational needs department, lack overall leadership and coordination. This is an area for improvement.
92. The effectiveness of the governing body in fulfilling its responsibilities is very good overall. Governors have a very good understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement for the school. Together with the headteacher, they are not afraid to face difficult situations and take hard decisions. The school's leadership is realistic and practical in its approach to secure improvement. The governing body, senior management and the majority of staff take a justifiable pride in the school. The governors fulfil their statutory duties satisfactorily but they have still to ensure that the new Code of Practice for special educational needs is fully implemented. The school does not provide for a daily act of collective worship for all pupils.
93. The school's management is outward, as well as inward looking. This approach is reflected in its growing contact and links with the local communities, and through initiatives such as the careers convention. When they need to, the governing body and senior management are not afraid to take help and advice from organisations and sources outside of the school in order to seek improvement. This is a developing strength of the school's leadership. There has been a series of fairly recent changes to the governing body and the way in which it operates. As a result, a system of committees has been set up which enables the governing body to hold, more effectively, the school to account. As a result, governors and senior management are becoming increasingly successful in monitoring and evaluating the school's performance in order to raise standards. In pursuit of this, the governors and headteacher have set themselves some very challenging, but ultimately achievable targets.

¹¹ In this context 'ethos' refers to the characteristic spirit or attitudes of the school as a community.

Social Inclusion

94. The school works hard to ensure all boys are treated equally and that everyone receives the same quality of experiences and opportunities. Staffing shortages faced over the past year have made this very difficult to achieve, with some pupils having several teachers for science and European languages. Nevertheless, there is a strong commitment to equality of opportunity.
95. The school has a very good race equality policy, produced in consultation with a good number of community groups and pupil representatives. Racial tolerance and acceptance is promoted well. Procedures for dealing with racist incidents are firmly in place. There is appropriate provision for religious observances during lunchtimes and welfare considerations are thought of during times of religious fasting. The school is actively trying to attract and encourage the recruitment of staff who are more representative of the local community, with some success.
96. The school is finding it very difficult to accommodate the behaviour and learning needs of a small but significant group of boys of white ethnic origin in Years 8 and 9. These are pupils with a history of low attendance, whose behaviour is extremely challenging and who have consequently been temporarily excluded on more than one occasion.

The leadership and management of special educational needs

97. The work of the special educational needs provision is well managed and makes a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and progress. All staff are qualified and experienced in ensuring pupils' needs are met. However, there is insufficient specialist support in the classroom for pupils with challenging behaviour. The staff are not fully informed about the implications of the new Code of Practice. The special needs department, including the learning support unit, works hard to reflect the school's aims and values in its work but does not make sufficient use of information and communication technology to support teaching, learning and record keeping. The work of the coordinator of the provision for gifted or talented pupils makes a very valuable contribution to pupils' learning and progress. Regular monitoring of progress supports target setting and makes best use of learning mentors but few staff have used the opportunity for training in meeting the needs of gifted or talented pupils. However, the school does not have adequate systems in place for managing, monitoring and coordinating the overall provision in the school and for measuring standards and progress of all pupils with additional learning needs.

The School's resources: *Staffing*

98. Staffing is unsatisfactory overall. Whilst the school takes significant steps to ensure there is a satisfactory match of the school's permanent staff to the curriculum, the balance is fragile. Long-term absences and recruitment difficulties continue to affect provision in some subjects. In recent years the turnover in teaching staff has not been excessive but there has been an overall reduction in the number of teachers. The school continues to take every step it can to recruit good specialist teachers and develop the skills of existing staff. It spends an above average proportion of its budget in recruiting temporary staff to ensure that all pupils have a teacher.
99. The school has set itself challenging targets to raise the quality of teaching and learning across all areas of its work. Staff development, and that of middle managers in particular, are seen as fundamental to securing improvement. The school identifies training needs and uses its own expertise, external consultants and the local authority.

Training is closely linked to the school development plan and targets for improvement are systematically monitored.

100. In design and technology, and Urdu, the match of specialist staff to the curriculum is very good. There is a good match of specialist staff in mathematics, art, religious education, physical education and citizenship. With the exception of science, European languages and English the match of staff in other subjects is satisfactory overall, although non-specialists teach a small minority of lessons.
101. In English the shortage of specialist staff with well developed teaching skills and the use of temporary teachers has a significant impact on learning. In science, staff turnover, long-term absence and the use of temporary and non-specialist staff disrupts learning and depresses standards. In modern European languages, the long-term absence of one of only two members of staff has led to a succession of temporary teachers. This has disrupted learning and is de-motivating pupils. Prolonged absence and insufficient specialist staff also affect learning support for pupils with English as an additional language.
102. Monitoring systems have been improved to involve and inform the governing body and enable the school to look more critically at the role of senior and middle managers. Performance management together with a two-year cycle of five-day departmental reviews enables it to identify clearly its priorities for development. As part of its plan to improve support and training for teaching and non-teaching staff, the school is working towards an Investors in People award.
103. The school is making progress but the full impact of the self-evaluation and review policy in developing the roles of middle managers and raising the standard of teaching and learning has yet to be seen across all departments. The school supports newly qualified teachers through a clear mentoring framework and regular meetings to ensure their needs are met. The induction and support materials are to undergo further improvement so that all staff new to the school are fully supported. Although not a centre for initial teacher training the school does provide around five initial teacher-training placements each year. This provides good professional development for departmental heads, who are involved as mentors for these teachers in training.

The School's resources: *Accommodation*

104. The school's accommodation is satisfactory overall for the teaching of the National Curriculum, and provides a satisfactory environment for the encouragement of learning. Accommodation is adequate in most subject areas, and good in mathematics and religious education. In physical education, the large sports hall and gym allow for the teaching of a full range of activities. However, the environment of the school has, until recently, lacked investment. There is now a drive to improve the premises and facilities through an ongoing programme for refurbishment. Internally, some areas have been redecorated such as the dining hall and a number of corridors, but other parts of the school are still shabby. The site management team works hard to keep the school clean and pupils are encouraged to take a pride in the school. There are insufficient display facilities in corridors and public areas of the school to celebrate fully pupils' success and achievement. In information and communication technology the unsatisfactory ventilation results in high temperatures, and some seating is too low for boys to use computer monitors comfortably. At present, the school's outdoor activity centre is closed until health and safety issues are overcome. However, the school and governors are working hard to ensure the necessary finance is raised to enable the necessary improvements to be made.

The School's resources: *Learning Resources*

105. Resources to support pupils' learning are satisfactory overall. There is enough equipment and resources in most subjects to enable effective teaching to take place, especially in design and technology, specialist information and communication technology, religious education, art and citizenship. However, in some subjects, textbooks are becoming worn and there is a programme for replacement. Teachers in modern languages and design and technology have produced their own workbooks to meet the needs of all pupils. However, there are insufficient textbooks in science for Years 10 and 11. The English department lacks overhead projection equipment to enliven presentations. There is insufficient access to computer facilities in history, science, business studies, and for pupils for whom English is an additional language. There is an unsatisfactory range of outdated computers in the library and the learning support unit. However, pupils do have limited access to the Internet for research purposes. There is an appropriate range of books, newspapers and magazines in the school library.

The efficiency of the school

106. The school makes good strategic use of its resources. The school's budget clearly reflects the educational priorities of the school's improvement plan. The new headteacher inherited a budget deficit of £250,000 as a result of above average staffing costs. These have now been reduced to average proportions, compared with national figures. The budget is in surplus, with satisfactory planning for its allocation and use. The above average spending on classroom support staff for pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language meets the school's priority of providing good and equal opportunities for all. The school's target of improving the learning environment is reflected in the above average expenditure on upgrading and maintaining well, the premises and facilities. The school now has a rolling programme of planned refurbishment, the recently improved dining room being an example. The school and governors are carefully planning the most effective use of £2.7 million from the Targeted Capital Build Programme to enhance the curriculum and environment. The proportion of the school's budget spent on learning resources, apart from computers, has been well below the national average for secondary schools. However, the school is aware of this and spending this year has increased. Although it is still lower than average, it is not having an adverse effect on standards.
107. Grants for specific purposes are generally well used. Those provided from Schools in Challenging Circumstances and Excellence in Clusters are used effectively to support the curricular developments and the pupils' learning. The Ethnic Minorities Achievement Grant is being appropriately used to provide additional teaching support for pupils with English as an additional language, either in the classroom or through withdrawal. However, there is inconsistent use of this support between subjects and the effectiveness of the spending is not being monitored.
108. The school's systems for financial planning and control are very good, as they were in the previous inspection. The existence of a three-year plan for strategic development means that long-term financial planning is possible. The bursar and the governing body's finance and premises committee are therefore in a strong position to plan the allocation of funds and resources to suit the school's priorities. Income and expenditure are very effectively controlled by the bursar, using very efficient computer technology, as indicated by a very favourable report following a recent audit by the local education authority. The bursar's role has been made more efficient by having oversight of all financial matters, including staffing costs. Subject managers, who receive valuable training in financial management, are provided with monthly budget

statements to inform them of their spending and to make them accountable. The governors use these so that the school is fully accountable to them and they can make informed decisions about resource implications for all aspects of their work. The school is in the process of drawing up a guidance booklet of good financial practice to support all fund managers and the governors.

109. There are very good arrangements to ensure that the principles of best value are applied in the school's use of resources. Governors are consulted in the planning of the budget and staff are kept aware of the financial situation to ensure widespread understanding of decisions taken. Heads of department are required to link spending to the school's priorities for improvement and are challenged to justify bids for extra funding. Orders have to be authorised by the bursar before being raised. Tenders are sought from a number of contractors recommended by the local authority so that the best value is found. The school is also aware of how its spending compares with other schools so that appropriate adjustments can be made, for instance in increasing the proportion spent on learning resources.

Value for money

110. Overall, the school is providing a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Pupils' attitudes, their behaviour and their personal development are sound. Standards are below average. However, the pupils start from a low base of attainment in Year 7 and they achieve well as they move through the school. The management of the school is good and there are some very good elements in its leadership, which are helping to drive it forward and secure improvement. The school's unit costs per pupil are high in comparison with national figures. Although improvement is now satisfactory, the school has been too slow, until fairly recently, in addressing the issues from the previous inspection. Consequently, the inspection team finds that the school is providing overall satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

111. In order to further the school's determined drive to ensure improvement, and to build on the good commitment to succeed in this, members of the school community, the governors, headteacher and senior management should take further action to:

[1] Raise standards in national tests, assessments and public examinations by:

- Strengthening and enhancing the work being undertaken to achieve this through the school's good development planning.
- Building on the recent good work of senior management in their monitoring of the work of departments, and the quality of teaching and learning.
- Ensuring heads of department receive the training to enable them properly to analyse and use the performance data available in the school to help set targets for their department, groups of pupils and individual boys.
- Taking effective action on key issues [2] to [6] below.

[See paragraph(s): 1 to 8; 10 to 12; 76 – 77; 79; 91]

[2] Improve the unsatisfactory provision made in science, modern languages and music.

(a) Science: raise standards of attainment and achievement in science, particularly in Years 10 and 11, by:

- Improving the stability and quality of the teaching staff.
- Ensuring that all teachers are consistent in their marking and assessment of pupils' work.
- Ensuring teachers give sufficient guidance to pupils to help them understand how to improve.
- Ensuring that homework is regularly set, marked and properly related to coursework.
- Ensuring that resources for information and communication technology are sufficient to support learning in the subject.

[See paragraph(s): 3; 10; 36; 62; 94; 101; 144 to 157]

(b) Modern languages: raise standards of attainment and the achievement of pupils in all year groups in modern languages by:

- Ensuring sufficient, professionally qualified staff are appointed to raise the quality of teaching in the subject.
- Ensuring sufficient curriculum time is allocated to the subject.
- Improving the quality of teachers' planning in the subject, including a detailed departmental improvement plan.
- Improving teaching strategies and the use of the target language in lessons.
- Improving the department's assessment procedures to ensure proper records on pupils' work are maintained.
- Ensuring teachers give sufficient guidance to pupils to help them understand how to improve.
- The more rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning in the subject.
- Raising the status of the department across the school and, in particular, in the perception of the pupils.

[See paragraph(s): 10; 33; 36; 45; 62; 94; 101; 204 to 212]

(c) Music: raise standards of attainment and the achievement of pupils in all year groups in music by:

- Ensuring that the training needs of the head of department are met in order to improve the management of the department and to raise the quality of teaching and learning.
- Raising teachers' expectations of pupils in the subject and offering greater challenge in lessons.
- Ensuring that a scheme of work is put in place for the subject, which is properly linked to assessment measures.
- Ensure that teachers properly understand the standards set by the National Curriculum levels in the subject, and that these are applied in their assessment of pupils' work.
- Providing greater opportunities for pupils to be involved in music throughout the school, particularly through extra-curricular activities, in order to raise pupils' interest in the subject.

[See paragraph(s): 33; 36; 44; 77; 90; 213 to 218]

[3] Improving the school's provision for information and communication technology (ICT) throughout the school, and the implementation of this important strand of the National Key Stage 3 strategy by:

(a) The use of ICT across the curriculum:

- Ensuring the resources are available to enable all subjects of the curriculum to make their required contribution to the ICT strand of the national strategy.
- Ensuring that all teachers fully understand the standards set by the National Curriculum levels in the subject, and that these are applied in their assessment of pupils' work.

(b) ICT as a specialist subject:

- Ensuring that the statutory requirements for teacher assessments at the end of Year 9, and for the reporting of the subject to parents, are met.
- Ensure that pupils' work in ICT is more regularly marked and assessed in order that pupils have greater opportunity for its review, revision and improvement.
- Ensuring the development of schemes of work for all the ICT courses taught in Years 10 and 11.
- Ensuring the issues of health and safety relating to the specialist ICT classrooms are resolved.

[See paragraph(s): 8, 77; 104 – 105; 131; 157; 180 – 181; 193 to 203; 215; 224]

[4] Improve the range of teaching strategies so they are matched, and consistently applied, to fully support the learning needs of all pupils by:

- The greater involvement of heads of department in the monitoring of teaching and learning within their subject areas.
- Involving pupils more in lessons and using teaching methods which more actively encourage pupils to show initiative and take responsibility for their own learning.
- The development of a more consistent and professional approach to lesson planning, which is linked not only to lesson preparation but involves sharper evaluation and the greater sharing of good practice.
- The more consistent planning and incorporation of homework into departmental schemes of work and ensuring this is regularly set, marked and is properly related to coursework.
- Ensuring that those teachers who do not yet fully appreciate or understand the additional learning needs of all pupils are provided with the professional support and training to do so. This includes not only pupils with special educational

needs but also, those who are identified as gifted or talented and pupils with English as an additional language.

[See paragraph(s): 19 to 21; 28; 34 to 36; 67; 83 – 84; 97; 169; 175; 187; 190 to 192]

[5] Take action to improve the joint management and coordination of the support provided for pupils within the special educational needs department, those for whom English is an additional language, and the learning support unit by:

- Putting into place adequate systems for the overall management, monitoring and coordination of the overall provision in the school.
- Putting into place more coordinated systems for measuring the standards and progress of all pupils with additional learning needs.
- Making greater use of information and communication technology to support teaching, learning and record keeping.
- Ensuring the provision of sufficient specialist support staff in the classroom for pupils with challenging behaviour.
- Ensuring that individual education plans are in place for all pupils with learning difficulties.
- Ensuring that the quality of individual education plans is improved, and that targets for pupils are sharper and more relevant to their individual needs.
- Ensuring that all pupils with additional learning needs are clear about their targets and how well they are doing.

[See paragraph(s): 14 – 15; 31; 39; 52; 60; 73; 91; 97; 101; 107; 113 to 118; 124; 150; 164; 187]

[6] Ensure that statutory requirements are met for:

- (a) The full implementation of the new Code of Practice for special educational needs and by ensuring that all staff are fully informed about the implications of this new Code.
- (b) The reporting of pupils' progress to parents by providing more detailed and meaningful assessments of pupils' progress, and information as to how pupils can improve as an aid to learning.

[See paragraph(s): 87; 92; 97; 164; 195]

112. In addition to the main areas for improvement, the governors headteacher and senior management should consider the following subsidiary issues:

[7] The provision of a daily act of collective worship for all pupils, of all faiths and beliefs, at the school, not only to meet statutory requirements but to improve the school's provision for the pupils' spiritual development.

[See paragraph(s): 54; 92]

THE PROVISION FOR, AND STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS WITH ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

113. Overall, the quality of provision for pupils with English as an additional language is **unsatisfactory**. The standards they achieve are **below average**.

Strengths

- The very good awareness of issues and practices by the head of the support team for pupils with English as an additional language.
- The effective identification of the individual needs of pupils with English as an additional language.
- The good and effective work of the community liaison officer.
- The good in-class and very good withdrawal support for pupils with English as an additional language.

Areas for improvement

- Standards attained by boys with English as an additional language in Years 10 and 11.
- The inadequate provision of learning support staff for pupils with English as an additional language.
- The sharing and monitoring of good practice across the whole school to provide better support for pupils with English as an additional language.
- The consistent application of teaching strategies and learning support between and within departments.

114. The unsatisfactory nature of the school's provision is due to the fact that although there are many positive aspects of practice, the dissemination, monitoring and sharing of support throughout the departments in school is too inconsistent to be completely effective. Inadequacies of staffing and funding also have a negative impact. This in turn means that the standard attained by these boys is below average, although by the end of Year 11 the pupils' learning has improved to satisfactory as they have, in general, acquired enough command of English to cope with the demands of their studies.

115. The head of the support team has a very good awareness of the issues and practices involved in supporting this group of pupils, and has good vision for future developments. Nevertheless, the monitoring and consistency of support are unsatisfactory. Pupils and their needs are identified on entry to the school and subsequent assessments take place twice a year for the remainder of the boys' time at the school. There is a detailed analysis of attainment by ethnicity, which in recent years has identified the significantly good results of boys from Indian ethnic backgrounds, particularly in English literature.

116. Contact with parents is good. The community liaison officer visits all new pupils at home and carries out assessments. Consequently, the school has built up a profile of families who will need support in communicating with the school. To meet these needs, the school provides interpreters at parents' evenings, translation of letters home where necessary and a dedicated Urdu telephone line. Governor support is also good, with mother tongue speakers on the governing body, a link governor attached to the team and a raised awareness of the issues facing these pupils.

117. Support is almost entirely in-class, and is appreciated by the pupils. However, the long-term absence of a classroom support assistant, and an unfilled teaching post, has had a detrimental effect. Only one boy is withdrawn from lessons for extra support as he is at an early stage of learning English. This withdrawal support was observed during the inspection and was very good. The in-class support is good overall and the best practice includes clear explanations, modelling, illustrated key words, culturally

relevant teaching aids and peer support. The support team also provides a pack which pupils who take extended holidays may complete whilst they are away. Some re-assessment is then carried out on their return if the absence has been protracted.

118. However, major problems arise because the good practice is very patchy across the school. Departments such as design and technology provide very good support, and in mathematics a bi-lingual¹² teacher demonstrates very good strategies to maximise pupils' progress. However, some departments do not even identify pupils' need, do not plan specifically to support this group of learners and do not apply any of the strategies set out in the staff training guide. Boys with English as an additional language sometimes benefit from strategies aimed at pupils with special educational needs, but this is a much too arbitrary system to ensure targeted support and consistent progress.

¹² The term 'bilingual' is generally used to refer to pupils, or specialist teachers of pupils, who are in regular contact with more than one language for the purposes of daily living. Their competence may be in one or all of the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in either or both languages and is likely to be at varying levels.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS***Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection***

Number of lessons observed	139
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	62

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	23	53	48	11	2	0
Percentage	1	17	38	35	8	1	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 to Y11
Number of pupils on the school's roll	662
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	217

Special educational needs	Y7 to Y11
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	42
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	127

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	386

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	24

Attendance**Authorised absence**

	%
School data	7.5
National comparative data	7.8

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	4.6
National comparative data	1.2

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	2002	161	N/a.	161

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	71	103	91
	Girls	N/a.	N/a.	N/a.
	Total	71	103	91
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	54 (48)	64 (55)	57 (60)
	National	66 (64)	67 (66)	66 (66)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	16 (15)	34 (32)	17 (21)
	National	32 (31)	45 (43)	33 (34)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 5 and above	Boys	100	110	91
	Girls	N/a.	N/a.	N/a.
	Total	100	110	91
Percentage of pupils at NC level 5 or above	School	63 (51)	70 (66)	58 (57)
	National	67 (65)	70 (68)	67 (64)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 6 or above	School	26 (17)	42 (46)	22 (15)
	National	32 (31)	44 (42)	34 (33)

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 4 for the latest reporting year	2002	153	N/a.	153

GCSE results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A*-G	1 or more grades A*-G
Numbers of pupils achieving the standard specified	Boys	35	134	152
	Girls	N/a.	N/a.	N/a.
	Total	35	134	152
Percentage of pupils achieving the standard specified	School	23 (25)	88 (89)	99 (95)
	National	50 (48)	91 (91)	96 (96)

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

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per pupil	School	28.5 (28.3)
	National	39.8 (39.0)

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

Vocational qualifications		Number	% success rate
Number studying for approved vocational qualifications or units and the percentage of those pupils who achieved all those they studied	School	N/a. (N/a.)	N/a. (N/a.)
	National		N/a. (N/a.)

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	265	50	1
White – Irish			
White – any other White background	1	1	
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3		
Mixed – White and Black African	1		
Mixed – White and Asian	2		
Mixed – any other mixed background	1		
Asian or Asian British - Indian	250	3	
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	135	10	
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi			
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2		
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1		
Black or Black British – African			
Black or Black British – any other Black background			
Chinese	1		
Any other ethnic group			
No ethnic group recorded			

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 to Y11

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	47.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	14

Education support staff: Y7 to Y11

Total number of education support staff	20
Total aggregate hours worked per week	582

Deployment of teachers: Y7 to Y11

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	65.3
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Average teaching group size: Y7 to Y11

Key Stage 3	22.9
Key Stage 4	20.0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001 - 02
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	£
Total income	2735076
Total expenditure	2642300
Expenditure per pupil	3291
Balance brought forward from previous year	204386
Balance carried forward to next year	297162

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	12.2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	7.2

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	3
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

662

Number of questionnaires returned

173

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	38	49	8	3	2
My child is making good progress in school.	38	51	6	2	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	31	47	9	8	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	46	13	9	4
The teaching is good.	35	51	8	2	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	37	47	12	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	40	49	8	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	42	1	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	28	52	13	2	5
The school is well led and managed.	35	44	3	3	15
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	38	42	10	2	8
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	41	7	2	16

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

ENGLISH

119. Overall, the quality of provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- There are very good relationships between teachers and pupils, and between pupils themselves within lessons.
- Pupils make good progress from their low attainment when they come to the school.
- Pupils develop effective speaking and listening skills.
- Teachers promote formal expression and organised writing well through the more predictable demands of English literature.

Areas for improvement

- The best practice in teaching is not effectively shared by all members of the team.
- Some teachers do not provide sufficiently varied ways for pupils to learn, including the use of information and communication technology.
- Teachers do not identify clear targets for pupils with special educational needs within English lessons.
- There is insufficient use of drama to enable lower attaining pupils to explore and express their ideas.

120. Standards of work seen during the inspection are below the national average. However, this represents good progress for pupils based on their very low attainment when they come to the school. Consequently, their achievement is good. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, but teaching is better in Years 10 and 11. The boys' attitudes to the subject, and their behaviour in lessons, is good. Pupils with special educational needs make unsatisfactory progress in Years 7 to 9, but good progress in Years 10 and 11. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make slow progress in Years 7 to 9, but this improves to satisfactory in Years 10 and 11. Gifted or talented pupils in English make good progress in all year groups. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection due to satisfactory leadership and management.

121. Standards in national tests at the end of Year 9 were well below the national average. Pupils do not reach as high a level in English as they do in the other core subjects. This is because a large proportion of the boys come to the school with low levels of literacy. Over the past three years, improvement has been slightly faster than the national average. These results represent very good achievement based on pupils' prior attainment. Pupils of Indian ethnic origin have reached consistently higher standards than those from the other ethnic groups.

122. Standards in the 2002 GCSE examinations were well below the national average for A* to C passes and below average for A* to G. Over the past three years the trend has fluctuated around this level, though results in English literature improved significantly in 2002. Here again achievement was good from the pupils' attainment at the end of Year 9. However, although about half the national average percentage of pupils gained a grade A, no pupils attained the highest A* pass. The school enters a slightly higher than national average number of pupils in both English language and literature GCSE examinations. This is particularly encouraging as the school has a higher than national average percentage of pupils whose mother tongue is not, or believed not, to be English.

123. The standards seen during the inspection are better than those attained by pupils in the national tests and examinations. Speaking and listening skills develop more quickly than writing. In a lesson where pupils debated the morality of smacking children, higher attaining Year 9 pupils spoke very fluently when expressing their views. They developed their arguments to a standard well above average. In Year 11, higher attainers used discussion as a very effective way of building their own understanding of the text of 'Hamlet'. They plan their writing methodically, and link their ideas together in sophisticated sentences. Lower attainers also progress well to develop extended pieces of writing. In one Year 11 group, a boy wrote mature and elegant sentences about Mohammed Ali's popularity in Africa.
124. Pupils with special educational needs make better progress in Years 10 and 11 than they do lower down the school. In Years 7 to 9 teachers are not yet devising appropriate targets to meet individual needs as individual education plans do not provide sufficient guidance. However, those pupils who receive additional support outside mainstream lessons are well provided for. They make good progress through every year.
125. By the time they reach Year 10, most pupils have gained additional maturity and their language skills have developed satisfactorily, particularly for pupils with English as an additional language. This is because teachers place a closer emphasis on the more predictable demands of the English literature examination. Teachers have also developed effective ways of coaching the boys to cope with these demands.
126. There is an appropriate variety of additional activities to support and enhance the pupils' English studies. These include theatre visits and competitions such as one to produce a school newspaper. Such activities offer good scope for pupils to develop both their English and social skills, which they do with enthusiasm, and such provision contributes well to the pupils' personal development. However there is insufficient use of drama to develop pupils' self-esteem, or to offer alternative ways of exploring and expressing ideas.
127. Despite difficulty recruiting teachers, and some unsatisfactory teaching, the overall standard of teaching is satisfactory and there is some very good practice. In every lesson seen there were very good relationships. In the best lessons the techniques promoted in the National Key Stage 3 Literacy Strategy are used very effectively. Pupils are told very clearly what they need to learn during the lesson. Teachers demonstrate new skills before they ask pupils to try them. This was particularly effective when Year 9 boys learned to reproduce the style of a tale of Gothic horror. Pupils are given a good variety of ways to learn which keep them interested throughout the lesson. This also enables pupils who learn in different ways to have an equal chance to master the new skills and ideas. At the end of the lesson teachers check carefully to see what has been learned and use this information to good effect to plan their next lesson. These teaching and learning skills are not used in the less successful lessons. As a result, pupils have too few opportunities to speak at length, to discuss ideas, and organise them so that they understand them properly. Pupils are heavily dependent on the teacher, and do not develop the necessary independent learning skills.
128. Since the previous inspection, there has been satisfactory improvement in the provision for English. The leadership and management of the department are satisfactory. The department's managers have used data effectively to help them set appropriate targets and to monitor progress towards these. They have identified effective ways of improving standards. However, they have not been as effective in spreading the best teaching methods across the whole team. They have not ensured that the best

techniques for marking and commenting on pupils' work are used by all of the teachers. Information and communication technology is insufficiently used to support and extend pupils' writing. The English department management has not provided all of the resources, in order to enable teachers to use the techniques which have been proved to be so effective in the best teaching within the department.

English: media studies

129. Overall, the quality of provision in media studies is **satisfactory**. However, in 2002, GCSE results for grades A* to C were well below average. Twice the national average percentage of boys were entered for the examination and all gained an A* to G pass. Although a higher percentage of boys gained a grade A than in other subjects, this was half the national average and no boys gained the highest A* pass. Overall, standards in GCSE examinations are not yet good enough.
130. Over recent years, the course has been designed to provide an interesting and worthwhile GCSE option for lower attaining students. In 2002, the course was adapted to cater for the full range of students. However, teaching styles have not yet been sufficiently modified to enable students to gain the highest grades. This was evident from underachievement in the 2002 examination, and also from the work seen during the inspection.
131. Students do gain a useful and enjoyable understanding of the development of a range of different media institutions such as the movie industry, newspapers, music and television. Lessons are enjoyable, and relationships are good. Almost all students have a good recall of basic factual information, which helps them to understand the influence of the media in modern life. This is very useful for those students for whom the course was originally designed. However, there are not enough planned opportunities in every lesson for pupils to use and demonstrate more complex skills of analysis and decision making. Pupils are not learning to be sufficiently critical and discriminating when they use information and communication technology.

The National Key Stage 3 Strategy: Literacy across the curriculum

132. Teachers across the range of subjects have made good progress towards adapting their schemes of work to increase the emphasis on teaching literacy. Lessons often now include specific opportunities to develop the vocabulary, sentence structure and understanding of a range of different kinds of text. However, teachers in general within the school have not made as much progress towards changing their teaching methods to make pupils active participants in lessons. Neither have English teachers, in particular, increased the pace of learning within lessons – the other dimension of the National Key Stage 3 Literacy Strategy. There is some very good practice in some lessons, and it is beginning to filter through to others so that the approach to the development of pupils' literacy skills is currently satisfactory overall.

MATHEMATICS

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

Strengths

- Examination results and standards are improving. They are very impressive compared with similar schools.
- Achievement is consistently good, relative to prior attainment.
- Overall, teaching and learning are good.
- Pupils have good attitudes to mathematics, which are developed by regularly assessing their own progress.
- Smallish group sizes allow for high levels of individual attention from teachers and learning support assistants.
- Leadership and management are good and improving.

Areas for improvement

- More varied teaching styles, which enable pupils to be consistently involved in their own learning.
- Homework and pupils' use of resources, including information and communications technology (ICT), are insufficiently integrated into learning.

134. Standards of work seen during the inspection are now just below the national average. These improved standards are achieved because teaching is good overall. Pupils' positive attitudes and the smallish class sizes also contribute to good learning. The standard of pupils' work on entry to the school is well below average. Pupils' achievement is now consistently good throughout the school. The level and good quality of additional class support ensure that pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Gifted pupils respond well to the challenge of investigative work. Pupils with English as an additional language are effectively integrated into mainstream classes. This is due to highly successful teaching, in small groups, by a specialist teacher of mathematics who also speaks their mother tongue. The enthusiastic, improving and good quality leadership and management of mathematics have ensured consistently good improvement since the previous inspection.

135. At the end of Year 9 in 2002, the attainment of pupils in the National Curriculum tests was below the national average. However, this represented good achievement relative to prior attainment as entry levels in Year 7 are consistently well below the national average. The results in 2002 were a clear improvement on 2001, and continued the steady improvement seen since the previous inspection. In 2002, two gifted pupils made highly significant progress to attain the level only just below the national exceptional performance standard. Pupils attain consistently better results in mathematics than the other core subjects. Their results have been very impressive compared to similar schools in the last two years.

136. In GCSE examinations in 2002, the attainment of pupils was below the national average. Overall, the points score improved from 2001, in line with the national trend. The proportion of pupils gaining grades A* to C was below the national average, as in 2001. The proportion obtaining grades A* to G was in line with the national average in 2002, a decline from being above in 2001. No pupils obtained the highest grade in either 2001 or 2002 and the proportion attaining either A* or A, continues to be below the national average. However, attainment in GCSE is steadily rising and in 2001 and 2002 represented good achievement from the prior attainment at the end of Year 9. Impressively, performance in recent years is well above similar schools. The school enters the same proportion of pupils as schools nationally.

137. Standards seen in lessons confirm the examination results. At the end of Year 9, they are just below the national expectation. The most able pupils, including some who are gifted, work with confidence in data handling. They understand the clear difference between situations where the chance of something happening, such as predicting a throw of six on a die, is different from the chance of rain tomorrow, requiring historical data. This is because their learning was helped by a teacher who engaged their interest by well-structured tasks and, entertainingly, by relating the legend of St Swithin, which contributed well to the pupils' cultural education. However, other teachers rarely attempt to introduce spiritual or cultural ideas to enhance learning. There are not as many high attaining pupils as in schools nationally, simply because many of these pupils are at, or just above national average levels on intake in Year 7 and are already achieving well above what can be expected of them.
138. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support in lessons. They are provided with this additional support from early in Year 7 and consequently make good progress. In a very good lesson, the lowest attaining pupils learned about shape and space very effectively. They made good quality constructions of a variety of three-dimensional shapes, using paper and glue. They were motivated because they were actively involved in an enjoyable and relevant practical activity. The skilled learning support assistants, ably directed by the teacher, were careful to give only the correct amount of help, but good encouragement, thus allowing the pupils to succeed for themselves. However, clearly targeted individual education plans, stating mathematical needs, are rarely used.
139. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 who have English as an additional language, are taught in small groups by a specialist teacher. The teacher integrates talking in English and the mother tongue as necessary, to hasten the learning of concepts. In a very effective lesson with Year 8 pupils, they drew enlargements of shapes accurately on the blackboard whilst giving a commentary in English to the other pupils. These pupils are able to join mainstream classes effectively later in their school life.
140. Overall, standards in Year 11 are just below the national average. Gifted pupils are, for example, challenged to think deeply about how to determine the number of solutions of difficult equations. In a stimulating lesson, gifted pupils responded very well, and continued to discuss the issues after the formal end of the lesson. Lower-attaining pupils achieve well above reasonable expectation when calculating the size of unknown angles. A small group of pupils with special educational needs successfully plotted points on a two-way grid from a series of given co-ordinates. This was achieved because of the high level of good quality individual attention from teacher and learning support assistant. The introduction of statistics as an option is developing satisfactorily. Suitably, average and above average ability pupils opt for this additional course. They are attaining in line with their ability and the majority are on course for higher grades.
141. Teachers manage pupils very well. The smallish group sizes allow teachers to help individuals effectively. Teachers know the attainment of pupils well, and target work at suitably challenging levels. They set high standards of behaviour and encourage good attitudes by insisting that pupils assess their progress for each objective. This is enjoyed by the pupils and enhances their learning. Teachers work hard and use overhead transparencies well to support and illustrate work. However, despite some good examples of activity work, teaching is too didactic on occasion with too much emphasis on oral question and answer and little emphasis on using resources. Homework is not always fully integrated into planned learning. However, teaching is always at least satisfactory. Overall, teaching is good and is often very good, particularly where pupils are made to discuss and investigate.

142. Staffing in the department is good. The teachers are all specialists and there are good levels of in-class support. Teachers work hard. They benefit from the leadership and management of a good head of department who has driven them forward to ensure consistently rising standards over many years. Target setting is challenging and the head of department is successfully pioneering the use of an interactive white board, which is already enhancing learning. Wall and external displays are very good and show pride, high quality and commitment. The use of computer software and methods of organising homework, as well as a widening of teaching styles have all been accurately identified as areas still needing further development. This department has the good quality leadership, and other personnel, required to take the boys' achievement further forward in the near future.

The National Key Stage 3 Strategy: Numeracy across the curriculum

143. Numeracy across the curriculum is a good and improving feature of the school. Teachers in all subjects have been trained in developing skills relevant to their subjects. Whilst there is no formal tracking of its use, many subjects regularly take opportunities to enhance numeracy skills. In art, pupils scale well in drawings. In design and technology pupils measure accurately. In information and communication technology, the boys develop algebraic skills using spreadsheets and in both geography and science pupils use graphs and tables suitably to analyse and record results. The use of numeracy booklets once a week in tutor periods for pupils in Years 7 and 8 has helped raise awareness of the importance of numeracy. It has given form tutors the opportunity to develop the skills of those pupils most in need of help.

SCIENCE

144. Overall, the quality of provision for science is **unsatisfactory**. The core of the problem for the department is directly related to staffing issues over the last few years.

Strengths

- The good commitment of, and input from, the acting head of department since taking responsibility six months ago.
- The improvement in the national test results at the end of Year 9 which has taken place for the last two years.

Areas for improvement

- The stability of the teaching staff which historically, and at present, is negatively affecting standards.
- The low standards of attainment, particularly in Years 10 and 11.
- The inconsistent assessment and marking, across the department, of pupils' work.
- A more consistent approach to the development of pupils' literacy skills.
- Resources for information and communication technology (ICT), which are insufficient to support learning.

145. Standards of work in all years are below average. Teaching is satisfactory overall in a department, which contains several temporary members of staff. Most pupils have satisfactory attitudes to the subject and behave well, allowing them to learn satisfactorily. The standard of pupils' work in science, on entry to the school in Year 7, is well below average but many pupils make good progress throughout Years 7 to 9. Progress is not so good, however, in Years 10 and 11. Improvements since the previous inspection have been insufficient and have been restricted by the frequent changes in staffing.

146. Pupils enter the school with results in science well below those expected nationally. During the first three years, many make good or very good progress. Comparing their results in Year 6 with their achievements at the end of Year 9 in 2002 shows this. Progress is not so good in Years 10 and 11 and the majority make only satisfactory progress. In the single award groups many pupils do not make satisfactory progress. Many of these groups have had several different teachers during their GCSE course.
147. By the end of Year 9, standards attained by pupils in the national tests are well below all schools nationally but have shown a definite improvement in the last two years. They are better than at the previous inspection. When compared to similar schools, a better picture emerges. In 2001, standards compared with similar schools were very high and in 2002 were well above. Based on pupils' prior attainment, the 2002 results are well above those expected. School analysis shows that boys of Indian ethnic origin attain better than other groups, particularly boys of Pakistani ethnic origin.
148. Results at GCSE for A* to C passes are below the national average. There has been little improvement in the numbers of boys attaining the higher grades in either double or single science in the last three years. However, A* to G passes are just above the national average for the single award and just below for the double award science examinations. Very few pupils gain a grade A and none attained an A* pass in 2002. The percentage of boys entered for single science is nearly five times the national average, whilst the percentage of those taking double science is only 60 per cent of the average for their year group. Attainment in science, particularly single science, is significantly below other subjects in the school and is directly related to staffing problems, particularly in the last two years. In 2001, boys of Indian ethnic origin attained more of the higher grades in double science than other groups but in 2002 this was not the case because boys of white ethnic origin improved their results.
149. Standards seen in lessons, by Years 9 and 11, reflect those attained in public tests and examinations. Overall, standards are below those expected nationally. However, in some groups in double science, pupils are working at levels above that expected nationally, whilst in others, particularly in single science, the boys' standards are well below average. Several groups in Years 7 to 9 contain pupils working at nationally expected levels but in other groups attainment is below the levels expected.
150. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in Years 7 to 9, particularly when supported by support teachers or learning assistants who help keep them on task. The use of specially prepared resources, such as easily read worksheets or tables and diagrams for the pupils to complete, all help the boys achieve well. However, teachers do not assess the needs of these pupils in a uniform way and there is not enough reference to individual education plans, or attempts to relate them to the subject. Similarly, there are inconsistencies in the achievement of pupils for whom English is not their first language. When the specialist support staff, and the subject teachers help these pupils to use language correctly, in order to explain what they are learning, then these pupils achieve well. At other times achievement is satisfactory. Pupils who are gifted are identified both by the school and the department. At present, there is little additional work provided for these boys but they make satisfactory progress. However, in the top GCSE double science groups, many boys are attaining high levels and make good progress.
151. Teaching is satisfactory overall. In half the lessons seen teaching was good, and in all but one of the remainder, teaching was satisfactory. The department experienced significant staffing problems during the week of the inspection. One member of staff was ill throughout, and three others for certain days. Three temporary teachers were employed during the week.

152. In the better lessons teachers display clearly what pupils will learn and start the lesson by referring to these lesson objectives. Some lessons started with 'warm-up' activities to get pupils thinking, such as a simple jigsaw or quick questioning involving all pupils. Practical tasks are used to help pupils learn better, such as through a teacher's demonstration of how different metals react, reinforcing information related to this which was displayed on a screen. The team of technicians supports the staff well and ensures the smooth running of practical sessions.
153. The changes in staff have prevented any consistency in managing key areas of pupils' learning, namely marking, setting of homework and developing the skills of literacy. The marking and assessment of pupils' work is unsatisfactory and because it is too inconsistent. All too often, work is just ticked and given a mark, but no help offered on how to improve. The better marking is detailed, with constructive comments, corrections and targets set for improvement. Most classes do not have homework set regularly enough, particularly in the lower groups. The standard of work produced by pupils varies too much and is directly related to the teacher's expectations and the frequency and detail of marking.
154. Whilst pupils are able to use calculations, graphs and charts to analyse their experimental data, the skills of literacy are under-developed. Teachers do not always emphasise key words and their spelling, which is necessary for pupils to write correctly about the subject. Occasionally boys are given the chance to write at length or use their imagination, such as creating an imaginary conversation between the two scientists who made discoveries about chemical elements. However, these opportunities, together with speaking and reading, are too infrequent and do not develop literacy skills.
155. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are directly related to the expectations and consistency of staff. Where teachers set high standards in behaviour, and the application to and completion of work, most pupils respond well. Lessons are orderly, behaviour is good and pupils achieve. In situations where pupils have had a variety of teachers, both temporary and permanent, then their attitudes are poor and there is misbehaviour, inattentiveness and poor progress. Sometimes the behaviour of a significant minority affects the progress of the others.
156. Over the last two years there have been a considerable number of changes in the teaching staff. At present the situation is unsatisfactory but the school is taking steps to rectify this. The acting head of department, in post for the last six months, has had a considerable positive impact on the department and is trying hard to build a team who can move the subject forward. The department desperately needs a stable staff to put into place the issues raised in the development plan. Unfortunately, there remain some key posts unfilled. The use of an outside consultant is having some effect on improving teaching and learning. Whilst there has been some improvement since the previous inspection, namely attainment by the end of Year 9, improvement remains unsatisfactory and is another direct consequence of the staffing situation.
157. The laboratories and storerooms need refurbishment and the school is putting in place a programme for this. The school aim in this is to provide more stimulating science areas in which pupils may learn. The subject is inadequately resourced. In particular, there are insufficient ICT resources to enhance the teaching of the subject or to allow boys to use computers for the recording and analysis of results from experiments.

The National Key Stage 3 Strategy: Science across the curriculum

158. The school is making a satisfactory start in introducing the science strand of the National Key Stage 3 strategy. Since the introduction of the strategy, the acting head of department has completed an audit of the work of the department and started to apply the suggested science framework. Training and consultation with the local education authority consultant have also occurred. A development plan for science in Years 7 to 9 has been drawn up with the help of the seconded head of science. However, other subject areas have still to consider how they may contribute to, and support science education development, within their own areas.

ART AND DESIGN

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

Strengths

- Teaching is consistently good and pupils are very well managed.
- Standards in public examinations are in line with the national average for boys.
- Leadership and management are very good.
- Pupils' achievement by the end of Years 9 and 11 is good.

Areas for improvement

- The use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning.
- Refine assessment systems to sharpen information for pupils and parents about the boys' progress and what they need to do to improve.

160. Standards of work seen during the inspection are below average by the end of Year 9. By the end of Year 11, standards are in line with the national average. These standards represent good achievement in relation to the well below average standards of pupils on entry in Year 7. They are achieved because the good specialist teaching gives individual support to pupils across all year groups. This support encourages pupils to develop positive attitudes to their learning. Improvement since the previous inspection has been very good.
161. GCSE art results have risen steadily since the previous inspection when they were well below average. Although below average for all pupils in 2002, passes at A* to C were in line with the national average for boys. All pupils, including those identified by the school as being gifted or talented, achieved well in relation to their attainment at the start of the course. The proportion of pupils who took the examination is above that for boys nationally and they achieved a grade better, on average, than in other subjects taken at the same time. All pupils taking the GCSE examination gained an A* to G pass. In 2002 the only pupils to gain an A* pass at the school did so in art.
162. Teacher assessments in art at the end of Year 9 show below average numbers of pupils attaining the expected Level 5 or above. Pupils entering the school in Year 7 have varying and often very limited experiences of art. As a result of well planned lessons, good teaching and individual support they make good progress over Years 7 to 9 developing their understanding of the use of colour and a range of materials and media. They draw and paint with increasing confidence. Teachers provide a wide range of activities and subject matter through which pupils learn to work in two and three dimensions and broaden their understanding of art. Understanding of specialist vocabulary develops because teachers provide good opportunities for the pupils to take part in discussion. Teachers use questioning well to check and consolidate understanding. Year 8 pupils drawing architectural features developed literacy skills through a challenge to spell as many words as they could from the letters of the word

‘architecture’. Specialist words are explained in displays around the classrooms and examples of artwork are used to motivate and inspire pupils. The boys are actively involved in evaluating their work, which helps them reflect well upon their learning. A good range of teaching methods in lessons helps sustain concentration and the pace of working. Good relationships are encouraged through the provision of opportunities for the pupils to work in groups and help one another. The very good individual support provided ensures that pupils, including those with statements of special educational need, achieve well. Pupils develop their use of a sketchbook for homework, and to record their ideas, but this, and their use of computers in art, is a weaker aspect of their learning.

163. Work seen during the inspection shows that standards by the end of Year 11 are average. The school has taken the decision to enter pupils for the GCSE examination at the end of Year 10. This is proving to be very demanding of pupils especially those with special educational needs, who represent almost half of those currently studying art. Progress to date is good as a result of the considerable individual support and guidance provided by teachers. Work in Year 10 sketchbooks is of a similar standard to those of Year 11 pupils who are also making good progress with coursework. Teachers’ offer the boys good opportunities, after school, to undertake additional work related to their art studies. Understanding and appreciation of art is broadened through visits to local galleries and, for example, working with a sculptor at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park. Good guidance materials are provided to help with written evaluations and this promotes confidence particularly amongst pupils with weak literacy skills. Teachers provide clearly written, evaluative comments, for example on the recent trial examination work. These comments help pupils understand how to improve. During lessons, pupils are helped by the teachers’ frequent verbal advice, which encourage them to think for themselves and make their own decisions when developing their coursework.
164. Leadership and management of art are very good. The head of department has worked hard since the previous inspection to put in place improvements to all aspects of the department’s work, and to give very good support and guidance to other staff in the department. There is a willingness to reflect upon, evaluate and improve working practices. Displays of work are used well to enhance the learning environment in classrooms. There are clear systems for assessment, which involve pupils in evaluating their work. However, these assessments do not make consistent reference to important aspects of subject learning. Consequently, there are neither sufficiently clear criteria, nor sharp enough judgements, for the assessment records to be used effectively enough to improve the quality of information in reports to parents. The department’s system requires refinement. Senior management’s recent review of the department has already identified resourcing, and the use of ICT, as requiring improvement. Issues from the previous inspection have been dealt with very well. Overall, the quality of teaching has improved. It is now good and standards have risen steadily as a result.

CITIZENSHIP

165. Overall, the quality of provision in citizenship is **good**.

Strengths

- Very good leadership has led to the development of a good citizenship programme.
- The good contribution the programme makes to pupils' personal development
- The wide range of learning activities provided for pupils

Areas for improvement

- The contributions of a broader range of subjects to citizenship education.
- The development of the systematic use of marking and assessment linked to National Curriculum descriptions for the subject.

166. Overall, pupils achieve standards that are consistent with expectations and sometimes above by the end of Years 9 and 11. They are enthusiastic and enjoy the content of the modules, particularly those concerned with relationships and the development of attitudes and values. Achievement is good across all year groups.

167. Pupils of all attainment levels make good progress due to the careful thought and attention which the school pays to this aspect of pupils' personal development. Citizenship education is taught as part of the personal, social and health education programme and supported satisfactorily by related themes and topics covered in most other subjects. Pupils have many opportunities to develop an understanding of responsible citizenship and the democratic process through activities such as elections to the school council. Pupils are consulted on school policies and plans, and attend at interviews for school staff. The use of citizenship themes, such as crime in design technology, enables pupils to discuss and develop a clear understanding of issues such as those relating to the use of firearms, alcohol related crime and drugs education. The schools council, and most subject areas, make worthwhile contributions to citizenship education. Overall, these activities provide an unusually wide range of opportunities to enhance the development of citizenship. These opportunities ensure that by the end of Year 11, pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of what responsible citizenship entails. Citizenship is currently integrated well into the ASDAN¹³ youth award scheme and there are plans to develop a GCSE short course in the future, thus enhancing further the school's provision for the personal and social development of its pupils.

168. Teaching is good overall. Teachers prepare their lessons well and through the skilful use of questioning, challenge pupils' thinking about social issues. Effective use is made of a range of resources to support teaching and learning. Teaching time is well used with time limits set for the completion of learning activities. This helps to focus pupils' attention and ensures that lessons proceed at a good pace. Pupils' learning is underpinned by effective classroom management, which is based on the very good relationships observed in most lessons. The personal, social and health education and citizenship lessons are at present taught by a mixed team of staff. There are plans to create a more dedicated team, which will develop expertise in key areas through appropriate training.

169. The leadership and management of the subject are very good and make a significant contribution to pupils' progress in the area. The teaching of citizenship is very well supported by a comprehensive scheme of work and a very good pupil self-assessment procedure, which enables the coverage of topics across subjects to be properly recorded. However, assessment procedures are, as yet, incomplete and do not relate

¹³ Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network

to the new National Curriculum descriptions for the subject. There is also inconsistency in marking because through this pupils are not made sufficiently aware of the targets they should reach. However, well-focused training is helping to promote higher standards in personal, social and health education and in citizenship, and these subjects are making a valuable contribution to the ethos of the school as a whole. Citizenship makes a valuable contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils both in terms of the curriculum on offer and teaching styles, which encourage pupils to develop attitudes and values. Good progress is being made in these areas and there is a very firm base for further improvement.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

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

Strengths

- The good progress pupils make by the end of Years 9 and 11.
- The good teaching and learning across all areas of the subject.
- The very good contribution the subject makes to developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.
- The very good leadership and management of the department.

Areas for improvement

- The regular use of on-going assessments across all aspects of design and technology.
- The accommodation for the subject, particularly the provision for drawing and designing in the workshops.

171. Standards of work seen during the inspection reach the national average by Year 11. These standards are achieved because the teaching is good overall. Pupils enjoy design and technology and their positive attitudes and good behaviour also contribute to good learning in the subject. The standard of pupils' work, on entry to the school in Year 7, is well below average. Pupils' make good progress through Years 7 to 9 when standards are below average. All pupils, including those with learning difficulties, the gifted or talented and those on the early stages of using English as an additional language also make good progress. As they move through the school, pupils continue to make good progress.

172. Since the previous inspection, the improvement in design and technology has been good. Pupils' results have improved significantly. They compare very well with the boys' results in other subjects and with results in schools locally. In 2002, the percentage of pupils entered by the school for the GCSE examination was a third higher than the national average. The most recent examination results were significantly below results nationally for grades A* to C but in line for grades A* to G. Researching skills have improved in both scope and depth and the presentation of written work has benefited from the greater use of information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils for whom English is an additional language benefit very much from the very good support they receive from the specialist support staff. All pupils have opportunities to develop as independent learners and many have the ability to continue on their own work making good progress. Pupils do not always have the range and level of drawing skills required to represent their ideas on paper and the techniques they use are frequently basic and unrefined. Through established, good, supportive links with the community, pupils appreciate the relevance of what they learn to the world of work.

173. In 2002, teachers' assessments of pupils in Year 9 showed they were below average for the percentage of boys reaching the expected Level 5 or above, but closer to the

average for the higher Level 6 and above. By the end of Year 9, pupils design and make products and models that show a good level of thinking about function and manufacture. They represent their ideas on paper but their drawings lack the refinement to show how their ideas have developed. When working practically they re-model their ideas and show a good level of competence across a range of materials including food, systems and applications. Because they are given good opportunities, they develop well their numeracy and literacy skills and technical vocabulary.

174. Teaching is good with frequent very good features. The established team of teachers work very well together and offer pupils a good range of specialist expertise and teaching styles. They set high standards for learning and behaviour and are successful in engaging and sustaining pupils' learning. Recognising the challenges that some pupils have, they use a very good range of support techniques especially for younger boys. For example, they write all tasks, books and support sheets to match the pupils' levels of reading and understanding and to support the development of their literacy skills. They explain all key words and technical vocabulary. The department makes very good use of the ethnic minority assistant teachers in the writing of these materials and for supporting boys in the classroom. Teachers and learning assistants give good support for pupils with special educational needs and the gifted or talented. They give good opportunities for them to work at levels which match their ability, and to make good progress. Drawing skills are taught but opportunities to practise and develop them are often missed. Pupils do not learn to refine their skills on paper to use them freely and clearly to represent their ideas.
175. Teachers know their pupils' strengths and weaknesses but do not record their marks regularly to show what pupils know, understand and can do to inform their short-term planning. Long-term, they do evaluate the success of the courses they plan. They make changes to successfully meet the needs of the changing pupil intake, for example the one-year GCSE course for disaffected pupils. There is good provision extra to the curriculum through clubs, visits to local industries, links to other schools and work with parents as providers. The food demonstrations by mums, from the different ethnic groups in the community, are very successful and give parents, who would not normally take part, a chance to join in school life.
176. This is a very well managed department with clear aims and values for its work and development. The head of department keeps proper track of the curriculum. Changes are made to improve the provision by giving a good range of opportunities for whole school priorities such as citizenship, development of ICT for learning and pupils' numeracy and literacy skills. The technicians work hard to support the work of the department and frequently the work of pupils! The school sees improvement to the accommodation as a priority. This includes clean areas for designing in all rooms. Resources for learning are very well used but some computers are out of date.

GEOGRAPHY

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

Strengths

- The good quality of subject specialist teaching in Years 10 and 11.
- The good and successful implementation of approaches to support pupils' literacy and numeracy development.
- The effective use of teaching assistants to support for pupils' learning
- Effective curriculum and lesson planning, which promotes well the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Areas for improvement

- Standards achieved in GCSE results for pupils in Year 11.
- The use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support pupils' learning.
- The opportunities for pupils to undertake fieldwork, especially in Years 7 to 9.
- The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning.

178. Standards of work seen during the inspection are below the national average. Teaching by subject specialist staff, especially in Years 10 and 11, is good and contributes well to pupils' learning. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory overall and good in Years 10 and 11. Pupils' achievements in relation to standards are satisfactory. They make satisfactory progress in Years 7 to 9 but good teaching contributes to good progress in Years 10 and 11. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs, and those who are designated as gifted or talented, is satisfactory. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.

179. The standards pupils attain in geography are below the level expected nationally for pupils in Year 9. In 2002, there had been a good improvement in standards from previous years, for pupils gaining the expected Level 5 or higher, and they are now closer to the national average for boys. By the end of Year 11, in 2002, GCSE results were well below the national average for A* to C passes and below average for A* to G grades. However, the school enters almost twice the national average percentage of boys in the examination. By the end of Year 9 and at GCSE the attainment of boys of Indian ethnic origin is higher than that of boys from Pakistani and white ethnic origin. Raising the attainment of pupils is a priority for the department and they are successfully implementing a range of approaches to improve pupils' learning, examination techniques and writing skills.

180. At the end of Year 9, standards of work seen are below average levels. Pupils have a developing knowledge and understanding of physical and human processes. Their knowledge of place is satisfactory and in lessons it is well supported by the use of maps. Pupils have acquired a satisfactory range of geographical skills and undertake simple geographical enquiries with confidence. They demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of the processes involved and illustrate their work well with maps and graphs. Pupils' work is well organised and presentation is good. Pupils enter the school with low levels of literacy but a real strength of the department is the successful use of a range of strategies to support the development of language and writing. For example, in a Year 9 lesson on economic development the teacher began the lesson

well by asking the pupils to define five key words they had used in the previous lesson. At the end of the lesson there was a short spelling test on new words learnt that day. Display of key words and support on writing are good features in the specialist geography rooms. The use and application of number is good. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop the use and application of ICT. Overall, most pupils demonstrate satisfactory attitudes to their work and make satisfactory progress with their learning.

181. By the end of Year 11, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the interrelationships of the physical and human environments. They demonstrate a satisfactory knowledge of location and the use of technical language. GCSE coursework shows their enquiry skills are well developed. The boys successfully use and apply maps and graphs to illustrate their work. Descriptive writing is accurate but their skills of analysis and interpretation are weaker. Pupils' use of number and graphs is good. For example, a river study shows the accurate recording and calculation of data that is well illustrated through a range of graphs and diagrams. There is insufficient use of ICT to support their work. The use of approaches to develop thinking skills is being successfully implemented to improve pupils' learning. For example, in a Year 10 lesson on resource management effective use was made by the pupils of mind-maps to record information from a video. This information was then used to produce a case study through the use of a structured framework for writing. Overall, pupils in Years 10 and 11 display good attitudes to their work and make good progress with their learning.
182. The quality of teaching is good. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. In Years 10 and 11, where subject specialists teach all lessons, 80 per cent of teaching was good or better. Good features include the teachers' subject knowledge and enthusiasm, the range of approaches used in the classroom, and quality resources. Teaching supports the development of pupils' literacy skills well. The display of key vocabulary and strategies to support writing are successfully implemented throughout the department. In several lessons effective support for pupils with special educational needs was provided through the use of teaching assistants. For example, in a good lesson in Year 7 the teacher was well supported by two teaching assistants and used an imaginative approach to stimulate the pupils' work on understanding the earth's daily and seasonal movements. Teachers make good use of a range of high quality resources including maps, photographs and videos. For example, in a Year 10 lesson on flooding, following a high quality explanation and the use of a video, the teacher helped pupils to understand why floods occurred in Mozambique through analysing information from the atlas. Pupils' work is marked regularly, often with helpful comments for improvement. The recording of pupils' work and progress is good.
183. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Staffing, accommodation and resources are satisfactory. Non-specialist staff, teach geography across Years 7 to 9, and often such teaching is in non-specialist rooms. This is unsatisfactory. Arrangements for performance management have been implemented and are having a positive effect on improving the quality of teaching. High quality documentation and schemes of work provide very effective support for the teachers. The planning of the curriculum to provide for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to undertake fieldwork. A good department improvement plan has identified appropriate priorities for improvement but there is insufficient monitoring of its implementation. Formal procedures for monitoring and evaluating teaching are not well enough established to ensure consistency of standards and provision across the department.

HISTORY

184. Overall, the quality of provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Strengths

- Standards by Year 9 have significantly improved and pupils achieve well.
- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection especially in developing pupils' skills of enquiry and writing.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school.
- Improved assessment procedures are helping to raise standards in Years 10 and 11.

Areas for improvement

- Rigorous marking and the challenging of pupils' skills of analysis and interpretation are inconsistent in Years 7 to 9.
- Support materials for pupils with English as an additional language are undeveloped.
- Teaching and learning are inadequately monitored and evaluated, and good practice is not adequately shared.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is not used systematically to develop the boys' history skills.

185. Standards of work seen during the inspection are below average. However, this represents good achievement in relation to pupils' standards on entry to the school in Year 7. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 10 and 11. These standards are achieved because teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Boys with English as an additional language, and those who are gifted or talented, make satisfactory progress. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.

186. Standards of work seen by the end of Year 9 are below the national average. This matches the teachers' assessments for 2002 for the proportion of pupils attaining the expected National Curriculum Level 5. Pupils' achievement in relation to their attainment on entry to the school is good as they begin Year 7 with skills and understanding in history that are well below average. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

187. By Year 9, pupils have sound factual recall and satisfactory skills of simple note-making. Less able pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress in developing these skills as they are well supported by the teachers. Numeracy skills are being developed satisfactorily, for example through the use of time lines and graphs to show population growth. However, many pupils, including those with English as an additional language, have weak literacy skills. This was seen when Year 8 pupils successfully colour coded religious changes in Tudor times, but had problems writing about them. This is because some teachers are insufficiently aware of the needs of pupils with difficulties in English. However, most teachers use the individual educational plans well for those with special educational needs. The more able boys, including gifted pupils, develop satisfactory skills of writing at length in a variety of forms, such as a Year 8 group's newspaper report on a local mill disaster. However, opportunities are missed to use ICT to present these. Skills of organisation and enquiry are improving with more topics studied in depth. However, analytical skills of evaluation and interpretation of evidence are undeveloped when inadequately challenged by rigorous tasks.

188. Results in GCSE history had significantly improved in the three years up to 2001. In that year, although below average, the results were some of the best in the school. However, in 2002 they were well below average at A* to C grades and well below at A* to G. Pupils achieved significantly less well in history than in most of their other subjects. This was partly due to disaffection amongst some pupils and a lack of revision for one exam paper.
189. Standards of work seen in Years 10 and 11 are below the national average but better than the examination results in 2002. The pupils achieve satisfactorily in relation to their attainment at the end of Year 9. Year 11 pupils have a good understanding of the key events, for instance opposition groups in Nazi Germany and the influence of propaganda. The department is aware of the need to reinforce this knowledge in the lead up to examinations. Less able pupils and those with special educational needs have satisfactory skills of enquiry and recording, encouraged by studies in depth in Year 9. Gifted, talented and more able pupils confidently analyse and interpret relevant evidence from a variety of sources, and subsequently write well. Consequently, the best coursework in Year 11 on women in the First World War and the Blitz is of a high standard. However, such skills are less well developed in pupils of average ability.
190. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, an improvement on the previous inspection. It is best in Years 10 and 11, where it is good. Teachers use their good subject knowledge well to teach at a good pace and with a variety of activities which involve the boys. A vivid film on trench warfare was used to stimulate the imagination of Year 10 pupils. This enabled the boys effectively to match cards describing conditions and prepare empathetic diaries of trench life. Teachers set high expectations. However, inadequate monitoring of progress during some lessons does not always ensure these expectations of learning are fulfilled, although reviews at the end of lessons are now more common practice. Marking, though done regularly, is not sufficiently rigorous across the department in setting clear targets for improvement in Years 7 to 9. However, Year 11 pupils know their current progress, predicted grades and how to improve.
191. Pupils make at least satisfactory progress in lessons as a result of the teaching they receive. Pupils satisfactorily acquire knowledge and are learning important new skills of enquiry, and organisation. This is encouraged by the teachers' good relationships with them and good management. Good learning occurs in Years 10 and 11 as a result of good teaching and the pupils' interest in the work. They also work by themselves better than those boys currently in Years 7 to 9. Only occasionally is learning less effective in Years 7 to 9 when non-specialist teachers, unsure of the subject, do not challenge the pupils sufficiently. A loss of concentration occurs when some lessons are not planned well enough to allow for the pupils' weak literacy skills. Such planning is insufficiently well developed, but is beginning to be tackled by the use of materials, produced by the department, for supporting the boys' writing.
192. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is clear direction through the department's development plans, which reflect the school's priorities. The department is committed to improvement and is well placed to move forward with teachers working well together. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory. Teaching overall and standards in Years 7 to 9 have improved, as have book resources for these year groups. Assessment procedures have improved with individual target setting and good analysis and use of results, although pupils in Years 7 to 9 are unsure of the meaning of National Curriculum levels. Teaching and learning are not effectively monitored and evaluated, especially through more regular classroom observation, to promote and share good practice. The use of ICT is not happening systematically to enrich the subject and provide pupils with their entitlement in history.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

193. Overall, the quality of provision in specialist information and communication technology (ICT) as a specialist subject is **good**. Nevertheless, its use in other subjects across the curriculum is **unsatisfactory**. However, improvements are in hand which are starting to raise the overall quality of provision for the subject.

Strengths

- Teaching is good in specialist ICT lessons and boys are making good progress in developing new skills, knowledge and understanding.
- Boys have very good attitudes to their learning and achieve well.
- Lessons focus on literacy skills which helps boys use ICT terminology effectively, and improves the quality of presentation of their work

Areas for improvement

- Statutory requirements for teacher assessments at the end of Year 9, and for reporting of the subject to parents, were not met in 2002.
- Marking of practical work is under-developed, as well as monitoring and assessment of progress against specific targets.
- There are no schemes of work for the extra-curricular GCSE or NICAS courses in Years 10 and 11.
- The National Key Stage 3 Strategy for ICT has yet to be implemented.
- The use of ICT in other subjects of the curriculum is unsatisfactory.
- There are issues of health and safety relating to the accommodation for the subject.

194. Standards of work seen during the inspection are below average overall. They are average by Year 9, but below average by Year 11. Pupils now in Years 10 and 11 did not have specialist ICT lessons whilst in Years 8 and 9, and this has affected their level of attainment. No pupils were entered for the GCSE examination in ICT in 2002. Since September 2002, curriculum changes now enable all pupils to study specialist ICT. In spite of these past difficulties, pupils' achievement in relation to their standards on entry to the school in Year 7 is good. This level of achievement is enabled because the teaching is good. Pupils' attitude to the subject, and their behaviour in lessons, is very good. This contributes to the quality of their learning being good throughout Years 7 to 11. Pupils consequently now make good progress as they move through the school. Pupils with learning difficulties, those who are identified as gifted or talented in the subject, and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress. Improvement overall since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.
195. No teacher assessments of pupils at the end of Year 9 were undertaken in 2002. This is in breach of statutory requirements. Consequently, the reporting to parents of standards and progress of pupils in ICT did not meet statutory requirements. The school's reason for this is that the head of department felt unable to make the assessments due to insufficient information either through specialist ICT lessons or from assessments of related work in other subjects. This is a serious weakness in the management of the department and the coordination of ICT across the curriculum.
196. In Years 7 to 9, the standards attained by boys in work and lessons seen are now average. Pupils' achievements in ICT lessons are good as a result of well-designed tasks that systematically develop a range of skills and knowledge, and build upon prior learning. In Year 7, boys are starting to understand basic terminology in relation to newspaper layout. In Year 8, boys satisfactorily use a range of animated text and graphics in their multimedia presentations, and some use hyperlinks for efficient access to the Internet for extra graphics. They assess each other's presentations satisfactorily

and they all take part in discussions on use of correct spellings and grammar. In Year 9 after research into local traffic flows, boys use presentation software satisfactorily to show their findings, and customise their pages to interest and inform other people.

197. Under arrangement with design and technology, Year 9 boys receive an extra lesson of ICT to prepare them for work in Year 10. For example, they are starting to produce computer work using exact measurements when preparing isometric drawings. Boys are keen to try out new techniques and experiment to improve their level of skill. Good individual support by teachers and classroom assistants provides extra guidance for the least able, and greater challenge for the high attaining boys. This helps to build confidence and boys make good progress as a result.
198. In the work seen in Years 10 and 11, attainment is below the national average, but achievement in lessons is good. Boys are responding well to the new curriculum and all are building on their previous learning. They are successfully using multimedia software, sometimes for the first time. Beginners set up basic slides and use colour to enhance text on screen whilst those boys with some experience import graphics from other software or the Internet and are reaching a higher than average standard of skill. A quarter of all boys have achieved a National Inter-Action Certificate at intermediate level in word processing and spreadsheets. Boys have very good attitudes to their learning and this helps to raise their achievement. Boys with special educational needs satisfactorily key in wages data on simple spreadsheets. They then carry out mental calculations of the totals with support from their teacher and this helps them understand the automated functions for additions, which take place electronically. Teachers provide sensitive support to enable all boys of all abilities make progress.
199. A number of gifted or talented boys in Years 8, 9 and 10 are taking an extra-curricular course leading to GCSE in ICT over one year. They are highly motivated and have started independent work on their 'communications' assignment, however no completed or marked work was available. There is no scheme of work showing teaching planning for this course and it is unclear whether it will be achieved in the specified time.
200. Teaching is good overall. Teachers are not specialists but have sufficient knowledge and skills to meet the needs of the subject and the ability of the boys. A good level of discipline is maintained through positive relationships. Teachers use a wide range of effective methods to maintain attention, demonstrate and explain new skills, and involve the boys in reflecting upon their learning. There is sufficient scope in the set tasks to allow boys to progress to their potential, especially in Years 7 to 9. In Years 10 and 11, the good teaching ensures that boys have a firm foundation of skills within a wide range of software. In all lessons, teachers place a strong emphasis on the development of literacy skills. Teachers ensure that the boys understand the meaning of new terminology, and emphasise the importance of correct spelling, use of capitals and punctuation. This approach is helping to raise achievement.
201. Assessment and encouragement for the improvement of work in progress take place informally. Marking of printed work, with written guidance on improvement, does not take place until a unit is complete. When this happens there is no time for pupils to carry out improvements, consequently this procedure is unsatisfactory. Not all teachers fully understand the standards represented by the National Curriculum levels for the subject. In a small number of lessons, there is a lack of questioning to identify and build upon prior learning when starting out on new software. There is not always enough time for a thorough review of learning during a lesson, and demonstrations lack effect when boys are concentrating on other tasks.

202. Although, in most respects, the leadership and management of ICT as a specialist subject are satisfactory, they are unsatisfactory overall because the management of the department has failed to ensure statutory requirements for assessment and reporting are properly undertaken at the end of Year 9. However, the recently appointed coordinator has initiated a specialist course in ICT in all years, and there is now a good range of resources to support the curriculum. The procedure for monitoring the attainment of each boy as he progresses through the school is almost complete, but the lack of data on attainment at entry, or in Year 10, means target setting is not yet in place. There are no facilities to store the boys' completed work other than electronically. There are good schemes of work for Years 7 to 9, but they have not been published for Years 10 and 11. The department benefits from the work of an experienced technician. However, there are some health and safety concerns relating to the subject's accommodation. Ventilation is poor and windows and blinds have to be opened to ensure a fresh flow of air. There is no area for work away from computers, and chairs are too low with computer monitors too high for some boys to work comfortably.

The National Key Stage 3 Strategy: Information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum

203. Overall, provision for ICT as taught within other subjects of the curriculum is unsatisfactory. Leadership and management of ICT across the curriculum are unsatisfactory. Initial training for the ICT strand of the National Key Stage 3 Strategy has taken place, but this has yet to be implemented. The use of ICT by subjects across the curriculum is inconsistent and un-coordinated. Design and technology and the mathematics departments have their own suites of computers, and make good use of these. However, science has insufficient computing equipment, and in English and media studies teachers lack strategies to ensure that the boys make appropriate use of ICT to enhance learning in the subject. Although there are sufficient up-to-date computers, the current deployment makes it difficult for some subjects to gain appropriate access. In the learning support unit, the library and in the vocational education and careers areas, the computers are out-of-date and do not meet the needs of all pupils. Some older computers have been earmarked for disposal but there is no ongoing policy for replacing obsolete hardware.

MODERN LANGUAGES

204. Overall, the quality of provision in modern European languages is **poor**, but in Urdu the provision is **good**.

Strengths

- Teachers' good subject knowledge.
- The good management of behaviour and encouragement of supportive working relationships with pupils.
- There are some good teaching strategies.

Areas for improvement

- Standards in modern European languages are too low.
- Staffing and the curriculum time allocated to the subject are unsatisfactory.
- Teaching is unsatisfactory in modern European languages and planning is poor.
- There is insufficient use of the foreign language in lessons.
- Assessment techniques and use of assessment information are not good enough.
- The inclusion of Urdu as an integral part of the department.

205. Standards of work seen during the inspection in modern languages are below average by Years 9 and 11. This is because teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall. The department has experienced, and continues to experience, serious staffing difficulties. Pupils' achievements are consequently unsatisfactory in all year groups. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are therefore unsatisfactory. Pupils of all abilities make unsatisfactory progress in modern languages. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language learn at a comparable rate to other pupils. Improvement since the previous inspection has been poor.
206. Teacher assessments of pupils at the end of Year 9 in 2002 were below average for boys gaining the expected Level 5 and above, and very low for those achieving the higher Level 6 or above. GCSE results, in 2002, for grades A* to C were very low in French with no boy gaining higher than a C pass. However, the percentage of boys entered for the examination was nearly 50 per cent higher than the national average and the A* to G pass rate was close to the national average. No pupils were entered for German in 2002. The trend in performance over recent years has been inconsistent and the number of boys continuing to study languages to GCSE level is small.
207. Achievement in Urdu is good but unsatisfactory in French and German. There are three main reasons for this. These involve the staffing problems, a lack of time allocated for foreign language study and the underdevelopment of strategies for effective teaching and learning. Long-term absence and an unfilled post have meant that pupils do not have the benefits of a specialist teacher. The amount of time given to language work and the way in which the time is arranged during the week lead to a lack of consistency in learning. These timetable factors make it impossible for even experienced teachers to maintain the standards of pupils' recall or the reinforcement necessary for effective learning to take place.
208. The quality of teaching seen during the inspection was unsatisfactory, although the better strategies seen in French and German lessons were evident on a more regular basis in Urdu, where the teaching and learning are good. These positive aspects include teachers' knowledge of their languages, the good management of behaviour and encouragement of supportive relationships with pupils, the sharing of clear objectives with classes and the positive use of the foreign language for classroom business. However, pupils learn less well when there is too much English used, when the foreign language is used inconsistently, where the planning is poor and where there

is no recap at the end of lessons to help boys to consolidate their learning. This same lack of reinforcement is also evident in the lack of purposeful, consistent homework and the lack in some lessons of purpose and challenge.

209. Even though the accommodation and resources are satisfactory, the unsatisfactory elements previously mentioned contribute overall to a poor provision of learning opportunities. This is compounded by the boys having very little contact with speakers of the languages except the Urdu teacher and a supply teacher. There are no longer any language based trips abroad and the pupils do not have the benefits of contact with other native speakers via e-mail or other links. The use of information and communication technology is very limited in all its applications.
210. Teachers demonstrate a genuine concern for their pupils' well-being, but support for individual boys' learning is poor overall. This is largely due to the lack of planned work suitable for the range of pupils' learning needs, scant targets or hints for improvement in teachers' feedback, and poor reporting. However, some assessment procedures have now been introduced in Years 7 to 9 and there are plans to continue the new system forward once it is properly established.
211. The leadership and management of the department are unsatisfactory. The head of department has been working hard in extremely difficult circumstances to hold the department together and there are now schemes of work in place and a number of initiatives planned. Nevertheless, too many schemes have been deferred pending new developments. The scarcity of departmental documentation reflects the lack of systems to support the boys' language learning in unfavourable conditions. The main areas for development involve the more rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning and a detailed departmental improvement plan. Although there are many good practices in Urdu, these are not shared within the department and this reflects the fact that this language is not yet fully incorporated into the modern languages team.
212. Improvement since the previous inspection has been poor. There have been improvements in the provision of schemes of work, reading schemes and the amount of time given to Urdu. However, there has been little or no significant movement on many of the factors already outlined and the quality of staffing, teaching and learning, and contact with native speakers has declined. The same phrase from the previous report can still be applied "*This department needs more 'status' across the school*".

MUSIC

213. Overall, the quality of provision in music is **unsatisfactory**.

Strengths

- The musicianship of the head of department is good.
- The music department is housed in a pleasant room with enough instruments, and adequate computers for GCSE work.

Areas for improvement

- The standards and achievement of pupils throughout the school are not high enough.
- The teaching is not good enough to promote good learning and interest in music.
- There is very little involvement of pupils in music beyond Year 9.
- There is a lack of extra-curricular opportunities in music.
- The scheme of work is incomplete and does not link with the assessment of pupils.

214. Standards of work seen during the inspection are below average. They are well below average in Year 9 and below average by Year 11. Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory throughout all year groups. This is because the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory. Whilst pupils' behaviour in lessons is satisfactory, their attitudes to music are unsatisfactory overall. Consequently, this leads to their learning being unsatisfactory. Pupils of all abilities, therefore, make unsatisfactory progress in all year groups. This includes pupils with special educational needs, those who are gifted or talented in the subject, and pupils with English as an additional language. Improvement since the previous inspection has been unsatisfactory.

215. Standards of attainment at the end of Year 9 in 2002 were average according to the assessment done by teachers. However, the inspection evidence shows that they are well below average in Years 7 to 9 because of the unsatisfactory teaching. Lessons do not have a sense of purpose and pupils are not always clear about the reason why they are doing certain activities. Pupils are not helped to make the links between the recorded music they hear and their own performance because they mostly spend the whole lesson on one activity or the other. Too little is expected of pupils and the work planned does not allow them to learn more about the musical elements necessary to enable them to reach the National Curriculum level appropriate for their age. Pupils come to the school in Year 7 with very little musical achievement. They have not mastered the basic musical skills to allow them to progress and become creative musicians. Not enough emphasis is given to the teaching of basic skills, in music, literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. As a result, pupils neither develop the fundamental skills to apply in creative music, nor to express their thoughts and ideas. This represents unsatisfactory achievement. Because progress is slow in Years 7 to 9 pupils are not equipped with the skills and knowledge they need to embark on an examination course in Year 10. Many pupils do not find the work interesting and so do not work hard enough. A background of chatter and fidgeting, which is not tackled with stimulating teaching, accompanies most lessons. This has a significant, negative impact on the rate of progress and subsequently on the numbers of pupils choosing to study music at GCSE level.

216. The small number of pupils who took music GCSE in 2001 did not do as well as in other subjects taken at the same time. The number gaining an A* to C pass was well below the national average. There was however disruption in their learning through staffing problems at a critical period in their studies. There were no pupils entered for GCSE in 2002 so it is not possible to detect any kind of pattern to levels of attainment. In the present Year 11, pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. They discuss different types of music based on an adequate knowledge of musical forms and periods, but

because their experience of listening to a range of music is limited they do not use this knowledge well enough in tests and examinations. There are aspects of teaching which are good, particularly the high standard of musicianship, which gives pupils a good example to follow. The pupils are very competent in using composing software on computers, which shows they understand how to structure a composition using a chord sequence. Attempts have been made to introduce out of school musical activities but they have foundered through lack of interest from the boys. However, the eight boys in Year 11, who are studying music for GCSE, frequently stay behind to use the computer to work on composition or to rehearse their performance pieces.

217. The unsatisfactory progress made by pupils with special educational needs is not helping them to improve their involvement in music, or their ability to concentrate and work well with others. Issues relating to concentration and co-operative work are two of the more frequent targets identified in their individual education plans. Pupils identified by the school as gifted or talented are not singled out in music as pupils of whom more is expected, or who show demonstrably higher levels of attainment. The needs of pupils with English as an additional language are not recognised, although these pupils cope very well and take part in lessons by following their friends.
218. Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. Since the previous inspection, standards have fallen and there has been lack of continuity in teaching, although this is now more stable. The essential management tools of a good scheme of work linked to clear assessment measures are not in place to support good teaching and learning. The action following performance management review has not yet resulted in the training needs being met in order to develop the head of department as an effective leader. The low achievement of pupils is recognised and the school has plans, already in the early stages of implementation, to increase the number of pupils learning an instrument. This, together with the quality of accommodation and range of classroom instruments, is intended by the school to have a positive effect on standards in lessons and, in turn, to put the department in a stronger position to introduce out of school activities.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

219. Overall, the quality of provision in physical education is **satisfactory**. However, there are a number of notable features in the department's provision.

Strengths

- Teachers have secure knowledge, plan lessons well with clear and stated objectives and assess pupils well. This results in good achievement for pupils in all year groups.
- There is very good accommodation and a good level of resources.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are good.
- There is good leadership and effective staff co-operation.
- Pupils of differing abilities and background are fully integrated and make equally successful progress.
- There is a very good extra curricular programme.

Areas for improvement

- The use of information and communication technology (ICT), especially in GCSE classes.
- The quality of written work within GCSE classes to improve attainment in examinations.
- The level of support and guidance by teachers when dealing with some pupils with behavioural problems.
- The department's links with feeder primary schools.

220. Standards of work seen during the inspection by Year 9 are in line with national expectations but below average by Year 11. However, pupils' achievement, in relation to standards on entry to the school, is good throughout Years 7 to 11. This good achievement is gained through good teaching. The satisfactory attitudes of the pupils and very good accommodation ensure satisfactory learning for pupils in all year groups. Pupils from all ethnic backgrounds, and including those identified as gifted or talented, make satisfactory progress. Although there was only one lesson where additional support was available for boys with special educational needs, these pupils, and those with English as an additional language, progressed in line with other boys. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.
221. In 2002, teacher assessments of pupils in Year 9 were below average. In lessons seen with the current Year 9, standards are average. However, whilst the majority of pupils achieve in line with national standards there are more below average than above average attaining pupils in Years 7 to 9. GCSE results in 2002 were below average for grades A* to C, although all pupils entered gained an A* to G pass. No pupils gained a higher A* or A grade. These standards were reflected in the lessons observed. However, pupils gained over half a grade better in their sports studies than they did in other subjects taken at the same time. This reflects and supports the good achievement the boys make in the subject.
222. Above average levels of attainment were evident, notably in a Year 7 inter-form soccer competition and in Year 8 and 11 gymnastics and basketball lessons. Pupils demonstrated very competent ball skills, awareness, balancing routines and gymnastic disciplines. The written work seen in the Year 11 GCSE class is well below average at this level. Pupils do not express their ideas clearly or show the required level of understanding of basic concepts. The quality of marking and assessment of this written work is unsatisfactory and there is little evidence of homework assignments. In contrast, these pupils have practical skills consistent with and in some cases better than the national average.
223. Most demonstrate satisfactory motivation and interest in the subject. However, there is a minority of pupils, in some lessons, who display an unsatisfactory response. Additional guidance and support from teachers in dealing with these behavioural problems does not always have a positive enough effect on learning and in raising standards for these pupils. Nevertheless, good examples of strong and sustained motivation on the part of pupils were seen. In a Year 10 health related lesson and in Year 7 to 9 lessons involving soccer, short tennis and gymnastics, pupils showed much enthusiasm in performing and improving their standards.
224. Teachers are very secure in their subject knowledge, use appropriate encouragement and plan their lessons well. They establish a good rapport with most pupils and are effective with boys of different ability levels. This positive and focused approach ensures that the level of achievement in lessons is good. This is the case throughout all year groups with clearly stated lesson objectives being met. There were some examples of pupils being involved in their own self-assessment and the evaluation of others in the class. In many lessons, this good teaching resulted in effective learning. For example, a well-taught Year 10 lesson resulted in the pupils completing a demanding circuit training programme, measuring their pulses and accurately calculating their heart rates. There was no evidence of the use of ICT skills in the lessons observed although there are plans to do so within the GCSE programme.
225. The two full time members of staff work most effectively together in the teaching of the subject, especially in Years 7 to 9. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 who are not studying the subject to GCSE level have relatively few opportunities to develop their full potential in

the subject, as the allocation of curriculum time is relatively low. However, a very good range of extra-curricular opportunities enhances the boys' learning opportunities. There are regular lunchtime and after school clubs for each age group offering soccer, basketball, indoor cricket and racquet games. Pupils have the opportunity to represent the school in these sports and, in addition, there are good contacts with local soccer and rugby league clubs. The Duke of Edinburgh award scheme is well established as are caving trips to North Yorkshire and the Peak District.

226. The department is progressive and well led. Accommodation and resources are very good enhancing both the programme offered and pupils' learning. Indoor facilities include a large sports hall and gymnasium, both of which are well equipped. The outdoor facilities are equally impressive and include four soccer pitches, six tennis courts, an athletics track and two all weather cricket surfaces. Particular developments since the previous inspection include an improved curriculum and an increased range of extra curricular activities. Standards of performance in school teams have improved and a well thought out department assessment scheme introduced. The new schemes of work have aims and objectives, which are properly linked to the national curriculum programme. Pupils are now well informed of their progress and the criteria required to achieve higher levels of attainment. The department is keen to improve its links with feeder schools, build upon the arrangements for pupil self-assessment and expand the schemes of work, which have been written. An important aim of the department is to improve the level of parental support for its activities.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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

Strengths

- Attainment by pupils in the GCSE short course has improved.
- Teaching is very good and occasionally excellent.
- Teachers' management of pupils is very good.
- The leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- The curriculum in all year groups is well related to the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education.
- The subject makes very good provision for the boys' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Areas for improvement

- The sharing of levels of attainment and the setting of targets with pupils and parents.

228. Standards of work seen during the inspection are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education for pupils by Years 9 and 11. Boys in all year groups achieve well in the subject. Very good teaching contributes significantly to this good level of achievement. Pupils' attitudes to the subject, and their behaviour in lessons, are good. There are very good working relationships between teachers and pupils and this contributes well to the boys' personal development. Consequently, the quality of the pupils' learning, in all year groups, is good. Pupils make good progress in the subject. There are no significant differences in the standards achieved by pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are gifted or talented make significant progress. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good.

229. In Years 7 to 9, there are many very good examples of pupils developing their knowledge and understanding of religious language, principles and concepts. In a Year 7 lesson, through a very good question and answer session developed by the teacher, pupils made very good gains in their knowledge and understanding of

Buddhist prayer. They thoughtfully reflect upon the application of the Buddhist principles in their everyday lives, from their own religious standpoints. In Year 8, pupils explore their hopes and feelings for the future and are encouraged to share these with others. This enables them to develop understanding and tolerance of the values and beliefs of others. In Year 9, pupils understand the importance of the rites and rituals of Jewish weddings and make connections with their own experiences of weddings in other faiths and traditions. Individual pupils make good progress as a result of good support and explanations by the teacher. This teaching approach enables them to begin to examine their own attitudes and feelings. The use of key words, technical language and good discussion work are useful aids to the improvement of the pupils' speaking and writing skills, particularly for pupils with special educational needs.

230. In 2002, GCSE examination results for A* to C passes in the religious education short course were just below the national average. All twelve pupils who were entered for the full GCSE course obtained an A* to C pass, which is well above average. This represents good and often very good achievement for the pupils involved. In the Year 10 GCSE course, pupils show a good understanding of issues such as the teachings of Islam on race, prejudice and discrimination. Through an excellent teacher-directed discussion and exercise, pupils produce profound and well-balanced arguments. They show a respect for the views of others, and this enables all pupils to feel confident in expressing their views in an open and honest way. In Year 11, pupils develop a very good understanding of the Christian and Islamic attitudes towards abortion. The teacher's use of a variety of approaches to the material enables pupils to explore and use reason to support their views and judgements. They demonstrate the beginnings of skills of critical analysis and the ability to present balanced arguments.
231. Pupils are well motivated and apply themselves diligently to their work. They collaborate well with each other and work at a productive pace. Teachers support individual pupils very well, both academically and personally. Consequently, pupils' behaviour makes a clear contribution to their achievement and progress. Religious education makes a valuable contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, so providing opportunities for them to explore world issues of justice, relationships and personal beliefs.
232. The teaching is of high quality with some excellent features and has a significant impact on pupils' achievement. Planning is very good, and lesson aims are shared with pupils in all lessons. Teachers make very good use of questioning to consolidate current learning and to review previous work. Teachers use a suitable range of styles, which enable pupils to *learn from* as well as *learn about* religion. This assists pupils to maintain their interest and develop understanding of religious principles and concepts. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well, contributing to a very good climate for learning. Extension work and homework are used satisfactorily 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 very effective in contributing to pupils' achievement. The 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. Assessment informs the teaching and learning cycle and the planning of new work. However, levels of attainment and pupils' targets are not currently shared with parents and pupils on a regular basis. This is recognised by the department as an area for development.
233. Religious education is managed very well and led with a clear sense of purpose and direction. Pupils are provided with a rich diet of religious education in all year groups. The head of the department approaches the task with enthusiasm and commitment. Planning is very good. The departmental development plan identified important

priorities. The quality of display, which celebrates pupils' achievement, is very high. Resources for the subject are good. Since the previous inspection, improvements in standards, teaching styles and assessment procedures have had a good impact on pupils' achievement and progress.

VOCATIONAL AND OTHER COURSES IN YEARS 10 AND 11

234. Overall, the quality of provision in the vocational courses offered by the school is **satisfactory**. In addition to the National Curriculum subjects in Years 10 and 11, the school offers courses in sociology and in business studies. Inspectors sampled both of these courses. Discussions with senior management show that the school is looking to develop its range of such subjects and extend the curriculum in Years 10 and 11 through additional vocational GCSE and GNVQ courses.

Strengths

- Sound planning for the development of a range of vocational and other courses to enhance the school's curriculum.
- The good quality of learning support for pupils, when additional help is provided in classes.

Areas for improvement

- Teachers' planning to support fully the range of pupils with special educational needs in their classes when learning support is not provided.
- The development of teaching strategies to involve pupils more in lessons, particularly through questioning and discussion work.
- The use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support and enhance pupils' learning and achievement in the subjects.

Sociology

235. This GCSE sociology course is a relatively new one for the school and is currently only being studied by pupils in Year 10. Standards of work seen during the inspection are below average. Teaching, learning, pupils' achievement, their attitudes to the course and the progress they make are all satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, as do those pupils who are gifted or talented in the subject. However, no specific, separate support is provided for these pupils and this is unsatisfactory. One reason for this is that, until very recently, there has been a lack of resources for the subject. Sociology is being taught by a newly qualified teacher who is working hard on the development of the course and the production of a sound scheme of work for the subject. However, there is no other experienced, specialist sociology teacher at the school to provide additional support and advice.
236. In the lessons seen, although introductions are brief, lesson aims are satisfactorily shared with the pupils. However, there is a tendency for the teacher to give the boys information rather than exploring their learning through questions and discussion. There are however, some limitations on the pupils' own involvement in learning. Nevertheless, when the teacher opens up discussions, the attitudes of the boys tend to be passive. They respond satisfactorily to the teacher's prompting, and take notes readily enough, but there is little evidence of pupils asking questions of the teacher or raising issues as a result of their own thinking. An example of this was seen when the teacher asked the class to consider the difference between middle and working class expectations in relation to education and parental expectations. The teacher had to work hard to involve the pupils but turned the experience around well to consider sociological concepts. For example, they discussed the idea of a 'self-fulfilling prophecy' in respect of educational expectations and the importance of 'self-value' in pupils' approach to work. The emphasis on self-value was good in its reinforcement of

the school's aims and in contributing to the boys' spiritual as well as social development.

Business Studies

237. The Year 10 intermediate vocational course in business studies was sampled, as was the Year 11 GCSE in business education. Standards of work seen during the inspection in the business courses are well below average in Year 10 and below average in Year 11. Teaching, learning and pupils' achievement are satisfactory. The response of the majority of pupils to the subject is satisfactory. However, in both courses a few boys showed lazy attitudes, in spite of the teachers' encouragement, and had little self-motivation for learning. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress in their business related courses. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.
238. Where there is an additional learning support teacher for pupils with English as an additional language, they make good progress, particularly in their understanding of more complex concepts. This was well illustrated in a lesson where the support teacher helped pupils well towards an understanding of 'Inter-', as in 'Internet' or 'Inter-City' as opposed to 'Intra-' as in 'Intranet'. However, when support is not present, teachers' planning for the range of pupils with special educational needs is minimal and not good enough.
239. In all lessons seen, introductions were sound with previous work being reviewed to set the context for the lesson. However, the more passive response of pupils led to either the teacher talking too much in order to present information to the class, or limiting introductions in order to work with boys individually. When the former happened this led to a slower pace to the lesson and limited the pupils' learning. Where the latter occurred, although good support was provided for individuals it meant that teachers were often repeating and revisiting information several times as they went about the class. Whilst the boys appreciated the individual attention and tuition, an over-emphasis on this led to some inefficient teaching strategies and the pace of lessons not being sharp enough.
240. Nevertheless, progress and learning are supported well through sound assessment procedures. Most of the boys have a good idea of their potential grades and discussion with them shows they know their targets for improvement. However, a scrutiny of their work and folders shows very little use of ICT. This is unsatisfactory, particularly in the vocational courses where the use of ICT is an important and integral part of the work. In terms of the boys' literacy development, there were often weaknesses in the presentation of their business course work. For example, a few pupils had used word processing to review, revise and correct work and this tended to be of a higher standard.
241. Some of the best teaching occurs when the teacher shows a good understanding of the boys' interests and relates the topic studied well to these. At such times, lessons become livelier and the pupils more involved. A good example of this occurred in a lesson on the subject of human resources and the recruitment and retention of staff in a business organisation. Once the teacher related this subject to the problems of a local football club and its managerial difficulties, the boys successfully related theory to practice and the quality of their learning and understanding became good. Consequently, they were able to develop an appreciation of the importance of 'manpower' planning to a business.